

KANT'S *ANTHROPOLOGY*
FROM A
FOUCAULDIAN POINT OF VIEW

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FOUCAULDIAN POINT OF VIEW

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A Thesis
Submitted to the School of graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Master of Arts

McMaster University

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MASTER OF ARTS (1998)
(English)

McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Kant's *Anthropology* from a Foucauldian Point of View

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SUPERVISOR: Dr. David L. Clark

NUMBER OF PAGES: *xii*, 88

ABSTRACT

The last of Immanuel Kant's texts to be published in his lifetime, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* [*Anthropologie in Pragmatischer Hinsicht*] (1798) has gone virtually undiscussed in twentieth-century English scholarship. In fact, Susan Meld Shell appears to be the only English scholar to provide even a marginal account of its position in Kant's *oeuvre*. Part of my thesis will address why the *Anthropology* -- a rather strange and anomalous text in that it easily betrays the anxieties behind one of the most guarded, rigorous, and determined thinkers of the Enlightenment -- is such a marginalized text. Why are critics of Kant so willing to dismiss it? With this question in mind, I aim to reveal some of the more critical interests and investments motivating the text's fundamental query: who is the *anthropos* of anthropology, that is, who or what is "man"? Although Kant concedes that the question is ultimately insoluble, that the definition of man is ostensibly circumscribed by the absence of an ontologically equivalent external *other*, he insists on problematizing "man" as the stage or site on which the dramatic contest between reason and unreason or concord and discord takes place. Whereas Shell limits her brief discussion of the *Anthropology* to consider how Kant's personal experience with hypochondria determines the scope and emphasis of his pragmatic anthropology, I will argue that the text's hypochondriacal resonances stem from a larger concern for what Foucault calls the "cultivation" or "care of the self."

Consequently, I will read the *Anthropology* as a kind of conduct book that traces the manner in which the subject, in its relationship to itself, styles and maintains its own self-sovereignty. I argue, moreover, that Kant's text reflects an ideological shift in emphasis in the history of ethics, a shift in which the bourgeois subject redefines its relationship to itself in order to preserve its differential value as the central or privileged figure in the semiotics of the health of the body and of the soul.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Without question, the first person I would like to thank is my supervisor Dr. David L. Clark. I knew from the very beginning that with him there would be no looking back; but I could never have anticipated the enormous affect his infectious enthusiasm would have on my writing nor the commitment to scholarship he would inspire in my otherwise aimlessly drifting prior self. I would also like to thank my readers Dr. Sylvia Bowerbank and especially Dr. Daniel Coleman for being kind enough to engage my thesis very early on and for providing extensive comments and invaluable insight throughout the entire summer. Finally, I would like to thank Kerry, who not only had the patience to endure countless hours of thoughts spoken out loud, but also had the “pleasure” (and in this she wasn’t alone) of hearing (over the phone) many prior drafts and re-writes.

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*Lodged in the shelter of himself, hugging his being
like a bride, he is now a solitary, proud old man,
sealing where he can the leaking substance of his
life.*

Bernard Edelman, *The House That Kant Built*

PREFACE:
Anthropology from a Foucauldian Point of View

*...it is wholly fitting that the study of Kant should begin with
the reading of Anthropology.*

Arsenij Gulyga, *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Thought*

Kant's *Anthropology* is one of those strange little texts buried beneath the massive weight of major works in the Western philosophical canon. It is curious that a work intended, as one critic suggests, as the "completion" or "summation of [Kant's] thought" (Gulyga 246)¹ should remain -- especially in the English tradition -- virtually ignored. As Kant has long occupied the central position as the major figure of the Enlightenment (he was, of course, the author of the most definitive response to the question "What is Enlightenment?" [1784]), the *Anthropology* could, then, very well be considered the Enlightenment's quintessential text on and of the margin. What is required then -- especially today, when post-Enlightenment subjectivity has become an obsession of contemporary critical theory -- is an archeology of the philosophical canon, an unearthing of texts, like the *Anthropology*, that have been "forgotten." It is, of course, Freud who informs us that forgetting is always a way of remembering. Consequently, I would suggest that forgetting the *Anthropology* has been for the West a way of remembering what I believe the *Anthropology* ultimately -- if inadvertently --

¹Arsenij Gulyga also suggests that "formally, the *Anthropology* is one of Kant's most lucid works" (Gulyga 240).

shows us: the *instability* of the Kantian subject, or the Kantian subject at its very limits.

Following my own ultimatum, I intend to perform my thesis as an excavation of the *Anthropology*. I will interrogate the *Anthropology*'s rhetoric not only because this task has gone largely unfulfilled since the text's publication in 1798, but also because I believe the *Anthropology* produces a subject so problematic, so transformed from the self-sovereign will we have come to expect from the author of the three *Critiques*, that we can barely recognize it. Rather, as I will argue, the *Anthropology* offers us a subject that, precisely because it is (as Kant informs us near the end of his text) fundamentally "insoluble" (238), is more akin to -- in fact, even anticipates -- the more palpably critical stances towards "man" taken much later by both Martin Heidegger and Michel Foucault. Indeed, it is hardly coincidental that these two philosophers are the only major figures in Western thought to have demonstrated any kind of inheritance (however slight) from the *Anthropology* itself: when Heidegger defines and critiques "The Idea of Philosophical Anthropology" in his book *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1929), many of the references and terms he uses (as I explain in a footnote on page 28) are borrowed directly from the *Anthropology*; and when Foucault famously addresses the "recent invention" of "man" in *The Order of Things*, he returns to issues that, according to Ian Hacking, "arose from an [earlier] attempt to write an introduction to...Kant's *Anthropologie*" [238].² Hence, I devote a large part of my

²Not only had "Foucault planned a work which would relate the *Anthropology* to Kant's critical works," as Frederick P. Van De Pitte also suggests in his introduction to Victor Dowdell's English translation of the *Anthropology* (xxii), but also, in order to fulfill

thesis to determining Kant's position as an antecedent to Heideggerian and Foucauldian thought -- that is, as an early thinker in the tradition of thinking "man"³ as a limit-figure.

Although I rely heavily at times on the work of Heidegger, I have chosen a methodology more faithful and closer in kind to the Foucauldian approach to ethics as a history of the "care of the self." Moreover, I have chosen to read Kant's *Anthropology* as a conduct book written in the spirit of (and contemporaneously with) what German historians (Foucault, as I will explain in Chapter Two, also makes this observation) call the "flood of autobiographies and letters" (Kachuba 393) published in Germany near the end of the eighteenth century. As a book of manners intended, as we shall see, for the bourgeois male, the *Anthropology* reconceives the self-sovereign subject (i.e., "man") as a *contingent* being whose very definition (itself "quite insoluble" [238]) demands that we think "man" not as a single unproblematic will, but as a site or stage on which conflicting forces and agencies collide and struggle in a kind of drama of the self.

the requirement for his thesis at the *Collège de France*, Foucault edited, introduced, and translated into French an edition of *Anthropology Du Point De Vue Pragmatique*. This translation was later published in 1970 by *Librarie Philosophique J. Vrin*. Foucault's comments on the *Anthropology*, however, are limited in this edition to a mere four-page "Notice Historique" (containing only biographical contextualization and a brief publication history) and a three-page collection of editorial endnotes.

³I use this grammatical formation (i.e., "thinking 'man'" or "thinking anthropology," of which I will speak later) throughout my thesis. It is meant to denote the *production* as well as the thinking *of* that which will be thought (in this case, "man"). In other words, I am suggesting that Kant is not so much thinking *of* "man," as though "man" were prior to this thought, but thinking "man" as the thought itself, as the product or effect of a certain way of thinking.

In my “Introduction,” I will explicitly draw out how Kant treats “man” as a being of *care*, as a being, that is, that cares for itself. I will investigate, *via* Mary Meld Shell, how Kant’s own experiences and obsessions with hypochondria and melancholia prefigure the *Anthropology*’s rhetoric of regret, and how these “illnesses” prompt him to rearticulate the “insoluble” constitution of the subject. In Chapter Two, “‘What is Man?’ Kant’s Characterization of the Species,” I will show how the *Anthropology* radically revisits Kantianism in that, while defining “man” in its concluding pages, it begins to imagine the subject (as I have already suggested) more as a collision of intersecting and competing forces (that is, more as an *ethos* or site of mediation and arbitration) than an independent fixed point of *solubility* from which the self-sovereign subject freely exercises its own will. In Chapter Three, “Kant’s Dinner Party: The Kantian Regimen and the Rise of the Bourgeoisie,” I will investigate the historical contingency of this newly imagined subject and the regimen and care that Kant prescribes for it. In this section, I will describe and interpret what Kant calls (under italics) “*the art of good living*” (154) *viz-à-vis* his rules of conduct for a “good meal in good company” (186). Finally, in Chapter Four, “The Guest (and Ghosts) of Honour: The Anthropological Subject and its *Others*; or, Three Short Tales,” I will interrogate even further this new self-healing “man” and navigate through the margins of what I call (in the spirit of the bourgeoisie) the *Anthropology*’s “silent specialization” of the subject, that is, the way in which the text’s hegemonic motivations prepare the self to care for and construct itself as a very specific and superior kind of self. I will

reconstruct three “anthropological” narratives to demonstrate how the *ghosts* that inhabit and support the structure of the Kantian self-fashioning “man” (i.e., the woman, the non-European, and the young) manifest the *others* against whom the subject’s specialization is measured.⁴

⁴Another *other* (perhaps the most significant) in the process of this specialization is, of course, the body. I will, however, speak of the body throughout my thesis, almost as though I were always speaking of it.

**INTRODUCTION:
Melancholia, Hypochondria, and
the Care of the Self**

This panacea [provided by morally practical philosophy], however, is only a regimen to be adopted: in other words, it functions only in a negative way, as the art of preventing disease. But an art of this sort presupposes, as its necessary condition, an ability that only philosophy, or the spirit of philosophy, can give.

Immanuel Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*

The “First Book” of the *Anthropology*, entitled “*On the Cognitive Faculty*,” is a catalogue of the abilities, functions, failures, weaknesses, and responsibilities of the mind. Throughout this book, Kant’s rhetoric is nevertheless traced by a kind of madness, by a rather startling fear in which the aging philosopher’s hands cling increasingly more desperately to the so-called “reigns” (158) of reason. For readers more accustomed to the magisterial confidence of the author of the three *Critiques*, the nervousness and uncertainty with which Kant writes his last work cannot help but come across as unfamiliar, even surprising. Trembling before the mysterious depths of the human mind, this more anxious Kant issues a series of severe and panicked warnings against hypochondria, a condition characterized by its deliberate and “neurotic” (70) observation of the “inner sense.” Openly and relentlessly dreading the hypochondriac, he remonstrates this figure for leading the soul down the most direct path to what he calls, with a

noticeable shudder, “illuminism and terrorism”: the “confused belief that we are open to higher inspiration and, without our help, who knows why, are subject to unknown interior forces” (16-7). This is a “belief,” of course, that threatens the very notion of the Kantian self-sovereign subject. For this reason, the hypochondriac, troped in the terms of maniacal terrorism, serves the *Anthropology* as a scapegoat, ushering to the margins the specters of madness and other alien agencies of the “anthropological” mind. Despite its intended function, however, the hypochondriac refuses to leave Kant’s house. Rather (and this is a kind of condensed version of my thesis), it comes to inhabit the very nexus on which the *Anthropology* produces its vision of the Kantian subject.

What is most interesting about Kant’s grim fascination with hypochondria is that, as he admits in *The Conflict of the Faculties* [*Der Streit Der Fakultäten*] (1798), he himself had “a natural disposition to hypochondria” (189) -- a disposition, moreover, that, in his “early years,” made him “almost weary of life” itself (189). The *Anthropology*, then, precisely because it is unrelenting in its pledge to oust the hypochondriac from its domain of intelligibility, becomes for Kant a kind of melancholic self-castigation in which he aims to reproach, punish, and discipline himself -- to exorcize his body and mind of his own unknown and unwelcome spirits and demons. Even the most unassuming passages of the *Anthropology* have the potential to turn melancholic. Early in the “First Book,” for example, Kant pities those poor souls (again, they are hypochondriacs) who lack the skill for “abstraction (*abstractio*)”:

Many people are unhappy because they cannot engage in abstraction.
 Many a suitor could make a good marriage if he could only shut his eyes
 to a wart on his sweetheart’s face or a gap where teeth are missing. But it

is a particularly bad habit of our faculty of perception to observe too closely, even involuntarily, what is faulty in other people. Likewise it is bad manners to fix one's eyes on the spot where a button is missing from the coat of a man who is directly in front of us... (15)

Lurking behind this advice, however, is Kant's obsession and frustration with his own personal susceptibility to what he calls, in opposition to abstraction, "distraction (*distractio*)."

Arsenij Gulyga, one of Kant's most famous biographers, recalls an incident from Kant's life on the lecturing podium that sheds a revealing light on Kant's compassion for these "unhappy" suitors:

Once he had begun to unfold his thought, the slightest disturbance in the auditorium could interrupt his train of thought. He was once distracted and lectured worse than usually; he then confessed that he had been distracted by a student who sat right in front of him with a button missing on his coat. (Gulyga 79)

The similarity even in the phraseology of these two citations is quite provocative. From the vantage point of this biographical anecdote, Kant's allegory of the "unhappy" suitor betrays itself as nothing more than a kind of displaced hallucination of *self-regret*. It is quite possible (Gulyga neglects to cite the source or date of Kant's interrupted lecture) that the incident occurred while Kant was writing and delivering his lectures on anthropology (which began in the winter of 1772 and ended with the publication of the *Anthropology* in 1798 [*Anthropology* 6n]). Moreover, it is quite possible that the incident affected (i.e., "distracted") Kant so much that it came to haunt the very content of these lectures. It is not hard to imagine Kant's preoccupation with this "unhappy" failure to concentrate functioning as the principal motivation behind one of the obsessed philosopher's so-called moments of "sudden inspiration" (Höffe 9).

In fact, the incident (or, at least, the condition that caused the incident) returns to torment Kant yet again. Later, in the *Anthropology*'s discussion on "distraction," the professor's lectern becomes the central metaphor:

The teacher from the pulpit or in the academic lecture-hall, the prosecutor or the attorney who has to demonstrate mental composure in free speaking (on the spur of the moment) or at least in conversation, must each pay attention to three things. First, he must concentrate on what he is now saying, in order to represent it clearly; second, he must look back to what he has said; and third, he must look forward to what he intends to say. If he fails to give consideration to any of these three, and if he fails to arrange them in this order, then he will certainly be distracting both himself and his listeners or readers. An otherwise good mind cannot disregard these rules without being called confused. (104)

With an anxious precision that marks the rigour of the philosopher's legendary daily routine (Höffe 9), Kant creates for the lecturer a regimen so mechanical, so lifeless as to seem almost inhuman. The body -- all sensory perception whatsoever -- is forgotten, censored, deferred; it is written out of the lecturer's mind so that the self-sovereignty of the soul can distribute itself unmolested. This is the fantasy of a philosopher-lecturer terrified of the spontaneity of the lectern. It is the dreamwork of a philosopher haunted by the specter of a missing button. Beneath this dream, the self struggles with itself, with its unknown "interior forces" (i.e., forces that are here and elsewhere in the *Anthropology* metonymously inscribed with images of the "body"). This is a self so concerned for itself it verges on neurosis (the trademark of hypochondria). Obsessed with its own problematic nature, it aims to place the limits and fissures of its self-mastery under erasure. In the process of forgetting the alien and interfering agency of the body, however, the body returns (and this occurs throughout the *Anthropology*, as we shall see) to plague the self

with an unforeseen ferocity.¹

In the *Anthropology*, Kant's is, indeed, a rhetoric of regret, of trepidation, and, most of all, of melancholia. Conveniently, the *Anthropology* itself provides us with a definition of melancholia that not only is clinical, but also oddly enough renders Kant's own struggle with this "weakness" (97) ironic, even tragic:

A melancholic [hypochondriac] man is well aware that the *train of his thought* does not move properly, but he has not sufficient control over himself to direct, restrain, or control the course of his thought. (97, emphasis mine)

Again, the phraseology of this passage should remind us of a Kant who lost his *train of thought* at the lectern, of a Kant who failed to pay attention to his own three rules of "mental composure" and thus fell prey to "confusion." Although Kant's fantasy is that he *can* in fact maintain sufficient control over himself, he is painfully aware that the train of his *own* thought "does not move properly." In fact, it is with this passage that the *Anthropology* diagnoses its own melancholia.

With its engaged and detailed taxonomy of the "weaknesses" and "illnesses" of the mind, the *Anthropology* mourns the stability of its subject. As a preventative measure, it prescribes a regimen, a "care of the self" in the Foucauldian sense of the phrase, that aims to recover the loss of a self prior to the crisis of what Susan Meld Shell calls the "hypochondria" of the eighteenth century.² Because this regimen is not a curative art,

¹In the opening paragraph to this chapter, I tried to evoke the presence of this return in my use of metaphors and phrases such as "the aging philosopher's hands," "trembling," "panicked," and "noticeable shudder."

