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WE "OTHER PRUSSIANS": BODIES AND PLEASURES IN DE QUINCEY AND LATE KANT

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> I asked him whether he knew me. He could not answer and only offered me his lips to kiss. I was deeply moved; he offered me again his bloodless lips. I suppose he was taking leave of me and thanking me for the many years of friendship and assistance. I do not know whether he had ever kissed any of his other friends.
>
> Ehregott Andreas Christoph Wasianksi, *The Last Years of Immanuel Kant's Life*

> Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! Thou art translated.
>
> William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

WHAT I would like to do in this essay is to open a page from a work-in-progress on Immanuel Kant's late writings, a part of which reads Kant and Thomas De Quincey alongside or perhaps *athwart* each other—if such an ambitiously calisthenic and improbably homosocial scene could be imagined. The occasion of that meeting of bodies and minds is both what is called "drugs" and the habituated behaviors with which drugs are often associated in narcotic modernity. These are matters to which De Quincey—of course—and Kant—as it turns out—each gave considerable thought. Kant *avec* De Quincey, then: an odd couple, to be sure, yet as icons, respectively, of sobriety and intoxication, and as explorers of imaginary spaces of absolute voluntarity and absolute habituation, they together map out the discursive terrain in which the question of addiction and drugs largely continues to be situated to this day.[1] Remembering what Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick says about epidemics of the will—that the invention of a "pathologized addict identity" is part of a historical process in which concepts of pure "will" and pure "compulsion" simultaneously emerge as each other's unconscious ("Epidemics" 131, 135)—I want to suggest that if "Kant" had not existed De Quincey *would have had to invent him*. Or perhaps it is better to say that he *does* invent him, in a manner of speaking, and with a little help from some Prussian friends. The English opium-eater *translates* "Kant," dreams him and dreams *of* him, but this is a process that is made considerably more complex because De Quincey also responds to ways in which the philosopher had—in his late essays—begun to reimagine himself.

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1. A PHILOSOPHER IS BEING BEATEN

When in 1827 De Quincey translates, ventriloquises, and recirculates the Reverend Ehregott Andreas Christoph Wasianski's first-hand recollections of the life of Kant, the sober Sage of Königsberg comes off as anything but.[2] Simultaneously naive and knowing, Wasianski's biographical essay—originally published in 1804, the year of Kant's death, and the year De Quincey takes his first opium hit—is remarkable for the sharpness with which it narrows the answer to the question *Who was Kant?* to an account of his mechanically repetitive behaviors, and to the ferociously meticulous attention he paid to policing his bodily functions and mental states. Wasianski peeks behind the image of Kant as the genius of the Enlightenment, showing us moments of offstage intimacy. Yet the loving portraitist, brimming with furtive power and ruthless curiosity, ends up constructing an inspection-house or perhaps a *Wunderkammer* into which all are invited voyeuristically to peer: under this glaring light, a great man with strange habits is transformed into a somewhat smaller man who *is* his habits. The perplexing irony is that Wasianski's *The Last Years of Immanuel Kant's Life* was published as one of three biographical sketches that were assembled shortly after the philosopher's demise for the ostensible purpose of reinforcing his good reputation amid what Thomas Pfau has called "the then bristling and contentious scene of German intellectual life" (x). Yet far from being straight-forwardly protective, much less anything approaching a philosophical life, Wasianski's narrative reads like a cross between a tabloid tell-all and a medical history of its subject's habituated psychic and domestic existence. Almost inadvertently, he translates Kant into a fretful hypochondriac, even while proceeding as if his account were warmhearted and complimentary. The controlled rhythms of the philosopher's life may feel like mind-numbing "monotony" [*Gleichförmigkeit*] (228)[3] to his readers, Wasianski concedes, but this was not the case for Kant, who found in his extreme vigilance good health, serenity, and above all, a profound sobriety. Through unfailing discipline, we are told, Kant incarnated the power of rational self-fashioning, becoming a "gymnastic artist" ["*gymnastische Künstler*"] (228) of both body and soul. Wasianski's intent seems to have been to derive as much tragic pathos as possible from the story of the philosopher's heroic struggle to walk the narrow path of his continent existence without stumbling, even and especially when his faculties betrayed him—as of course they most certainly did—in his old age. Despite Kant's repeated insistence that the renunciation of pleasure in general was never his objective,[4] Wasianski chooses to remember the philosopher as a triumphantly Stoic figure who lived a life of self-denial up until the unhappy point when various embarrassing infirmities cruelly denied him. But what an odd lesson this is, for Wasianski—who was Kant's friend, amanuensis, and caregiver, all roles of relation in which elements of faithlessness can never be ruled out—leaves us not so much with a picture of a temperate philosopher who strategically adopted certain regimens to ensure his physical and mental well-being, as a man who had all but totally dissolved *into* these regimens—like an addict, let us say in advance of my argument here, into his addictions.

With friends like these, one might well ask, who needs enemies? Yet enemies Kant certainly had, and perhaps never more complicatedly so than in De Quincey, whose salacious instincts, melancholic propensities, and allergy to things Kantian were only quickened by Wasianski's improbably sensational glimpse into the philosopher's "private life" (4: 328).[5] In his retelling of Wasianski's story, De Quincey behaves like an

opportunistic pathogen, exploiting the ambivalence that at once energizes the German host text and compromises its promised integrity. Antennae out, the opium-eater senses this exposed opening, and tells us so: in his prefatory remarks, Wasianski is described first as especially noteworthy among Kant's biographers for leaving us with the "best impression" of "the purity and philosophic dignity" of the man's "daily" life, but in the next breath he is denigrated as trading in "biographical gossip" and subjecting Kant to "ungentlemanly scrutiny" (4: 328). De Quincey says this with a straight face, that is, without acknowledging that the ennobling and embarrassing sides to Wasianski's narrative contradict each other—as if for him the two things naturally co-exist. One senses two things happening here: that the opium-eater is rehearsing the psychic moves that he makes at the start of his own biography—where he also stagily apologizes for "the public exposure of our own errors and infirmities" (3: 209); and that in Wasianski's Kant he is attending once more to the intricacies that lie at the heart of the confessional speech-act, the secret communications that obtain necessarily there between self-aggrandizement and self-debasement, dissimulation and truth-telling, avowal and disavowal. As de Man long ago demonstrated,[6] the terms of each of these doublets share a complicatedly counter-intuitive relationship, and perhaps this is why De Quincey shows no interest in either reconciling them or even in describing them as mutually exclusive. Instead, he claims to be disconcerted by Wasianski's indiscretion, but not without cannily making sure that in retelling the tale for his English audience that he is declared not guilty by association; gossipers about Kant lack "honour," he notes, but those who "read" and consume this gossip—De Quincey included—are claimed to be "without blame" (4: 328). By tweaking the more or less earnest clinical interest in the case of Kant that he saw modeled in the German original, De Quincey seeks to disgrace the philosopher whom he despised while also maintaining a certain safe distance from the biographer who in effect props up his shaming gaze. He finds a way to murder Kant's dignified reputation, but because he does this artfully via the defile of Wasianski's account, he also gets to claim a rock-solid alibi, one worthy of Freud's kettle-logic: I was not there, someone else did it, Kant was dead anyways. Can it be an accident that the most perversely Kantian of De Quincey's essays, "On Murder Considered As One of the Fine Arts," first appears in the same issue of *Blackwood's Magazine* that sees the publication of "The Last Days of Kant"? But why would De Quincey even feel the need for such an odd alibi? Why not be brutally direct about Kant, as he certainly was elsewhere—for example, when he denounces him (in his portrait of Coleridge) as a contaminating and "essentially destructive" menace, the "Gog and Magog of Hunnish desolation"(2:155)? De Quincey is less inclined to execute a direct *ad hominem* attack, I would argue, because defaming the philosopher is not his only interest here, perhaps not even the main one. Wasianski's "Kant" also provides De Quincey with a unique opportunity to attend to elements of the opium-eater's habituated psyche, but to do so in a doubly displaced fashion—as if it were the concern of an other, by another. Wasianski's ambivalent relationship with Kant may not have been the same as De Quincey's, but ambivalent they both were about the man, or at least the phantasm of the man; the opium-eater manipulates that richly affective homology—we could almost say *hommo*-ology—, plying Wasianski's passive aggressive willingness to trade in stories about the philosopher's eccentricities so as to slander Kant, but also using the pastor's adoring attraction to the philosopher as a way of interpreting, chastizing, and protecting facets of his own personality that had been laid bare by drugs and by being-on-drugs. What we are reading

in "The Last Days of Immanuel Kant" is not only character assassination, then, but also *confession* by other means.

This unlikely identification of the English opium-eater with the respectable Prussian *Bürger* was no doubt encouraged by Kant's astonishing claim in the concluding essay of *The Conflict of the Faculties* (1798) that the "morally practical philosophy" that he was writing in his last days as a philosopher was in the mode of "confession"—or was it a patient's confidences in his physician?[7] Kant flirts with both of these wholly over-determined narrative figures for his work, and it is as if in that indeterminate generic space that men like Wasianski and De Quincey jump in, happy to play the roles of differently interested intimates. Not coincidentally, Kant's essay is the single place where the philosopher is most public both about the vagaries of his affective life—"*my private feelings*" [*mit seinen Privatempfindungen*] (*OP* 177; 7: 413), as he calls them—and the special forms of hygiene they summoned from him; indeed, it is from these remarks that we get a vivid glimpse of the compulsive psyche behind the behaviors subsequently described in Wasianski's account and from which De Quincey derived such *Schadenfreude*. That Kant begins his essay by describing it as a pharmacist's "prescription" [*Rezepte*], as a drug or "panacea" [*eine Universalmedizen*], could hardly have failed to excite the opium-eater's addicted attention, no less than Kant's subsequent concession that the urgent interest he showed in the husbandry of his vital powers was complexly caught up in his "natural disposition" [*eine natürliche Anlage*] towards states of involuntary fixation or what he called "hypochondria" (*OP* 189; 7: 418).[8] "Kant": *Mon semblable, mon frère*. But what for Kant feels like a tendency, a habit for habit, at it were, becomes in Wasianski's hands, and then in De Quincey's, an all-consuming reality, everything that the philosopher *is* or at least all that was finally worth remembering. The enlightener who had famously called for individuals to think for themselves appears not in skilful command of his physical and mental state but intoxicated with the intricate control of their inner workings and outer circumstances, as if "the philosopher's medicine of the body" ("PM" 195)[9] that he had prescribed for himself had been transformed through some strange alchemy into something poisonous and pathological. *Pharmakon*: the very word, Kant said to friends who pressed drugs on him, meant both curative and toxin.[10] Before Wasianski, Kant's public notoriety came partly from the image of him as a genius of personal as well as philosophical temperance; after Wasianski it becomes possible to think of him as continent about everything *but* his continence. And the odd thing is that Kant had seen for himself how the sobriety of self-discipline can morph into something closer to inebriation and dereliction—this, in his long-time friend Moses Mendelssohn. Kant believed that Mendelssohn died of an anorexic passion for rationing, a troublesome feature of habituated modernity that Marion Woodman has in fact called an "*addiction to perfection*."[11] "[I]ntemperate in fasting:" that was how Kant described Mendelssohn's condition ("PM" 196), perhaps seeing and *not* seeing in that hunger artist, in that spectacle of uncontrolled self-control, an anticipatory apparition of himself. One can only imagine the fascinated incredulity with which Wasianski's tale was then greeted and consumed. *This* was Kant? *These* were the scenes that philosopher's friend, of all things, chose to recall for all posterity?

