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Politics and Enlightenment: Kant and Derrida on Cosmopolitan Responsibility

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Walter Benjamin once remarked of the enterprise of translation 'that it is nowhere': that the labour of transcribing the sense, inflection and difference of any particular language and text must always situate the translator in a space which is neither 'of' the original, nor 'of' the language into which it is to be transcribed. This 'non-position' of the translator—between the original and its analogue, between the 'spirit' and the 'letter', the difference and the acceptability of the text—marks the labour of translation as an ethical responsibility: that of communicating the significance of something—a gesture, a story, a custom, a tradition—which has appeared to this/our socio-linguistic culture as strange and unfathomably alien; and to achieve this communication without annulling its strangeness, its alterity. The purpose of my comparison of Kant and Derrida's remarks on cosmopolitical responsibility therefore, is fourfold. First, I want to suggest that it is this 'stricture' of translation—this difficult responsibility of both judging and respecting the difference of 'foreign' cultures—which marks the (non-Kantian, non-situated) 'territory' of cosmopolitical responsibility. Second, by using Kant's remarks on the relationship between the political evolution of European Enlightenment culture and a possible world confederation of sovereign states, I want to point up the hierarchies and secondarizations involved in the determination of universal standards of moral, ethical and political conduct (even if these standards are originally prosecuted as the legislative conditions of a 'radical democracy'). Third, I want to look at the ways in which the stricture of translation has been articulated as a theory of 'global' responsibility—particularly in the divergent ethical and political approaches of Jurgen Habermas and Jean-Francois Lyotard. Fourth, I want to suggest that it is Derrida's idea of a 'dual responsibility' of critical thought to the political and philosophical resources of European Enlightenment and to the difference of non-European nations and cultures, that marks the difficulty (the stricture) of acting responsibly within the global economics of power, identity and legislation. I want, in other words, to show that the 'nowhere' of Benjamin's translator, is a 'place' whose possibility demands a certain 'Kantian' right of reflection; that is, the right to pursue the 'transcendent' principle of respect for the other.

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The title I have chosen to give the article comprises of a number of difficult and heterogeneous names and ideas. 'Politics', 'enlightenment', 'responsibility' and 'cosmopolitanism' are all terms whose meaning it is impossible reduce to any simple 'essence' which would be valid for all times and in all places. Indeed, we will see in what follows, that it is perhaps the desire to accumulate these terms into a universal 'essence' of human sociality, that is implicated in the constitution of a 'progressive' colonialism which heads out of European cultural identity. The proper names 'Kant' and 'Derrida' are also important in the construction and logic of the title. For they register a crucial difference in the idea of modernity: a difference which, we will see, is concentrated around the possibility of humanity's moving beyond its 'self-incurred' dependency upon custom, tradition and the dominance of received wisdom, and becoming the author of its own rationally chosen ends. The structure of the title therefore, indicates that in examining and reconstructing Derrida's relationship to Kant's historico-political writings, we will be dealing necessarily with questions of: (1) the founding of the nation state as the site of rational autonomy (that is, the 'place' where law, coercion and legitimacy are inscribed and mediated); (2) the relationship between politics—in the sense of the administration of the 'life world'—and ethical responsibility (for it is a charge often levelled against both Kant and Derrida that their respective ideas of responsibility can have no directly 'political' significance); and (3) the establishment of 'cosmopolitanism' as the central theme of an ethics of modernity (especially given that it is the themes of international right, sovereignty and violence which, having been 'critically' expounded in Kant's political philosophy, continue to occupy Derrida's deconstruction of the categories, forms and institutions of 'globalization').

The question with which we must begin our account of these issues then, is this: given that Derrida's most significant work on European identity is concerned with the philosophy of spirit (explicitly, in Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger and Valery) and its 'gathering' of culture, citizenship and autonomy into the original space of 'enlightenment', why do we need to look at Kant's formulation of the possibility of a 'providential history' (i.e. the movement of human *socius* towards the establishment of a cosmopolitan confederation of states)? Or put in a more explicitly 'deconstructive' way: what might Kant's 'critical' difference from the resources of the philosophy of spirit, reveal about the writing/inscription of the law and its relationship to nationhood in general, the violence which European culture and identity presuppose, and the possibility of a political judgement which could acknowledge the 'other' of European civilization? In order to answer these questions, we will need to look in some detail at the themes which occupy Derrida's discussions of European identity as a 'philosopheme'—that is, as a demonstration of 'universal' moral, ethical and political necessity made through the textual resources of philosophical reason. Both *The Other Heading*[1] and *Of Spirit*[2] undertake to deconstruct the relationships that exist between spirit, culture and identity. In *Of Spirit*, Derrida's leading concern is a certain 'spiritual' trajectory in Heidegger's later writings: a trajectory which, through his assertion of an 'absolute privilege of the German language' in regard to the question of Being,[3] is implicated in the Nazification

of German culture and the 'flame and ashes' of the Final Solution. In *The Other Heading*, this theme of a 'gathering' spirit—which having departed from its essence, seeks to 'remember' its origin and to reappropriate the world—is developed through Paul Valery's work on the responsibility of France in relation to European Enlightenment culture, and to humanity in general. It is then, the iteration of spirit as a gathering, reintegrating force (which is always already threatened by the corruption inherent in the 'material' world), that informs Derrida's writing of the relationship between philosophy and European identity. For even though we may no longer believe in Hegel's 'speculative' recuperation of spirit from the contradictory forms of law, state and nationhood, there is a sense in which the Hegelian 'desire' for a universally mediated ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) has pervaded European thought about European identity:

> ...from Hegel to Valery, from Husserl to Heidegger, in spite of all the differences that distinguish these great examples from each other ... this *traditional* discourse is *already* a discourse of the *modern* Western world. It dates, it is dated. It is the most current, nothing is more current, but already it dates back... . It dates from a moment when Europe sees itself *on the horizon*, from the imminence of its end... . This old discourse about Europe, a discourse at once exemplary and exemplarist, is already a *traditional discourse of modernity*. It is also the discourse of anamnesis because of this refined taste for finality, for the end, if not for death.[4] (original emphasis)

We will need then, to look very carefully at Derrida's deconstruction of spirit's constitutive resources; especially the ideas of capitalization, exemplarity, gathering, and memory through which the 'heading' (trajectory, teleology, end) of European identity is re-presented in his writing. For the moment however, we should register that our exposition of Derrida's relationship to Kant's political thought, will be thematized by the position which Kant's critical philosophy occupies *in general* to the resources of spirit.

This thematization is quite complex, and refers us to a crucial difference between Jean-Francois Lyotard's transcription of feeling, reflection and judgment in Kant's critical philosophy,[5] and Derrida's presentation of the 'finitude' which organizes Kant's entire presentation of rational autonomy, political responsibility and historical progress.[6] For Lyotard, the importance of Kant's political writings is that they gesture towards a possible remission from the 'totalizing' violence of Hegelian spirit. In Kant, the relationship of the critical subject to the origin of the moral law—that is, to the infinite intelligence which has organized the apparent contingency of nature—is such that the reception of 'duty' cannot be fixed in the categories of legal, political or economic cognition. For as Lyotard points out in *The Differend*, a recurrent theme in Kant's idea of providential history, is the impossibility of determining the 'real' conditions under which rationally autonomous beings would be freed from the 'heteronomy' of positive law and its institutions. Thus the enjunction 'dare to know' which Kant presents as the motif of Enlightenment,[7] refers not to the possibility of 'realizing' the purposes of nature in the institutions of human sociality (for it