²Shell writes: "Hypochondria was especially associated with the disturbances of the imagination during a century in which imagination was coming increasingly to be regarded, by

however, but is what Kant, in another set of lectures, calls an “art of *preventing* disease” (*Conflict* 177, emphasis preserved), the melancholic or hypochondriacal subject (regardless of Kant’s repeated renunciations of it)³ becomes a central and unavoidable specter of the *Anthropology*. For, an art of *prevention* is at best an art of deferral, an art of postponement. It is a “putting off” of crisis, of hypochondria and melancholia. With its rhetoric of regret, the *Anthropology* functions for Kant as a means of procrastination [“*procrastinatio*” (*Conflict* 175)], of delaying his own fundamental and irresolvable inner struggle with hypochondria. Subsequently, his regimen, the way in which he aims to organize and maximize the economy of the self, manifests a postponement of all “involuntary” movements of the body and the soul, of all “unknown interior forces” that confound one’s *train of thought*.

But let us now introduce the “body” (i.e., Kant’s) of which we are speaking (of which we will continue to speak) as best we can.⁴ “According to contemporary reports,” says Shell, “Kant was of slight and delicate build, though with a large head and pleasant face of which the eyes—ethereally blue and clear—were especially arresting” (266). He

philosopher’s and poets alike, as *the* seat of interaction between the mind and matter” (267).

³In *Conflict of the Faculties*, immediately after diagnosing the hypochondria of his “early years,” Kant insists: “But I have mastered its influence on my thoughts and actions by diverting my attention from this feeling, as if it had nothing to do with me” (*Conflict* 189). Despite this self-acclaimed recovery, the specters of “hypochondria” and “melancholia” (terms that Kant uses interchangeably) manifest the most deeply rooted of the *Anthropology*’s anxieties.

⁴By introducing the “body,” I do not mean to suggest that I am theorizing the “body” (this will occur elsewhere in my thesis). Rather, I simply aim in this paragraph to evoke, and subsequently play with, a representation of Kant’s body according to Kant himself, that is, according to *his* own documentation and interpretation of it.

was “physically clumsy” and weak, and his “shortness of stature provided, he believed, too little room for his intestines, predisposing him to wind and constipation” (266). More bothersome than this, however, was (as he himself describes it) his “flat and narrow chest” which left “little room for the movement of the heart and lungs” (*Conflict* 189). His heart, he claimed, was “forced up against the left side of his diaphragm, resulting in a steady feeling of painful discomfort that he identified as *Behlemmung* [constriction, oppression] of the heart” (Shell 266). It was to this condition, moreover, that Kant attributed his “natural disposition to hypochondria” (*Conflict* 189). Subsequently, he claims that, since “nothing could be done about it [the constant pain and throbbing in his chest],” he “soon came to pay no attention to it” (*Conflict* 189).⁵

It appears to me, however, that Kant, rather than indifferently disregarding the pangs of his tortured frame “as if [they] had nothing to do with [him]” (189), not only became even more acutely aware of his own body, but also grew increasingly more concerned (even preoccupied) with how he (and he extends this advice to his readers) could “master its morbid feelings merely by a firm resolution” (177). Just as forgetting is often for Freud a covert, but nonetheless active, means of remembering (that is, a

⁵Kant continues: “The result was that, while I felt the oppression in my chest, a calm and cheerful state prevailed in my mind, which did not fail to communicate itself to society, not by intermittent whims (as is usual with hypochondriacs), but purposely and naturally. And since our *joie de vivre* depends more on what we freely *do* with life than on what we *enjoy* as a gift from it, mental work can set another kind of heightened vital feeling against the limitations that affect the body alone. The oppression has remained with me, for its cause lies in my physical constitution. But I have mastered its influence on my thoughts and actions by diverting my attention from this feeling, as if it had nothing to do with me” (*Conflict* 189).

deliberate form of repression), paying no attention to his body (willfully ignoring it) was for Kant an active means of subjecting it to his command, of forever jerking the chains that held it down. It was, in other words, a means of always remembering the body as a threat to self-sovereignty.⁶ I say this simply because, as Shell argues in the final chapter of her book *The Embodiment of Reason*, hypochondria is a topic that evidently continues to preoccupy and motivate Kant in his academic pursuits and, as I will later demonstrate, his personal life as well.

Of all diseases known in the eighteenth century, hypochondria was, according to Shell, “that which most closely touched on the vexed question of the relation between mind and matter” (267). This was, of course, a relation that interested Kant immensely. References to the disease appear in his work as early as his *Investigation Concerning Diseases of the Head* (1764) in which he defines hypochondria as an “illness” that hatches “chimeras” that “do not properly deceive outer senses, but rather only make for the hypochondriac an illusion of the experience of his state,¹ either of the body or the soul, that is largely a mere crotchet” (Shell 268).⁷ With later references to the disease still

⁶This repression of the body, as I will argue later, does not function as though it were simply a means of forgetting the materiality of a prediscursive, preexisting body. Such is the ruse of what Foucault, in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, calls the “repressive hypothesis.” Rather, as we have seen in his attempt to attribute his hypochondria to the “abnormal” composition of his chest and intestines, Kant’s “body” (that which he attempts to ignore as though it had nothing to do with him) is already a dream -- that is, already the *product* of an elaborate scientific discursive practice. In this light, his “body” becomes less the object of a repression (of an act of writing out) than it becomes the *effect* of an endless process of inscription.

⁷This passage is cited from a larger passage cited and translated by Shell herself. The text is unavailable in English.

circulating in texts like the *Anthropology* and *The Conflict of the Faculties*, Kant's interest in hypochondria appears not to have subsided or been ignored as though it had "nothing to do with [him]," but rather it appears to have increased over thirty four years of publication. As Shell rightly points out, hypochondria, with the questions it posed to the relation of the mind and body, proved to be for Kant a crucial field of theorization.

What I want to entertain here (although, perhaps, only in passing) is the possibility that Kant's hypochondria, his melancholic obsession with the ills of the body (or, at least, the "chimeras" of such ills), inspired him -- Shell herself suggests that the disease become for Kant a "special sort of gift," a "condition of genius" (298) -- to conceive of "man," his subject, as a fundamentally problematic being. This is a being who is at its very center (or non-center, as the case may be) always already *sick*, a being who is destined, even obliged, to care for itself, to concern itself with the involuntary forces that rise infectiously from deep within the folds of its mind/body nexus. The subject or self, however, is tacitly reconceived not as intrinsically "healthy" and falling prey to "sickness," but constitutively dis-eased, the object and subject of its own care. This is precisely how Kant, in the *Anthropology* (a text published at the very end of his philosophical life -- his final, desperate and *dying breath*, as it were), treats the anthropological subject: as a patient *always already* in need of care, that is, to be more specific, always already in need of caring *for itself*. It is this "care" (i.e., the technology or *process* of this care) that defines the nature of this subject in its most fundamental form. In other words, "man" does not precede "his" own care, but "he" is produced in the economy of that care. This being the case (as I intend to prove in the chapters that follow), the Kantian subject

(especially as it is articulated in the *Anthropology*) would then possess a structure identical to the hypochondriac. Moreover, what I have thus far referred to as Kant's attempt to "oust the hypochondriac" from the proper constitution of "man," that is, his attempt to place this figure under erasure, would then manifest itself as nothing more than a kind of fear of the self. It would, to speak in Kantian terms, reveal a kind of hypochondria of the hypochondriac within us all: a fear of that subject who cares for itself *too much*. This kind of hyper-hypochondria would then necessarily conceive the subject as a hypochondriacal/normative split, a fractured and unstable self constituted by and on the *fold* of these two phantasmagoric figures. This would, moreover, be a subject produced as an *effect* of this struggle, one whose very definition would stem from the negotiation or care of this primordial (yet discursive) divorce.

Kant was, indeed, well aware of the hypochondriac within himself. Contrary to his haughty claims of "mastering" its hold over him as though it "had nothing to do with [him]," the hypochondriac remained very much with him, and not simply as a supplemental part of his private life, but as though it had, in fact, *everything* to do with him. Truly haunted by the phantom of hypochondria, Kant left no part of his life to chance, no part of his physical well being to gamble. He executed his daily routine with such rigour and with such precision that it prompts Otfried Höffe to begin his biographical and critical study of Kant [*Immanuel Kant* (1992)] with the humbling, and rather amusing, jest: "an exciting biography of Kant would be difficult to write; his life was regular and uniform" (9). Kant paid so much attention to the condition of his mind and body that, as Shell's research informs us, he came to regard his health as "a 'masterpiece,' a work of art, in other words,

of the highest order” (264). Not unlike Foucault (of whom we will speak in a moment), Kant was a technician or craftsman of life -- an early devotee of the “aesthetics of existence” (*Use of Pleasure* 12).

In his text *The Life of Immanuel Kant* (1882) (the first English biography of the German philosopher), J. H. W. Stuckenberg provides perhaps the best account of Kant’s “Home and Social Life.” Noting “the clock-like regularity of Kant’s life [that] surprised his friends, and became the subject of frequent remark” (162), Stuckenberg reprints verbatim the words of the poet Heine (a colleague and occasional dinner companion of Kant):

It is difficult to write the history of the life of Immanuel Kant, for he had neither life nor history. He lived the mechanically ordered and almost abstract life of a bachelor, in a quiet, retired little street of Königsberg, an old city on the north-eastern border of Germany. I do not believe that the large clock of the cathedral did its work with less passion and with greater regularity than its countryman, Immanuel Kant. To rise, drink coffee, write, deliver lectures, eat, take walks, everything had its appointed time; and the neighbours knew that it was exactly half-past three when Kant, in his grey coat and with the Spanish reed in his hand, stepped out of his door and walked towards the small Linden Avenue, which is still called after him, “The Philosopher’s Walk.” (162)

The Conflict of the Faculties, with its detailed and (perhaps, to our ears) slightly bizarre program, explains the principle behind Kant’s daily routine. It begins with the stipulation that a “regimen for prolonging man’s life must not aim at a life of *ease*” (181). The artist of existence must *struggle*; he must toil to preserve his “vital energy.” He must practice what Kant calls the “*Stoic* way of life:” a means of mastering one’s “sensuous feelings” (i.e., the pleasures) through a strict and rigorous “self-imposed principle” (183) of discipline. “*Warmth, sleep, and pampering* ourselves when we are not ill,” he warns,

“are some of [the] bad habits of a life of ease” (183). Rather, to live a life of reason and longevity, one is well to follow the advice of the “Turks,” whom Kant claims “have a saying about moderation: that at the beginning of the world each man had allotted to him the portion he would have to eat during his lifetime, and to the degree that he squanders his ration in very large meals, he can count on a shorter time *to eat* and so *to exist*” (189). Similarly, the same rule applies to the amount of time assigned to each man for sleep: “one who has given too much of his adult life (more than one-third of it) to sleep cannot expect a long time for sleeping, that is, for living and growing old” (191).⁸

What Kant demonstrates in the meticulous precision and strange pseudo-scientific preoccupations of his regimen is a hypochondriacal concern for the functions of a body that he himself produces, forms, and problematizes as the most unstable pillar of existence.⁹ He interprets (that is, inscribes) the body as a concentrated pool of *pure life* from which the subject intermittently draws. How much and how often one dips into this pool of existence is left for the individual to decide. In this tale of the pleasures, the body is given -- it is a gift -- but the self is left (even obliged) to preserve its integrity -- in other

⁸According to Stuckenberg, Kant honoured this principle in practice: “He regarded seven hours of sleep as sufficient, and accordingly limited himself to that number, until in old age when he found that more was necessary. Promptly at ten he retired, and his servant had strict orders never to let him sleep longer than five, however strongly he might plead for more rest” (160).

⁹Earlier, I suggested (along with Shell) that Kant was an artist of existence. However, it could be argued, that Kant, because his life and regimen were so mechanically executed, so rigorously detailed and preconceived (charted and schematized), was less an artist than he was a *scientist* of existence, and a *mad* one at that. One could suggest that he dissects and taxonomizes his life so much that it is transformed from an animated source of organic spontaneity into the lifeless drone of an overdetermined, inhuman narrative.

words, to make it last through moderation and conservation. The indulgent person, the one who dips too often, who neglects the regimen, who lets himself be ruled by the body and its desires, “miscalculates...the *quantity of life* at his disposal” (*Conflict* 191) and is thus the product of bad regimen.

What this amounts to is a regimen motivated by fear: a fear of the “unknown interior forces” (*Anthropology* 17) that confound the self-sovereign will -- in a word, a hypochondria of sorts. For this reason, I intend to treat Kant’s regimen -- which is reissued, repackaged, and refurbished in the more urbane, more cosmopolitan rhetoric of the *Anthropology* -- as a carefully measured, strictly politicized *rearticulation*¹⁰ of the kind of “care of the self” discussed by Foucault in Volumes Two and Three of *The History of Sexuality*. Not only does the *Anthropology*, with its always-already-sick subject (i.e., the “man” that is summoned by Nature to “turn discord into concord” [238]), structure itself as a kind of manual for this revised “technology” or “care of the self,” but, published as it was contemporaneously to the discursive explosion surrounding the formation and expansion of the bourgeois *Lebenswelt* [life-world] of eighteenth-century *Bürgertom*,¹¹ it also produces an instructional framework housing the spirits and motives of bourgeois hegemony. In fact, the *Anthropology* is itself a kind of middle-class conduct book

¹⁰I employ this phrase (“politicized *rearticulation*”) for reasons that will become clear not only in the sentences below, but even more so in my discussion (in Chapter Three and Four) of the *Anthropology*’s discursive (bourgeois) ideologies concerning class, race, sex, and age.

¹¹I will discuss *Bürgertom* and this discursive explosion (what German historians have called Germany’s “reading revolution” [Blackbourn 3]) in Chapter Three.

borrowing its rhetorical strategies from those etiquette books, described by Foucault in Volume One of *The History of Sexuality*, “published in great numbers at the end of the eighteenth century, on body hygiene, the art of longevity, [and] ways of having healthy children” (125). Such a thesis, which may surprize us at first, will seem more logical than simply radical when we consider that Kant was not only born into a merchant-class family -- his father Johann George was a harness-maker (Gulyga 9) -- but, as Otfried Höffe is quick to remind us, “of the great modern philosophers Kant is...[also] the first to earn his living as a professional teacher of his field. In contrast to most representatives of the British and French Enlightenment, Kant led the assiduous but uneventful life of a bourgeois scholar” (Höffe 8). What I intend to argue throughout this thesis, then, is that the *Anthropology*'s rhetoric, constructing as it does the subject as a fundamentally “insoluble” problem or sickness in need of around-the-clock attention, offers itself as criteria for the self, a set of instructions that allows the subject, in its relation to itself, to freely inscribe itself with and as a middle-class body, to *care* for itself (both physically and ethically) as a productive and healthy member of the bourgeoisie. Responding to its own self-constructed hypochondriacal crisis -- a crisis, that is, that forces the *Anthropology* radically to reproblematicize the Kantian subject not as a strictly self-sovereign entity, but more a complex field of conflict, negotiation, and care -- Kant's text evidently attempts to recuperate (mourn) by offering an “aesthetics of existence” buttressed with the ideals, imperatives, and metaphors of middle-class production. With its lofty claims to offer a “pragmatic knowledge of man” that “aims at what man makes, can, or should make of himself as a freely acting being” (*Anthropology* 3), the *Anthropology* teaches the

bourgeois male to nurse the volatile *insolubility* of “his” own being. It acts as a handbook detailing a specialized (i.e., middle-class) technology for governing the conflict (between concord and discord) that constitutes the very nature of this “man.”

At this juncture, it is necessary to offer a brief overview of the Foucauldian notion of the “care of the self.” Rather than paraphrase the otherwise lucid and lyrical definition of the “care of the self” (known alternatively as the “arts” or “aesthetics of existence”) set forth by Foucault himself, I will quote directly from Robert Hurley’s original translation:

What I mean by the phrase [the “arts of existence”] are those intentional and voluntary actions by which men not only set themselves rules of conduct, but also seek to *transform* themselves, to *change* themselves in their singular being, and to make their life into an *oeuvre* that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria. (*Use of Pleasure* 10-11, emphasis added).

I place emphasis on the role of “transformation” because, in the “aesthetics of existence,” the self is always a work in-progress; it a work that is always in the process of becoming, of transgressing itself. For “Maurice Florence,”¹² this transformative “aesthetics of existence” considers the “constitution of the subject as its own object: the formation of the procedures by which the subject is led to observe itself, to analyse itself, to decipher itself, to recognize itself as a domain of knowledge” (316). In this process, however, as I (and others, including Judith Butler) will argue, there does not exist a *prior* (self-willing, self-

¹²The following citation is from “Foucault, Michel, 1926--” which, as Gary Gutting claims in the pretextual blurb to *The Cambridge Companion to Michel Foucault*, is “a pseudonymous dictionary entry on Foucault that was probably written by Foucault himself shortly before his death.” Rather than a modest summary of Foucault’s major works, “Maurice Florence” (a suspiciously keen one-hit-wonder) authors an important piece that not only radically corrects some of the misconceptions concerning the lack of consistency in the Foucault’s *oeuvre* (misconceptions with which Foucault himself was often known to be frustrated), but also outlines in lucid (and, perhaps, even polemical) detail the methodology motivating his work.

sovereign) self negotiating and styling itself as though it were merely a matter of suiting itself up for life, but rather, the self itself is produced on the complex site or intersection of such negotiation; it is the end result of a collision of several forces, structures, and unconscious agencies (including hegemony, history, desire) -- the end result of the technology that mediates and organizes such confrontations. The self is caught in the subtle nexus of being both the subject and object of a single act of production. In other words, the “self” in the phrase “self-shaping” does not precede its own act, but is itself shaped in the very process of shaping. Within this domain of what Butler calls “subjectivation” -- in which the “soul,” as an “instrument of power” or “normative ideal” “forms and frames the body” in the “*constitution* of the very materiality of the subject” (34) -- the self’s relation to its body is continually reinvented, reproblematicized, while its rules of conduct undergo endless reconfiguration.¹³ The concerns, moreover, that occasion the shifts in the self’s on-going problematization of itself all stem from the same basic structure of fear: that of what Foucault calls the “threat of a breaking forth of involuntary forces” within the body *and* the soul. “Self-sovereignty,” then, is simply an illusory effect of subjectivation, an effect that ostensibly bestows the self (and the “self” is actually part of this gift) with its own principle of organization. Always already mourning the possible loss of such sovereignty, the subject continues to treat itself as an *ethos*, as a permanent site of transformation (as a placeholder in which the “self” is played out and

¹³To supplement this point, I cite the following passage from Butler in which I have substituted the terms “masculine” and “feminine” for “mind” and “body” respectively: “The economy that claims to include the [body] as the subordinate term in a binary opposition of [mind/body] excludes the [body], produces the [body] as that which must be excluded for that economy to operate” (37).

reformed) where it is always moving from the threat of enslavement to the pleasure of self-mastery. And the experience of using the crisis of this space, of this *ethos*, to transform and negotiate a style of the self (a *technē tou biou*), is, indeed, “the experience of a pleasure that one takes in oneself. The individual who has finally succeeded in gaining access to himself is, for himself, an object of pleasure” (*Care of the Self* 66).