Whatever his intent, Wasianski ends up trafficking in stories about Kant's behaviors that are so at odds with a certain received picture of the philosopher that they remain controversial even to this day. Manfred Kuehn, author of a recent monumental biography, cannot bring himself to repeat more than a handful of them, claiming testily that "the

anecdotes about Kant's scurrilous habits indicate nothing about his philosophy or about his *true personality*" (416). Claiming to have proprietary rights over Kant's "true personality" seems to me to be a highly problematical notion in general, and never more obviously so during the late period, when the philosopher is experimenting with various public and private forms of reason, and while he is ardently, if ambivalently, engaged with the question of narration and audience. Although these were always subjects of enormous interest to Kant,[12] the late period is also marked by his sharpening concern not only about his place amid philosophies increasingly given over to the *Genieschwärmerie* and *Popularphilosophie*, to overpowering feelings and unworked-for intuitions, but also about the place of philosophy in an emerging Prussian bourgeois culture that is seeking from its professors training mostly in what Kant calls "technico-pragmatic reason" (*Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* 179)—that is, if it is seeking anything from them at all. Moreover, like other German and English luminaries of the day, Kant is distressed to find that too many literate citizens are in the throes of the much debated "reading addiction" or "reading epidemic" [*Leseseuche*], and thus interpolated by the insatiable cravings, fleeting pleasures, and repetitive behaviours associated with the literatures of entertainment—of which Wasianski's biography will wittingly or unwittingly form a part.[13] As Kant argues in the section of the *Anthropology* on "Mental Weaknesses of the Mental Faculty," "the reading of novels, in addition to causing many other mental discords, has also the consequence that it makes distraction *habitual*" (*AP* 104). The fact that Wasianski's biography will itself become scrumptious food for this habit—one of three gossipy hits collected in a single volume, almost as if the publishers set out to induce a certain craving for "Kant" unplugged—is an historical irony that De Quincey no doubt recognizes when he turns to the German narratives. Tellingly, this is also the period in Kant's work in which we see the philosopher figure himself in several different ways in his own texts: "Enlightener" about the prospect of perpetual peace is of course one of those personae, as is the indomitable architect of the critical philosophy who is still seeking, as late as 1798, to complete the project "lest there remain a gap in the system" (*Correspondence* 251). But that magisterial and totalizing character competes complicatedly with other more worldly self-representations, including: "pharmacist," "physician," and "patient"; earnest author of handbooks for the Prussian middle-class (as I have argued elsewhere), here demonstrating as much interest in what colour might best show off a man's calves as the future of the human race; as a "collector and curator of collections," assembling a wonder-cabinet of cultural oddities and edifying examples for the consumption of the merchant class (*AP* 168);[14] as a kind of anthropological handy-man, "weaving . . . fragments" drawn from the welter of the world (*The Metaphysics of Morals* 538); as a thinker not in search of the truth but what he calls, performatively, "*a practice of truth*" (*MM* 538); as a philosopher who judges and *must* judge but cannot, as he readily concedes in his *Anthropology, teach judgment*, cannot judge and account for judgment in the same moment, not if judgment is to remain reflective in nature, hospitable to the shock of the new, and thus available to a grabby, troublesome, and endlessly interesting and interested bourgeois quotidian that at once demands and denies a fully rational apprehension.[15]

What Kuehn forgets is that Wasianski's tale (he does not even mention De Quincey's essay), for all its titillating coarseness, is not conjured out of thin air; in many significant ways it recalls Kant's own account of his psychic and bodily life in "On the Power of the Mind to Master its Morbid Feelings through Sheer Resolution," the self-fraying and

generically indeterminate essay with which he concludes *The Conflict of the Faculties*. As the essay's unhappy title promises, Kant here offers up—at least until its last pages—a strict programme for mental and physical hygiene—a "diet with regard to thinking" (*OP* 199), as he says. Far from a general study in psychology, however, Kant's essay is very much a report of a personal experiment in sober restraint about whose intimate details the philosopher feels—or appears to feel—a certain degree of embarrassment. Making my thoughts "loud" is literally how Kant describes the testimonial impetus that animates his narrative[16]—this, even though he had elsewhere spoken powerfully against raising the tone of philosophy just to be heard.[17] Yet loud and proud Kant is, notwithstanding the affected modesty with which he begins, and I wonder if Wasianski and De Quincey felt that the man was here giving them permission or at least an excuse to speak publically about the philosopher's private eccentricities. As it turns out, though, "eccentricities" may be too modest a term to describe what we see unfolded in this essay. As Susan Shell observes, "both figuratively and literally, Kant's dietetic plays the quasi-maternal role of controlling—with a documented meticulousness bordering on the exquisite—what goes in and out of him, from food (once a day only) and water (as little as possible); to air ("drunk" through the nose, in order, among other things, to husband laxative saliva); to thought itself (rationed to avoid eating or walking at the same time that one is thinking systematically, a practice said to bring on hypochondria and vertigo)" (295). For a time, no substance, psychic or material, escapes Kant's obsessive attention; no action, mental or physical, dodges his mania for orderliness, surveillance, and conservation. Under these conditions, what begins to look morbid is the power of the mind to master its morbid feelings through sheer resolution. We start to see that Wasianski's narrative comes by its ambivalence honestly, for Kant's confessional essay models for his readers two interwoven versions of himself: the muscular rationalist who claims that there is nothing that cannot be done if one possesses sufficient self-discipline; and the hypochondriac who is plagued with the obsessional idea that while he is alive, while he eats and breathes and thinks, he "cannot 'have done' with anything," the very definition, as Nietzsche argues, of the " 'dyspeptic' " or voluptuary who has made self-denial the object of his or her uncontrolled consumption (58). In this latter mode, Kant masters his body and mind and curtails his troublesome thoughts and feelings, not to rid himself of these things, but, like a Kristevan melancholic, to locate and to conserve them. In his own words, he "attends" to the never-ending contingency of daily life, but "negatively," that is, "*as if* it had nothing to do with me" (*OP* 189). As in so many places in Kant's work, that "as if" opens a space of play that involves a turning *from* that is also always a turning *to*, and that works to separate worlds without making them inaccessible to each other. In Kant "negative attentiveness" [*negative Aufmerksamkeit*] ensures that disinterestedness and renunciation are not the opposite of interest but rather its most subtilized expression. It means never having finally to say *no* to no.[18] In this he behaves most like the addict as Avital Ronell defines the term—as "the non-renouncer par excellence," the one "who does not know how to renounce anything" (*Crack Wars* 9).

De Quincey in turn cannot have done with Kant, three times publishing versions of his ventriloquization of Wasianski over a span of almost thirty years (1827, 1853, 1854)—a long time to be conducting a quarrel with a dead man. It is as if Wasianski had opened a dossier, a case history, about Kant that, once opened, was never to be closed. Yet one wonders what remained sufficiently "alive" in Kant that it required this kind of ongoing

regard—especially during the period in which Kant's philosophical credentials and celebrity stocks had tumbled and Hegel's had risen spectacularly. De Quincey is especially intrigued by the philosopher's "*anxious* attention to his health" (6: 83), but by the time we finish reading his narrative it is impossible not to think that he is pleasurably guilty of the same eager interest. In this scene involving De Quincey's voyeuristic fascination with Kant's body and Kant's altogether imagined harassment of De Quincey one is reminded of the gothic homosocial settings that Sedgwick often draws upon in her early work: "the tableau of two men chasing one another across a landscape [in which] . . . it is importantly undecidable . . . whether the two men represent two consciousnesses or only one" (*Coherence* ix). Reinhold Jachmann, another of Kant's German biographers whom De Quincey consults, points out that "Perhaps no man who ever lived paid a more *exact* attention to his body and everything that affected it."[19] (Even Wasianski can be more neutral about the nature of Kant's fastidiousness: the philosopher, he simply writes, "cares for the maintenance of his health."[20]) The fact that De Quincey makes Kant's temperament "anxious" rather than "exact" is telling; it picks up on the *felt* nature of the philosopher's resolute will, while also of course describing—at a distance—the opium-eater's acute sensitivity to and fascination with the pleasures and pains of his own body. The phrasing names the excess of fearful affect, the passionate *ordeal*, that saturates every act of self-mastery, and that in turn demands further attentiveness, further discipline, trapping the philosopher in a spiralling loop of controlled desire and desirous control for which satiation and closure are not logically possible—except of course in death . . . or, as De Quincey will subsequently imagine on Kant's behalf, its unreasonable facsimile. To this richly habituated and hypochondriacal scene, De Quincey adds and addresses rumours of Kant's abuse of food, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol, as well as his unnatural attachment to "melodies." Revealingly, Kant finds it necessary to address the deleterious consumption of almost all of these comestibles and paracomestibles at one point or another in his writings.[21]

Before turning briefly to some of these rumours, it is worth remarking that even when De Quincey is talking about something else *other* than Kant's strange habits, as he is when he chastizes him for annihilating hope for the immortality of the soul, he characterizes the philosopher as possessed by unnatural appetites. For example, in his 1834 portrait of Coleridge, De Quincey invites us to consider Kant as a stomach that consumes itself:

> The fact is that, as the stomach has been known, by means of its own potent acid secretion, to attack not only whatsoever alien body is introduced within it, but also (as John Hunter has showed) sometimes to attack itself and its own organic structure, so, and when the same preternatural extension of instinct did Kant carry forward his destroying functions, until he turned upon his own hopes and the pledges of his own superiority to the dog, the ape, the worm. (2: 156)

To be sure, this is not a happy meal. De Quincey's slur draws its defamatory power from many locations, including, perhaps, Shakespeare: "Humanity must perforce prey upon itself," Albany says of Lear's daughters, "Like monsters of the deep" (4.2.48–49). Tubercular patients had once been described as possessing bodies that fed upon themselves. For that diseased pariah De Quincey substitutes a more modern scourge—"godless rationality," the unbridled pursuit of which transforms the philosopher into a kind of eating machine, a spectacle of self-perpetuating consumption without reserve. One of the many things that the figure says is this: the more that Kantian philosophy swallows up the universe,

murdering to dissect, the less of Kant there is left alive as a moral human being. As he fills himself up he gnaws himself away, so contaminated by and enamoured with the rationalistically mechanistic appropriation of things that he has become mechanistic himself, at once the means and ends of all his consumption. In Kant there is no covenant with God, nothing but indifference to the promises and rewards of a faithful Christian life. Turning his back on the rhythm of that exchange, Kant's "Enlightenment" is a hallucination lacking reality or truth, at once groundless *and* pathetic in its ravenous attempt to ground itself.