is this cognitive idealism which lies at the root of a revolutionary incitement that can only destroy the established level of subjective culture), but to a certain susceptibility to ideas, and to the 'analogical' forms through which the Idea of the infinite 'presents' its transcendence. Lyotard's primary concern in his exposition of Kant's political writings, is to establish that Kant's recourse to the sentiment of 'enthusiasm' (a subjective condition very close to the feeling of pleasure–pain which marks the presence of the sublime in the third *Critique*) as the 'sign' of historical progress, discloses the impossibility of regulating moral and political responsibility through the postulate of practical reason. For by making spectatorial enthusiasm (for events precipitated by the illusions of revolutionary politics) the signifier of historical progress, Kant, according to Lyotard's reading, crucially displaces the legislative procedure of the categorical imperative, and opens the critical subject to the heterogeneous and unpresentable feelings which mark the occurrence, or event, of ethical responsibility. The French Revolution, for example, would mark the occurrence of a particular differend—between 'feudal' and 'bourgeois' forms of authority—whose significance would remain necessarily heterogeneous with the other constituted identities (nation states) within the European continent. There could, in other words, be no universal moral feeling (Kant's historico-political enthusiasm) from which the violence, heterogeneity and conflict of national difference has been excluded. What Lyotard is determined to take from the presence of the sublime in Kant's political writings therefore, is an 'advance into heterogeneity'[8] which not only displaces the *archia* of practical reason among the 'faculties' of the subject, but which also anticipates a politics of communal sensibility—or *sensus communis*—whose autonomy would be the 'aesthetic' reception/phrasing of what is silenced in the categories of 'Occidental' philosophy.

There to be seems then, a sense in which Lyotard's transcription of Kant's political writings, begins with the idea that through the admission of the sublime into the critical philosophy (via the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*), Kant has already 'got the better'[9] of Hegel's dialectical reductions of difference, conflict and 'event'. For Lyotard, in other words, the feelings of disquiet and agitation which play around Kant's division of the critical subject into discrete faculties, disclose a 'loss' (of the rational/ethical integration of duty and respect, citizenship and civil society, history and moral progress) which leaves 'us' obligated to the radical heterogeneity of the other. It is this sense of Kant's aesthetic anticipation of the complexity (of language games, phrase regimes, genres of discourse) within which the reception of 'difference' must take place, that marks a continuity in Lyotard's later work with some of the 'reflective' notions of culture, community and moral feeling which are to be found in the third *Critique*. This is perhaps most apparent in the essay '*Sensus Communis*',[10] where Lyotard attempts to expound a possible relationship between Kant's notion of 'subjective universal' judgment, and a kind of untotalizable sensibility which both accompanies and resists the movement into totality. (And indeed, it is this Kantian sense of a 'vigorous' sensitivity to Ideas, which informs *The Differend*'s final sections on the relationship between a resistive culture of autonomy, and the economic imperative of 'gaining time').[11] To return to our reconstruction of Kant's relationship to Derrida however, I would suggest that while there are

traces of a certain Kantianism in Derrida's 'political writings' (particularly the importance he attaches to reason's relationship to 'the other', whose alterity remains infinitely transcendent of the resources of legislative presentation), it is his writing of the critical philosophy as dominated by categories of finitude—'categorical imperative', 'humanity', 'self-love'—that gives the clue to his relationship to Kant's ideas of ethical necessity and international right. In his essay 'The ends of man', Derrida remarks that, 'In Kant, the figure of finitude organizes the capacity to know from the very emergence of the anthropological limit'.[12] This means that after 'man' (as a species) has emerged from the violent, immemorial cycles of nature, the idea of 'rational humanity' must be understood as entirely distinct from the 'anthropological' determinations of the species. Yet this originary distinction which Kant makes between 'nature' and 'rational beings as such', is elided in his ethical writings, particularly the *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. 'Man the species', in other words, becomes an exemplification of the principles of pure practical reason: that is, a 'particular being' whose egoity, individuality, feeling and desire, can be treated as coincident with the transcendental purposiveness of rational intelligence as such. This account of the organizing presence of finitude in Kant's critical ethics is very important: first, because it situates the occurrence of the sublime within a theatre of knowing which has already gathered the contingency 'feeling' into the (transcendental) purposiveness of nature; and second, because it places the Kantian ideals of citizenship, republican democracy and cosmopolitanism, in a very different relationship to the resources of European identity than that which is to be found in Lyotard's writing.

In *The Other Heading*, Derrida gives us the outlines of a thesis about the relationship between spirit (or rather the philosophical resources through which the mediating and recuperative powers of spirit are written) and modern European identity. A rather hurried presentation of this thesis would emphasize Derrida's insistence upon a certain 'dual responsibility' which is constituted in Europe as the original place of enlightenment. Such a responsibility would remain, in part, continuous with the ideals of Western philosophical thought. For although Derrida's tracing of the supplement through the determinations of spirit is above all a registration of the 'economics' of the *archia* (that is, of the violence, resistance and contingency which is unacknowledged in the writing of the law as presence/self-identity), it remains true that the concepts of humanity, autonomy and respect which have been articulated through the resources of philosophical reason, constitute a kind of (ideal) horizon through which the 'alterity' of the other must be thought. The demand produced by a deconstructive (re)writing of European identity therefore, is that the presence of that identity to itself should be disclosed as the outcome of a 'gathering' (of humanity, of citizens, of rationally autonomous beings) which has excluded the 'difference' upon which it is founded. This difference (which Derrida identifies not simply with the 'colonized' who have accompanied the expansion of the Western gaze from the time of the Ancient Greeks, but also with the racial, cultural and national differences that originate the search for a 'spiritual' Europe) is what Derrida refers to as the 'other of the heading': the alterity which, in its co-presence with the origin and trajectory of European identity, demands to be

thought of in relation to its 'established' categories of legality and right. Thus, while the ideals of the Enlightenment demand to be respected as conditions which allow the registration of difference/alterity as an ethical necessity, it must also be recognised that to act responsibly, one must actively pursue the irreconcilability of the other (as other) with the 'present' forms of rational mediation. As Derrida puts it in *The Other Heading*: '... there is no responsibility that is not the experience and experiment of the impossible... . Taking a few shortcuts, economizing on mediations, it would seem that European cultural identity, like identity and identification in general, if it must be equal to *itself and to the other*, up to the measure of its own immeasurable difference "with itself", belongs, therefore *must* belong, to this *experience and experiment of the impossible*' (original emphasis).[13]

This notion of an ethical responsibility to 'the impossible'—that is, to those occurrences and contingencies that are (necessarily) unforeseen in the legislative strictures of reason—is fundamentally important to our presentation of the relationship of Kantian to Derridian politics. As is well known, Kant's idea of 'critique' begins with a radical questioning of the presuppositions of rationalist and empiricist epistemologies,[14] and proceeds to a complex, 'analogical' reformulation of the idea of causality as necessary to the concept of a moral will (*Wille*).[15] Now, while Kant is at pains to point out that the form of the categorical imperative—'act as if the maxim of your action were to be universal law for all mankind'—cannot prescribe a set of actions which would be moral 'in-themselves', it remains the case that the sense of pure duty which is invoked by the other as a rational being, must always be brought into conformity with the concept of self-determination (i.e. with the set of private and civic duties prescribed by the the legislative structure of practical reason). For Derrida, this idea of moral prescription must remain incompatible with the kind of responsibility demanded by the constitution of 'Europe' as a cultural, philosophical and spiritual identity. For by attempting to derive a set of substantive ends from the principle of formal self-coincidence, Kant has from the beginning subjected his idea of 'infinity' (the transcendent unity of nature and freedom whose necessity issues in the feeling of pure obligation) to a normative calculation which can only reproduce the conditions of its enactment. A finite, Eurocentric 'humanity', in other words, is encrypted in the demand of duty; and it is this demand which Kant deploys in his political writing as the unconditional guarantee that state republicanism, representative democracy and rational individualism, are signs of progress towards a cosmopolitan responsibility. Clearly this presentation of the relationship between Kant's critical ethics and the aims of his political writings, needs a good deal of unpacking. We will need to look first at the ways in which Kant attempts to reconcile the apparent disorder of historical events with the Idea of humanity's moral progress, and at his account of the relationships between Enlightenment, cosmopolitanism and world-historical right. Again, the difference between Lyotard and Derrida's respective readings of Kant is important. For as we will see, Derrida's re-marking of the legislative finitude in Kant's political writings (that is, the encryption of 'European' forms of representation, self-recognition and individuality in the reflective proposition of world historical progress) informs a critique of the ethical and political complicities of neo-

Kantian thought—especially the polarities represented by Lyotard and Habermas. We will return to this question of the relationship between Kantianism and 'global' modernity,[16] when we come to look at the detail of Derrida's reflections on the European 'philosopheme' in *The Other Heading* and in *Of Spirit*. For the moment however, we need to examine the claims of Kant's political writings in rather more detail.