It is to this kind of pleasure that Kant aspires not only in the late remedial rhetoric of the *Anthropology*, but also as early as 1784 in “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?” [“*Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*”]. In this seminal essay, Kant characterizes the Enlightenment as “*mankind’s exit from its self-incurred immaturity*” (*Enlightenment* 58). Rather than encouraging those readers who find comfort in books that understand for them or in doctors who judge their diets for them (that is, those *immature* readers who “lack the resolution and the courage” to know “without the guidance of another” [58]), Kant challenges them to understand for themselves, to judge their own diet, to Know Thyself! His “motto of Enlightenment” is “*Sapere aude!* Have the courage to use your own understanding!” (58). Kant wants to free “man” from religious dogma and the tyranny of the past so that “he” can *become* a self concerned for itself. In Foucauldian terms, he wants to release the subject from a “universal legislation” that determines permitted and forbidden acts (*Use of Pleasure* 91). It is, in fact, this appeal to the subject as an individual unafraid to know itself, to question itself, and to use its own understanding that moved Foucault to interpret (and even preserve) what he calls the “certain attitude” of the Kantian notion of Enlightenment as the tendency to problematize one’s “relation to the present” as an “autonomous subject”

(*Foucault Reader* 43) -- to “take oneself as an object of a complex and difficult elaboration” (41).

Thus it is that Kant’s “man” makes and cares for “himself.” In fact, “man” -- whom the *Anthropology* defines as an animal who, because “he” is “endowed with capability of reason (*animal rationabile*),” “can make himself a rational animal (*animal rationale*)¹⁴ -- is not only a “recent invention,” as Foucault radically suggests in the “Preface” to *The Order of Things*, but more specifically, “he” is an invention that signals a shift in emphasis (beginning contemporaneously with the rise of the bourgeoisie) in the care of the self. Throughout the remaining portions of my thesis, I intend to interrogate this shift as it becomes manifest in the *Anthropology*, to investigate how Kant’s rhetoric defines the parameters of this shift and how the *Anthropology* reconstructs (or, at least, rearticulates) Kantian metaphysics (i.e., what Heidegger calls “philosophical anthropology”) into a pragmatic care of the self. Over the course of the next three chapters, I wish to interrogate the motivations, implications, and connotations of Kant’s “man” as a being of *care*.

¹⁴It is interesting to note in passing that Kant’s definition of “man” is remarkably close to that of Epictetus (from whom Foucault draws heavily in *The Care of the Self: Volume 3 of the History of Sexuality*). Foucault paraphrases Epictetus as follows: “Man is defined in the *Discourses* as the being who was destined to care for himself. This is where the basic difference between him and other creatures resides... Man [in contrast to animals] must attend to himself... The care of the self, for Epictetus, is a privilege-duty, a gift-obligation that ensures our freedom while forcing us to take ourselves as the object of all of diligence” (47). This is essentially how Kant saw “man” and the Enlightenment: “*Sapere aude!* Have the courage to use your *own* understanding!” (*Enlightenment* 58); “Nature has *willed* that the human species, through its reason, turn discord into concord” (*Anthropology* 238, emphasis mine).

CHAPTER ONE:

“What is Man?”: Kant’s Characterization of the Species

The field of philosophy in this cosmopolitan [weltbürgerlich] meaning may be summed up in the following questions:

- 1) *What can I know?—*
- 2) *What ought I do?*
- 3) *What may I hope?*
- 4) *What is man?*

The first question is answered by metaphysics, the second by morality, the third by religion, and the fourth by anthropology. At bottom all this could be reckoned to be anthropology, because the first three questions are related to the last.

Immanuel Kant, *Logic*.

Introductory Note

In this chapter, I will interrogate the fundamental and theoretical framework through which Kant produces a self always already in need of caring for itself. I will read (very closely) the rhetoric of the final pages of the *Anthropology* in which Kant, rather belatedly, begins to define the *anthropos* (i.e., the “man”) of his pragmatic anthropology. Throughout this reading, I aim to flesh out the “non-subject-centered discourse” (a term I will later explain) of Kant’s final vision of “man.” I intend to contemplate the possibility that this very late Kant effectively anticipates the kind of non-metaphysical notions of the subject working both in Heidegger and in Foucault himself. Rather than the transcendental self that structures and supports the bulk of

Kant's earlier works, the *Anthropology* imagines a self that is (in the Heideggerian sense) *transcendence* itself: a self that is (as I have already suggested) always in the process of becoming and transgressing itself, of producing itself as though it were always ahead of itself, always coming into itself rather than preceding and unproblematically willing itself. Although I argue that Kant did, indeed, "invent" "man" (as Foucault claims), I will show that Kant, in the *Anthropology*, draws "man" to "his" very limits in that he exposes "man" as nothing more than another shift or manifestation in the history of the care of the self.

"What is Man?"

In the "Preface" to *The Order of Things [Les Mots et les choses]* (1966), Michel Foucault maintains that his text aims not "to describe the progress of knowledge towards an objectivity in which today's science can finally be recognized" (xxii). Rather, he envisions an "archaeology" of that knowledge in order to "bring to light" what he calls "the epistemological field, the *episteme* in which knowledge...grounds its positivity and thereby manifests a history which is not that of its growing perfection, but rather that of its conditions of possibility" (xxii). For Foucault, the history of the Western *episteme* is a history of epistemological shifts in which these "conditions of possibility" are radically recentered, reorganized around an always newly decided site of problematization. In fact, Foucault's archaeological inquiry into Western thought reveals "two great discontinuities in the *episteme* of Western culture [since the sixteenth

century]: the first inaugurates the Classical age (roughly half-way through the seventeenth century) and the second, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, marks the beginning of the modern age” (xxii).¹ In each of these two breaks (the latter of which will remain the focus of this essay), the foundation upon which knowledge grounds itself as a unified project begins to crack and fissure, signaling the urgency for the rise of an epistemic revolution.

For Foucault, what occurs in the shift from the Classical age to the Modern age is that the site of epistemological problematization moves from representation/classification to anthropology. Knowledge grounded in a theory of language and signs gives way to a knowledge of the world founded in an empirical knowledge of “man:”

the theory of representation disappears as the universal foundation of all possible orders; language as the spontaneous *tabula*, the primary grid of all things, as an indispensable link between representation and things, is eclipsed in its turn; a profound historicity penetrates into the heart of things...and, above all, language loses its privileged position and becomes, in its turn, a historical form coherent with the destiny of its own past. But as things become increasingly reflexive, seeking the principle of

¹Foucault’s invention and use of the term *episteme* renders it surprisingly analogous to what Thomas Kuhn, in the slightly different context of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, calls the scientific “paradigm.” According to Kuhn’s own archaeological inquiry into “pure science,” these “paradigms” are also subject to discontinuities and radical shifts. Such shifts manifest scientific “revolutions” (a word he employs explicitly to counter the ideological rhetoric of scientific “evolution”) which are “the tradition-shattering complements to the tradition-bound activity of normal science” (6). In such shifts (Kuhn’s central example is the shift from Newtonian to Einsteinian physics), the entire “world view” or methodology of science is reinscribed. The whole “paradigm” (context, body, or *space*) of scientific knowledge is completely redefined in such a way that all the terms, technology, and discoveries of a previous paradigm (in their exposure to a radically other differential semiotic system) are altered to the point of *incommensurability*.

their intelligibility only in their own development, and abandoning the space of representation, man enters in his turn, and for the first time, the field of Western knowledge. (xxiii)

According to Foucault, modernity ushers in a problematization of historicity. As things become increasingly reflexive (and this is, as Foucault states elsewhere, the defining inclination of modernity: to “problematize man’s relation to the present, man’s historical mode of being” [*Foucault Reader* 42]), temporality becomes constitutive to meaning, and knowledge as a cosmological inheritance gives way to knowledge as a process and product of time (i.e., as an effect of contingency). “Man” -- that existent who *makes* “himself,” who treats “himself” as a process of becoming what one ought -- enters, for the first time, the field of epistemology. With this interpretation of the history of Western knowledge, Foucault comes to the most surprising, and perhaps most famous, conclusion of *The Order of Things*: that “man,” who is “no more than a kind of rift in the order of things,” is only a “recent invention” (xxii) -- that “man” is an epistemic effect only two hundred years old.

Beginning with Kant and his inauguration of philosophical anthropology, “man” comes to inhabit the new center of knowledge. Kant turns philosophical inquiry away from the world of signs and representation outside the self, directing it instead back on the self so that “man appears in his ambiguous position as an object of knowledge and as a subject that knows” (*The Order of Things* 312). Moreover, defining the spirit of his age in “What is Enlightenment” (1784), Kant cries: “*Sapere aude!* Have courage to make use of your *own* understanding! is thus the motto of enlightenment” (17). For Kant’s philosophical anthropology, knowledge begins and is grounded in “man;” the self

must know itself, it must cultivate the freedom of its spirit in order to advance into and organize knowledge of the world. It is with Kant that the question “What is Man?” becomes, for the first time in Western philosophy, *the* fundamental epistemological inquiry. Hence, every attempt to understand or critique philosophical anthropology must begin with Kant. The *Anthropology* is not only the first book of its kind (that is, the first to acknowledge the anthropocentric turn of Western philosophy in its attempt to answer the question of man) but it also anticipates (perhaps, even inaugurates) the rise of the human sciences (Schrag 30).²

Although Foucault makes the interrogation of “man” the primary task of *The Order of Things*, Heidegger is the first major thinker after Kant to concentrate a full fledged critique of philosophical anthropology. Like Foucault, he too saw the rise of an anthropological subject beginning with the writings of Kant. In fact, Heidegger’s first critique of philosophical anthropology begins in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* in which he retraces the Kantian laying of the foundation of metaphysics. For Heidegger, Kant’s inquiry “yields this conclusion: The establishment of metaphysics is an interrogation of man, i.e., it is anthropology” (213). According to Heidegger, however, this foundation, this attempt to reduce metaphysics to anthropology, miscarries (213); it yields not the stable empirical-transcendental unity Kant was seeking,

²Calvin O. Schrag, in his book *Radical Reflection and the Origin of the Human Sciences*, locates in Kant the moment when the human sciences (as they are known today) began. In fact, he claims that his study aims “to distinguish philosophical anthropology from pre-Kantian ‘speculative psychology,’ in which there was a rather bold and uncritical application of the traditional metaphysical schemata of substance and attributes, form and matter, essence and existence, in an effort to designate an invariant nature of man” (29).

but an ambiguous fold where the limits of this “unity” recede into obscurity and instability. “Man” in the anthropological foundation of metaphysics becomes what Heidegger calls “a kind of dumping-ground for all basic philosophical problems” (219).

For Heidegger, philosophical anthropology first materializes as the central nexus of metaphysics when Kant, in his course of lectures on logic, adds a fourth and ultimately comprehensive question (What is Man?) to the three questions of the *Critiques* (What can I know? What can I do? What may I hope?).³ With the subsumption of these three questions into the fourth, Kant aims to unify “cosmology,” “psychology,” and “theology” -- what Heidegger calls the “three disciplines of true metaphysics” (214) -- within the spacious shelter of an anthropological *ethos*. Consequently, “man” becomes a tropological figure suspended over the fold of a series of converging discourses. “Anthropology,” writes Heidegger, “must consider man in his somatic, biological, and psychological aspects, the results of such disciplines as characterology, psychoanalysis, ethnology, pedagogic psychology, the morphology of culture, and the typology of *Weltanschauungen* must converge in it” (216). Following in the footsteps of Max Scheler, Heidegger can only admit that “[m]an is so broad, motley, and various a thing,” that “he” inevitably escapes definition for “he has too many sides” (217). Hence, anthropology, the study of “man,” becomes such a vast and

³Although Kant first poses the question “What is man?” formally in *Logic* (edited and published by Gottlob Benjamin Jäsche in 1800, two years after the *Anthropology*), it is in the *Anthropology* (more precisely in the section entitled “The Character of the Species,” which will be the focus of the latter half of the present chapter) where he first begins to address the question of man. In fact, both texts were composed contemporaneously as two separate but complementary series of lectures given over the last two decades of Kant’s life.

comprehensive project that the “idea of such a science loses all precision” (216). For this reason, although the modern epoch, with its intense anthropological focus, has (more than any other) accumulated such an impressive variety of knowledge *concerning* “man,” Heidegger is quick to discover that “no epoch is less sure of its knowledge of what man *is* than the present one,” that “[i]n no other epoch has man appeared so mysterious as in ours” (216, emphasis mine).

Clearing the way for his own discussion on the ontology of *Dasein* -- in which he claims that the *essence* of “man” (the *anthropos* of anthropology) must radically be interrogated -- Heidegger insists that, in a repetition of the Kantian laying of the foundation of metaphysics as anthropology, “human subjectivity be placed at the very center of the problem” (218). For Heidegger, the obscure and indecisive role of philosophical anthropology is cloaked in the self-evidence of “man”: it is justified “only with respect to the object and point of departure of philosophy as seen from without” (219). The essence of its object (i.e., “man”) and of its departure from this object remains unquestioned and aporetic. As the “dumping ground” of metaphysics, the *anthropos* delimits and founds the borders of metaphysical reducibility. Seen from without, however, “man,” under the enormous pressure of the demands of foundation, is nothing more than a straw-figure trembling on the limits of its own “superficial” (219) and self-evident objectivity. Beneath the watch-guard of this self-evidence, “man’s” subjectivity survives without scrutiny or problematization. For this reason, Heidegger insists that “man,” as the assumed object of philosophical anthropology, can never be the center of philosophy. “Man,” in the anthropocentric rhetoric of philosophical

anthropology, surfaces as the limit or “unthought” of metaphysics.

Although Heidegger is especially concerned with the way the irreducibility of “anthropologism” (219) traces its way through the rhetoric of the Kantian laying of the foundation of metaphysics, Kant himself was well aware of the obscurity of that object (i.e., “man”) on which he founded his pragmatism. In fact, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* -- itself a kind of radicalized self-conscious reading of Kant’s previous works -- allows for, anticipates, even encourages, the Heideggerian reading of philosophical anthropology. Heidegger’s reading of Kant itself (as Heidegger himself is quick to emphasize) is, of course, a kind of *repetition* in which Heidegger aims to expose what he calls “the primordial possibilities concealed” (211) in Kant’s thought, that is, those moments in which Kant’s rhetoric openly discloses the limits of thinking anthropology. Heidegger’s repetition, moreover, is a reading on the margins in which a certain Kant (one sensitive to the limits of his own metaphysical inquiry) reveals himself.

That Heidegger read the *Anthropology* (and we know that he did, for he refers to it frequently to support his critique of Kant’s investigations into the role of the transcendental imagination [*Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* 134-141])⁴ is especially useful in understanding the “primordial possibilities” of Kant’s thought.

⁴Moreover, when Heidegger defines “The Idea of Philosophical Anthropology,” the terms he uses (although they are not cited as such) are borrowed directly from the *Anthropology*. He explains that although anthropology must consider “the differences of character, race, and sex” (Kant has sections headed under all of these), it “must also seek to know what man as an active being can and should ‘make of himself’” (215). This last citation, although Heidegger fails to identify his source, is lifted directly from the introduction to the *Anthropology*, where Kant writes: “pragmatic knowledge of man aims at what man makes, can, or should make of himself as a freely acting being” (3).