In a chapter on "the power of appetite" in the *Anthropology* Kant had specifically counselled against philosophers who dine alone, chastizing "[t]he indulging person who wastes himself in self-consuming thought during the solitary meal" (*AP* 188–189). De Quincey's hideous figure reproduces that meal, placing Kant in his own text; it puts to us that by professing a form of atheism Kant had perversely embraced a radically solitary life, the body of his philosophical thought becoming what he despised—unproductive, self-predating, and profligate in its isolation. Here De Quincey condemns Kant not to death but to a strange form of death in life; like the stomachs of the vivisected animals that John Hunter had observed digesting themselves once those animals had been killed,[22] Kant in his godless rationality thrives, but only in the disconcerting manner of a ravenous zombie. The twilight of the Owl of Minerva has become The Night of the Living Dead. As Denise Gigante has reminded us in her recent work on Romantic incorporation, Kant insists that aesthetic "taste" is possible only at the point that the subject's corporeal appetites have been satisfied.[23] De Quincey mocks the philosopher by imagining him in a condition of radical tastelessness, his permanent hunger having consumed all claims to disinterested contemplation. By figuring Kant as more dead alive than post mortem, De Quincey evokes a quite particular form of self-loss: not so much the absolute extinction of the self but its substitution by a soulless mechanism that feeds itself and on itself. In becoming its own contents, the desiring subject is literally turned *inside out*, now not the subject of desire but the desirous cavity where wholly anonymous appetites are given free reign.

Daniel O'Quinn has recently taught us how best to read De Quincey's lurid figures of consumption in light of the Wasianski translation. To that fine work let me add only this: one senses in the very vividness of the figure that De Quincey is scandalized not only by Kant's politics, troped here as the philosopher's un-English rejection of Christianity, but also by something that lies much closer to hand. The stomach trope *literalizes* and *hyperbolizes* the ardent self-absorption that De Quincey also sees structuring Kant's hypochondria as well as his own. Like the stomach that eats itself, the man who pays "anxious attention" to his body is *wrung out* as and in its "feeding" relation—certainly a form of existence about which the opium-eater knew a thing or two. Perhaps the most troublesome feature of a stomach that devours itself is that it has, in effect, consumed *consumption*, thereby ingesting the satisfactions and motivations that ordinarily attend eating. This phantasmatically embodied Kant exists beyond the pleasure principle; he simply lives-on, in an automated manner whose impetus and objective is analogous to what Ronell has described as a "pure instance of being-on-drugs: only about producing a need for itself" (*Crack Wars* 36). Kant menaces De Quincey as the monstrous other, the black hole of Königsberg, but the figure with which he most vividly expresses that disgust is oddly specular in its effects. In that wretched stomach, in that paradigmatic *involute*

brought disgustingly to life, the opium-eater affords a glancing look at himself—albeit in the mirror of Wasianski's shield.

Kant on drugs? Habituated? On the face of it, this will always have seemed a ghastly and implausible prospect. Was Kant's name not synonymous with rigorous continence, rationality, and autonomy—all ways of being in the cosmopolitan world that since the eighteenth century have been imagined to be the exact opposite of being-habituated and being-on-drugs? Irrespective of the sensational accounts published immediately after his death, Kant remained for many the almost angelically disembodied philosopher about whom Heinrich Heine had famously written: "The history of Kant's life is difficult to describe. For he neither had a life nor a history. He lived a mechanically ordered, almost abstract, bachelor life in a quiet out-of-the way lane in Königsberg."[24] That expectation of the philosopher being, as it were, missing-in-action still has some currency today: a recent review of Kuehn's biography was entitled "Body Found: Believed to be Attached to Kant's Brain"[25]—as if to register the surprise that Kant had a life, much less that he had an interest in the bodies and pleasures that are crucially important figures for that life. And had thinkers from Schiller to Nietzsche not found in Kant's work evidence of a profound asceticism, a *philosophical* sobriety, which, although not the same thing as a personal continence, could not be said to be without analogy to it?[26] In his last days as a publishing philosopher, as I have suggested, Kant had strongly encouraged an identification between his life and work, not only prescribing a "diet in thinking" but also by supplementing the critical project with various anthropological studies that often pay close attention to the psychic and social intoxications that interfere with the rational subject's progress. As Kant makes a point of saying in his *Anthropology*, a special place must always be reserved for consideration of the significance of drugs and habituation in the lives of the Prussian bourgeoisie (*AP* 59).

About the derangements of substance abuse, Kant could be defensively categorical. For example, he sharpens the normative distinction between sobriety and intoxication by denying personhood and thus *respect* to the inebriated individual, summarily declaring him or her to be "like a mere animal, not to be treated as a human being" (*MM* 551). In the Kantian anthropocentric moral schema, a heavier indictment or more forcefully coercive abjection of an other would be hard to imagine—which perhaps explains its lively operation in political and juridical discourses about those who consume illicit substances to this day. Animalizing the intoxicated subject, Kant says explicitly what has become unspoken in our own time—namely, that the war on drugs is in fact a metonym for a more consequential assault—what David Lenson calls "the war on those who take drugs" (10). "God and Magog of Hunnish Desolation" he may have been, but Kant's work is a part of what makes it possible for the nineteenth century to police and produce an abject addictive identity: when De Quincey saw this in Kant, as I think he did, he might well have glimpsed—Luke Skywalker like—the oedipalizing phantasm of his *discursive father.*

Johann Friedrich Reichardt, De Quincey tells us in a footnote, recalled that Kant's eyes, although "brilliant and penetrating," were also remarkable for "expressing powerfully the coarsest sensuality, which in him displayed itself by immoderate addiction to eating and drinking" (4: 339). Part of what makes Reichardt's remarks interesting to De Quincey is that they point to the dialectic of Enlightenment at work in Kant's very body; his face betrays a duplicitous combination of the light and the dark, the all-seeing eye of the mind and the blind mouth of desire. Reichardt is here presumably ringing some changes off of

Kant's condemnation of the intemperance of *others* in the section of *Metaphysics of Morals* entitled "On Stupefying Oneself by Excessive Use of Food or Drink." (Would De Quincey have winced upon encountering this discussion, and felt himself the subject of its heavy reproach?) Yet it is impossible to read "The Last Days of Immanuel Kant" and not feel that we are also reading a dreamy allegory of De Quincey's own narcotic psychic life, since it is *he*, not Kant, who more obviously resembles the hypochondriacal soul that we find in Wasianski's account. It is De Quincey's habit for laudanum, after all, that concentrates into one substance an "immoderate addiction to eating and drinking." Perhaps this explains why De Quincey feels compelled to use the good deacon as his alibi, as if to distance himself from the ferocious interest he elsewhere shows that he had in Kant. The prospect of De Quincey incriminating himself in his own narrative, of revealing his "Kant" to be "De Quincey" *manqué*, is a real and present danger—and perhaps that's the point. Using Wasianski's tell-all as the barest of cover, De Quincey is unable to refuse the pleasure of confessing, especially if that pleasure is to be had by avowing what looks like someone else's sins, in someone else's words. Wasianski provides De Quincey with an excuse with which obliquely and safely to arraign himself in public; at the same time, he forges a triangle of deflected desire, one whose fervent pathways are quickened by what we might call the opium-eater's *panic* about Kant, the always stagily hyperbolic disgust with the philosopher that both masks and enables the secret of his complicated identification with him. Wasianski, in other words, unwittingly finds himself *between men*, functioning as the unwitting go-between in a lover's quarrel, his gossip about the intimate details of Kant's body operating as the more or less symbolic means with which De Quincey registers his own complicatedly felt enchantment with the philosopher's "domestic habits" (4: 326).[27] De Quincey's attention to the other's desires amounts, finally, to a desire of the other.