Kant and the Idea of Moral Progress

In order to appreciate fully what is at stake in Kant's political writings, we need to return to the concept of duty which is expounded in the *Critique of Practical Reason* and *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. In the latter, Kant remarks:

> Now, I say, man, and in general, every rational being exists as an end in himself and not merely as a means to be arbitrarily used by this or that will. In all his actions, whether they are directed to himself or to other rational beings, he must always be regarded at the same time as an end.[17]

This passage, which Derrida quotes at the beginning of 'The ends of man', indicates the ultimate purpose to which Kant's idea of duty is dedicated: that is, an unconditional respect for the other considered as a rational, self-determining intelligence. The universalizing structure of the categorical imperative therefore (which demands that we ask ourselves whether or not the maxim of our particular action could serve as a law for an ideal community of rational beings), is intended to schematize a certain 'noumenal' causality of the will, in which the purity of my motives—their freedom from the influence of nature (self-love, inclination)—functions to guarantee the rightness of my action with regard to rational humanity in general. Thus, the unconditional voice of conscience upon which Kant founds his critical ethics, is presented as a 'fact of reason': as an inescapable demand for moral rightness, which is distinguished *a priori* from the exigencies of acquisitiveness, sexual desire, love and even friendship. We might note in passing that Kant was far from untroubled by the possibility that human nature might exist in state of 'radical evil', in which the demands of conscience would be followed only insofar as they might facilitate the ends of self-love.[18] In the end however, Kant withdrew from the implications of such a degenerate human nature (implications which were rigorously followed through in Joseph de Maistre's account of the state as orchestrater of arbitrary and spectacular punishments), and began his critique of political reason from the 'established' primacy of duty within the rational subject. We need then, to examine the ways in which Kant sought to validate the proposition that, while there is evil in the world, there is also progress in human history towards higher moral culture and the establishment of a cosmopolitan responsibility.

In his essay 'Idea for a universal history with a cosmopolitan purpose', Kant remarks that:

> Whatever conception of the freedom of the will one may form in terms of metaphysics, the will's manifestation in the realm of

> phenomena, i.e. human actions, are determined in accordance with natural laws, as is every other natural event. History is concerned with giving an account of these phenomena, no matter how deeply concealed their causes might be, and it allows us to hope that, if it examines the free exercise of human will *on a large scale*, it will be able to discover a progression among freely willed actions.[19] (original emphasis)

This passage is a highly synoptic statement of the relations between nature and morality, freedom and necessity, and noumena and phenomena, which Kant regarded as established in the first and second *Critiques*, and which inform the method of his providential history. Thus, the ethico-teleology which is set out in the 'Idea for a universal history' (i.e. the emergence of rational humanity from its submersion in nature, the violent necessity for protection which founds the nation state, and the formation of law and civil society from the spontaneous limitation of self-interest), presupposes the difference between 'practical' and 'theoretical' legislations which Kant has already expounded, and which organizes the identity of freedom, autonomy and reason within the critical subject. The concept of progress towards the good which Kant develops in his political writings therefore, involves a complex re-presentation of the relationship between 'nature' (i.e. the empirical events of human history which appear to disclose no more than a continuum of violence, domination and destruction) and 'autonomy' (i.e. the law-governed freedom of humanity whose ultimate purpose is the cessation of conflict between nation states). As we have seen, the account of knowledge which Kant sets out in the first *Critique*, explicitly involves a 'schematization' of sense data into intuitive forms which are amenable to the discursive activity of the understanding (*Verstand*). In order for there to be knowledge of objects in space and time, in other words, it must be possible to refer any particular presentation to the general conditions of knowing—that is, to present 'this' particular presentation as an *example* of the structures which determine the 'objectivity' of cognition in general. What is important here, is that the concept of exemplarity is restricted *a priori* to the realm of phenomenal knowledge (nature); and as such, must remain foreign to the reception of speculative concepts, such as the progress of humanity towards the ultimate good of perpetual peace. The basic problem with which Kant is concerned in his political writings therefore, is that of divining the 'cosmopolitan purpose' of history from events which appear to be governed exclusively by natural necessity (i.e. by self-love, inclination, war and conflict).

Kant's attempt to resolve the antinomy between his designation of 'man' as a rational being capable of bringing about his own improvement, and the violence and destruction manifested in the events of empirical history, involves a recourse to the notion of reflective judgment presented in the third *Critique*.[20] A highly schematic account of his arguments—the detail of which is meticulously reconstructed in *The Differend*'s fourth 'notice' on Kant—would run something like this:

(1) For Kant, the prospect of history as a purposeless continuum, in which war and conflict would inevitably frustrate any improvement in the moral culture

of humanity, is an offence to reason. As autonomous beings, we are distressed by the apparent domination of human affairs by conflicts which occur within and among particular nation states.

(2) This feeling of 'a certain distaste' at the prospect of an utterly inhuman history however, is itself a 'sign' of man's designation as a moral being who is capable of pursuing his own freely chosen ends. And so while it must remain the case that moral progress cannot be validated by the emergence of particular states into real historical time (for as we have seen, the term 'humanity' refers to a speculative Idea which cannot be directly 'exemplified'), it is also true that the subjective reaction of humanity in general to the prospect of an unfathomable chaos in human affairs, is enough to suggest that nature cannot really exist in flat contradiction of the purposiveness which is proper to rational intelligence.

(3) It must then, according to Kant's argument, be possible to make a passage from the political logic of 'exemplification', to that of 'reflection': a passage in which the events of empirical history are no longer regarded simply as repetitive examples of an essentially violent human nature (as in the 'political moralism' of Machiavelli, Hobbes, de Maistre, etc.), but rather as possible 'analogical' presentations of the progress of humanity towards the good.

(4) The original presupposition of Kant's speculative history therefore, is that the very impossibility of exemplifying the concept of humanity in the laws and duties of particular states, must return the critical subject to the pursuit of 'free causality' (morality) in the realm of nationhood and international right. According to Kant, this return is made possible by the occurrence of historical 'signs' (*Begebenheit*): events which, although they occur within the realm of empirical history, also stand as analogical presentations of a possible future in which rational, cosmopolitan peace, will have emerged from a violent and chaotic nature.

(5) The ideal significance of these events is, for Kant, disclosed in a universal subjective feeling of 'enthusiasm' which sometimes accompanies the spectacle of revolutionary violence. When this feeling does occur (and it is in the nature of historical signs that they are temporally unpredictable, and cannot be 'determined' by the 'various diachronic series of the mechanical world'),[21] its contribution to the moral trajectory of history, always accumulates among those who live within states adjacent to, yet removed from, to the violence of popular insurrection. To use Kant's example, it was not in the Jacobin Terror established after the Revolution of 1789, that the signature of progress was to be divined, but rather in the general enthusiasm for the 'rights of man' which the French Revolution implanted in the sovereign states of Europe.[22]

(6) In the end therefore, it is this contingent and unpredictable feeling of enthusiasm—a feeling which, as Lyotard points out, is very close to the sense of 'agitation' which accompanies the judgment of sublimity in the third *Critique*—which allows us to assert the continued progress of humanity towards the good. For the open expression of enthusiasm for the aims of republican democracy within states that remain dominated by the

absolute authority of the monarch, reveals both an essentially 'ethical' unconcern with the punitive consequences of espousing the republican cause, and the achievement of a certain *irreversible* level of subjective moral culture (enlightenment) among human beings.