Although he neglects to say as much, Heidegger must have noticed in the *Anthropology* a concerted effort to lay bear the pitfalls of an anthropological metaphysics.⁵ In fact, what the *Anthropology* ultimately reveals is Kant's own willingness to admit to the irreducibility of philosophical anthropology. Rather than laying the foundation for a kind of naïve philosophical anthropology, the *Anthropology*, as the title itself suggests, endeavors to found a pragmatic anthropology which not only acknowledges the limits of thinking the subjectivity or defining characteristic of "man," but also consciously integrates "man's" primordial obscurity into its very foundation. This is, in fact, what I would call the "silent thesis" of the *Anthropology*: that philosophical anthropology, as long as it fails to interrogate the object (i.e., "man") which it designates as its self-evident point of departure, will always remain fundamentally and irresolvably problematic. As Kant himself learns in the final pages of his text, "giving an account of the character of the human species is quite insoluble" (238). This discovery is the single most important contribution to thought the book has to offer. Unlike philosophical

⁵It is strange that Heidegger, although he is so interested in the epoch of philosophical anthropology, pays only a marginal amount of attention to the *Anthropology in Kant and the Problems of Metaphysics*. As soon as he mentions the book, he dismisses its importance in the following manner: "The *Anthropologie* contains no more than has already been brought out by the laying of the foundation of metaphysics in the *Critique of Pure Reason*" (138). Why does Heidegger do this when the *Anthropologie*, as I have already suggested and will continue to argue, turns its critical focus (especially in the section entitled "On the Character of the Species") toward the problems of characterizing "man's" subjectivity -- which is also to say, towards the problems of philosophical anthropology itself? Why does Heidegger disregard this crucial thread of the *Anthropologie* when his critique could well have (and this would have been logical) begun in it? Nevertheless, as this would no doubt be the focus of a different essay, I will leave this observation to stand here as a curious punctuation.

anthropology, Kant's pragmatic anthropology imagines "man," not as an unquestioned *arche* or foundational principle, but as an unstable *unground* that compels "him" (and this becomes, in fact, "his" defining characteristic) always to treat "himself" as though "he" were a patient in need of care. Unafraid to expose his thought to the chasms of Western subjectivity,⁶ Kant radically thinks anthropology in the very gesture of grounding it as the foundation of a kind of knowledge of the world. He explicitly draws it to its very limits, where it exceeds itself and is exposed to its own aporias, where its unthought subjectivity reveals its own problematic tensions.

The ontological obscurity of *anthropos* becomes the fundamental field of problematization in the *Anthropology*. At the core of his pragmatism, Kant's subject (i.e., "man") is no more than a mere site produced by an intersection of conflicting forces (forces that can be traced in their conflicts along the splicings between mind/body, good/evil, concord/discord dualisms). Kant's pragmatism is necessarily grounded in this instability. In fact, this instability itself occasions the call to reason, the call of the self-fashioning subject that, in its relation to itself, treats itself as on-going work of art. Moreover, caught in the discursive loop of being both the artist and the work, this subject is both sustained and produced in its own treatment of itself.

What this vision of "man" implies is that, despite the fact that philosophical

⁶As David Krell discovers in his essay "The Crisis of Reason in the Nineteenth Century," Kant, in a footnote on page 68, finds another aporia in the unification of "understanding" and "sensibility" in which the body and soul are "based on separating and uniting the dissimilar" (68). Krell argues that Kant here envisages "something like a *genealogy* of reason...a genealogy that would implicate reason itself in the 'dissimilars' of male and female" (60), a genealogy in which reason loses itself in the obscurity of such a lineage.

historians traditionally mobilize Kant's ethical subject to represent what Christopher Norris calls the "various endemic conflicts and antinomies of humanist thought," there is lurking in the rhetoric of the *Anthropology* the promise of "a non-subject-centered discourse, one that views the self 'in [its] singular being' as the locus of those practices and rules by which the process of self-transformation somehow comes about" (182). Although the process of self-transformation operating in the *Anthropology* is still very much regimented by reason and rationality, as I will presently demonstrate, Kant's method exposes reason (and by association, discord and the body) as nothing more than the guiding principle of an elaborate aesthetics of existence. In the *Anthropology*, the obscurity that surrounds the limit tracing the relation between reason and the body (or, put another way, at the limit or fissure that determines this opposition) constitutes the major conflict or *ethos* of a self that, in its constant and fundamentally irresolvable negotiation with itself, remains forever "insoluble."⁷ This is a self continually caught in the process of its own production.

Kant's Characterization of the Species

This "insoluble" subject receives its greatest attention in the very last section of the *Anthropology*, entitled "On the Character of the Species" (237). Having laid the grounds for a series of rigorous taxonomies of the person (i.e., personality), the sexes,

⁷I am intentionally evoking the spirit of Foucault in my rhetoric, for it is, as I will argue later, in this particular Kant that Foucault found a touchstone for what critics have called his "ethical turn." As Kimberly Hutchings expresses it, "this is no longer the Kant of the 'analytics of truth', but is instead the Kant of an 'ontology of ourselves', a relation to self which Foucault characterizes as ethical" (116).

the nations, and the races, Kant sharpens his focus on the most essential and defining characteristic of the human species to which all “anthropological characterization” must be referred. With this shift, however, he finds himself not at the threshold of a metaphysics founded on an indifferent point of departure, but at a curious impasse in which “man” emerges in “his” precarious ontological status. Approaching what will emerge as the central crisis of his text, Kant explicitly articulates the conditions of the method which he has and will continue to employ in his “anthropological characterization”:

In order to sketch the character of a certain creature’s species, it is necessary that the species be compared with and referred to in terms of other species already known to us. What makes the species different from each other has to be quoted and referred to as the differentiating reason for its properties (*proprietas*). (237)

In each of his characterizations of the person, the sexes, and the nations, Kant was able to secure his analysis in a structure of difference. In the “Character of the Person,” he found there to be four temperaments (the sanguine, the melancholic, the choleric, and the phlegmatic); in the “Character of the Sexes,” he discovered a differential ground for definition in the apparent opposition between man and woman; and finally, in the “Character of the Nations,” he constructed a system of five civilized nations (the French, the English, the Spanish, the Italians, and the Germans) in which he could compare, contrast, and “quote” the defining differences. As he moves from the specific to the general, however, Kant’s anthropological characterization becomes increasingly genealogical. In fact, what the *Anthropology* offers in this last section is none other than a genealogy of character in which Kant aims to question the possibility of an originary

source -- an indifferent point of departure -- for the difference of human character. For this investigation, he looks to the question "What is Man?". For Kant, the whole project of anthropological characterization must be founded in the "Character of the Species," the character of "man."

Anticipating the problems of defining the character of the human species, however, Kant imagines a curious dilemma:

But if one kind of creature which we know (A) is compared to another creature which we do not know (non-A), how then, can we expect or demand to sketch the character of A, when we have no middle term for the comparison (*tertium comparationis*)? (237)

Already, Kant hints at the impossibility of tracing a genealogy to a fixed place of origin where, as he states in a slightly different context, dissimilar pairs (i.e., understanding and sensibility, mind and body, good and evil) "form a close union...as though one were begotten by the other, or as though both had a common origin, which is impossible" (*Anthropology* 68). What Kant wants to suggest is that if the character of "man" is the ground to which all anthropological characterization is to be referred, that is, if "he" is to be the originary source of the genealogy of character, the problem of "man's" *other* must be considered. But where, he asks, are we to find this other?

It is at this juncture that Kant commits the most curious and, because it will lead him to the limits of philosophical anthropology, most crucial rhetorical turn of the *Anthropology*. Rather than constructing an opposition in which "man" would be compared to other *terrestrial* species, Kant oddly enough begins to contemplate life beyond the so-called "final frontier":

The highest concept of species may be that of a terrestrial rational being [“man”], but we will not be able to describe its characteristics because we do not know of a nonterrestrial rational being which would enable us to refer to its properties and consequently classify that terrestrial being as rational. (237-238)

Rather than negating the term “rational” in “terrestrial rational being” -- and this would have been the logical choice in determining the opposite of “man” whom for thousands of years metaphysics has labeled a “rational animal” -- the *Anthropology* takes a science fictional turn to imagine an extra-terrestrial *other*. But because this “nonterrestrial rational being,” this alien, is imaginary (we know nothing of it) “man” is left without a middle term for the comparison. With the absence of this spectral alien *other*, Kant allows himself not only to avoid the question of “man’s” relationship with animals, but also to clear the discussion of all potential others *outside* “man.” What is so curious about this maneuver is that it propels Kant in a direction in which he will explicitly discover “man’s” other *inside* “himself”, so that “man,” as the ground of all anthropological characterization, is “himself” a unity of dissimilars, that is, “he” is a problematic being whose very essence consists of an intersection of conflicting forces.

Without a middle term for the comparison, Kant reveals a shocking discovery for the whole project of philosophical anthropology:

It seems, therefore, that the problem of giving an account of the character of the human species is quite insoluble, because the problem could only be solved by comparing two species of rational beings on the basis of experience, but experience has not offered us a comparison between two species of rational beings. (238)

At the very foundation of philosophical anthropology lies an abyss. Before Heidegger, before Foucault, Kant draws philosophical anthropology to its very limits. This is the

Kant with whom Foucault, in the later stages of his career, allies himself; it is a Kant, moreover, who in a very real way prophesies the radicalized repetitions of Heidegger. The kind of self-questioning rigour found in the *Anthropology*'s engagement with the limits of philosophical anthropology is, in fact, the "certain critical attitude" (*Foucault Reader* 38) that Foucault, in "What is Enlightenment?", found so admirable in the Kantian critique. Whereas Foucault, in this essay on Kant, carves out a position for himself that aligns him both with and against Kant (Hutchings 103), Kant, in this final section of the *Anthropology*, appears also to be for and against himself, that is, for and against Kantianism. If, as Heidegger suggests, the Kantian laying of the foundation of metaphysics is a foundation of metaphysics as anthropology, then the *Anthropology* itself -- precisely because it exposes the trembling and volatile *archè* of a metaphysics grounded in a naïve conception of "man" -- is an attempt not only to expose the limits or "anthropologism" of Kantianism, but also to push anthropology beyond these limits to arrive at a conception of "man" as a problematic and unstable site in need of a regimented "care of the self."

This new conception of "man" emerges immediately after Kant proclaims the death of a soluble *anthropos* into which all anthropological characterization might dissolve. This new "man" is the product of a genealogical method that refuses to provide metaphysics with what Jacques Derrida would call a center or fixed origin "which is itself beyond the reach of freeplay" (*Criticism* 518). Rather, this new "man" arises as a kind of composition, or more precisely, as the result of a self-fashioning pragmatic program that aims to regulate (although without ever fully resolving) the

friction of “his” insoluble nature:

Consequently, in assigning man his place within the system of animate nature, and thereby characterizing him, all that is safe for us to say is that he has a character which he himself creates, because he is capable of perfecting himself according to purposes which he himself adopts. Consequently, man as an animal endowed with capability of reason, (*animal rationabile*) can make himself a rational animal (*animal rationale*). (*Anthropology* 238)

With the phrases “capability of reason” and “can make himself a rational animal,” Kant splits “man” in two. He discovers that “man’s” *other* is nothing more than phantasm of “himself!” The *capability* of reason is traced by a struggle, a drama between reason and what Kant will call “discord.” With this split, “man” becomes the product not of a single agency, but that of the collision of two wills: the will to reason and the will to *unreason* - both of which “he” is *capable*. Not only is “man” a rift *in the order of things*, as Foucault suggests, but “his” being itself constitutes the very rift between reason and madness. “He” is not a point of fixed origin, but a point of intersection -- a limit.

Consequently, Kant, as a pragmatic champion of reason, insists that “man’s” great ambition is to regulate this inner struggle in such a way that “he” will cultivate “himself” for rational (i.e., good) living. With this end,

he first preserves himself and his species; secondly, he trains, instructs, and educates his species for social living; thirdly, he governs the species as a systematic whole (arranged according to principles of reason) which belongs to society. (238)

This kind of rational or “social” living is one of organizational rigour. “Man,” in Kant’s anthropological rhetoric, has a character of action, and “his” greatest action is to obey a strict physical regimen governed by reason, without which “his” species faces the threat

of extinction. In order to *preserve* “his” species from death (a death that constantly hovers over and haunts “his” existence), “man” must minimize “his” opulence and expenditure, both of which are metonymically inscribed, in this last section of the *Anthropology*, as “discord”:

But in comparison with the idea of potential rational beings on earth, the characteristic of the human is that Nature has planted in the species the seed of discord, and that Nature has willed that the human species, through its reason, turn discord into concord or at least create a constant approximation of it. (238)

Consequently, “man” emerges, in this last of Kant’s works, not simply as a self-sovereign subject, but as a complex field of negotiation. At the heart of the *Anthropology* is an *anthropos* whose essence constitutes the folding of at least two specters of “man”: one reasonable, the other mad (i.e., *alien*). “Man” is (to employ Kant’s own rhetoric) endowed with both the seeds of reason (the ability to turn “discord into concord”) and that of “discord” itself.⁸ Despite the fact that Kant rigs this opposition so that the triumph of “concord” is the preordained or privileged narrative conclusion (thus, exposing what Derrida calls “the force of a desire” [*Criticism* 518]), these two possibilities of “man” trace one another in an endless game of *différance*. From a Foucauldian point of view, Kant’s genealogy of character grounds “anthropological characterization” not in a stable or fixed “man,” but in a power

⁸As I suggested earlier, within Kant’s “discord” lies all of “man’s” various manifest *others*. Throughout the *Anthropology* “discord” emerges in the form of the body (i.e., appetites and desires), woman, and non-Europeans, all of which are for Kant’s “man” that which “he” must turn into “concord” (that is, that which “he” must civilize as though they were [and perhaps they are] part of “himself”). I will, however, reserve this for the subject of my last chapter.

relation: in a mediated intersection of competing forces.

Having thus produced “man” as a relation or, as Foucault would alternatively call it, an *ethos*, Kant concludes with the necessity of treating anthropology from a pragmatic point of view:

We can therefore say the first characteristic of the human species is man’s ability, as a rational being, to establish character for himself, as well as for the society into which nature has placed him. (246)

Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view considers “man” as a existent who defines “himself,” who decides (i.e., cuts) “himself” in such a way that “he” organizes and (most importantly) produces “his” being (“his” selfhood) around those areas of “himself” in which the friction between concord and discord is most intense. This is a “man” who centers “himself” according to “his” greatest point of instability.

Is this not, then, a kind of “care of the self”? Does Kant’s pragmatic anthropology not require the same kind of rigorous attention of a self that knows itself as a fundamentally problematic being? If “man” is to *make* “himself,” if “he” is to establish not only “his” own character, but also that of the society in which “he” lives, then is “he” not creating for “himself” a *technē tou biou*, an art of existence? Is “he” not, in “his” relation to “himself,” responding to “his” anxieties over “an expenditure that waste[s] the body’s resources” and the “threat of a breaking forth of involuntary forces” (*Use of Pleasure* 136-7) within the self (i.e., Kant’s “discord”)?

This is, perhaps, what the young Foucault, while translating the *Anthropology* into French, learned from this later, more pragmatic Kant: that the self, in its attempt to turn discord into concord, problematizes its own being according to its own anxieties.

Kant's "*art of good living*" (*Anthropology* 154), then, is not only an "aesthetics of existence," but it could also have been the very inspiration of the Foucauldian "care of the self." Kant's anthropological "man" surfaces in the order of things at a time when "sovereignty reached its limit...in man's finitude" (*Order of Things* 340). The body, expenditure, and death become the central fields of problematization, and the subject embraces death as the ultimate measure of its entire existence. Painfully aware of its own finitude, it begins to create its own technology of the self in which it seeks to regulate and control the play of voluntary and *alien* forces that constitute the *locus* or fold of its limited being.

It is from this Kant -- a Kant who thinks on and beyond the limits of subjectivity -- that the human sciences of the nineteenth century diverged and entered what Foucault calls "anthropological sleep" (*Order of Things* 340). For Foucault, anthropology after Kant fails to learn Kant's most crucial lesson: that all anthropology must be pragmatic anthropology in so far as it must designate and interrogate *anthropos* (the object of its study) not as an *a priori* point of departure, but as a finite and unstable field of negotiation. "Man," in this later Kant, is a problem, an *ethos* awaiting the decision of an ethics. In simpler terms, "his" ontological instability provides the material with which "he" constructs "himself" as an ethical subject. Knowing "himself" as such, "he" aims to develop for "himself" a skill or *technē* for living in the world.

Foucault, in calling for the death of "man" -- for the end of "anthropological sleep" -- is in a sense calling for a return to that certain critical *attitude* of the Kantian method: the kind of skepticism and self-questioning rigour that enabled Kant, in the final

pages of the *Anthropology* (and of his philosophical life), to admit to the insolubility of “man.” If Kant is, in fact, the first to inaugurate the question of “man,” he is also the first to draw “man” to “his” limits, to expose “man” as a limit-figure. Consequently, Foucault’s so-called “ethical turn,” in light of his admitted alliance with Kant, could well have been a revitalized interest in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, in which “man” is found in “his” very essence taking care of “himself.”

**CHAPTER TWO:
Kant's Dinner Party: The Kantian Regimen
and the Rise of the Bourgeoisie**

The mind at the end of the meal, as at the end of a drama (the same applies to the entire life lived by a rational human being), inevitably looks back on several phases of the conversation. If the mind cannot find a connecting thread, it feels confused and realizes with displeasure that it has not progressed in matters of culture, but rather regressed.

Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology*

Introductory Note

In this chapter I will trace some of the trajectories of the Kantian “man’s” care of the self (as it emerged in the preceding chapter). I will perform a reading of the *Anthropology*’s “On the Highest Ethicophysical Good,” a section in which Kant employs what he calls “a good meal in good company” (186), that is, the dinner party, as the central metaphor through which he conveys his regimen.¹ I will argue, moreover, that this regimen, and the rhetorical shape it assumes, imports elements and strategies found in the etiquette books distributed in great numbers throughout *Bürgertom* in the late decades of the eighteenth century. My aim will be to draw out (in typical Foucauldian fashion) the historical contingency (i.e., the middle-class hegemony) that determines much of the ideals and goals of the *Anthropology*’s care of the self.