De Quincey's denegation of Kant is perhaps never more revealingly palpable than when the subject at hand is drugs. Witness, for example, the opium-eater's incoherent attempt to distance himself from Reichardt's scandalous claims. "There were but two things on earth—coffee and tobacco—for which Kant had an immoderate liking," De Quincey declares, "and from both of those, under some notion that they were unwholesome, it is notorious that he generally abstained" (4: 339). De Quincey will soon contradict himself on this question, happily reproducing Wasianski's account of Kant's ferocious addiction to coffee as if it were a true story. But why grant even this momentary reprieve to the German philosopher? Why in effect say that Kant is habituated, yes, but can quit at any time? Why protect him at all from Reichardt's drug interdiction? In a narrative that otherwise luxuriates in defaming Kant as a man whose rational will only masks an array of irrational impulses (it is hard not to think that De Quincey counted on his readers to think, *it takes one to know one*), De Quincey's counter-claim that he had his addictions to coffee and tobacco quite under control says much more about the opium-eater's desires, and his desires *for* his desires, than it does Kant's. De Quincey seldom grossly contradicts the biographical details provided by Kant's German contemporaries, as Charles Rzepka has recently and pointedly reminded De Quincey scholars (93); the fact that he does so over the specific question of *addiction,* and in the name of defending a clean and sober Kantian body, therefore stands out with some sharpness. It hardly seems relevant to claim that Kant managed to quell his hunger for tobacco and coffee, not when so much of the rest of his daily life, organized as it is around a maniacal attention to the substances and desires flowing in and out of his body, was structured like an addiction. Yet that is the unlikely claim that

De Quincey *does* make, characterizing the philosopher, against all the evidence provided elsewhere, as heroically continent, subject to ritualistic appetites, yes, but able to master at least two of these appetites through sheer force of will. Is this not the clear-headed mental life that De Quincey wanted or rather *wished* he wanted for himself (wanting sobriety and wishing to want sobriety being interestingly different kinds of desire), coffee and tobacco here standing in as de-exoticized metonyms for opium? Choosing this juncture briefly to step out from behind the mask of Kant's German confessors, De Quincey speaks *as if* in his own voice, so perhaps we should not be surprised that this is also a moment in which he is talking most transparently about the psychic distance he had sometimes hoped to have achieved from the "immoderate addictions" to which he was held in thrall. Trust De Quincey, though, to confess in the delirious manner of being *beside* himself, that is, admitting to his secret wish to be more like "Kant" by defending the philosopher from the accusation that he is more like De Quincey. Declared innocent of the charges regarding tobacco and coffee (while also remaining under suspicion by Reichardt), the non-addicted "Kant," the productive, influential, and disciplined scholar who knows and feels the allure of drugs but manages to say "no" to them, is everything that De Quincey is not; but this is a concession that he can make only from the margins of his psychic life, as it is from the footnoted sidelines of the narrative published in *Blackwood's Magazine*. Under the shaming rays of Reichardt's judgmental gaze, De Quincey uses this phantasmatically sober "Kant" to protect a small region of voluntarity and rational autonomy against the overwhelming claims of compulsion.

2. KANT ON DRUGS

> Narcotic desire's implications for freedom did not entirely escape Kant's gaze (hence the need for prescriptions in general). But it was not until Thomas De Quincey that drugs were pushed toward a philosophy of decision.
>
> Avital Ronell, *Crack Wars: Literature Addiction Mania*

This identificatory transposition between (auto)biographer and his subject around the nodal point of drugs is reaffirmed when, at a subsequent moment in the narrative, De Quincey imagines that he could have been, of all things, pharmacist and physician to Kant. Wasianski has been describing the terrifically disturbing dreams with which Kant was troubled late in his life, dreams crowded with "shocking and indescribable" vistas in which the philosopher is stalked by assassins, chased by "awful trains of phantoms," and wrenched by strange time dilation effects. "Single scenes, or passages in these dreams," De Quincey relays to his English readers, "were sufficient to compose the whole course of mighty tragedies, the impression from which was so profound as to stretch far into his waking hours" (4: 359). What De Quincey reports—the paranoid fantasies, the spectral hauntings, the superabundant hallucinations, the temporal displacements—exactly describes the most disturbing moments of the pains of opium in *Confessions* and *Suspiria de Profundis*, as Paul Younquist notes in passing (349). It is *De Quincey* who of course is dreaming here, albeit by remote control, as if one could have nightmares in German but remember them safely, as someone else's dreams . . . and in English. This curious transpositional effect is made more obvious when we compare Wasianski's account to Kant's reflections on his own dreams in his *Anthropology*: There Kant argues that "nature seems to have arranged it so that

the majority of dreams contain difficulties and perilous situations" (*AP* 82)—of which the anthropologist then provides several personal examples. The dreams that worry him the most concern his becoming confused or disoriented standing in front "of a large audience," dreams where, to his horror, he realizes that he is wearing a "nightcap instead of a wig" (*AP* 83). (Who among us hasn't had *that* dream? Perhaps only professors and graduate students suffer from nightmares about saying or wearing the wrong thing at a scholarly gathering.) Wasianski's account reads like a drugged version of the philosopher's rather more tame scenes of confusion between night and day; but in both cases the underlying threat is that the boundary between waking and dreaming life were permeable. The fact that De Quincey, on Wasianski's authority, imagines Kant suffering from these oppressive visions makes his subsequent medical advice for the sober Sage both fantastically unlikely and dreamily apposite. *Opium*, De Quincey offers; Kant needed opium to alleviate the "morbid affection of the stomach, out of which the dreadful dreams arose" (4: 359). One wonders again whose dreams these are, since it is laudanum that induces the nightmares that De Quincey claims it will alleviate; the fantasies that spill so readily over into the philosopher's "waking hours" seem in their indeterminateness like a trope for the deliberate confusions animating the opium-eater's imagination—the disorganization of the distinctions that obtain between poison and cure, cause and effect, sobriety and being-on-drugs, Kant's nightmares and his own.

Before trying to decipher the meanings of that medication (we can call it the "dream of Immanuel's *ingestion*"), let me briefly consider its Kantian pretext. For De Quincey partly steals the role of helpful pharmacist from Kant's "On the Power of the Mind to Master its Morbid Feelings" essay, where the philosopher claims the prerogative to prescribe medication for precisely the sort of psychic dereliction that we see afflicting the opium-eater. As we have seen, Kant submits that a "philosopher's medicine of the body" "provides a *panacea* which, though it is certainly not the complete answer to every problem, must still be an ingredient in every *prescription*" (*OP* 313). In himself, and on behalf of others, the philosopher diagnoses the hypochondriacal impulses in a growing bourgeois culture to fix obsessively on certain behaviours, thoughts, and substances, when what is called for is a kind of habitual restlessness or a cultivated disposition to distraction. How to free oneself from the paralyzing effects and bruisingly compromising interpellations structuring a middle-class life centred upon consumption? Even something as mundane as "making a *habit*" out of "walking in the open air" can be beneficial, for it makes it possible "to keep one's attention moving from one object to another and so *to keep it from becoming fixed* on any one object" (*OP* 195, 199). For subjects unable or unwilling to muster the discipline necessary to hold off the world in all its delicious yet potentially immobilizing fascination, Kant decrees a discipline of thought and action quickened—as I have suggested—by what he calls the power of "negative attentiveness," the ability to attend to something by holding it away—"*as if it had nothing to do with me*," as he says twice in his short essay (*OP* 189, 191). Much could and should be said about the significance of that *as if*, always a "space of deconstructive ferment" in Kant, as Derrida suggests ("Future" 32). Suffice it to say that for Kant sobriety and the exercise of sheer resolution are not so much about punctually saying no as saying yes in the negative mode of disavowal. Anticipating Freud's monumental discovery that forgetfulness is not opposed to recollection but a special form of remembering, Kant suggests that *aversion* (a psychic and rhetorical turn about which Douglas Kneale has taught us so much[28]) is a matter of getting into the habit of looking

into and *after* the myriad objects of our desirous attention by "looking away." The "harassing notions that arise involuntarily" (*OP* 187) in our mental life are to be met with a certain kind of dis-interestedness—a form of apprehension in which the disciplined subject escapes the cloying indignities of consumption. Under these conditions of negation and denial, the "diet with regard to thinking" that he prescribes as a "cure-all" for having eyes bigger than our stomachs must therefore be a form of eating without eating. The firmly resolved mind treats the world in an oddly "angelic" manner, as if tarrying with it were magically a matter of touching on its compulsively attractive contents but only at a safely abstracted distance. In this way, the power of the mind to master its morbid feelings exemplifies what Derrida calls "exemplorality," the phantasmatic process that "assimilates everything to itself by idealizing it with interiority, masters everything by mourning its passing, refusing to touch it, to digest it naturally, but digests it ideally, consumes what it does not consume and vice versa" (*Economimesis* 20). What is unlikely and fascinating (but must remain undiscussed here) is that two wildly different phenomena share striking structural similarities to the oblique contact constituting "negative attentiveness": the "aesthetically consuming subject" that is modelled in the *Critique of Judgment*, and the subject metabolizing drugs as it is described in the *Anthropology*.[29]

But it should be emphasized that Kant moves towards the conclusion of his essay in *The Conflict of the Faculties* with a series of strange questions that ambivalently *unravel* the principled confidence of his regimen. Faced with the prospect of his declining mental and physical powers, and confessing to profoundly unsettling doubts about the efficacy, indeed, the very purpose of the "regimen by which reason exercises direct healing power," he concedes that his precepts, rooted though they are in the unadulterated and self-sufficient "power" of the rational will, "*will never replace the prescriptions the pharmacist dispenses*" (*OP* 326, my emphasis). This is an astonishing concession to make, since it reverses the position Kant had forcefully staked out at the beginning of the essay, where he claims that the use of "drugs" to "stimulate or ward off" morbid feelings amounts to a practice of medicine that "is *merely* empirical and mechanical" (*OP* 316)—fit, as he says elsewhere, for treating cows but not human beings.[30] Taking Kant at his word, De Quincey opportunistically intervenes, drugs in hand: "a quarter grain of opium, every eight hours, would have been the best remedy, perhaps the perfect remedy" (4: 359), he says from the margins of the Wasianski translation. Kant's *Universalmedizin* bows out to its dangerous supplement in the form of De Quincey's anodyne. Stepping through the looking glass of his own narrative, De Quincey makes a claim for the same drug that, in his own experience, did not pick up where resoluteness failed but annihilated that resoluteness altogether, the panacea of laudanum in effect replacing "De Quincey" with the morbid power of its own prodigious agency. Against that complicated addictive background, De Quincey craftily suggests that if the Prussian philosopher had his cravings for tobacco and coffee under control, might he not be trusted with something stronger, especially if he carefully followed the instructions written on the label? Seeking a sober advantage over the philosopher (albeit an advantage that has been won from a state of knowing intoxication), De Quincey imagines doping him up. Strictly speaking, the perfect remedy would be death; the only thing more perfect would then be death without dying, precisely the "simulacral" state which Ronell describes as De Quincey's peculiar insight into being-on-drugs, and that O'Quinn argues is the condition that opium-eater is here violently wishing on Kant.[31] The "perfect remedy" is but a euphemism for the perfect crime, and one could say that the fine art of