We have seen that the transcription of Kant's political writings which Lyotard presents in *The Differend*, is concerned primarily with the extent to which Kant has 'ventured into heterogeneity' with his account of the subjective universal feelings which guide reflective judgements. However, we have suggested that such a reading of Kant, as anticipating a certain 'ethical' relation of feeling (*sensus*)—'agitation', 'excitation', 'suspension', etc.—to discrete and incommensurable forms of knowledge, may conceal a deeper, more structural logic of 'presentation', whose presuppositions are played out in his ideas of republican democracy, international right, and cosmopolitan responsibility. We need therefore, to look more closely at the way in which Kant has described the possible 'gathering'—to use Derrida's term—of (European) humanity into a legislative confederation of states.

In the essay 'Perpetual Peace', the republican constitution is defined as: '... the only constitution which can be derived from the idea of an original contract, upon which all rightful legislation of a people must be founded'.[23] The 'original contract' to which Kant refers in this passage, marks a transition from the realm of pure nature, in which humanity is determined through the mechanical ordering of its existence, to the realm of history, in which it is possible to divine a 'guiding thread' of purposiveness in the realms of national and international right. Thus, the 'prophetic history' through which Kant authorizes the moral necessity of perpetual peace, must provide an account of how the apparent chaos of natural/mechanical causes, can contribute to the development of republican democracy from the violent absolutism which founds the state, and how the formation and proliferation of such constitutions, can contribute to the ideal of a cosmopolitan confederation of nations. For Kant, the structure of a truly republican constitution, necessarily involves the formal freedom of all its members (considered as 'men' in the sense of 'rational beings'), the dependence of every citizen upon a single common legislation, and the equality of every citizen before the law.[24] Such a constitution is 'ideal' in the sense that its concept is derived, not from the immediate causes which precipitate the actions of human beings considered as part of nature, but rather from the Idea of pure practical reason (i.e. the original, originating necessity that rational intelligence should be a universal and unconditional end for itself). Yet if this republican constitution is not to remain a kind of Platonic ideal (*paradigmata*) whose purity is originally estranged from the corruption (*doxa*, *hyle*) of human affairs, it must be the case that nature, considered as a reflective Idea, has been contrived in such a way as to further the ends of rational humanity. As Kant puts it in the 'Idea for a universal history':

> Nature has willed that man should produce entirely by his own initiative everything that goes beyond the mechanical ordering of his existence, and that he should not partake of any other happiness or perfection than that which he has procured for himself without instinct and by his own reason.[25]

It is this rationalized, non-pathological happiness therefore, that is the ethical 'good' towards which the 'large-scale' trajectory of historical events is orientated.

Thus, if we turn to the the detail of Kant's arguments in 'Universal history' and 'Perpetual Peace', his presentation of the design which guides human history proceeds along the following lines:

(1) The original formation of nation states comes through the universal violence that exists in the state of nature (a violence which, for Kant, is inescapable due to the fact that the Earth is a globe, and that an 'infinite retreat' of peoples from each other would have been impossible).[26]
(2) The unremitting necessity to which individual states are subject (i.e. the universal threat of invasion, devastation and spoliation),[27] ultimately contributes to a stable and coherent organization of civil society. For the better organized any given state is in its in its *internal* affairs, the better it will be able to resist the violence *externally* imposed upon it by other nations.
(3) A moral citizenry, in which each is recognized as an unconditional end in himself, is founded upon the limitation of self-love which is necessitated by the violent and 'unrestricted relations which obtain between various nations'.[28] The origin of civil society and the rights and duties which are inscribed in its institutions, in other words, can be traced to the constitution of what Kant calls the 'unsocial sociability' of particular ends.[29] For each individual, in order to guarantee himself a share of the collective good, will modify his work, satisfaction and desire in order to accommodate the needs of another.
(4) Such modifications of the 'technical' purposes pursued by individuals in civil society, ultimately contribute to the development of a moral culture, in which the calculation of mutual advantage is steadily replaced by the unconditional demands of duty and enlightened citizenship.
(5) This moral culture, while it originates in the constant threat of war among sovereign states, has as its necessary and unconditional end the establishment of 'a perfect civil union of mankind, [which] must be regarded as possible and even capable of furthering the purposes of nature itself'.[30] For Kant, in other words, we can legitimately assume that those states which approximate most closely to the republican ideal, will also be the most powerful actors in the economy of violence which obtains among nations considered simply as 'natural' individuals. Thus, within the geopolitical space of Enlightenment—that is, in the continent of Europe—it is possible to recognize a design in which the achievement of a certain level of civil and political culture, will always be sustained *and improved* through the moral necessity inscribed in the establishment of international power.
(6) Finally then, there is the world-historical role which Kant attributes to Europe in the establishment of a global cosmopolitanism. For inasmuch as moral culture has been progressing towards the cosmopolitan ideal ever since the emergence of Ancient Greek ideals of democracy, citizenship, and reason, it must, according to the logic of 'universal history', have occupied a legislative position in relation to the 'other' of European culture and

> identity. As Kant puts it: '... in so far as knowledge of them [hegemonic European states] has gradually come down to us through enlightened nations, we shall discover a regular process of improvement in the political constitutions of our continent (which will probably legislate eventually for all other continents)'.[31]

So where has this brief rehearsal of Kant's political arguments taken us? Well, I began the article by suggesting that in order to understand the possible contemporary significance of Kant's reflections on international right and cosmopolitanism, we will need to examine closely the relationship between the 'gathering' of European cultural identity which occurs in the philosophy of spirit, and the notion of 'finitude' which schematizes Kant's account of 'universal history'. It is clear from much of Derrida's writing prior to *The Other Heading*, that it is Heidegger's presentation of the relationship between the 'ontic difference' of Being and the categories through which this difference is organized, which is the founding provocation of the concept of deconstructive responsibility.[32] This is perhaps why Derrida devotes so much attention to the idea of spirit which Heidegger deploys (both secretly and explicitly) in his writing after *Being and Time*. For there seems to be a powerful dissonance between the deconstructive gesture implied in the 'dissimulated' unity of Being, and Heidegger's pursuit of a gathering, inspirational 'spirit' which inhabits and revivifies the privilege of the German nation and language in relation to historicity of 'man'. Thus, the question we must address before moving on to the detail of Derrida's account of the 'capitalizing' trajectory of European culture, concerns Lyotard and Derrida's respective 'discoveries' of originary difference in the work of Kant (Lyotard's reading of the 'Analytic of the Sublime' in *The Differend*) and Heidegger (Derrida's deconstruction of the question of Being in *Writing and Difference* and *Of Spirit*).