The Rise of the Bourgeoisie

In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault argues that the “deployment of sexuality” -- the hegemonization of the body -- during the eighteenth century “was not established as a principle of limitation of the pleasures of others by what have traditionally been called the ‘ruling classes’” (122). Rather, the ascending class of this period, the bourgeoisie, appears to have “first tried it [the deployment of sexuality] on [itself]” (122). Nevertheless, Foucault claims that what occurred was not the rise of a kind of bourgeois asceticism, at least not in the sense of a renunciation or denial of the pleasures of the body, but “on the contrary [what occurred was] an intensification of the body, a problematization of health and its operational terms: it was a question of techniques for maximizing life” (123). He suggests that with the proliferation of certain “works” on hygiene, etiquette, and parenting -- works highly invested with an aggressive middle-class hegemony -- the eighteenth-century bourgeoisie “provided itself with a body to be cared for, protected, and preserved, to be isolated¹ from others so that it would retain its differential value” (123) as the central or privileged figure in a reconfigured semiotics of health. These texts represented for the middle classes a positive gesture: an act of self-affirmation. They enabled the bourgeoisie to distribute and concretize the superiority of its own self-constructed body image. The aristocratic emphasis on the “natural signs” (*Discipline* 135) of body value was displaced by a bourgeois inscription which allowed the body to be produced and healthily sustained in a carefully self-regulated physical regimen. By the late eighteenth century “a calculated constraint runs slowly through the body, mastering it, making it pliable, ready at all times, turning silently into the automatism

of habit” (135). It becomes something that can be made “out of a formless clay” (135).

Kant’s *Anthropology* emerges at this time as a symptom of this new body problematic. Published as a collection of lectures addressed to the “general reading public” (*Anthropology* 6), the *Anthropology* bears a strong resemblance, both structurally and rhetorically, to those very texts to which Foucault refers. In fact, the *Anthropology* is itself a kind of conduct book that traces the manner in which the subject, in its relationship to itself, styles and maintains its own self-sovereignty. It proposes, on a popular level, to study “what man can and should *make* himself” (Van de Pitte xix, emphasis mine); it stresses “man’s” responsibility to “*himself*.” For these and other reasons, the *Anthropology* is essentially an invocation of a kind of “care” or “cultivation of the self.” Deploying rhetorical strategies from books on table manners and etiquette, Kant prescribes for the bourgeois subject a “diet” or “regimen” -- what Kant himself labels under italics “*the art of good living*” (154): a manner of forming oneself as a civilized subject with a sufficient concern for the body.

Offering a set of criteria for an “aesthetics of existence” (*Use of Pleasure* 12), he problematizes the subject. As we discovered in the previous chapter, he inscribes into it an urgency to regulate what he fears is a precarious inner conflict between the forces of the mind and the body. This crisis, which functions in the *Anthropology* to haunt and motivate the self-sovereign subject, is itself a psychological effect of what Foucault sees as a typical anxiety caused by the “threat of a breaking forth of involuntary forces” within the self, forces that threaten the self’s integrity as an “ethical subject in the making” (136-7). Moreover, on a sociological level, this crisis -- this problematization and subsequent care

of the self -- is invested with eighteenth-century middle-class desires simultaneously to maximize and subject the forces of the body, and to propagate, through an edict of self-surveillance, the cultural presence and supremacy of a naturalized ideal bourgeois body.

According to modern historian, David Blackbourn, there emerged at the end of the eighteenth century two principal groupings within what he calls the *Bürgertom*, the German label for the bourgeoisie. The first group, the *Stadtbürger*, were members of the urban middle class who enjoyed citizen rights and privileges. They included merchants, businessmen, and master craftsmen. The second -- and for this study, more significant -- group was the *Weltbürgertum*, what Blackbourn nicknames Germany's "cosmopolitan bourgeoisie" (2). *Weltbürgers*, slightly more privileged than *Stadtbürgers*, were middle-class men with occupations in education or state service rather than in production or in the market. They were the "thinkers" rather than the "makers" of the German bourgeoisie. As officials and academics, *Weltbürgers* provided a large part of the membership of the reading clubs and lodges on the rise in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Germany (3). In fact, they inaugurated the momentum of what German historians have dubbed the "reading revolution" (3), *Bürgertom's* counterpart to the industrial and political revolutions of England and France¹. With their hold on cultural and literary development, *Weltbürgers* played a key role in shaping and distributing the philosophemes

¹Blackbourn argues that although the Industrial and French Revolutions have, in conventional historical analysis, overshadowed its presence and significance, Germany's quieter "reading revolution" stands as a symbol for "the way in which one particular part of the bourgeoisie was growing in size and self consciousness" (3). Cultivation (the distribution of norms and culture) formed a large part of the bourgeois claims to social dominance.

of the Enlightenment that accompanied and even helped buttress the burgeoning social ascension of the middle classes.

Through the “reading revolution,” *Bürgertom* created for itself a bourgeois identity. Most of what we know of this identity comes from what Wolfgang Kaschuba calls the “flood of autobiographies and letters” (393) written in Germany near the end of the eighteenth century. These texts manifest “a kind of ‘subjective testimony,’ reflections of bourgeois life, and examples of its characteristic self-admiration” (393). They functioned as an attempt to reconstruct personal and social history -- the natural course of human life -- within a rigorously bourgeois framework. Kaschuba identifies the literariness of these texts, drawing out narrative structures in which the events and situations are transcribed within “very definite patterns” (393). They clearly represent the workings of what Kaschuba understands to be an essential feature of bourgeois culture: “social self-representation and self-stylization as an aesthetic practice” (393). Abstracting life through a subjective bourgeois prism, these texts consciously re-interpret history, inscribing into it images, ideals, and norms of middle class life. Their hegemonic impulse aggressively conforms history into a normalized bourgeois model. The sheer numbers of these volumes enabled the middle classes to project a bourgeois *Lebenswelt* (life-world) onto the standards and conduct of everyday life (394). They constituted and enshrined a bourgeois identity founded on hard work, competition, and achievement. They exuded the hegemonic valorization of rationality, the rule of the law, the taming of nature, and the living of life by the rules (Blackbourn 9).

Alongside these texts, and with the very same agenda, came a strain of books on

conduct and etiquette, on “correct table manners [and] sartorial codes...on cleanliness and hygiene, and on the importance attached to timetables” (9). It is within the tradition of these latter texts -- from which Kant’s *Anthropology*, with its explicit tropological use of “a good meal in good company” (186), borrows its “popular” strategies -- that the German bourgeoisie was able to fully propagate its own self-affirming notion of a “self-regulating, enlightened ‘civil society’” (Kocka 4). Through these works, *Bürgertom* provided itself with a rational lifestyle with a particular middle-class body. As a collective, it created for itself a unified ethics or, as Foucault would have it, an “aesthetics of existence.” Moreover, the ethics forwarded in these conduct books and autobiographies had, in contrast to aristocratic or peasant cultures, what Jürgen Kocka calls an “in-built tendency to expand beyond the social boundaries of the *Bürgertom*...to imprint the whole of society” (7). The ideological force and attractiveness of these texts were so strong and so widely felt that any group outside the bourgeois body domain (Jews, for example) were compelled to become “*bürgerlich* [resembling the *Bürgertom*] in their language and education, social manners and customs, their hygiene and their manner of dress” (10) in order to achieve even the slightest upward social mobility.²

²It is interesting to think here of the following footnote from the *Anthropology* in which Kant castigates the Palestinians (along with the “Jews of Poland”) because, although they are a “nation of merchants,” they are not the type of merchants favoured in the bourgeois *Lebenswelt*: “The Palestinians, living among us, or at least the greatest number of them, have through their usurious spirit since their exile received the not-unfounded reputation of deceivers. It seems strange to think of a nation of deceivers; but it is just as strange to think of a nation made up of nothing but merchants, which are united for the most part by an old superstition that is recognized by the government under which they live. They do not seek any civil honour, but rather wish to compensate their loss by profitably outwitting the very people among whom they find protection, and even to make profit from their own kind. It cannot be otherwise with a whole nation of merchants, *who*

With its “reading revolution,” the *Bürgertom* launched itself high into the ranks of German culture. To borrow a phrase from Foucault, the German middle classes “discovered the body as [an] object and target of power” (*Discipline and Punish* 136). Within the discourse of autobiography and conduct books, they created a new brand of “disciplines,” a fresh “art of the human body” (137). These disciplines were “different from asceticism and from ‘disciplines’ of a monastic type, whose function was to obtain renunciations rather than increases” (137). Although they involved the subjection of the body to others, these new “disciplines” did not take the form of one class subjecting another, but of a single class caring for and regulating itself; they functioned with the principle aim of increasing the mastery of each middle class individual over his/her own body.

It is precisely in this self-reflexive concern for the body that the “deployment of sexuality” in the classical age of the Enlightenment occasioned a new problematization in the history of what Foucault calls the “‘arts’ of using the pleasures” (*The Use of Pleasure* 253). This history, which Foucault reconstructs throughout his three volumes on sexuality, follows the continual re-centering of the “aesthetics of existence” around the decipherment of the self. The problematization of the body in the eighteenth century, like that of the “boy” in classical Athens and that of the “woman” throughout the Christian era (253), was equally invested with a fundamental desire to preserve a self-sovereign privileged subject. It was a complex reconfiguration of the “care of the self,” in which the

are nonproductive members of society (for example, the Jews of Poland)” (101n, emphasis added).

bourgeoisie, as a group, redefined and politicized its relationship to itself. With this new problematization, *Bürgertom* prescribed for itself a re-imagined, severely hegemonized subjectivity.

Kant's *Anthropology* not only articulates the parameters of this reconfiguration, but also unwittingly betrays the profound anxieties that mobilize and preoccupy such a radical shift in ethics. Although the *Anthropology* was published at the end of his life, Kant's personal and academic histories consistently demonstrate a penetrating and zealous devotion to a kind of cultivation of the self. At the core of his engagement with the Enlightenment and moral philosophy, and indeed at the very heart of the *Anthropology* itself, are the questions: What can I know? What ought I do? and What may I hope?³ For Kant, a pragmatic anthropology aims to discover the question "What is man?" *vis-à-vis* the more pressing question: what can "man", with "his" "technical," "pragmatic," and "moral gifts," make of "himself?" Moreover, we remember, he challenges his fellow Germans, *Sapere Aude*: "dare to know"; dare to discern the "constitution of ourselves as autonomous subjects" (*Foucault Reader* 58). This vocation, this pragmatic pursuit of ourselves, is for Kant the means of negotiating private and public freedoms in the "relation of the citizen to the commonwealth" (*Anthropology* 154). It is explicitly a call for the

³As I suggested earlier, it is in these inquiries and concerns of Kant's that Foucault must have found the seeds of what would, later in his life, become an articulated campaign devoted to caring for the self. In fact, James Miller, in his biography *The Passion of Michel Foucault*, suggests: "even during the most apparently insane moments of his life, Foucault never stopped thinking, never stopped trying to decipher the significance of his own positive and negative experience, in its genealogy, in its historically constituted preconditions and limits, always circling back to the four questions Kant had posed: What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope? What is man?" (32).

“care of the self,” which, as Foucault argues, is not only “ethical in itself, but...implies complex relations with others, in the measure that this *ethos* of freedom is also a way of caring for others” (*Final Foucault* 7).

Kant’s Dinner Party

In the *Anthropology*, Kant packages this *ethos* in a physical and mental regimen policed by the general theme of “sociability (that is, [the dedication] to living with taste)” (154). He provides his “general [and I would add, bourgeois] reading public” with a metaphysical conduct manual outlining a way of attaining an “[ethicophysical] mixture which, if properly combined, can provide the enjoyment of civilized bliss” (186). This mixture, this regimen, reaches its most critical point of articulation in the section entitled “On the Highest Ethicophysical Good” (185). It is in this section that Kant explicitly problematizes, through the rhetoric of a book on manners, the “partly sensuous and partly ethicointellectual human being” (185). Integrating his discussion of the Cognitive Faculty in Book One of Part One with his examination of Pleasure and Displeasure in Book Two, Kant argues in this final section of Book Three that the “inclination to pleasurable living and [the] inclination to virtue are in conflict with each other, and the restriction of the principle of physical good by the principle of moral good constitute through their very conflict the whole purpose of a well-bred...human being” (185).

The frontier of this conflict, of course, lies between the mind and the body. It is, however, in this violent metaphysical splitting of the subject, that the text’s latent psychological and sociological fears reveal themselves to mark the self-constructed crisis

of Kant's pragmatic anthropology, his "care" of the self. These fears produce a kind of double vision: the single subject becomes two. "Man," in the schizophrenic rhetoric of the *Anthropology*, becomes nothing more than a stage or site on which the dramatic contest between two warring figures -- the reasonable intellect and the discordant body -- takes place. The text's anxieties invent a subject requiring a strict physico-moral regimen that not only disciplines, but also actually *produces* a body that torments the mind (a mind, moreover, which is equally manufactured in these acts of discipline) as a second "alien" subject with its own ulterior motives, its own unconscious agency. For Kant, the tumultuous, involuntary, and "alien" forces of the body are to be purged, caged, and regulated, policed under the gaze and ethico-intellectual fantasies of the self-sovereign individual. What is so interesting about and so crucial to these fantasies is that this so-called self-sovereign individual (i.e., "man") is not so much the dreamer, but the dream itself. "Man's" disciplinary fantasies are not simply founded on a desire to maintain or care for a prediscursive or pre-existing body (which also implies the existence of a prediscursive sovereign-seeking self), but rather, they are founded on a desire to construct a regimen that simultaneously sustains *and* produces an entirely discursive and precarious body/intellect fold. Just as Kant, in his attempt to isolate the cause of his hypochondriacal condition,⁴ produced, sculpted, and inscribed the "materiality" of his own body, his dietetic and behavioural regimen, as it is articulated in the *Anthropology*, constructs a set of rules in which the intellect or soul (understood, in the Foucauldian sense, as an "historically specific imaginary" and "normalizing ideal" [Butler 33]) is "taken as an

⁴See footnote 4, page 7.

instrument of power through which the body is cultivated and formed,” through which, that is, “the body is effectively materialized” (Butler 33).

Dramatizing the urgency and authenticity of the negotiation between “man’s” interior doubleness -- “his” split personality -- Kant mobilizes the rhetorical figure of an hermetic gorging philosopher, the one who eats alone. This “mad” self-consuming figure surfaces in the *Anthropology* partly as a manifestation of Kant’s radical fear of that subject within the subject, the body. Through this recluse, Kant provides himself with an alibi, a subject outside the regulated domain of sociability. He tells the “general reading public” of the rising bourgeoisie:

Eating alone (*solipsimus convictorii*) is unhealthy for a philosophizing man of learning; it does not restore his powers but exhausts him (especially when it becomes a solitary feasting); it turns into exhausting work, and not into the refreshing play of thoughts. The indulging person who wastes himself in self-consuming thought during the solitary meal gradually loses vivacity which, on the other hand, he would have gained if a table companion with alternative ideas had offered stimulation through new material which he had not been able to dig up himself. (188-9)

Personifying (and thus constructing) the perilous effects of an unsupervised body in the figure of a gorging, philosophizing man of learning, Kant marginalizes the body, although only in the sense that this marginalization (precisely because it is motivated by an urgent hypochondriacal fascination or preoccupation with the body) is actually a way of making the body emphatic.⁵ The feasting philosopher becomes the scapegoat for Kant’s re-

⁵I say this simply because, as I will shortly demonstrate, this gorging hermit (i.e., the undisciplined body), although he is exiled, comes to inhabit “Kant’s Dinner Party” as though he were *the* guest of honour. His undeniable and ghostly presence at Kant’s table, testifies to the fact that disciplining and silencing the body is always a way of letting it speak.

imagined self-regulating subjectivity. Encased in this figure of excess, the “alien” subjectivity of the body is banished from the house of the soul carrying out with it the stain of gluttony, what Kant might see as the deadliest of the seven deadly sins.⁶ He is sentenced to solitude, to live and eat (to gorge in silence) amongst the uncivilized bodies beyond Kant’s cosmopolitan company.

This menacing figure, as a specter of expenditure and self-consumption, is also a figure of death. As his solitary feasting turns into “exhausting work” he gradually loses “his vivacity” (189). Wasting himself in his indulgence, he expends the bulk of his life force. Troped in madness (a madness that itself threatens to spiral into death -- that is, into a complete and utter exhaustion of the vital forces and appetites of the body), he serves to inspire the *Anthropology*’s rhetoric of *avoidance*, of avoiding the uncontrollable, devouring fury of pure, unmediated experience. In *The Conflict of the Faculties* (published only a few months prior to the *Anthropology*), Kant characterizes his regimen, his care of the self, as a “*panacea*” that “functions only in a *negative* way, as the art of *preventing* disease” (177). This *panacea* is part of a “prescription” with which the rational subject “puts off” its own death -- a death which, as Kant explains, “always arrives too soon for us” (175). This feasting philosopher of the *Anthropology*, as a representation of a death by solitary self-consumption, reminds the self-sovereign subject of the fast

⁶Kant’s tropological use of this feasting philosopher to circumscribe a fear of gluttony is not the only time that his rhetoric is suspiciously susceptible to the influence of religious dogma. Throughout the *Anthropology* other “deadly” sins surface to affect his rhetoric: lust [“debauchery is of the kind that makes us ill” (153)]; sloth [“Young man! (I repeat) be fond of your work” (138)]; and anger [“the upset person...fears being driven to violence which he might later repent” (166)]. He also warns against envy [“Ambition” (180)] and greed [“Avarice” (181)].

approaching possibility of its own finitude, of the possibility of eating oneself to death. He is a reminder that life and death are one and the same, that they are two sides of the same limit of existence, that eating and similar activities, most often associated with preservation and life, can be instruments of longevity if well regulated, or agents of death if left to the indulgent, spontaneous whims of appetite.⁷

⁷In the *différance* of eating and other such *life*-activities of the Kantian regimen, death comes to constitute the very essence of life. As life becomes a field of prevention in the “art of prolonging life” (*Conflict* 175), death becomes increasingly more central as the measure of existence. In such an art, life equals procrastination (*procrastinatio*) (*Conflict* 175). Although no one can experience his/her own death (*Anthropology* 55), its specter (manifest in such figures as the feasting philosopher) inspires the subject, forcing it to live with a technology of “putting off” pleasure in an attempt to delay its own unknown, unthought death. Through this deferral, through minimizing or *saving up* its life expenditure, the subject purchases for itself a kind of long-life insurance. Moreover, underwritten with bourgeois metaphors of investment, the Kantian regimen thus produces a notion of existence more traditionally associated with Heidegger’s conception of “life-death”: a way of thinking life and death in a single complex term. In fact, the Kantian subject, as it functions in the *Anthropology*, resembles what Heidegger calls a “being-toward-death” or a “being-ahead-of-itself” (*Being and Time* 237). The Kantian “man” appears as that being (*Dasein*) which “reaches its most proper possibility and becomes what it is at the very point where it can claim to *testify* to it, in its *anticipation* of death” (*Aporias* 31, emphasis added). “Man” is therefore a being that, although “he” cannot properly foresee it, forecasts “his” own finitude, and regulates and inscribes “his” life according to that prediction.