murder gets no finer than when De Quincey in effect tranquillizes and euthanises a man who is already dead. As De Quincey unfurls his prescription, we note that although he sharply raises the stakes of his treatment—in half a breath "the *best* remedy" becomes "the *perfect* remedy"—, that sublimely perilous escalation is checked and rationalized by the knowledgeable exactness of the drug dosage, the precise rhythm of its administration. De Quincey may be quite mad (he is the paradigmatic case of a doctor without borders), but the sureness with which he graphs his imaginary patient's meds gives his prescription a distinct aura of measured competence—a miniature case of "technico-pragmatic" reason forming an alibi for what is in fact a dream of violent subjection. The fatal ambience that hangs about "the perfect remedy" is confirmed when we recall that Kant is not the only "infidel" and "fearful enemy" to whom De Quincey offers a precise quantity of drugs in an act of seeming pharmaceutical benevolence; his "perfect remedy" echoes the infamous scene in the *Confessions* in which he gives the itinerant Malay a present of opium (3: 402–406)—intending, as John Barrell argues, "to stone the Malay to death" (74). Beware Greeks, or those affecting knowledge of Greek, bearing gifts![32] As with the Malay, De Quincey expresses concern for the health of his "patient" belatedly, and even then only by being safely screened through reports of Kant's condition by "other biographers." Of course, De Quincey never attends the sick man directly, and has the luxury of calling his prescription in, long distance, indeed, the longest distance. He may wish a "simulacral death" on his German adversary, but it is worth emphasizing—as both Ronell and O'Quinn do—the similarities between that "death" and the half-life that De Quincey both suffered and enjoyed while being-on-opium. Pressing opium on the hypochondriac is an attempt to render Kant less threatening and more docile by making the philosopher more like himself. Is this appropriation and preservation of the other not the object of translation in general? If we are to think of De Quincey's rapport in terms of the work of mourning, the fantasy of Kant ingesting opium figures forth the opium-eater's passionate desire not only to consume and internalize the philosopher but also to ingest that desire. The "perfect remedy" would be an act of faultless mourning, an incorporative labor without remainder, a stomach that eats itself. In other words, it is not Kant that the opium-eater is medicining as much as himself, this, by preparing the ghost of the philosopher for its sublation into the body of De Quincey's thought and work. Yet the fact that De Quincey resorts to these sorts of tactics only reiterates how difficult Kant was to swallow: as he elsewhere concedes, the philosopher remained fascinatingly and infuriatingly "*incondite, i.e.* without composition or digestion."[33]

In the rivalry that joins the two men, the strength of the bond that links the opium-eater to his absent rival is measured by the potency of their respective but mirroring addictions. This complex cross-identification is especially evident when De Quincey returns to the question of the philosopher's immoderate cravings, letting Wasianski insist that Kant *was* an addict, after all, even as Reichardt had claimed he was. The drug of (non-)choice? *Coffee.* As De Quincey re-tells the story, Kant's java-fix could never come soon enough. The old philosopher was passionately impatient for his daily dose, repeatedly crying out for his friends to quicken the pace with which they delivered the object of his unslakeable thirst.[34] "A trifling delay seemed unendurable to Kant," De Quincey translates; and when the old philosopher was told that he would need to hold on just a bit more, "he would collect himself with a stoical air, and say, 'Well, one can die after all: it is but dying, and in the next world, thank God! there is no drinking of coffee, and consequently no waiting for it.' "

"None of us could forbear smiling" at this behaviour, Wasianski remembers more or less fondly, casting Kant in the role of an indulged child. It's a wonderful story, and bless Wasianski for hallucinating it. In De Quincey's hands, though, the same words take on somewhat different resonances: "Confessions of a Prussian Coffee-Drinker", we could call this passage in its translated form, with De Quincey, at two removes from the original scene, now playing the part not of friend, caregiver, and dealer but of voyeuristic medical reporter.

Among the several remarkable things about this picture of Kant is how many of the features of narcotic modernity figure in it. So much to say here—for example, about how habituated behaviours emblematize conspicuous consumption, and thus an attachment not to objects but to processes of acquisition; and about how the fact that the addictive drug is coffee (a substance not without considerable class associations in eighteenth-century Prussia)[35] draws what Stacey Margolis elsewhere describes as "an explicit analogy between the excesses of the addict and the everyday experience of the [bourgeois] consumer" (21). As one of the most lurid examples in Wasianski's narrative of Kant's irrational habits, this little narrative says as much about the philosopher's ferocious attachment to the rituals surrounding the preparation and delivery of coffee as it does about his addiction to the coffee itself. And that makes this scene more revealing than perhaps it means to be, because it reminds us that Kant always already abundantly *has* what he craves—namely the habituated behaviours that are tensely impassioned, precisely, by *not* having the coffee to hand. His satisfaction—that into which Wasianski claims the philosopher is investing all this fretful energy—comes in the mode of *not-yet-consuming* the coffee, as if the drug in its serially repeated absence were the negative means to prolong the all too positive presence of the exquisite waiting for it, and as if actually drinking, tasting, and enjoying the coffee (about which, tellingly, we hear almost nothing except that it couldn't happen fast enough) were the conduit through which Kant gets back to the strange compensations of staying rather than satisfying desire. If the scene is scandalous, it is perhaps less for painting a picture of Kant as helpless before his onslaught of his immoderate thirsts, as for making visible a difficult thought about addiction: that habituated cravings lay bare the possibility that desire is in the final analysis desire of itself (this explains why, in principle, the objects of addiction are boundless), the complex satisfaction of which is not to be found in filling up a lack but in perpetuating the yearning *attempt* to fill it. "Is not Habit the Desire of a Desire?" Coleridge once asked,[36] as if grasping in his own repetitive behaviours the psyche's deeply conserving nature, its vital investment in living amid the premonition of pleasure. In Kant's after-life, unlike Toronto, where I live, there aren't Starbucks on every corner. Indeed, heaven is precisely not a condition of all-coffee, all-the-time, but a radically caffeine-free state where one not only forgets coffee but also forgets forgetting it. For Kant—as Wasianski and De Quincey remember him—that condition of absolute sobriety means nothing less than being dead.

What we are reading in Kant's coffee-break is more obviously a barely displaced account of De Quincey's own cravings, but in Wasianski's scene, it is worth emphasizing, Kant is surrounded by friends who are familiarly tolerant of his being-on-drugs. This is after all a projection of the circle of knowing but enabling supporters that De Quincey spent a great deal of time fantasizing about but never quite managing to create or sustain in his own often desperately lonely life. Coffee functions a metonym for opium, but it is also a normalization of addiction, or at least its domestication, its alignment with the habits and

rituals of daily bourgeois life. To live the high-life *and* to measure one's life out with coffee spoons; it is hard to know if De Quincey found that story in Wasianski deliciously appalling or secretly enviable—or both at once. What the account does do, as I assume Wasianski at some level realized, is attribute to Kant the very private abuses and inward cognitive impairments that the philosopher diagnosed everywhere around him as impeding the ascent of Prussians to cosmopolitan freedom and rationality. In this respect, the sober Kant precisely embodies Derrida's observation that "the Enlightenment, identified essentially by the motif of publicity and with the public character of every act of reason, is in itself a declaration of war on drugs" ("Rhetoric of Drugs" 250). For lots of reasons, as we know today, this is *not* a winnable war, not least because the sides in that conflict have an uncanny way of switching. As Orrin Wang has recently argued, the difference between the discourse of Romantic sobriety and the counter-discourse of Romantic intoxication is often much finer than one of contrast. Kant knows this, sometimes. On the topic of opium-eaters and the permissibility of their drug-use, for example, he suspends his otherwise violent abjection of the user as an "animal" and his insistence that narcotics should only be used "as medicines" with a curious rhetorical question: "But who can determine the *measure* for someone who is quite ready to pass into a condition in which he no longer has clear eyes for *measuring*?" (*MM* 551). In making this point Kant opens a potentially disquieting space in the midst of his argument, one which sees the philosopher speculating aloud about the limitations of his moral calculus. In that instant he passes from cognitive and ethical certainty to a situation where the rules of judgment no longer seem to apply, or at least to apply so convincingly. Kant asks: what kind of clear-eyed "sobriety" would be required to distinguish between the social drug and the anti-social one, between medicine and poison, between self-assertion and self-mutilation? One may never know with what is called knowledge, at least knowledge in the punctual form of calculations, measurements, and the bringing of things to sight. Judgments must be made: the considerable weight of the argument of *Metaphysics of Morals* yearns for this end. Yet how to judge? Am *I* that judge? In the perplexing yet productive presence of opium, Kant's "casuistical question"—as he calls it—nudges the discussion of intoxication and drugs *away* from a merely instrumentalizing reason that is answerable to given norms—measurements—, and *towards* a reflectively practical form of judgment, a reason that propagates new ideas by interrogating the old.[37] The question is *itself* a form of judgment, here quite deliberately set off from the determinate computations of human behaviour that it queries. Asking it challenges the sanctity of the oppositional limit between the intoxicated person and the person with "clear eyes" by locating the metaphysician-moralist amid the unsettled and unsettling dust of events, actions, and opinions from whence he came and to which he must return with each act of judgment.

Habituated behaviours are the peculiar sickness of "cultivated people," Kant notes, behaviors that could be called the occupational hazard of such people if it were not also their perverse way of avoiding having an occupation—in the sense of a vocation—in the first place. Here it is the literatures of entertainment that are made to feel Kant's severest indictment. Everywhere he looks he sees Prussians behaving badly, sees evidence of the use of gross and violent stimulants by citizens who are "sustained," as he says, only "by the appetite and even the ravenous hunger for reading (a type of idleness) ephemeral literature" (*AP* 134). "Such reading is *not* done for the sake of self-cultivation," he complains, "but rather for enjoyment; so that the readers' heads always stay empty, and there is no fear of

satiation, because they give to their busy idleness the aspect of work, and pretend to themselves a meritorious use of time" (*AP* 134). Here Kant joins the earnest and tellingly panicked debate surrounding the "reading addiction" that was widely believed to have seduced literate Europeans into an uncontrolled and feminizing appetite for novels, periodicals, and other texts that didn't in the remotest resemble, for example, the three critiques. *Unsafe text*, we can call this disabling yet curiously agitating condition, where the proper labour of acculturation is overcome by its dangerous doubles: "irresponsibility, non-work, irrationality, unproductivity, delinquency" (Derrida, "Rhetoric of Drugs" 243). In response to this peril, Kant brings the reading addicts before the bar of reason and hands down the indictment that Derrida observes operating at the heart of the rhetoric of drugs: "We do not object to the drug user's pleasure per se, but to a pleasure taken in an experience without truth" ("Rhetoric of Drugs" 236).[38]