We have seen that Lyotard's transcription of Kant's writings, is concerned to show that the notion of enthusiasm through which historical progress is signified, marks a 'venturing into heterogeneity' (feeling, agitation, suspension etc.) which cannot be contained within the boundaries of a republican organization of duty and civic responsibility. According to Lyotard, Kant's re-presentation of the feelings of sublime agitation in the form of the *Begebenheit*, discloses *the* crucial fact about the law as it posited through the structures of generic discourse: i.e. that its necessity is always accompanied by an irreducible remainder; a residue of feeling which registers that which is not and cannot be presented within the terms of 'this' set of determining rules. As Lyotard puts it in *The Differend*: 'what is discovered [in the pure moral 'enthusiasm' of the *Begebenheit*] is not only the infinite import of ideas, its incommensurability to all presentation, but also the destination which is to supply a presentation for the unpresentable ... and therefore to exceed all that can be presented'.[33] The consequences of this transcription of Kant's idea of subjective universal feeling, are explored more fully in two of Lyotard's later opuscles, *Heidegger and "The Jews"*.[34] In the latter, Lyotard makes the claim that the 'moments, formations and entities' of 'Occidental thought',[35] are originally determined in relation to an 'otherness' which, in every historical epoch, becomes the unacknowledgeable object of

violence, marginalization and forgetting. (It is this dispersed and unpresentable otherness which Lyotard names 'the jews': that is, all those minorities which remain 'outside' of the acknowledged universality of the law.) Thus, the event of the Nazi Holocaust is presented by Lyotard as an act of final finality: an attempt to rid the law, and its social, ethical and political mediations, of its relationship to the other, by destroying the absolute other of all community (the Jew and his anxiety before the word of a transcendent God) and burying all signs of the destruction. What is important here, is that for Lyotard, it is Kant's 'discovery' of the unpresentable feelings that accompany the postulation of the law, which is essential to a politically responsible reception of difference. For implicit in this discovery, is the idea that there are certain 'undeconstructable' feelings which maintain an 'ethical' demand in relation to the law as such: a demand which can only be registered if these feelings are taken as irreducible signs of differend, alterity and the spontaneity of 'the phrase' (within the *sensus communis*). It is this sense of Kant's having already given us the gift of heterogeneity, which informs Lyotard's critique of Derrida's 'deconstructive' reading of Heidegger (a reading whose meticulousness, Lyotard maintains, serves only to conduct the signs, feelings and events of difference that are essential to the determination of 'spirit', into a 'blind blank zone' which 'authorizes' the politics of absolute violence.[36]) Yet this disavowal of deconstruction as simply completing the Heideggerian project (by seeking out the residue of spirit which led Heidegger into his infamous complicity with Nazism), neglects Derrida's idea of an originary 'promise' which is even more originary than Heidegger's account of the question.

According to the famous dedicated footnote which Derrida appended to the lectures which comprise *Of Spirit*, 'Before us, before everything, below or above everything, it [the promise] inscribes the question, negation or denial, it en-gages them without limits in the correspondence with *langue* and *parole* (*Sprach*)'.[37] What this means, is that *before* the possibility of the question (attentiveness to the 'epochal' questions of man's historical 'being'), there is the necessity of my having been placed in the 'scission' between the strictures of the *logos* (duty, legality, general will, etc.), and the undecidable, unforeseeable responsibility which follows from the enunciation, or 'Saying', of those strictures. The (Heideggerian) question therefore, itself presupposes the originary, immemorial event of 'our' having been 'promised' to the *logos*, and thus made responsible to the contingency (momentary empowerments and unforeseen translations of the 'alterity' of the other) which is opened by legislative enunciation of the law. And so far from leading away from questions of the origin of the law, of violence and coercion, of memory and forgetting, and of political responsibility, deconstruction actually demands that we reflect carefully upon the metaphysical 'supplements'—ghosts, traces—through which the law is maintained in its 'presence'. With regard to 'our' responsibility to European cultural identity then, Derrida remarks in *The Other Heading*: 'We must ... be suspicious of both repetitive memory *and* the completely other of the absolutely new; of *both* anamnesic capitalization *and* the amnesic exposure to what would no longer be identifiable at all' (original emphasis).[38] And so in order to understand the kind of responsibility which 'we' Europeans may still have towards the ideals of

citizenship, enligtenment and international right presented in Kant's political philosophy, we will need to look at the relationship of these ideals *both* to the gathering/legislative powers of (European) spirit, and to the elements of 'modernity' (the 'global economy', the 'third world', the technocratic domination of nature, the industrialization of culture, etc.) which have emerged since the 'bourgeois' revolution of 1789.

Derrida's 'Other Heading'

As we have seen, the core of Derrida's exposition of European thought, culture and identity, is his deconstruction of the idea of spirit. As he puts it in *The Other Heading*:

> I note only that from Hegel to Valery, from Husserl to Heidegger, in spite of all the differences that distinguish these great examples from each other ... this *traditional* discourse is already a discourse of the *modern* Western world. It dates, it is dated. It is the most current, nothing is more current, but already it dates back. It is the most current, nothing is more current, but already it dates back And this currentness reveals a familiarly disquieting wrinkle, discrete but merciless, the very stigmata of an anachrony that marks the day of all our days, of all our gestures, discourses and affects, both public and private. It dates from the moment when Europe sees itself *on the horizon*, that is to say, from its end ... This old discourse about Europe, a discourse at once exemplary and exemplarist, is already a *traditional discourse of modernity*. It is also the discourse of anamnesis because of this refined taste for finality, for the end, if not for death.[39] (original emphasis)

Thus for Derrida, if we are to understand 'Europe' as more than a geographical promontory appended to the continental mass of Asia, we must attend to the logic of those philosophical structures through which its internal difference—nationality, culture, race, etc.—has been gathered into a universal 'heading' for all humanity. The law of this historical re-production is that of transcendental supplementarity. For while it is the metaphysical resources of spirit which found the specifically European mediations of culture, politics, morality and right, these resources must remain 'excessive' of all their possible forms and categorizations. The concept of spirit, in other words, functions as the 'incomparable condition' of European identity: for it is that which necessitates the inscription of its own excessive/transcendent universality, within the hierarchical structures of truth and ethical life (nation, culture, language, etc.). It is this necessity of spirit's inscribing itself within the 'substance' of European culture therefore, which is designated in *The Other Heading* by the term 'exemplarity'. For even though Derrida insists that we must respect 'all the differences that distinguish' Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger and Valery in their respective accounts of the 'spiritual' unity of Europe, it remains the case that, in general, the resources of spirit are 'linked to the value of an *exemplarity* that inscribes the universal in the proper body of a singularity'.[40] Thus, the 'gathering' of Europe into the place of

a humanizing enlightenment, is accomplished through a logic of exemplification, in which the 'body' of a particular language or culture is expounded as the true—or at least the truest possible—embodiment of spirit's transcendent, revivifying, recuperative necessity. For example, when Paul Valery announces that his 'personal impression' of France is of a people whose 'special quality is to believe and feel that we are universal', he is announcing the exemplarity of France in relation both to the gathering excessiveness of spirit, and to the 'spiritual' totality of an enlightened European culture.[41] The same immanently violent logic can be said to characterize Hegel's presentation of spirit's relationship to the ethical structures of the Prussian state, and Heidegger's account of the proximity of the German language to the question of Being. Thus for Derrida, it is spirit 'that marks the day of all our days, of all our gestures, discourses and affects'; for it is that which, in its infinite excessiveness, constantly reemerges as the 'newness' of every new, enlightened modernity. We will return to this transformative, 'capitalizing' power of spirit in a moment.

How then, is Kant's political thought related to the metaphysical resources of spirit? And why is this relationship important to a contemporary understanding of the concepts of globalization and global responsibility? In order to answer these questions, we will need to specify exactly how the ideas of morality, responsibility and international right which Kant develops in his historical writings, are related to the certain 'postmetaphysical' descriptions of the politics of modernity (I have taken Habermas and Lyotard as exemplary). Specifically, we must attempt to register, or re-mark, the complicities of these forms of neo-Kantianism with the 'monopolizing' and 'dispersive' forces which have come to define our 'global' modernity.