This prediction, for example, comes early in the *Anthropology* when Kant defines unconsciousness: “Unconsciousness which usually follows dizziness (a quickly revolving change of many dissimilar sensations beyond comprehension) is a foretaste of death” (55). Although the subject is unable to properly experience its own death (for it “requires life in order to experience” [55]), Kant imagines here what he calls an “apparent death” (55). With “apparent death” available for the tasting (available, that is, to experience), “man” can begin to *anticipate* and live toward “his” own finitude. “He” can begin to *put it off* by monitoring his expenditure, which threatens to exhaust him and hasten death. It is, moreover, in this living toward one’s own death that *pure life* -- here inscribed as analogous to the “dizziness” that precedes unconsciousness (as the “quickly revolving change of many dissimilar sensations beyond comprehension” [55]), that is, as uncontrolled, spontaneous life -- becomes synonymous with dying. Rather than promoting a life without a “natural fear of death” (56), the *Anthropology* teaches its bourgeois subject to ration, conserve, and economize its life, to “bank on life,” by saving some of its

What is most intriguing, however, about Kant's gorging hermit is that he manifests throughout the *Anthropology* in other shapes and forms. He experiences several metonymic slides; he is continually displaced. Most notably, he morphs into the "opulent or aristocratic person" (154) of Book Two, another threatening figure who inspires the text's problematization of the bourgeois body. For Kant, a life of opulence is "a life of pleasure which runs contrary to the welfare of [the] commonwealth" (153), and hence, contrary to the whole bourgeois vision. It is an excess, a luxury, which, as Kant warns, "is injurious to good living" (154). Although Kant concludes that this "opulent or aristocratic person" can be reformed as one who "knows how to live," that is, can be *made* "skillful in his choice of lasting social pleasures" (154), he effectively places this figure under erasure. He colonizes the aristocrat, imposing onto him a life of moderation, an "*art of living well*" which is specifically bourgeois in nature. It is at this moment that the text explicitly betrays what is for Jürgen Kocka a typical and fundamental trait of the bourgeois texts of the late eighteenth century: "an in-built tendency to expand beyond the social boundaries of the *Bürgertom*...to imprint the whole of society" (7). Kant's self-styling bourgeois subject disseminates itself, saturating all cultural norms.

Kant's problematization or splicing of the subject is typical in the "Western" dualist tradition. His mind/body construct, like that of other philosophers and rhetoricians steeped in this legacy, is motivated by what Susan Bordo in her book *Unbearable Weight*

"living" for old age and retirement. It teaches the subject to avoid "dizziness" by moderating, controlling, or, at least, decelerating the "revolving changes" of its sensation. Essentially, the *Anthropology* holds up the philosopher who eats alone as a warning to the dizzying effects of a life without the proper respect and fear of death -- that is, of a life without ghosts.

calls a kind of “anorexic desire:” an over-determined fear of the “body.” In fact, Kant’s regimen, like the diet of the anorexic, is the material of a complex “fantas[y] of absolute control” (151). The regimen or diet produces for the subject a long standing war of attrition between mind and body; this is a war, moreover, that constitutes the very fundament from which the self emerges. Plotting anorexia nervosa over the “dualist axis,” Bordo draws four fundamental parallels between the rhetoric of dualism and that of the anorexic. In both sets of discourse, the body is experienced (1) “as *alien*,” (2) “as *confinement and limitation*,” (3) “as *the enemy*,” and (4) “as the locus of *all that threaten our attempts at control*” (144-5). Kant’s fear of hunger and apparent concern for the intake of food extends from an overall anxiety that produces a body and bodily desires as though they were somehow outside the self, or at least, outside the self’s operational control. Kant’s subject, like the anorexic, “experiences hunger as an alien invader, marching to the tune of its own seemingly arbitrary whims, disconnected from any normal self-regulating mechanisms” (Bordo 146). It is haunted by hunger. Like the abjected spectral figure of the feasting philosopher who, as Kant insists, “can make no claim of humanity” (191), hunger and the constant dread or lament of the body hover in the background of Kant’s conduct book rhetoric. In fact, although this “mad” philosopher is apparently not invited to the dinner party that immediately follows his brief but curious visit, he dines unbeknownst to Kant. The guest that never leaves, this figure clings to and feeds off its host. It lingers at times like a ghostly apparition, motivating the well-bred, presumably self-regulating guests of Kant’s bounteous yet civilized table. This feasting philosopher stands as a painful reminder of the threat the body’s appetites pose to the

integrity of the self-styled ethical subject.

I am not suggesting that Kant was an anorexic in that his “fantasy of absolute control” manifested an absolute refusal to eat. Such an attitude was, in fact, deplored by Kant. For example, as Shell recounts in an endnote of *The Embodiment of Reason*, Kant was critical of Moses Mendelssohn who, like Kant, “suffered from hypochondriacal propensities (expressed in his dislike of feeling full)” (433n.63). Shell explains: “Kant attributed Mendelssohn’s death...exclusively to regimen that went wrong by confusing pain (that is, the uncomfortable fullness that follows eating) and harm. Mendelssohn succumbed, in other words, to a sort of hedonistic asceticism, or ‘excessive temperance’” (433n.63). Kant, on the other hand, was well aware of the value of a “good meal.” A good meal is, in fact, crucial, as we have seen and will continue to notice, for the constitution of the well-bred, ethicophysical human being. Kant’s regimen does, however, possess an anorexic *impulse* (Mendelssohn’s fate, although an hyperbolic application of such a regimen, is proof that this impulse is very much latent in Kant’s design for the one who controls his intake of food). His regimen is anorexic in that it preserves the fantasy of subordinating the body to the mind’s control, of monitoring the body not according to its own desires and drives, but through the intervention of the will. Such mediation will, of course, always require times of refusal (times of attrition), in which the body will grow pliant before the sovereignty of the mind, in which, that is, it will function -- to borrow a phrase from Foucault -- as a “docile body.” For Kant, it is not so much a question of

eating or not eating, but of eating *well*⁸ -- of seating oneself before a *good* meal in *good* company.

Although Kant mobilizes the “mad” feasting philosopher to expel his anxieties concerning the body, this figure does not represent a desire to simply live *without* or *amputate* the body nor does it signal a concern for the body alone. After all, this “mad” philosopher is *mad* partly because he gorges in “self-consuming thought” *as well as* food. He lacks the “alternative ideas” and stimulation of a “table companion.” His mind, like his body, requires moderation or, as Kant continually stresses, “sociability.” According to Kant, the virtuous and simultaneous regulation of the mind and body “seems to harmonize best with...a good meal in good company (and if possible with alternating companions)” (186). The meticulous dinner manual that follows outlines a care of the self, in the Foucauldian sense of the term, in that it prescribes, as Christopher Norris explains, “an activity of disciplined self-knowledge in accordance with certain shared or communal norms” (161). It produces a *relation* (between the “intellect” and the “body”) that

⁸I mean for this phrase “eating well,” and indeed this entire paragraph, to echo Jean-Luc Nancy’s interview with Derrida “Eating Well, or the Calculation of the Subject.” Near the end of their discussion, Derrida offers the following set of questions that aim to connect ethics with the acts of eating: “The moral question is thus not, nor has it ever been: should one eat or not eat, eat this and not that, the living or the nonliving, man or animal, but since *one must* eat in any case and since it is and tastes good to eat, and since there’s no other definition of the good [*du bien*], *how* for goodness’ sake should we eat well [*bien manger*]? And what does this imply? What is eating? How is this metonymy of introjection to be regulated?” (282). These are all questions I wish to address in looking to Kant’s regimen *via* his metaphor of the dinner table (i.e., “the good meal in good company”). How does Kant turn eating -- something in which every person must partake and which is a potentially pleasurable or unpleasurable experience -- into the material of an ethical code? What set of rules or conduct will allow for the best eating -- a set of rules that are not only applicable to the individual self, but are also to be shared? For as Derrida suggests: “‘One must eat well.’ It is a rule of infinite hospitality” (282).

manifests the very definition of the self. Moreover, as an eighteenth-century bourgeois rendering or reconfiguration of an “aesthetics of existence,” the *Anthropology*’s “dinner book” demands that the cultivation of the self transgress the boundaries of the personal to enter the social. Kant’s care of the self is a co-operative “class” project, in which the collective consciousness of the bourgeoisie dictates the rules of its own behaviour and articulates its own field of problematization. Each individual bourgeois subject retains its “vivacity” through a constant self-monitoring social engagement with this “class” project.

Under the looming threat of the self-consuming “solitary feasting” of the “mad” philosopher figure, Kant’s discourse on the “full dinner, where the multitude of courses is only intended to keep the guests together for a long time (*coenam ducere*)” (189), offers the individual subject, through contact and conversation with “alternating” table companions, a healthy way of blending its various and competing interior forces. Following a threefold conversation, Kant’s *carte du jour* claims to produce a mutually beneficial or “natural” exchange between the body and the intellect. He writes:

- A. The first stage [narration] concerns the news of the day, first domestic, then foreign, received from personal letters and newspapers.
- B. During the second stage [reasoning], after this first appetite has been satisfied, the company gets livelier, because, in arguing back and forth, it is hard to avoid a variety of judgment, a dispute arises which continues to whet the appetite for food and drink; and in proportion to the liveliness of the dispute and participation in it, the food is felt to be beneficial.
- C. In the third stage [jesting], because reasoning is always a kind of work and exertion of energy, this finally becomes difficult after eating rather copiously during the dinner. Consequently, the conversation turns *naturally* to the mere play of wit... Such laughter, if it is loud and good-natured, has ultimately been determined by *nature* to help the stomach in the digestive process by moving the diaphragm and intestines, *consequently contributing to the physical well being.* (189, emphasis mine)

Chasing the hermetic gorging madman from his table, Kant prescribes for the subject an intricate network of “natural” relations between the self, its body, and its community. Inscribed within this network, the subject maintains its relationship to itself through self-surveillance and self-correction to norms. The conversation at Kant’s dinner party enacts the role of “[an] inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer...exercis[ing]...surveillance over, and against himself” (*Power/Knowledge* 155). Subjecting itself to this regulatory (dietetic) system, Kant’s subject produces within itself a complimentary or “healthy” rapport between its intake of food and the course of its own thoughts.

Nevertheless, what is most curious about this regulatory ideal is that it is not simply the product of a set of purely logical or pragmatic conditions in the text, but rather, the effect of an elaborate rhetorical construction. Kant’s dinner party is a textual hybrid, drawing freely not only from the rhetoric of conduct books, but from the rhetoric of scientific discourse as well. Buttressing his tropological vision of the dinner table, Kant forces several anatomical correlations between the body and conversational etiquette. In fact, Kant tropes the climax of the dinner in the ethicophysical and “natural” harmony between the diaphragmatic or intestinal movement caused by laughter and the digestive process. Nevertheless, this layering of discourse -- this intersection of cosmopolitan conduct book and biological theorization -- rather than concretizing Kant’s subject, ruptures its very foundations. It effectively reveals the over-determined nature of the text; it signals the force of a desire. It stands as a glaring textual manipulation, a rhetorical maneuver pointing to and confirming the absence of an abjected otherness: most notably,

the “unnatural” subjectivity of the “mad” feasting philosopher, that subject who eats, drinks, and thinks alone. With this gesture, the text ushers this figure of instability to the margins; his presence is sacrificed for the integrity of the self-sovereign individual. Each stage of the dinner is a repetition of this exorcism. The subject must repeatedly cast out this “mad” philosopher, this threat of *solipsus convictorii* (eating alone). Each stage, in its hegemonic reintegration of conversation and ingestion, is a reinstatement of the social network implicit in Kant’s care of the self. Only in the recurring renunciation of the “mad” feasting philosopher can “the participants of the dinner...fancy that they have found culture of the intellect...in the purpose of Nature” (189). In his absence, they are pleased to discover themselves in a state of equilibrium, “a state,” writes Foucault in a different context, “that is neither accompanied nor followed by any form of disturbance in the body or the mind” (*Care of the Self* 66).

Consequently, the chief delight of Kant’s *cuisine*, like that of the Foucauldian notion of the care of the self, is precisely “the experience of a pleasure that one takes in oneself” (*Care of the Self* 66). Seated at Kant’s banquet, the self becomes a narrative, an *objet d’art*. It is manufactured on the fold of a dramatic tension (between the mind and body) and a temporal sequence in which it can resolve this tension. Over the course of the entire meal, the self repeatedly shifts its focus of problematization according to the varying intake of food, regulating its body in a careful incremental fashion. Each stage of the dinner, each shift in problematization, enacts an episode in the continuing saga of the self.

Kant’s apparent preoccupation with hunger in the *Anthropology* differs from the problematization of the sexual act in fourth century Athens only in that dietary health has

displaced sexual pleasure as the primary object of ethical emphasis. The accent continues to fall on the “weakness of the individual, on his family, on his need to flee, to escape, to protect and shelter himself” (*Care of the Self* 67). The body’s appetites continue to pose for the self-sovereign individual the threat of a violence that may, if left unpoliced, “confound the will” (*Use of Pleasure* 136). Although Kant, as we discussed in the previous chapter, generates and subsequently problematizes an “insoluble” anthropological subject, his instructions for the “care” or “cultivation” of that subject is mobilized with various agencies of eighteenth-century hegemony. Specific in the construction of its subject, the Kantian regimen reveals the subject to be less a self-sovereign will than an historically contingent site where ideologies collide to create a technology of the self. Middle-class hegemony, however, is only one of such ideologies prefiguring Kant’s logic. Race, gender, age, as well as class play key roles in the constitution of the Kantian self-fashioning subject. In the following chapter, I will survey the impact of these factors as they intersect and produce conflicting and aporetic effects on the rhetoric of Kant’s care of the self.

CHAPTER THREE:
The Guest (and Ghosts) of Honour:
The Anthropological Subject and its *Others*;
or,
Three Short Tales

But were she to be taken once again by the desire to live, were her body to recover its lithe and animated heat, and were she finally tempted to flee the house, then her husband would have the unquestioned right to bring her back within the sphere of his command, as if she were a thing. The fate of the fugitive woman thus reveals the mighty paradox that we have glimpsed already: When free, the wife is a thing; enslaved, she is a person. When in possession of herself, she is treated like an animal; when obedient, submissive, well-behaved, she is a human being.

Bernard Edelman, *The House That Kant Built*

The Guest of Honour

While imagining the preparations for his ideal dinner party, his “good meal in good company,” Kant delimits the following fundamental requirement:

When I think of companions for a dinner party to be composed solely of men of taste (aesthetically united),* who are not only interested in having a meal together but also enjoying one another, then this little dinner party (since their number cannot amount to many more than the number of the Graces) must not only try to supply physical satisfaction—which everyone can find for himself—but also social enjoyment for which the dinner must appear only as a vehicle. (187)

The asterisk immediately following the phrase “to be composed solely of men of taste (aesthetically united),*” refers, of course, to a footnote at the bottom of the page, the first sentence of which reads: “There are occasions at a festive table, where the presence of

ladies automatically limits the freedom of the conversation to what is polite” (187n). Just as he makes “physical satisfaction” subservient to moral pleasure, that is, rendered “only as a vehicle” for social enjoyment, Kant relegates the woman, both literally and figuratively, to the margins. This strategy is typical of the *Anthropology*’s silent specialization of the subject. The *Anthropology* may indeed be a conduct book for a care of the self, but its criteria or instructional framework manifests a highly particularized *technē tou biou* [life regimen]. Only men are properly invited to sit at Kant’s table. Whenever the woman is introduced (always, for Kant, a regrettable circumstance), the dinner is altered to “please the lady” (189); it is tarnished, corrupted. When she is admitted, however, it is only as the butt of the play of wit: she is subject to “minor, intentional, but not insulting attacks on her sex” (189). Consequently, it is with her that the “meal ends with laughter” (189).