Already using a language of the usurping pharmakon with which drugged habituation will be more readily associated by the end of the century, Dr. Johnson had warned in 1750 that sentimental narratives had the power "to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence and produce effects without the intervention of the will."[39] Kant's characterization of the habituated reader is similarly prescient and formative, for in his account we see an early instance of modelling addiction as consumerism in its ideal form. The reading addict inhabits an automatized version of culture in which books have become the need for more books, individual acts of reading-consumption steps in an unending seriality whose only purpose is (re)producing a need for itself. As Fichte said, wringing his hands about the same spectacle of mediated emotional pleasures, "Anyone who has tasted this sweet oblivion wants to continue enjoying it, and ceases to want to do anything else in life."[40] Habituated readers of the lives of others risk not being subjects at all, for they consume, as Kant says, without ever becoming satiated; they become not so much a vessel to be filled or an urge to be satisfied, but rather a kind of relay point through which a pandemically infectious desire for narratives flow. Their "empty heads" figure forth not only idleness and mindlessness, but also the spectral nature of the commodity form with which those heads are perfectly and irresistibly in tune. As Kant suggests in a discussion of being addicted to tobacco, it is not only the distraction from the working world that perturbs (that seems unavoidable for Kant, hence the need for reiterated mental discipline), but also the habituated and de-socializing nature of this dissipation, the spectacle of a subject being *repeatedly* dispossessed by desires it cannot claim to be its own, a subject that is as isolated from itself as it is from others.[41] Hence Kant's curious turn of phrase—subjects whose being filled up is also a kind of emptying out. In this instance it is not, or not simply, a question of the subject failing to control his or her inner impulses, but of suffering a transformation from a person, demanding respect and having responsibilities, into a thing—and not any "thing" either, but much more troublingly, for a man of letters, a reading-thing—perhaps even a "reading-machine." (This para-subject is not unrelated to what Kant elsewhere describes as a "*Sprachmaschine*," the man of "inner compulsion" [*innere Nötigung*] whose vulgarities spew forth in a Tourette's-like fashion, without volition or control [*AP* 35; 8: 34; see also *MM* 553]. *Vulgarities in, vulgarities out*, we might say by way of describing an increasingly mechanized Prussian culture.) I think that one of Kant's fears here is the monstrous possibility that the subject is radically vulnerable to such vampiric evacuations by the culture of capital, so that either its own desires are wholly replaced by the desire of the other, *or* that its own desires are shown always already to have been the

other's. Reading addiction would appear to be a special but illuminating case of avarice, and of being "dominated by a passion for accumulating riches," when, as Kant counsels, "one should be in control of one's desire for wealth rather than controlled by it" (*MM* 27). Capital, which is to say wealth oriented to the production of new wealth, possesses and mesmerizes, and Kant is but one of many writing the panicked narrative of that possession. Here he mobilizes the figure of insatiability and habituation as the pathological sign under which he identifies a split between an imagined Enlightenment of "culture" and that of "capital," as between "dignity" and "price,"[42] or the dreamed autonomy of the self-forming subject, on the one hand, and the virtualizing reality of that subject's accommodation to the habituated world of getting and spending, on the other.

3. DREAM FUGUE

As the designated thinker in what feels to him to be a kind of rave culture, Kant seems to want to get everyone home safe and sound. But how can he do this, when that culture has experienced such a tremendous shift in cultural capital, and when a significant part of the "general reading public" (his hoped-for but entirely phantasmatic audience in the *Anthropology* [6]) is intoxicated and, after all, *not* with Kant? Kant's disappointment in the habituated tastes of the literate citizenry, the social class that of course makes his own work as a salaried intellectual possible, registers the crisis of legitimation for philosophy that preoccupies *The Conflict of the Faculties*, and helps explain its curious narrative movement *from* a rigorous defence of the autonomy and supremacy of philosophy to the substantial rewriting of the nature of its labor. In the last pages of the volume that work hovers indeterminately between being an agent of biopower—more instructions in an ongoing manual Kant appears to have been preparing for the health and wealth of the Prussian middle-class—and something quite unexpected, an experimental care of the self. And with this revisioning of Kantian "work" comes a change in the meaning of the philosopher's professional habitus, and of what "sobriety" and being-on-drugs mean within it. These instabilities are perhaps never more obvious, nor productive, than in the concluding sections of "On the Power of the Mind" essay. For the most part, as I have suggested, Kant praises the power of negative attention, the ability positively to abstract oneself from the thoughts and things to which one feels compulsively drawn. But as the essay draws to a close, *fades* might be a better word to describe what happens (is it any wonder that Kant's last words are about his failing eyesight?), other, less brutally ascetic tendencies and strategies of self-fashioning emerge. Anticipating the profound doubt about the final outcome of his rational regimen, and worried that its forceful explanation will only menace his readers with boredom, the very state his anodyne is meant to address, Kant finds special praise not for the systematic philosopher or "the metaphysicians" (*OP* 209), whose very efforts work finally to thwart their lives. Instead he makes a point of complimenting those who supplementally *play* at philosophizing, those who are able to achieve some distance between themselves and the strident determinations of the reasoning faculty that otherwise so dominates the essay. "*Dreaming*," he dares to call it (*OP* 191). This *Spiel* is like a drug, Kant says, and a recreational drug at that: "*philosophizing*, in a sense that does not involve being a philosopher, is a means of warding off many disagreeable feelings and besides, a *stimulant* to the mind [*Agitation des Gemüts*] . . . though it is merely in the

nature of a game" (*OP* 185; 7: 416). Only a few years before Kant had condemned the intoxicating mystagogues, the would-be philosophers of feeling, for indulging in such seductive pleasures and self-induced distractions, but here they are characterized as healthful and hopeful—strengths that Kant in the role of the practicing philosopher isn't sure he possesses any more, this, it cannot be ignored, after a lifetime of taking another medicine, namely "reason's prescription." "Why do I prolong a feeble life to an extraordinary age by self-denial?" he asks, directly challenging the worth of that medicine (*OP* 209). "Kant's philosophic cure-all (*Allgemeinesmittel*)," Shell observes, "precisely by preserving life beyond its natural boundaries (as established in the actuarial tables), now threatens him with a mindless, and hence valueless, existence" (290). But was this threat not always already a part, and, indeed, a constitutive part of his life? In this strange essay, composed during the last days of Kant as a public scholar, the sober sage wonders if he too hasn't been *playing at philosophy*, or isn't doing so at this very moment. In all rigour, can an essay that evokes philosophy's double as a game be distinguished from such a game? What position of absolute unplayfulness would one need to occupy decisively to make such a cut? Kant's essay offers little help, since the power of the mind firmly to make resolutions is precisely what it ends up putting into question. Like "the very old man [who] found a great interest in making the numerous clocks in his room strike always one after another, never at the same time," or like the fellow who filled his days "feeding and caring for this songbird," or the "wealthy lady [who] found a way to fill her time with idle chatter at the spinning wheel" (each of these figures deserve slow reading!), is philosophy nothing but a means of staying alert, hanging out, and marking time (*OP* 186–187)? Who can determine the *measure* for someone who is quite ready to pass into a condition in which he no longer has clear eyes for *measuring*?

One thing seems certain: systematic philosophy, as invigorating as it is, shortens one's days in this world. The mortality rate among philosophers competes with that even of married persons, Kant observes wryly. What to prescribe, then? The remedy cannot simply be more of "reason's prescription;" indeed, Kant concludes by admitting that the vigorous practice of such asceticism has left him completely vulnerable to something like the morbidity that it was marshalled to master. Quickened by an unrelenting worry about his disposition to hypochondria developing into full-blown mental illness, Kant struggles with a disease "whose chief symptom," as Shell points out, "is perpetual anxiety" (433). This is the painful crux in which Kant's essay willingly, bravely, locates itself: the philosopher is stranded in a regimen that must induce the very thing it promises to relieve. What I think is intriguing about these final pages is that Kant responds to this untenable situation by writing an essay whose very queerness creates a discursive space that hints at more interminable possibilities, as opposed to arguing, as we might expect from the essay's proud title, for a kind of triumph of will, an escalation of the mind's power to ever higher forms of disciplined denial. Instead, the maximal resistance to "reason's prescription" that Kant casts in front of himself triggers an odd releasement from mastery, a "disorganization" of the faculties whose threat the philosopher contains by identifying it as a symptom of his "old age" but which also describes the hybridity of thought and argument that characterizes and unsettles the essay as a whole.[43] An ability and willingness to unfix one's attention and to give oneself "over to the free play of the imagination" is Kant's remedy for "the man of studious habits" (*OP* 199), but this is a liberty and a detachment from the "proper" work of philosophy that the essay itself *performs*—even if its arguments sometimes

take it in other directions. The fact that Kant initially describes his mental condition via medical reports in "the *Copenhagen Newspaper*" (*OP* 205), and thus speaks of himself as if he were someone else, furthers this sense of derangement while also drawing upon the objectifying authority of the case study. Can De Quincey's examination of the same body in *Blackwood's Magazine* be far behind? I want to say that the stylized but mixed up "Kant" that inhabits "On the Power of the Mind" falls indeterminately between being intoxicated or being sober, and explores a condition that throws into relief the relative coarsening of psychic life when it is viewed solely through that bipolar optic. De Quincey could not have been but mesmerized by this display, this canniness about what it means to be or not to be on drugs. Almost inadvertently Kant models a reconfiguration of the notion of sobriety, not as the *other* of being medicated or of morbidly self-intoxicating feelings, but as the promise of an experience that is outside or to one side of that opposition of temperance and intemperance. One of the things that triggers this self-revision about the nature of philosophical work is Kant's sudden ruminations about what he calls "untimeliness in thinking" [*Unzeit im Denken*] (*OP* 207; 7: 428), a condition of incontinence which he first characterizes, almost by reflex, as pathological but then illustrates as having its own season. Perhaps what we are seeing here is not so much the abandonment of negative attentiveness but its refinement, its transformation *from* the ability to look away from that which "molests the mind" (*AP* 103), as Kant says, *to* a tarrying with new epistemic material that Tilottama Rajan describes as the fundamental characteristic of Kantian reflective judgment, and that she identifies as a Romantic unruliness upsetting the philosopher's Enlightenment equanimity.[44] As Kant concludes, what matters finally is "opening new prospects for increasing our knowledge*, even if they do not belong directly to philosophy*" (*OP* 185, my emphasis).