We have seen that there is an apparent difference between what Derrida has called the 'capitalizing' power of spirit, and the structures and affections which organise Kant's political philosophy. A highly schematic, and indeed highly Lyotardian, account of this difference would emphasize: (1) the ideality ('unpresentability') of the concept of freedom; (2) the impossibility of an 'exemplary' realization of such a concept within the 'substantive' conditions of ethical life; and (3) that the nature of an 'enlightened' moral culture could only take the form of an increasingly vigorous subjective sensitivity to the idea of freedom. Yet despite these apparent gestures towards a 'reflective' politics (in which it would be the feelings provoked by the heterogeneity of generic discourses that would occasion the moment of political responsibility), it remains true that Kant concludes 'Perpetual peace' with the bold assertion that, 'we shall discover a regular process of improvement in the political constitutions of our continent (which will probably legislate eventually for all other continents)'. What is important here, is that Kant's notion of Europe as the legislative centre of moral enlightenment, discloses the structure of a certain teleology in which it is the temporal/phenomenological specifications of the 'universal' (the idea of freedom) that have come to dominate its speculative/unpresentable necessity. Derrida's essay 'The ends of man' makes this point with some precision: for he suggests that in Kant's moral and political thought, it is 'the figure of finitude [which] organizes the capacity to know from the very emergence of the anthropological limit'. There is then, a determining relationship between the

'analogical' forms through which Kant attempts to schmatize the idea of freedom (categorical imperative, rational humanity etc.), and the constitution of a moral teleology in which the confederal achievement of 'perpetual peace' is inscribed as an absolutely legitimate end. For it is only insofar as the self-identity of the moral will is presented as validating the possible peaceful co-existence of all 'rational' humanity, that such a goal can appear as a genuinely 'cosmo-political' end. It is this reproduction of the necessity of 'knowing' the structure of moral responsibility therefore, which discloses a passage—though not an identity—between the unifying ideals of Kant's political thought, and the capitalizing teleology (of spirit) through which Derrida expounds the 'heading' of European identity. Thus, if 'we' Europeans are to assume responsibility both for the ideals of the Enlightenment (formal equality, universal extension of the idea of humanity etc.), and for the alterity of those 'others' who live outside of the boundaries which circumscribe the place of reason and universal culture (here 'outside' would include the 'immigrant' whose status before the law is always touched by an excessive exteriority), we must attend carefully to the traces of a pure, transcendent responsibility which might survive within the 'philosophical discourse of modernity'.

Before examining the ways in which Kant's critical thought has been re-presented in certain 'postmetaphysical' conceptions identity, subjectivity, autonomy and responsibility however, we need to look in more detail Derrida's understanding of the idea of culture. In *The Other Heading*, Derrida announces as an 'axiom' that 'what is proper to a culture is not to be identical with itself'. Thus, when we talk about the 'identity' of a particular culture (in this case the legislative, capitalizing spirit of European humanity), we must recognize that such an identity is never fully present to itself; and that its constitution as a the 'subject' of moral, ethical and political activity always depends upon a certain inescapable difference from itself. As Derrida puts it:

> There is no culture or cultural identity without this difference *with itself*. A strange and slightly violent syntax: 'with itself' also means 'at home (with itself)'. In this case, self difference ... that which differs and diverges from itself, would also be the *difference (from) with itself*, a difference at once internal and irreducible to the 'at home (with itself)'. In truth, it would gather this centre, relating it to itself, only to the extent that it would open it up to this divergence.[42] (original emphasis)

Now, we have seen that the logic of exemplification which 'unites' the great expositors of European identity, also involves a certain dispersion which cannot be recuperated in any higher, more 'universal' writing of spirit. Thus, the categories through which spirit's self-presence is written (Said), reproduce European culture as an essentially conflictual 'Saying', which gathers difference into an economy of legislations, forces, coercions and resistances. We can, for example, understand the Nazi designation of 'culture creators' (Aryans), 'culture users' (non-Aryan white Europeans) and 'culture destroyers' (the Jews) as an enunciation of 'spirit', which sought to purify the place of its own self-recognition (the German nation state, and ultimately the continent of Europe) in the

project of absolute, ontological violence. Yet even this genocidal gathering of 'true' humanity into the body of the German *Volk*, demands to be understood in terms of the history of spirit; that is, in terms of 'a composition of forces and discourses which seem to have been waging merciless war on each other (for example from 1933 to our time)'.[43] The ethico-political necessity that has emerged 'after Auschwitz', in other words, demands that we attend to the religious, philosophical, political and economic forms which constitute the realm of 'culture' as an 'economy of violence', whose 'gathering' (monopolizing, homogenizing) potential is always inclusive of an 'otherness' which haunts the structures of universal identity. This reproduction of the other, the non-presence which is always given as the 'chance' of the ethical, is essential to Derrida's understanding of cosmopolitan responsibility. For if it is acknowledged that the capitalizing resources of spirit, as they are empowered and revitalized by the discourses of modernity, are neither absolutely realized, nor absolutely dissipated by those discourses, then our duty towards the 'other' of the European heading must take the form of a reflection which, while 'respecting all that is not placed under the authority [Western] of reason', also remains respectful of the ideals of clarity, communicability and universality which inspired the Enlightenment project. As Derrida puts it, our uniquely European responsibility 'dictates respecting differences, idioms, minorities, singularities, but also the universality of formal law, the desire for translation, agreement and univocity, the law of the majority, opposition to racism, nationalism, and xenophobia'.[44]

It is this deconstructive notion of responsibility which brings us back to the question of the relationship between Kant's formulation of the concept of cosmopolitanism, and Derrida's understanding of the 'centralizing compulsions' which determine the ideals and aporias of 'globalization'. In *The Other Heading*, Derrida thematizes the relationship between the 'where' of Enlightenment (the place in which the philosophy of spirit inscribes and reinscribes the 'essence' of humanity), and the expansive, colonizing trajectory of European culture, through the terms *la capitale* and *le Capital*. The first of these terms, the feminine *la capitale*, refers to the problem of constituting a 'centre', a fixed, determinate core of self-presence, from which the 'essence' of humanity would venture as a universally enlightening, universally liberating force. For Kant, we have seen that this 'venturing out' of the place of Enlightenment, should take the form of reproducing the conditions of confederal responsibility which are revealed as legislative within the 'theatre' of European identity. Thus the emergence of republican states from the violence which originally formed the nations of Europe, is linked *a priori* to end of conserving the moral culture which has already begun to emerge within those nations. The concept of a legislative 'centre' therefore, is disclosed in Kant's political thought as a 'gathering' of the *sensus communis* (the 'community' subjective universal feelings which respond to the Idea of freedom) within those states that are already most respectful of the ideals of autonomous humanity and reflective citizenship. For Derrida however, Kant's account of the 'signs' which mark historical progress (those expressions of pure, disinterested 'enthusiasm' which register the primacy of will and reason in human affairs), could only prefigure

the politics of exemplification which becomes fully explicit in the categories of spirit. Such a politics, we have seen, involves the presupposition of a transcategorial essence, whose necessity is the inscription and reinscription of itself within the determinate, hierarchical structures which organize national, cultural and linguistic hegemony. The gathering of the (European) 'centre' which is accomplished through spirit's capacity for 'exemplification', in other words, is originally bound up with the demarcation of stable frontiers and boundaries among those nations which comprise the 'capital' (*la capitale*) of enlightened humanity. It is this assumption of the state, or rather states, as the internally differentiated 'subjects' through which progress towards a universal 'good' is to be achieved, which marks a certain proximity of Kant's political thought to the metaphysical resources of spirit. For the reflective 'gathering' through which European cultural identity is to become legislative 'for all other continents', refers to structures and designations (civil society, republican democracy, formal legality) which are conceived as originally amenable to the transmission of subjective culture and the perpetuation of moral progress.