Kant’s “proper” table, on the other hand, is one that engenders the banter of masculine camaraderie. His ideal banquet is a masculine rite where “best friends” gallantly defend one another’s honour (188), where only the “confidence between men” ensures the best “covenant of security” (188) so that all the guests can dine comfortably with the knowledge “that whatever is publicly said by an indiscreet table-companion...to the detriment of someone absent, should not be used outside this company and should not be gossiped about” (187). Only in the absence of women -- indeed, only in abstinence (familiar ground for Kant, the veteran bachelor) -- can the feast of “man” provide the “enjoyment of civilized bliss” (186). Holding women at a distance, in a place outside the banquet hall or in a regulated space of humility within, the men of Kant’s table (i.e., the

guests of honour) defer the threat of emasculation. They avoid what Sarah Kofman, speaking in a Kantian tongue, calls the “risk of femininity” (362), which is both a “risk of death,” through expenditure and “excessive spending” of the sexual faculty, and a risk “of no longer remaining within human limits, of losing dignity as a man, of losing virility, by returning in a regressive way to the breast of mother nature” (362). This oedipal fear, in tandem with this fear of woman as whore, precludes the feminine from the proper constitution of the Kantian “I”.

Nevertheless, the *Anthropology* is not only a gender-specific care of the self in that it offers itself as a book of manners for the eighteenth-century male; its subject (i.e., its “man”) is also etched with the contours of various other intersecting hegemonies, including class ideology (as we discussed in the previous chapter), eurocentrism, and (perhaps, the strangest and most intriguing) ageism. In this final chapter, I will attempt to flesh out the woman, the non-european, and the young, to excavate them from beneath the specificity of the Kantian subject they support -- to uncover them as the guests and ghosts¹ of “man.”

In the three sections that follow (I think of them as narratives, *ghost* stories, as it were), I will open this citation -- this “man” whom I have thus far confined beneath the shelter of inverted comas -- only to begin speaking as though always under quotation marks:

¹It is interesting to note, as J. Hillis Miller has done so before me, that the words “guest,” “ghost,” and even “host” (it is easy to imagine the Kantian subject as the “host” of a vast array of “guests” and “ghosts”) all have such an intimately connected etymology. For a detailed and suggestive sketch of this etymology see “The Critic as Host” (Miller 220-221).

The First Tale: “The Woman”

“The Character of the Sexes” tells us what women want and what is to be done with their desires. Rather than characterizing women *and* men in an encyclopedic fashion (which is promised and even logical), Kant gives us a kind of owner’s manual for the management of the female sex. He explains: “The feminine sex has to develop and discipline itself in practical matters; the masculine sex does not understand this” (222). Moreover, he assures us that “in anthropology the nature of feminine characteristics, more than those of the masculine sex, is subject for study by philosophers” (216). Hence, while the woman is engulfed by the detailed disciplinary taxonomy that ensues, the masculine sex traces this section only as an assumption, as a self-evident regulatory ideal with which we are to gauge and regiment the woman as though she were simply an extension or another field of problematization of the self-fashioning (or, in this case, self- and *other*-fashioning) man.

Woman is to be treated as an embodied desire: “the woman should reign and the man should rule; because inclination reigns and reason rules” (224). She is an inclination, a specter of the body and libidinal discord. She is a mystery. Whereas “man is easy to fathom,” “woman does not reveal her secret” (*Anthropology* 217). Because of her “loquacity,” however, because of the “passionate eloquence” (217) and artifice of her tongue, Kant does fathom her. He discovers her secret: she is a fiction. She is the absence of truth. She is the gap where her teeth are missing (15); she is an empty object, or the threat of castration. In a footnote, Kant couples the following two sentences:

Fiction propagated as truth, however, is a lie.

(Tupiter atrum desinit in piscem mulier formosa supern—HORATIUS)
 [The woman, well shaped on top, ends below ugly in a black fish—Ed.]
(Anthropology 150n)

A black fish, a shadow. She is rotten bellow. She is a truth that is rancid to its very core. She is a lie. She reminds man, in a frightening reflection, of his own volatile foundation, of the fissure, the gap, the limit, the “black fish” that constitutes his very being. She is the dumping ground of all man’s ontological and epistemological fears.

She is indeed an animal, one whom, if left unchecked (unowned), grows “beastly, abnormal, and perverse” (Edelman 15). Sometimes she is a black fish; other times she is a duck -- a dead duck, whom Kant, under the advice of a count who mistakes the German word *Tante* (“aunt”) for *Ente* (“duck”), wants to have “skinned and stuffed” (*Anthropology 168n*).² Although Kant, of course, laughs at the absurdity of stuffing the lifeless body of a woman, “the hilarity resides in seeing what once was deadly drained of its poisons and rendered harmless” (Edelman 27). The woman’s ugly, fishy blackness (the dark vacancy that triggers man’s brooding nyctophobic fear of his own unconsciousness)

²This strange little mishap is told in the following footnote: “Count Sagramoso, who once had the commission to establish the Order of the Knights of Malta in Poland (of Ostrogothic appointment), had paid her [the late Countess of K-----g] a visit, and it happened that a man joined them, who was born in Königsberg, but who was now employed by several rich merchants in Hamburg as a collector and curator of collections which they had gathered as a hobby in their private galleries. This man was visiting his relatives in Prussia. In order to strike up a conversation the count said to him in broken German: “I’ve ‘ad an aunt in ‘Amburg (I used to have an aunt in Hamburg), but now she is dead.” Quickly the curator replied: “Why don’t you have her skinned and stuffed?” He had taken the English word aunt, which means *Tente* in German, for *Ente* (duck); and because it occurred to him that it must have been a very rare specimen, he was bewailing the great loss. You can imagine what laughter this misunderstanding must have stirred up” (168n).

is her deadliest poison; and by stuffing her with straw, by robbing her of herself (of her possession of herself), man postpones the mystery. Kant is a taxidermist filling (and forgetting) the absence of woman, mounting and positioning her as though she were a living human being. Only then is she a person -- after she is gutted and stuffed, after she is made to "appear cold" (*Anthropology* 220) and lifeless, without the hot blood of passion. Kant wants her dead, hollowed out like a straw-man, a straw-woman; only then can he be sure that she is a lie propagated as truth, that her mystery is but the black void of castrated reason, the abyss. With the phallic power of his rationality, with his power to make himself a *animal rationabile*, man must care for her (fill her with reason) as much and as well as he cares for himself, so that he can prolong (*procrastinatio*) his own negotiation with the internal conflict she arouses within him.

Surrounding the untamed woman with the threat of absence and castration, man avoids an abysmal fate. He tells himself: running to her, I will awaken my most reckless desires and expose myself to discord; I too will become inhuman, castrated; I will be consumed by absence; I will become an unfathomable lie. The taxidermicized woman, on the other hand, the stuffed woman who strikes a lifelike pose, is for man a scarecrow warding off the vertigo of facing his own annihilation. Stifled under the chains of domesticity and conjugality, she becomes a point of stability on which man can ration, conserve, and monitor the spending of his own life force. She is the lifeless rock on which he can found and care for himself.

There are therefore two kinds of women for Kant: the taxidermicized woman, domestic and docile, she is the woman of the house, the woman indoors; and there is "the

woman out of doors, who is nocturnal, a doer of evil and a barbarian” (Edelman 12). Skulking aimlessly through the labyrinthine darkness just beyond the house, the woman out of doors is a lost soul. She moves like a silhouette through deserted allies, through hidden thresholds of the street. Her pungent breath is hot and bated, poisoning the space around her. (Another image: she is an anchorless buoy, drifting out into a black sea, leading the man astray.)

She grows mad in her abysmal wanderings, betraying her nature. She betrays Nature itself -- a Nature that, “concerned about the preservation of the embryo,” “implanted fear into the woman’s character” (*Anthropology* 219). Her greatest perversion, the woman out of doors ignores her “fear of physical injury;” she fails to legitimately seek “masculine protection” (219). Rather, she follows her *daimon* (her unpredictable inner “demon”), and in doing so, loses herself. She becomes an agent of madness, an instrument of man’s destruction.

With a voice that haunts the corners of the night¹, she beckons man, awakening within him “all the savage desires” (Edelman 12). She is, in fact, *desire forever speaking itself out loud*. Belonging more properly to Kant’s imaginary race of aliens from “another planet” who “would not be able to have thoughts without voicing them” (*Anthropology* 250), her restless tongue inspires only chaos in the lives of men. Like these obnoxious extraterrestrials who spook Kant (he “cannot conceive how they would be able to live at peace with one another, how anyone could have any respect for anyone else” [250]), the woman out of doors acts as a *space* invader threatening the apocalypse of man. She is a frightening “thought from outside,” a thought *always speaking* from “outside

subjectivity,” where thought unfolds “the void that serves as its site” (*Foucault/Blanchot* 15, 16). An harbinger of devastation, her body is an abyss where desire is free to rise and fall with unpredictable spontaneity. It is a storm into which the man out of doors is hopelessly drawn, a tempest into which he is lost, unable to find his footing.

The woman out of doors, however, is not only a messenger of death for the individual. The more she discovers herself as a powerful engine of destruction, the more she threatens the very existence of the bourgeois *lebenswelt* in which Kant placed so much stock. Exploiting the insecurities of *Bürgertom*'s male subjects, Kant reminds his readers (as well as himself): “a man who has perhaps carelessly dissipated his sexual power before marriage, will be the fool in his own home because he can have domestic domination only so far as he does not fail to fulfill any reasonable request” (*Anthropology* 223). Extended and frequent *rendezvouses* with the woman out of doors leaves its mark in the form of male impotence -- in effectual castration. Without the ability to perform *any reasonable request* (Kant's bourgeois euphemism for sexual favours], the man of questionable sexual powers fails to garner the respect necessary to thrive as a successful domestic patriarch. Plagued by the inertia of his spent, limp, and useless phallus, his household becomes a farce, the laughing stock of *Bürgertom*. Consequently, man must save himself so that he can maximize and prolong the use of his resources: he must avoid the woman out of doors. Because her *daimon* threatens to rise eerily from the darkness of her desire like a foul and noxious mist intoxicating man, drawing from him the forces of spontaneity, man must care for himself by caring for and subduing the woman, by shackling her indoors. She must become his most crucial field of problematization. To live well, to live a

prolonged and healthy life of prevention, he must make himself a rational animal by *making her* a rational (or, in her case, a domesticated) animal.

This will be the death of woman, the death of her *daimon*. Because she is desire itself, she must be subjected to the “slow and honourable discipline of conjugal law,” under which she will “perish,” “unregretted and without a cry” (Edelman 14). Her body, once a powerful and compelling lure, will become docile and heavy beneath her iron chains. Her deadly poisons will be drained and replaced with straw, her fiction replaced with truth. She will be skinned, stuffed, and mounted before the hearth to stand as a trophy of reason. She will be a “body which is no longer anything,” and man will be her master, positioning her at will, maintaining and caring for her.

An important and enlightening paradox: *chained to the hearth (by conjugal law), “woman becomes free by marriage” (Anthropology 223)*. A champion and hero of reason, man rescues her from her dark tower only to place her in his own.

Her regimen -- the exorcism of her demons -- will be rigorous and gradual, for “only law and long suffering patience can discipline pleasure and transform the furious passions into tranquil and prudent dispositions” (Edelman 14). Moreover, as she transforms into an object of a bourgeois taxidermic pride, she will grow accustomed to the violence of the law. She will begin to crave it. She will come to understand it as the loving hand of the father. Kant, the prototypical armchair anthropologist,³ tells us the

³It is a well known irony that Kant, although the founder of modern anthropology, was an agoraphobe. He rarely ventured far from his place of lodging, let alone traveling beyond the limits of Königsberg. In fact, in a footnote to the *Anthropology*'s introduction he admits: “A large city like Königsberg on the river Pregel, the capital of a state where the representative National Assembly of the government resides, a city with a university

following anecdote found in Cook's travel book:

The old Russian story that wives suspect their husbands of keeping company with other women unless they are beaten now and then, is usually considered a fable. However, in Cook's travel book one finds that when an English sailor on Tahiti saw an Indian chastising his wife, the sailor, wanting to be gallant, began to threaten the husband. The woman immediately turned against the Englishman and asked him how it concerned him that her husband had to do this! Accordingly, one will also find that when the married woman practices obvious gallantry and her husband pays no attention to it, but rather compensates himself with drinking parties, card games, or with gallantry of his own, then not merely contempt but also hate overcomes the feminine partner, because the wife recognizes by this that he does not value her any longer, and that he leaves her indifferently to others, who also want to gnaw at the same bone. (*Anthropology* 218n)

The moral of the story is obvious: the woman longs for the violence of domestication.

She craves the teeth that consume her, the teeth that gnaw at her leaving only the bones.

If she is not beaten into docility, her body will recover its "lithe and animated heat"

(Edelman 25). Her *daimon* will reclaim her (hate will overcome her), and she will be

tempted to flee the house, to follow blindly an unknown, unpredictable trajectory.

Bewitched with rage and desire, she will once again greet the specters of the night.

Only the interior of the house (of the house that Kant built) engenders the proper character of woman -- the character of the woman indoors. This character, as Kant assures us, is "proper" because its "underlying principle...does not depend on our own

(for the cultivation of the sciences), a city also favored by its location for maritime commerce, and which, by way of rivers, has the advantages of commerce both with the interior of the country as well as with neighbouring countries of different languages and customs, can well be taken as an appropriate place for enlarging one's knowledge of people as well as of the world at large, where such knowledge can be acquired *even without travel*" (5n, emphasis mine). His knowledge of the world, and subsequently, his knowledge of man is essentially founded on hearsay!

choice, but the higher design for the human race” (219); this principle “serve[s] as Nature’s end in the creation of femininity, and not what we have devised ourselves as its end” (219). Whereas the woman out of doors is contrary to Nature, the woman indoors has a twofold character in accordance with the two following ends of Nature: “1) the preservation of the species, 2) the improvement of society and its refinement by women” (219).

1. As nature entrusted to the woman’s womb her most precious pledge, namely, the species, in the shape of the embryo by which the race was to propagate itself, Nature was concerned about the preservation of the embryo and implanted fear into the woman’s character, a fear of physical injury and a timidity toward similar dangers. On the basis of this weakness [her character is a weakness!], the woman legitimately asks for masculine protection.

2. Since Nature also wanted to instill the finer sensations, such as sociability and propriety, which belong to the culture, she made this sex the ruler of men through modesty and eloquence in speech and expression. Nature made women mature early and had them demand gentle and polite treatment from men, so that they would find themselves imperceptibly fettered by a child to due their own magnanimity; and they would find themselves brought, if not quite to morality itself, then at least to that which cloaks it, moral behaviour, which is the preparation and introduction to morality. (219-220, addition mine)

There are really two women indoors: the “nursing mother, seated near the hearth,” and the “sweet and even-tempered woman of the drawing room” (Edelman 19). Both of these women, moreover, function for the man as instruments for his care of the self: the first leaves him legitimate descendants and, thus, a well-managed sexual life; the second ensures the morality and “good living” of his domestic life. Man must therefore train the woman in both regards (she must be able to done either mask) so that both his own ends and those of Nature (fortunately they are the same!) are served.

The Second Tale: “The Non-European”

Kant was a man who appreciated the value of a good joke, of a good-hearted round of roasting. He even goes as far to suggest that it is an integral part of the “good meal in good company.” He claims, “it is a good-natured and at the same time a refined means of animating a conversation to use a person in one’s company as a butt for witty remarks (pull his leg) without being cutting (joking without invective), especially when the other person’s remarks can reply in kind, thus seasoning the conversation with merry laughter” (*Anthropology* 171). More than this, however, “laughing helps digestion better than the wisdom of the physician” (168). For this reason, Kant, wishing to unburden his general public of the possibility of heart-burn and stomach pains as they consume the seasoned philosophical morsels of his lectures, offers them a few appetizing moments of jocularity. (We have thus far already had a small taste of the hilarity of such moments. I am thinking of his joke about the man who mistook his friend’s aunt for a duck).

While discussing the “Faculty of Foreseeing (*prævisio*),” Kant tells his listeners the-one-about-the-Carib-who-sold-his-sleeping-mat: “Living carelessly (without foresight and care) does not give much credit to a man’s understanding; it is like the Carib who sells his sleeping-mat in the morning and in the evening is perplexed because he does not know where he will sleep during the night” (*Anthropology* 78). One can almost hear Kant laughing at this poor fool, at this dimwitted jester of his table. He laughs so hard that, in the section entitled “*On Boredom and Amusement*,” he cannot resist *amusing* both himself and his audience with yet another kind of joke at the Carib’s expense: “Because of his inborn dullness the Carib is free from this difficulty [the oppressive “boredom for all

persons who are mindful of their life and their time (cultivated people)"]. He can sit for hours with his fishing rod without catching anything; his want of thought is caused by a lack of incentive activity, which always brings grief with it and is therefore dismissed" (133n).