Almost against his wishes, Kant has exposed himself to the possibilities of such indeterminate judgment by virtue of writing different kinds of anthropology, which by its very nature takes him into heterogeneous and finally uneconomized regions of thought and experience that complicate and transect the distinctions between the faculties, as it does between the private and the public, the social and the psychic, the work and non-work of culture. What comes of that labour is neither simply an expression of the mind's power over itself nor a gushing confessional, neither negative attentiveness nor hypochondria, neither critical philosophy, mostly useless to the "*businessmen* or technicians of learning" (as Kant calls them earlier in *The Conflict of the Faculties*[45]), nor a sheerly instrumentalizing pragmatic anthropology: these are the competing oppositional ways with which Kant otherwise attempts to represent the self-tempering work that he appears to be doing in these last pages. But then what kind of labour can this be? And what kind of sobriety, looking for all the world like a kind of richly suggestive idleness? Only in the self-consciously experimental and non-productive clearing that Kant has created does he feel free to ask the most impertinent questions: Why do I not give way to a younger world? Why do I curtail enjoyment so as to live? Why do I bother confusing the statisticians, the scientists of biopower, by living to an unnaturally old age? Can one really tell the difference between feeling ill and being well? One can never be healthy and account for that health at the same time, Kant says: where's the reason in that? And perhaps most over-determinately, given the rhetoric of drugs with which Kant, De Quincey, and this essay have been preoccupied: Why teach a lesson in dietetics at all when that lesson will "never replace the prescriptions that the pharmacist dispenses?" (*OP* 326). Why not just junk

philosophy, then? These are hard questions whose asking interests me more than their answers. They evidence a form of playfulness that is not, strictly speaking, the opposite of work, but rather a kind of labour.[46] For in raising them Kant is playing out the consequences of what he has told us—in the *Anthropology*—to be the case: that in the absence of there being rules for the rule of judgment, Kant is promised to an incalculable future. We must judge, ask, *What is happening?* and *Who goes there?* even and especially if we do not know how to judge, how to be taught how to judge. *This is where we are*: irreducibly in the midst of the in-between that Derrida calls "the unquiet of judgment."[47] These are terrifically untimely meditations, particularly for those of us, like myself, who still largely set our clocks by the Sage's excursions. Perhaps Kant here models an alternative way of knowing, a negative capability in which the thinker deliberately evokes that which exceeds the thrifty psychic economy that he also teaches, and with which he ordinarily hopes to find something in common with the bourgeoisie. What kind of "work" would this species of "philosophy" be—a form of "dissipation" or fading that somehow also remains spritely and mindful and exemplary in the telling of it? Trying to say no to the faculty of saying no induces a strange spasm in the brain of the philosopher—a moment of worklessness, or dis-orientation in thinking, an inability to maintain the "unity of consciousness," he says, all-too-consciously (*OP* 207). Once, he had positioned himself and the worth of his work by speaking of the conflict *between* the faculties. But now it seems like the real problem is a conflict *within* the faculty of philosophical reasoning itself. Kant drifts in a space that answers only equivocally to either his "public" function as a scholar or his "private" role as a member of the *Bürgertum*. Kant imagines himself a castaway, standing in a lecture hall that now seems to have taken on the strange capaciousness of his own mind. He had dreamed about this once, but now that dream seems to have spilled over into his waking life. Or perhaps it was the other way around. Unable to find his place in his notes, he asks, *out loud*, no less, "Where was I?" Eyes wide shut, he says, to no one in particular, "Where did I come from?" [*Wovon ging ich aus?*] (*AP* 207; 7: 428).[48] For the man who wrote *What it Means to Orient Oneself in Thinking*, a more unsettling series of questions would be difficult to imagine. What they augur is not mental infirmity, however, but a world of infinite deliberation.[49]

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NOTES

I wish to thank the organizers of the 2002 NASSR Conference (Angela Esterhammer, Joel Faflak, Tilottama Rajan, and Julia M. Wright) for giving me the opportunity to present this paper in the presence of such an enormously discerning audience. Many colleagues and friends contributed to the composition of this paper, but I would like in particular to thank Ian Balfour, Denise Gigante, Peter Melville, Marc Redfield, and Orrin N.C. Wang.

[1] On the question of drugs and addiction, three texts in particular have significantly shaped my thinking: Jacques Derrida, "Rhetoric of Drugs"; Avital Ronell, *Crack Wars: Literature Addiction Mania*; and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Epidemics of the Will." Mariana Valverde's *Diseases of the Will: Alcohol and the Dilemmas of Freedom* has also proven very useful. Romantic criticism in particular has seen some important interventions in and around the same question. See especially M. H. Abrams, *The Milk of Paradise: The Effect of Opium Visions on the Works of De Quincey, Crabbe, Francis Thompson, and Coleridge*; Alina Clej, *A Genealogy of the Modern Self: Thomas De Quincey and the Intoxication of Writing*; Josephine McDonagh, "Opium and the Imperial Imagination;" Barry Milligan, *Pleasures and Pains: Opium and the Orient in Nineteenth-Century British Culture*; Anya Taylor, *Bacchus in Romantic England: Writers and Drink, 1780–1830*; Sue Vice, Matthew Campbell, and Tim Armstrong, eds. *Beyond the Pleasure Dome: Writing and Addiction from the Romantics*. See also Orrin N. C. Wang's "Romantic Sobriety," a crucially important examination of the meanings of Romantic addiction from the point of view of its counterdiscourses of continence.

Two recently published collections of essays also advance the field in very significant ways: *High Culture: Reflections on Addiction and Modernity*, eds. Anna Alexander and Mark S. Roberts, and *High Anxiety: Cultural Studies in Addiction*, eds. Janet Farrell Brodie and Marc Redfield. For a discussion of the question of addiction in a German philosophical context, see Clark, "Heidegger's Craving: Being-on-Drugs."

[2] Although De Quincey claims to be drawing from biographical sketches by "Wasianski, Jachmann, Borowski, and Others," his narrative comes—as Goldman argues (68–75)—almost entirely from Wasianski. Several significant critical discussions of De Quincey's translation have influenced my remarks here, especially Daniel O'Quinn's searchingly intelligent "The Gog and Magog of Hunnish Desolation: De Quincey, Kant, and the Practice of Death." See also Cutrofello, Goldman, Rzepka, and Younquist. Rzepka raises important questions about the curious authorial status of De Quincey's text, which I am arguing is attributable neither to De Quincey nor to Wasianski but to both at once. Another way of saying this is that Wasianki's narrative forms "material" for the dream-work of "the English opium-eater" (the oneirically phantasmatic, if barely disguised name with which the text is in fact signed). The opium-eater *translates*—i.e. *dreams*—Kant.

[3] All subsequent references to Waskianki are cited parenthetically, thus: *IK*, followed by the page number in Drescher.

[4] Kant: "The . . . discipline that a person practices on himself can only become meritorious and exemplary through the cheerfulness that accompanies it" (*MM* 597).

[5] All subsequent references to De Quincey are cited parenthetically, thus: volume number, followed by page number in Masson.

[6] See "Excuses (*Confessions*)," *Allegories of Reading* 278–301.

[7] "I am forced . . . to talk about myself," Kant writes. But he immediately qualifies this public disclosure of his "private feelings" by comparing what he is doing to the relationship between a patient and doctor—as if to speak in the open and to speak confidentially at the same time.

All subsequent references to Kant are cited parenthetically, thus: short form title, followed by the page number from the Cambridge UP edition. Short forms are: *AP: Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View; MM: The Metaphysics of Morals; PM*; "On the Philosopher's Medicine of the Body;" *OP*: "On the Power of the Mind to Master Its Morbid Feelings By Sheer Resolution." Where the German is cited, the relevant volume and page number from *Immanuel Kants Werke* is added to the parenthesis.

[8] For cogent discussions of Kant and hypochondria, see Melville and Shell 264–305.

[9] This was the title of the lecture that Kant gave as *Rektoratsrede* at the University of Königsburg in either 1786 or 1788. Hereafter cited as *PM*.

[10] See Stukenberg, *The Life of Immanuel Kant* 425.

[11] See Woodman's *Addiction to Perfection*.

[12] Willi Goetschel makes this argument, although he focusses on Kant's experiments in narration and self-stylization as a complex preparation for the writing of the critiques

[13] For a discussion of the reading addiction around 1800, see Kittler 141–148 and Woodmansee 87–102.

[14] In a paper delivered at the NASSR conference at the University of Washington in 2001, "The Man Who Mistook an Aunt for a Duck: Kant's Freakery," I read this curious footnote as an autobiographical moment in which Kant figures himself in his own text. See n15.

[15] Kant tropes himself in medicalized figures of those who dispense or take up drugs or therapy, as we have seen, in "On Philosophers' Medicine of the Body" and in "On the Power of the Mind to Master its Morbid Feelings Through Sheer Resolution." Elsewhere I have discussed Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* as a handbook for the Prussian middle-class (see "Kant's Aliens"). The *Anthropology* contains an intriguing narrative—in the form of a joke—that includes a character—a man from Königsberg, of all things—who is a "curator of collections" working in the service of the business-class—an ironic autobiographical figure for the work of anthropology and the anthropologist. In the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant characterizes the turn of his argument towards "casuistry," i.e., open-ended questions involving the exercising of judgment in a wide range of contingent situations (including drug use, sexual practices, and suicide) as "neither a science nor a part of science . . . not so much a doctrine about how *to find* something as rather a practice in how *to seek* truth . . . *woven* into ethics in a *fragmentary* way, not systematically" (*MM* 538). In the *Anthropology* Kant makes a point of saying that judgment cannot be taught (*AP* 93), this, presumably, because to teach it would be reduce it to an instrumentalizing calculation of the world. For judgment—reflective judgment—not to be pre-judged or to become pre-judgment, it must therefore itself be exposed in an on-going fashion to judgment.

[16] Shell notes the connotations in Kant's wording in *OP*. Kant: "I see myself thus forced [*Ich sehe mich also genöthigt*] to talk about myself [*mein Ich laut werden zu lassen*; literally, allow my "I" to become loud"] (cited by Shell 440, n90).

[17] See *On a Newly Arisen Superior Tone in Philosophy*.

[18] As a form of active forgetfulness, "negative attentiveness" has a lengthy and complicated history in Kant, beginning with remarks made in *Attempt to Introduce the Concept of Negative Magnitudes into Philosophy* (1763), extending through to the discussion of the positive importance of "abstraction" in the *Anthropology* (*AP* 13–15).