It is here then, that we begin to encounter the difference between 'traditional' discourses of modernity (those which presuppose the logic of exemplification in which particularized forms of language, nation and race are 'gathered' into the hierarchical politics of the 'centre'), and Derrida's account of the 'centralizing compulsions'—expressed in culture industries, the growth of new media of communication, and the expansion of techno-scientific powers—which do not always go through the 'spiritual' mediations of law and state.[45] This circumvention of the structures through which the traditional European politics of capitalization and hegemony has been played out, is important in the sense that it obliges us to reevaluate our relationship to the legislative resources of the Enlightenment. As Europeans responsible to our own cultural and philosophical history, in other words, Derrida insists that we can no longer assume that the realm of 'the political' is adequately expressed in the dialectics citizenship, participation and sovereignty which are essential to the idea of the *polis* (the place of political freedom in which the law is simultaneously given and received by a collectively identical subject—the citizenry).[46] Instead, we must attend to a 'resurgence' of the question of the legislative centre, *la capitale*, which has occurred through the dispersion of spirit's recuperative investment of nation and identity. This contemporary question of the capital therefore, is no longer one of attempting to establish the accumulation of spirit in the 'exemplary' forms and idioms of the centre, but rather one of judging how the global forces of 'dispersion' and 'monopoly' which have come to exceed the established structures of the nation state, might be related to the European ideals of autonomy, universality and democracy. For Derrida, such a judgement ought not take the form of abandoning responsibility for the 'exemplarist' logic of these ideals, in order to give a (supposedly) more positive account either of the processes through which formal sovereignty has been exploited within the global economy, or of how this economy has come to determine a new potential for communication and democratic practice. Rather, Derrida claims that the responsibility which has emerged with the forces of globalization, demands a kind of

navigation between the 'constructivist' concepts of Western thought (concepts which, we have seen, produce the 'gathering' of difference and non-identity into the determinate boundaries and frontiers of the centre), and the 'other' of the European heading, whose difference is increasingly threatened by the scientific, economic, aesthetic and political powers of monopoly. The question of the capital therefore, has become one of cosmo-political responsibility: of attempting to register the relationship of the other, as he or she is exposed to the newest forms of capitalization and exclusion, to an increasingly fragile (ideal, transcendent) hegemony of European culture.

This 'dual' responsibility cannot, for Derrida, take the form of a 'programme' (in which the ethical status of particular actions or judgements is determined *a priori*), but is inevitably provoked by the application of monopolizing techniques to the unknowable alterity of the other. Thus, the stricture of cosmo-political obligation is such that it demands an 'experimental' response to the aporias of 'gathering' (spirit, recuperation, exemplification), 'dispersal' (agonism, untranslatability), and 'monopoly' (subsumption, capitalization, reproduction); a response which would mark the exercise of 'freedom' and 'selfhood' as contingent possibilities that are necessarily generated by the (heterogeneous) forms, structures and idioms of modernity. The event of being called to decide upon one's ethical responsibility to the other therefore, is never 'private' in the Kantian sense—that is, in the sense of a possible repetition of the will's formal independence from the realm of 'natural' necessity (inclination, self-love). Rather, this responsibility is originally 'political' in the sense that it is a questioning of the law, both in terms of its textual/philosophical inscription, and of the possibility of its application to the 'new' conditions of social, cultural, economic and aesthetic reproduction. As Derrida puts it in *The Other Heading*:

> I will even venture to say that ethics, politics and responsibility, *if there are any*, will only ever have begun with the experience and experiment of the aporia ... The condition of possibility of this thing called responsibility is a certain experience and experiment of the possibility of the impossible: the testing of the aporia from which one may invent the only *possible invention, the impossible invention*.[47] (original emphasis)

Such a questioning therefore, must attend not only to the aporias of cultural identity, monopolistic accumulation and violent dispersal, but also to the legislative force of its own enunciation. For it is only by remaining open to the unforeseen possibilities (of domination, autonomy, resistance and colonization) which accompany this 'remarking' of the traces of alterity, that we can be responsible both to the 'other' of the European heading, and to the ideals inscribed in European cultural identity.

For Derrida, the conditions of ethical and political responsibility are to be found neither in the 'technico-economico-scientific'[48] powers of monopoly, nor in the dispersal of heterogeneous genres, idioms and nationalities which has occurred through the extension of such powers. If we are to assume a genuinely cosmo-political responsibility to plight of the other, we must not try to hide

the fact that its stricture is impossibly aporetic; and that as such, cannot be subsumed under any legislative writing of dispersal (heterogeneity, agonism) or centrality (homogeneity, communicability). Thus, it is Derrida's account of a performative freedom which is possible only within the 'global' economics of same and other, friend and enemy, war and peace, that returns us to the political ideas which Kant has bequeathed to modernity. In his recent essay, 'Of the humanities and the philosophical discipline. The right of philosophy from a cosmopolical point of view',[49] Derrida expounds in detail his relationship to the cultural, pedagogical and political ideals presented in Kant's 'Idea for a universal history'. As I have tried to show in my reconstructions Kant's relationship to the resources of Western philosophy, there remains in his political writings a 'teleological axis' in which the designations 'Europe', 'nature' and 'modernity' are gathered into a cumulative progression which is to become legislative for the whole of humankind. Yet even though this axis is sufficient to place Kant's providential history within the tradition of the European modernity whose logic is addressed in *Of Spirit* and *The Other Heading*, there is a sense in which Derrida's account of the 'cosmopolitical' right of philosophy remains Kantian. For while it should be clear that Kant's notion of Enlightenment can neither avoid an unfortunate complicity with the expropriative history of Western 'civilization', nor respond to the 'global' imperatives of late-modernity without transgressing its basic regulative structures, Derrida insists that the central insight of the political writings— that philosophical reflection is a fundamental right of all humanity, and that such a right is always reconstituted through those 'heteronomous' discourses which would claim a monopoly on the truth of humanity's proper political constitution— remains essential to his own account of the relationship between reason, culture and enlightenment. The possibility of moral progress, in other words, would receive its chance through a certain reflection upon the 'bastard, hybrid, grafted, multilinear and polyglot'[50] history of the ideas which gathered European culture into the embodiment of all that is properly human. For it is not until 'we' acknowledge the history of translation, dissemination and erasure through which 'our' European identity has been constituted, that the compossibility of freedom and ethical necessity which Kant has presented through the legislative figures of the categorical imperative, the rational citizen and the republican constitution, could possibly enact the 'dual responsibility' (to the centre and the other) that Derrida identifies as 'cosmopolitical'.

The condition of this responsibility we have seen, is 'a certain experience and experiment of the possibility of the impossible',[51] in which the concepts and ideas of Enlightenment thought (self and other, subject and object, personality and identity) are re-marked in their unforeseen relations with the scientific, technical and economic powers of modernity. Thus for Derrida, if there is a 'political' necessity to defend the right of all human beings to philosophical reflection (a necessity which Kant put at the very centre of his idea of Enlightenment as the emergence of humanity from its 'self-incurred immaturity'), this would begin not with 'reason' and 'nature' as established designations of good and evil, but with the necessity of acknowledging the presuppositions which are inscribed in the discourses of science, technology and

economy, and attempting to respond to these presuppositions without simply repeating the exemplarist logic of the philosophy of spirit. As Derrida puts it:

> ... a politics of the right of philosophy for all (men and women) [would] not be only a politics of science and technology, but also a politics of thought which would yield neither to positivism nor to scientism nor to epistemology, and which would discover again, on the scale of new stakes, in its relation to science but also to religions, and also to law and ethics, an experience which would be at once provocation or reciprocal respect but also irreducible autonomy.[52]

The possibility of an ethical response to the other—or 'others'—of global modernity therefore, is opened by the implication of spirit (its mediations of identity, subjectivity, reason and presence) in the capitalizing trajectory of European culture. Thus, when Derrida asserts at the very start of 'The right of philosophy', 'I will begin with the question "where?"',[53] he is attempting to mark a certain 'legitimacy' in the foundation of UNESCO—as a cosmopolitical institution concerned with the possibility of justice and the application of international law—at the 'centre' of rational enlightenment. For while such an institution would always be marked by a certain Eurocentrism, this European origin would at least demand that the 'globalizing' forms of science, technology and economy remain accountable to the structures within which freedom, identity and citizenship have 'traditionally' been enacted.