Are there any Caribs in the crowd tonight? Or is this the kind of hostile banter that elicits a "malicious (sneering) laughter" "at the expense of a simpleton whom one tosses back and forth like a ball" (171), at the expense of a man who cannot "reply in kind" (especially since he is absent, already *othered*)? No, the Carib is not invited to dine at the feast of man. He is not European. Rather, he is invoked as an agent of digestion. He is the low-sodium antacid of "civilized bliss," the butt of an elaborate anthropological joke.⁴

The Carib, however, is not the only joke at Kant's prestigious banquet. He is not the only one snubbed for the occasion. Turks, Russians, Asians, Arabs are all stricken from the guest list because each has "hit upon a constitutional system without freedom [without "Enlightenment" and *its* notions of freedom], where, therefore, no one is a

⁴In his book *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905), Sigmund Freud suggests "that joke-work [that is, the unconscious economy of joke telling] and dream-work must, at least in some essential respect, be identical" (165). Using the dream as a model, Freud describes the formation of a joke as follows: "*a preconscious thought is given over for a moment to unconscious revision and the outcome of this is at once grasped by conscious perception*" (166). Like the dream, the joke can be read to reveal the anxieties, obsessions, and concerns of this revision. Kant's jokes about the Carib, for example, are traced by an attempt to support the superstructure of civilized "Enlightenment" (in which "cultivated" men are seen *making* something of themselves and their time by projecting themselves into their *own* self-fashioned futures) with grotesque specters of half intelligible, half unfathomable men. The latter are men who, because they are unable to feel "civilized" emotions such as boredom, sit unanimated and lifeless for hours on end. These are men who, because they remain idle, threaten Kant's definition of "man" as an *animal rationale* destined to make himself an *animal rationale*.

citizen” (227n). Without citizenship, there can be no “civilized bliss,” no chance to overcome the dogma of what Kant himself calls “*self-incurred immaturity*,” no license to “have the courage to use your *own* understanding!” (*Enlightenment* 58). Rather, these are nations in which men reassure themselves: “I have a book that has understanding for me, a pastor who has a conscience for me, a doctor who judges my diet for me” (*Enlightenment* 58). Kant’s dinner party is no place for men like these. Unable to judge their own diet, they would be lost in the *mélange* of Kant’s open-style buffet. Without the ability to author their own dietetic regimen, they would gorge themselves in an exhausting bout of unregulated feasting.

There are, on the other hand, five civilized nations on earth [all of them European no less; all of them touched, as it were, by “Enlightenment”], only five that have developed a sufficiently unique culture to possess their own character as a nation. These five privileged guests include the French, the English, the Spanish, the Italians, and the Germans (*Anthropology* 228-233). Each revels in his own nation’s character while adding to the great variety of civilized man: the *French* are a “courteous nation” that “stands out among all others by its taste for conversation” (228) (an invaluable assent for the cosmopolitan Kantian feast); the *English* are a “race of sound people,” but because the “immigrations of tribes of Germans and French...have destroyed the original characteristics of this people as their mixed language proves,” the Englishman has a character in that “he must make a character for himself” (229) (this character, which is the very prototype of man *as a species*, is a good example for others); the *Spaniard*, unlike the French, is “moderate and wholeheartedly obedient to the laws, especially those of

ancient religion” (231) (he is barely civilized, that is, barely “Enlightened” in his failure to renounce religious dogma); the *Italian* has an “aesthetic character...that is linked with emotion” and a countenance that “reflects his strong play of sensations” (232) (he is effeminate and of the body); the *Germans* “are renowned for their good character; they have the reputation of honesty and domesticity, both are qualities which are not suited to splendor” (233) (as a “person of all lands,” as a “world citizen” who “emigrates easily,” he is the ideal cosmopolitan subject).

In another moment of the *Anthropology*, Kant drops the Spanish and the Italians from his list: “England and France [are] the two most civilized nations on earth,* who are in contrast to each other because of their different characters” (226). Because the Spanish are plagued by dogmatic devotion to the law and ancient religion, because the Italians are too emotional and too connected to the “play of...sensation,” both nations are marginalized, resting on the fringes (both inside and outside) of civilization. The Germans, on the other hand, although they are not included in this final list, survive in the footnote signaled below: “it is understood that the German nation is omitted from this character analysis, because otherwise the praise of its author, who is German, would be self-praise” (226n).

There are now only three properly civilized nations. Or are there? Does not Germany’s position (sprawled across the ground of a footnote) act like a shadow in which both the English and the French overlap and blend into a single unity, a single manifestation of civilization itself. Whereas, the French and the English represent the two sides of civilized man (good taste and common sense), the German we remember is a

“person of all lands.” His is a character of “phlegm combined with understanding” (233). “More than any other people, the Germans learn foreign languages; they are (as Robertson says) wholesale dealers in erudition, and in the field of sciences they are the first on the trail that is later followed by others much ado, they have no national pride, and they are too cosmopolitan to be deeply attached to their native region” (234). They are world travelers with *understanding* (which, as Kant argues in “On the Cognitive Faculty,” is lord over good taste [the French] and common sense [the English]). Thus, the elimination dance ends: Germany = “civilized bliss”!

This equation, moreover, gives birth to another: civilization = colonization. A nation is civilized according to its cosmopolitan consumption of the *other* outside its borders. The Turks, for example, are excluded because they fail to “travel in order to learn about people and their national character (*this is done by no other people but the Europeans, which proves the provinciality in spirit of all others*)” (227n). “The provincial spirit of all nations, which is not moved by disinterested curiosity to learn about the outside world with one’s own eyes and still less willing to be transplanted thither (as world citizen), is something characteristic of such nations. In this respect the French, English, and Germans favorably differ from other nations” (231n). This favourable difference -- this will to know the outside, to become a world citizen -- is the appetite of Enlightenment. Moved by a so-called “disinterested curiosity,” civilized nations propagate themselves, consuming otherness in the world-wide taxonomy of pragmatic anthropology. Otherness is quartered, cleaved, and cleaned. It is prepared, seasoned, and served to the civilized guests at Kant’s table. Exotic and new, it is placed before the appetite of

civilization, and Germany, the most cosmopolitan of nations, is also the most famished. Consequently, schematizing the world of man, defining him in his cosmopolitan garb, Kant (the father of modern Anthropology -- first on the trail of science) covertly wields both himself and his pragmatic approach to man to betray the omnivorous colonial ferocity of German Enlightenment.

The Third Tale: "The Young"

"Young man! Deny yourself satisfaction (of amusement, of debauchery, of love, etc.), not with the Stoical intention of complete abstinence, but with the Epicurean intention of having in view an ever growing pleasure" (*Anthropology* 54). Young man, care for yourself! This is the guiding principle motivating the philosophical man of learning. Epicures demands it: "Let no young man delay the study of philosophy, and let no young man become weary of it; for it is never too early or too late to care for the well-being of the soul" (Epicures 122).⁵ It is never too early to reach¹ for the wisdom of maturity, never to early to grow old before your time.

"Young man! (I repeat) be fond of your work; deny yourself pleasures, not for the sake of denying, but rather in order to keep them always in view as far as possible! Do not

⁵It is interesting to note in passing that Kant's invocation of the "Epicurean intention of having in view an ever growing pleasure" is one of the major touchstones for Foucault's essay on "The Cultivation of the Self" found in *The Care of the Self: Volume Three of the History of Sexuality* (from which I extracted this quotation). This connection, perhaps, provides further evidence that Foucault must have been thinking about this text (Kant's *Anthropology*) or must have at least remembered it from his translation of it when he began to formulate his later conception of a subject whose freedom manifests in its ability to reproblematicize, and hence, redefine itself according to its own anxieties about death and exhaustion.

dull your capacity for receptivity by indulging yourself prematurely!” (138). These are imperatives! -- exclamations shouted in the ears of the young like a disciplinary slap upside of the head. Like a crazed evangelist, Kant shakes the impetuous youth by the shoulders, cautioning him, begging him to listen: “This stinginess with the cash of your vital urge makes you definitely richer through the postponement of pleasure, even if you should, for the most part, renounce the indulgence of it until the end of your life” (54).

The body is to be respected as *the great patch work of man*. We must mend the leaks out of which our vital urge -- our precious life-fluid -- escapes the body. Living a life of reason and repair, the cautious philosopher must not only inscribe himself with a body, but he must also doctor, care for, and nurse his proud vessel as it carries him through life. (One can image this same man in his darkest, most panicked hour, like a shipwrecked soul adrift at sea, endlessly wedging and stopping the growing number of chinks splitting the hull of his own *man-made* and deteriorating lifeboat.) Only by saving up the store of vital energy, by sealing it deep within the¹ vault of the body, can the soul truly appreciate the pleasure of a life waiting to be properly experienced and enjoyed. “The maturity of old age, which never makes you regret the loss of a single physical pleasure, will assure, even in this sacrifice, a store of contentment which is independent of chance as well as the laws of Nature” (*Anthropology* 138).

Be fond of your work. Exercise, ration your energy! Integrate your work and play. Refrain from probing the dangerous, from testing the very limits of your strength and endurance. “Everything must be conserved -- air, water, saliva, blood, vital energy -- whatever might spread, escape, or diminish” (Edelman 51). Bank on life, I implore you,

says Kant. "Pleasure must not be exhausted at once nor spent like water, or it will hasten death" (Edelman 45). A hastened death is a death unprepared for, a death that will be wasted, unappreciated. "The luxurious person has experimented with pleasures of every kind, and no pleasure is new to him any longer" (*Anthropology* 134). "The dearth of sensation perceived in oneself produces a dread (*horror vacui*), and, as it were, the presentiment of a slow death is regarded as more agonizing than when fate suddenly cuts the thread of life" (134). Renouncing indulgence "until the end of your life," the subject prepares himself for the *pleasure* of sudden death. He saves his life⁶ so that his body is at its greatest sensitivity to receive the gift of death. This is what Kant, although he fails to articulate it as such, suggests.

It is our filial duty to live long and prosper (*Conflict* 179). This is why the young man *must* take heed. This is why he is not invited to dine with Kant until he is prepared to die, that is, until he has renounced his spendthrift, impetuous ways and demonstrated the maturity and wisdom of old age, until he has taken death seriously and shown a proficiency in the "art of prolonging life." This is also why old age is to be honoured, why Kant esteems the old man *the* privileged, most proper subject: "Old men should be accorded the respect due to great captains, for they bear upon their bodies the stamp of savage time, the record of the vanished men, and the history of courage of life. Example

⁶I might have said "he spends his life..." but this is precisely what he does not do. He holds on to it greedily. Like the miser who never enjoys his wealth, he hoards his store of energy so that saving becomes an end in itself. His life is a way of never letting go, of refusing to live life. And when death (the food that feeds his entire life) finally comes, he tastes (*feels*) its intensity at its ripest because tasting and feeling are still new to him, because he is ready to taste for the very first time the unbridled flavour of experience. This is the *death fantasy* of Kant's "man."

should be taken from their long-deferred mortality” (Edelman 44). “The duty of honoring old age, in other words, is not really based on the consideration that age, because of its frailty, can rightly claim from youth; for weakness is no reason for being entitled to respect...[O]ld people should be honored, as long as no shame has stained their lives—simply because they have preserved their lives so long and set an example” (*Conflict* 179).

The old man sits at the head of Kant’s table, toasting to the health and long life of his companions. The patriarch of an “Enlightened” crew, he presides over the meal, offering *himself* (the secrets of his old age) as the chief’s masterpiece.⁷ By feasting on his words, his advice, on his tales of ascetic heroism, by relishing the very contours of his time-ravaged body and the incorrigible strength of his commanding will, the guests of his table taste (vicariously through him) the “growing pleasure,” the contentment, that rewards a life of postponement: the sweet anticipation of finitude.

Kant’s “I” is a weathered soul. He is a veteran of life, a master of the body, and an artist of existence. He is a savings and loans expert, financing the pleasures, mortgaging his stores of vitality. He is a gourmet cook, a chef, preparing the feast of finitude. “Lodged in the shelter of himself, hugging his being like a bride, he is now a solitary,

⁷As I will discuss in the following chapter (my conclusion), Kant lived long enough to adopt this roll of patriarch of the table, to display himself at its head as a testament to the noble perseverance of old age. In fact, in the final days of his life, he had himself brought to the table before his dinner guests even though he was unable to eat (*Gulyga* 256). His guests would eat in silence, honouring the courage of their accomplished host. As Thomas De Quincey notes: “It disturbed [Kant] to see his...dinner companions conversing together whilst he himself sat like a mute on the stage with no part to perform” (154).

proud old man, sealing where he can the leaking substance of his life” (Edelman 55).

*Kant's "I" is an old man
waiting to embrace death.*

EPILOGUE and CONCLUSION:
(Procrastinatio) Postponing Important Decisions

In October [of 1803] Kant's condition worsened. For the first time in his life he spent several days in bed. Then there was an improvement, and guests were again invited to dinner, which now took place in complete silence. Kant quickly emptied his plate and retired to bed. Sometimes he slumbered. In the evening he became restless. He had nightmares. Kaufmann slept in his room.

The last entry in the diary is dated 15 December. Kant had not been able to read since the fall. Now he was almost deaf. He no longer recognized his sister; the only one he did still recognize was Kaufmann. On 3 February he stopped eating. He sat at the table with his guests and was not able to eat.

Arsenij Gulyga, *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Thought*

Kant died at eleven o'clock on February 12 1804, six years after publishing the *Anthropology*. Gulyga's account of Kant's final days, reveals, more than anything, the philosopher's *undying* devotion to the feast of "man." Until the very end, he relished its flavours, its "multitude of courses" (189), its stages of narration and stores of "civilized bliss." Yet, Gulyga's sketch is tragic; it is the heartbreaking *tableau* of a gracious host unable to eat. One can imagine the nightmares: a starving man chained to the walls of a cave in which there lies a cornucopia of forbidden foods just beyond his reach. No longer an emblem of prosperity and rational life, Kant's presence at the head of the table begins to cast long, dismal specters of death over the "tastefully arranged" (190) dishes of the meal.

De Quincey provides us with another more detailed and, perhaps, even grimmer portrait of “The Last Days of Immanuel Kant”:

The infirmities of old age now began to start upon Kant, and betrayed themselves in more ways than one...One of the first signs was, that Kant began to repeat the same stories more than once on the same day. Indeed the decay of his memory was too palpable to escape his notice; and, in order to provide against it, and to secure himself from all apprehension or inflicting tedium upon his guests, he began to write a syllabus, or list of themes, for each day’s conversation, on cards, or the covers of letters, or any chance scrap of paper. But these memorandums accumulated so fast upon him and were so easily lost, or not forthcoming at the proper moment (123).

These are snapshots of a philosopher whose “body” has taken its revenge. After years of meticulous articulation, of unrelenting taxonomies, and endless acts of deferral, Kant’s regimen begins to collapse. Death catches up with him, and it is, indeed, a death that “arrives too soon” (*Conflict* 175). Each further attempt to postpone it fails. The memorandums accumulate so fast upon him. Spiraling into a kind of terrifying madness, Kant scrambles to compensate.¹ His “body” begins to bleed beyond its borders, beyond the contours of a mold on which he spent years shaping and honing, into which he breathed a life of pure subjection and obedience. For Kant, this is a body that matters more than ever precisely because it begins to lose its shape, because it is on the verge of

¹Kant’s frustration and failure to provide for himself against the decay of his mind and frame led Kant into the deliriums of a furious kind of madness. De Quincey characterizes this madness: “During the last fortnight of Kant’s life, he busied himself unceasingly in a way that seemed not merely purposeless, but self-contradictory. Twenty times a minute he would unloose and tie his neck-handkerchief; so also with a sort of belt which he wore about his dressing gown; the moment it was clasped, he unclasped it with impatience, and was then equally impatient to have it clasped again. But no description can convey an adequate impression of the weary restlessness with which from morning to night he pursued these labours of Sisyphus—doing and undoing—fretting that he could not do it, fretting that he had done it” (155-156).

unintelligibility. It is a body that refuses to eat, that sleeps more than it ought, that simply denies him control.

This is a battle, however, that Kant had begun years before his final days. In the “Introduction” to the *Anthropology*, he knows very well that he is dying, that he has but one book left in him (6n). Moreover, in the “Postscript” of the *Conflict of the Faculties*, he has already begun to realize that his vision is failing, that when he is “reading, a certain brightness suddenly spreads over the page, confusing and mixing up all the letters until they are completely illegible” (211). In these later, “post-critical” works, Kant’s desire to produce a manageable body, one that will postpone the threat of death, becomes his greatest motivation. His hypochondria returns to shape the dreamwork of his ethicophysical regimen. He begins to view and inscribe “man,” especially in the *Anthropology*, as a being always already sick, a being, that is, whose character is one of action (be-ing as a verb), whose constitution resides not in a self prior to sickness or health, but in the very process or *technology* of caring for itself. The “man” of the *Anthropology*, therefore, is not the noble, virile and self-sovereign subject we have come to expect from our readings of Kant, but rather, “he” is a being of *care*, a being produced in its own precarious and unending act of caring *for itself*. In the *Anthropology*, his final work, Kant effectively draws “man” to “his” very limits. He thinks “man” in such a way as to expose “his” fundamental insolubility, “his” ultimately problematic foundation. He gives us “man” not as a fixed or self-evident point of departure on which we can found philosophical anthropology, but more as the placeholder for “his” own *production*. Beneath the bourgeois hegemony, the racism and

sexual ideology of the *Anthropology*'s rhetoric (all of which signal the undeniable proof of the production of "man"), Kant and (to overcome the folly of bestowing authorial intention, I would add) the conflicting forces, "alien" agencies, and contingencies that constitute the intersection of his own insoluble being unmask "man" as nothing more than a radical break or shift in the history of the (Foucauldian) care of the self.

I will conclude (taking as my example Michel Foucault's bold and daunting final statements of *The Order of Things*, in which he anticipates the death of "man") that the *Anthropology* -- precisely because it forecasts the work of Heidegger and Foucault in its treatment of "man" as a limit-figure -- is an early text (perhaps, *the* earliest) in what I would call the history of the disappearance of "man." More than one person has advised me that what I have accomplished in the preceding chapters may turn out to be the map to a larger project. Perhaps, this larger project (and it would indeed be very large) would amount to a survey of such a history.

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