[19] Cited by Shell 264.

[20] Wasianski: "*Diese Sorgfalt fürr die Erhaltung seiner Gesundheit . . .*" (*IK* 228).

[21] The consumption of food, tobacco, and alcohol, for example, form objects of discussion in *Metaphysics of Morals* 550–551 and the *Anthropology* 48; 58–62; 133. As Kant says of drinking, "Such a widespread inclination and its influence on the understanding deserve special consideration in a pragmatic anthropology" (*AP* 59). De Quincey writes that "Oftentimes melodies, which [Kant] . . . had heard in earliest youth sung in the streets of Königsberg, resounded painfully in his ears, and dwelt upon them in a way from which no efforts of abstraction could release him" (4: 359). I note here that music here takes on a kind of agency of its own, against whose "will" Kant cannot summon the rational power to say "no." That the mental agitation caused by this being overtaken by music leads immediately in De Quincey's narrative to an account of Kant's "terrific dreams"—which are nothing if not De Quincyean in their hallucinatory power—suggests that "melodies" are a displaced figure for a drug like opium. This is not the only time in Kant's life that he experienced music as oppressive yet irresistible. See my discussion of Kant's trouble with prisoners singing hymns outside his window ("Kant's Aliens" 217).

[22] As O'Quinn notes, "the invocation of John Hunter in this instance suggests that Kant is already dead, for in 1772, Hunter observed that while living organisms do not digest their own stomachs, after death, the stomach begins to auto-digest" (262).

[23] Gigante cites Kant's third Critique: "only when men have got all they want can we tell who among the crowd has taste or not." See "Keats's Nausea" 482–483.

[24] Cited by Keuhn 14.

[25] See *The National Post*, Saturday May 26, 2001.

[26] For a brilliant discussion of the figure of sobriety in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century philosophy, literature, and culture see Wang.

[27] O'Quinn similarly identifies a homosocial triangle linking Kant to De Quincey via Wasianski, but argues that rather than facilitating forms of (auto)biographical desire its deflecting "circuit[ry]" (279) functions primarily in the service of "disabling Kant's threat to Christian philosophy" (281).

[28] See Kneale's *Romantic Aversion: Aftermaths of Classicism in Wordsworth and Coleridge.*

[29] For an extraordinary account of the question of pleasures that are nonsensual, a question that finds its most complex exploration in Kant's discussion of the aesthetic, see Gigante (whose phrase, "tastefully consuming," I borrow here), and Derrida ("Economimesis"). Kant describes smoking and chewing tobacco as forms of eating without satiation, a touching of the body by an external substance but only for the purposes of its refusal: "The stimulus is felt like the influence of certain stable salts that incite the organs to specific evacuations. Consequently these objects are not really enjoyed, nor are they absorbed thoroughly by the organs. They only come into contact with the organs and then they are quickly discarded. They can be used without satiation all day long . . . " (*AP* 487).

[30] In "On Philosophers' Medicine of the Body" Kant argues that "The question is, whether the art of medicine should be practiced on man in the same way as the art we call veterinary medicine is practiced on domestic cattle [or whether it should take into account the force of the human mind] . . . The followers of Stahl . . . proclaim the remarkable force of the mind in curing diseases or bringing them to a head. It is for the philosopher to turn his mind to the latter" (197).

[31] See Ronell 59–61 and O'Quinn, "Gog and Magog" 280–281.

[32] In an attempt to communicate with the Malay, De Quincey—winking at us?—tries ancient Greek on the assumption that "the Greek, in point of longitude, came geographically nearest to an oriental one" (3: 404). Again, as in the case of the Wasianski ventriloquization, the question of *translation* and *displacement* is complexly caught up with the subjects of De Quincey's fascination and disgust. De Quincey *dreams* of connecting with his dark double, but that imagined meeting of minds and bodies is filtered and reorganized through the negative attention afforded by the shift from English to another language.

[33] Cited by Frederick Burwick 148.

[34] In the same note that De Quincey insists that Kant was addicted only to coffee and tobacco, the opium-eater recalls Reichardt's memory of Kant as " 'drier than dust . . . both in body and mind . . . [P]ossibly a more meagre, arid, parched anatomy of a man has not appeared on this earth' " (4: 339, n1). This curious insistence on the desiccated nature of the philosopher contrasts with Reichardt's insistence that he had an " 'immoderate addiction to eating and drinking.' " To live an unseemly life of simultaneous depletion *and* consumption: is this not a working definition of habituated craving—hunger and thirst without the prospect of satiation? A drenched body that remains irreducibly parched?

[35] See Matthee 37. Interestingly, De Quincey fastens on to a scene of coffee consumption that is at odds with its more common associations. Although he is surrounded by indulgent friends, Kant is soley preoccupied with this cravings; the received image of coffee consumption at the end of the eighteenth century, however, is one having to do with social gatherings to discuss the affairs of the day in public settings.

[36] Cited by Boon 36.

[37] I recall Jochen Schulte-Sasse's remark (which remembers what Hegel and Schelling say in *Oldest System Proposal of German Idealism*) that "Reflective reason does not just work intrinsically with a given set of norms and values, as instrumental reason does, but *produces* ideas" (124).

[38] The fact that "Kant's" work was invoked by some of his contemporaries as an effective prophylactic against the contaminations of the reading addiction and other kinds of cognitive impairments only gives a further twist to the irony that Wasianski's account of the philosopher was an instance of the very kind of bathetic narrative that Kant hated to see consumed so avidly, and in such large quantities. For example, the popular philosopher Johann Adam Bergk mobilized terms and concepts drawn from the *Critique of Judgment* against the depredations of the *Leseseuche* that had overtaken the German speaking peoples. Here Kant functions as an antidote. See Woodmansee 88–102 and Kittler 143–145, 152. Orrin Wang argues that Coleridge found an anodyne in Wordsworth and Kant: "first the man of sober poetry and then the man of sober reason hold out to Coleridge the cure *of* high romanticism" (491). On the other hand, Kant's work could be characterized by others with an enthusiasm that resembles the addictive tendencies that Kant saw being induced by the literatures of entertainment. For instance, Johann Casper Lavater writes to Kant about having made a friend with whom he can discuss the philospher's work "to satiey and still not to satiety" (cited by Zweig 20). To extend the Kantian rhetoric of drugs and habituation one more step: Hegel found Kant's "Enlightenment *gossip*" intellectually to amount only to "stale beer"—and beer was something Hegel knew quite a bit about. (Hegel is cited by Hamacher 266).

[39] Johnson's remarks from *The Rambler* no.4 (31 March 1750) are cited by Barker-Benfield 258.

[40] Cited by Woodmansee 92.

[41] I cannot discuss here the revealingly contradictory views that Kant has on smoking. Suffice it to say that at one point in the *Anthropology*, tobacco is valued positively as a figure for work: like tobacco, Kant says, work is "unpleasant" yet a source of necessary "stimulation" (*AP* 133). Without smoking and without work, we would die of boredom. But at another point in the text, Kant is not so sanguine, and instead hints at tobacco's masturbatory threat: smoking induces a "kind of familiarity of a man with himself that takes the place of fellowship, because in place of conversation it fills an emptiness of time not with conversation but with continuous newly excited and quickly vanishing sensations that have to be renewed as stimuli time and again" (*AP* 48).

[42] I recall Kant's famous distinction in *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*: "What has a price can be replaced by something else as its *equivalent*; what on the other hand is raised above all price and therefore admits of no equivalent has a dignity" (42).

[43] And perhaps the same could be said about Kant's entire *oeuvre*, the site of numerous self-differences, excesses, and shifting narrative strategies that speak of a philosopher who experimented in styles of philosophy and of being a philosopher from the beginning.

The last paragraphs of the body of Kant's essay are taken up with a frank description of the spasms or seizures by which his thinking is affected, the chief symptom of which is a feeling of being "disorganized" (*OP* 205). Although I cannot adequately pursue this thesis here, my argument is that Kant finishes the essay by giving us a language with which to describe its over-all narrative strategies and intellectual itineraries, but protects himself from the implications of those strategies and itineraries by speaking *as if* he were talking merely about his cognitive impairment. For an argument that also treats Kant's narrative about his seizures as the site of theoretical work, see Lyotard.

[44] My remarks here are indebted to Rajan's extremely suggestive argument about the doubleness characterizing Kant's late writings. See "From Restricted to General Economy: Romantic Studies and a Kantianism without Reserve." Her insights into the nature of Romantic worklessness in Keats (in "Keats, Poetry, and 'The Absence of Work' ") have also proven provocatively helpful to me. See also n46.

[45] See "The Conflict of the Philosophy Faculty with the Theology Faculty" 25.

[46] More discussion about the formal hybridity and epistemological equivocalities of this text, and its relation to Kantian's questions about "sobriety," "idleness", and "addiction," must await another analysis. But a good place to begin is Rajan's argument (in "From a Restricted to General Economy") that in works like *The Conflict of the Faculties* and the *Anthropology*, Kant possesses a "double identity." He is, Rajan suggests, "very much . . . a figure of the Enlightenment, anxious to close off the Romantic openings that his philosophy creates" (9). See also her discussion of the late Keats as modeling a radically reflective judgment, i.e., an unusual "openness to new epistemic material," the same openness that Kant willy-nilly subjects himself to by virtue of the resolutely empirical thrust of texts like the *Anthropology* ("Keats, Poetry, and 'The Absence of Work' ").

[47] John D. Caputo cites Derrida's phrase from "Préjugés," from *La faculté de juger* (99).

[48] It is the very question—experienced as an "unbearable thought"—that God must ask himself after having read the first critique. Kant: "The thought is as unbearable as it is unavoidable: that of the being that we represent to ourselves as the highest of all possible beings saying to itself, 'I am from eternity to eternity, outside of me is nothing except that which is something through my will; but from where, then, am I?' Here, everything sinks beneath us, and the greatest perfection, like the least, wavers unsupported for speculative reason which can, without losing anything, allow the one as well as the other, without the least hindrance, to disappear." See *Critique of Pure Reason* 513.

[49] I recall Derrida: "One is never sure of making the just choice; one never knows, one will never know with what is called knowledge. The future will give us no more knowledge, because it itself will have been determined by that choice. It is here that responsibilities are to be re-evaluated at each moment, according to concrete situations, that is to say, infinite deliberation" (*On Cosmopolitanism* 56).

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