This then, is the ethical core of Derrida's notion of a 'dual responsibility' constituted through the structures and categories of Enlightenment thought. For although Kant's idea of moral progress (in which the the relationship of 'autonomous' subjectivity and 'heteronomous' affection would ultimately contribute to the same hegemonic ideal of a 'nature that aims at the total, perfect political unification of the human species')[54] could no longer hope to 'find' its analogical forms (signs) within the 'necessary' structures of nationhood, there is still a basic and irreducible sense in which 'the right to philosophy', to think and to enter freely into the established usages and idioms of authority, bears upon the most 'political' questions which determine the identity of states. Derrida's particular concern with issues such as the enfranchisement of immigrants in France, for example, is a concern both for the fate of the 'revolutionary ideals' of Western democracy (formal equality, universal recognition, etc.), and for the fate of the 'other' as s/he must live in relation to legislative practices to which his/her alterity has no immediate point of access. As he put in an address to the collective '89 for equality', 'The combat against xenophobia and racism *also* goes by this right to vote. So long as it is not gained, injustice will reign, democracy will be limited to that extent, and the riposte to racism will remain abstract and impotent'.[55] Thus, we can begin to discern more clearly the economics of marginality and centrality which informs Derrida's account of the 'cosmopolitical' right of philosophy, and its 'indissociable' relationship to the 'movement of effective democratization'.[56] For so long as the European 'centre' remains concretely inimical to the 'others' through which it has sustained its internal hierarchies (a resistance which is made increasingly sharp by the

attenuation of 'national' structures of identity by the 'global' forces of science, technology and economy), the 'origin' of international law will tend to foreclose upon the unforeseen possibilities of translation or contingent points of re-cognition through which the 'other' (of Western cultural identity) would be given its chance. It is to this 'chance' of participating equally in the determination of the structures, categories and judgements of universal justice therefore, that 'cosmo-political' institutions like UNESCO ought to be responsible. Their very foundation, for Derrida, presupposes an ethical demand that the ideals of the Enlightenment project should remain infinitely—indeed transcendentally—sensitive to the different cultures, idiolects and singularities which the capitalizing history of Europe has sought to expropriate and to erase. What Kant's attempt to write the 'natural' gathering of Europe into the place of moral and political Enlightenment ought to have shown us therefore, is that if the right of philosophy is, as he maintains, unconditionally linked to the autonomy of the other, then we must acknowledge that the 'centre' of humanity's self-presence is 'legislative' only in the sense that it offers the registration/re-marking of non-European difference the infinite metaphysical resources of spirit. What this 'new' cosmopolitanism would demand, in other words, would be an acknowledgement of philosophy not as the source of a possible resolution of the conflict between the law and the 'heteronomous' conditions of its application, but rather an attentiveness to the possibilities of non-iterative translation (of the logos into languages 'without filiational relation' to Greek, Latin, German or Arabic foundations)[57] which always accompany the writing of the realm of moral, ethical and political necessity.

In conclusion, I want to look briefly at the ways in which certain forms of neo-Kantianism may have contributed to the misrecognition of 'global' modernity—either as the emergent condition of a universal pragmatics of communicative action, or as the infinite proliferation of heterogeneous discourses and untranslatable singularities. We have seen that for Derrida, the ethical and political responsibility which comes with 'being European' must find its way 'experimentally' between the claims of 'monopoly' (whether these are expressed in the terms of Marxism, or 'free market' economics, or techno-scientism) and those of 'dispersal' (as they are presented in certain forms of post-colonialist and post-modernist theories of difference). For Derrida, such a responsibility demands that we attend to the thoughts, concepts and categories of global politics as forms that must remain complicit either with the 'colonizing' values of European culture, or with the 'anti-colonialism' sustained through the registration of supposedly untranslatable singularities of culture, nationality, and ethnicity. Thus, what is important in Derrida's insistence upon the 'dual' nature of cosmo-political responsibility, is the fact that it must remain 'experimental'; and that as such, is a type of reflection which questions the legitimacy of the (European) centre even in its most radical validations of the *heteron* as the source of ethical and political responsibility. Neither of the two polarities of neo-Kantian thought (Habermas' idea of a 'transcendental pragmatics' of communicative action, and Lyotard's account of the 'agitated judgement' provoked by the difference of generic knowledges) therefore, are adequate to the of cosmo-political demand of cultural alterity. For as we will see, each remains

complicit with the ideas of 'monopoly' and 'dispersion' which Derrida conceives as the aporetic conditions of a free philosophical response to the 'other' of the European heading.

In the case of Habermas, it seems clear that his attempt to rehabilitate Kant's procedural rationality as a 'transcendental pragmatics' which frame the universal conditions of autonomy and social solidarity, presupposes an 'origin' in which the essential structures' reason have been validated by the immanent/transcendent necessities of communication, intersubjectivity and dialogical consensus. Such an origin, despite Habermas' attempts to present it as the analytically necessary 'truth' which founds the basic structures' social action, determines itself in a suspiciously Eurocentric way. For although his conception of the ideal speech situation is supposed to present the universal possibility of mediating the demands of rational freedom with those of 'objective' social necessity, it appears to situate the agency and responsibility of linguistically competent subjects/citizens, firmly within the sphere of scientific, technical and economic homogenization which has become pervasive in Europe and the West. The practico-linguistic identity which Habermas wants to function as the transcendental horizon of rational freedom, in other words, cannot avoid a certain complicity with the scientific, technical and economic discourses whose hegemony his work has sought to challenge. A complicity which is highly significant in the sense that it might lead 'us' Europeans to believe that in assenting to the universality of the 'global' market—and its innovative powers of dissemination and re-presentation—that we cannot fail to promote the ends of progress and democracy. Yet if Habermas' attempt to establish 'the non-objective whole of a concrete lifeworld' as the 'horizon' of rational freedom,[58] remains complicit with what Derrida has identified as the 'compulsions of monopoly', then it would seem that Lyotard's account of the heterogeneous genres and phrase regimes which characterize the 'postmodern condition', is equally complicit with the re-production of 'dispersal' as an 'ethic' of absolute difference and untranslatability. We have seen that *The Differend*'s presentation of the 'Analytic of the sublime', attempts to show that Kant's appeal to feelings of agitation and disquiet as analoga, or signs, of the transcendental unity of Freedom and Nature, gestures towards a reception of difference as that which can be respected only in its absolute incommensurability with all established structures of moral, ethical, political and economic 'necessity'. According to Lyotard, the possibility of this reception is always copresent with the heterogeneous knowledges which both maintain and disperse the social bond; for it is with the 'unphraseable' feelings of disquiet at the suffering of those who lack any recognition within the dominant discourses of authority, that the ethical moment begins and ends. This idea of an affective response whose 'phrasing' (saying, expression) would be the event of autonomy however, is problematic in the sense that its 'transgression' of the structures and mediations of the law (that is, its pure sensation of the silence of the other), seems to perpetuate a kind of moral sensitivity in which the demands of dispersion are inscribed as irreducibly necessary. Indeed, it is this registration of the 'sublime' in the conflicts and agonisms of 'postmodernity', which Fredric Jameson has referred to as Lyotard's 'embattled endorsement of the supreme value of aesthetic innovation'.[59] For Derrida however, Lyotard's

account of the 'affective' responses through which the law is constantly subverted in its claims to universality, do not simply obscure the 'real' political necessities of a 'late-capitalist' modernity, but rather serve to confirm the relationship between the metaphysical resources of European cultural identity, and the 'cosmo-political' right of philosophy as such. For in giving priority to the affections and sensations which register the alterity of the other, Lyotard's thought remains complicit with a certain 'anti-colonialist' account of difference, in which the categories of philosophical reason appear as 'totalitarian', and violently expropriative of the cultural, material and linguistic forms 'dispersed' beyond the frontiers of the European centre: 'The obstacle ... to finalization by the idea of freedom persists in the form of "national" names and traditions ... Internationalism cannot overcome national worlds because it cannot channel short popular narratives into epics, it remains "abstract" it must efface proper names'.[60]

Ultimately therefore, it is essential to recognize that the two polarities of neo-Kantian thought represented by Habermas and Lyotard, are unable to transcribe the cosmopolitan spirit of Kant's philosophy, without repeating the very oppositions (of colonialism and anti-colonialism, monopoly and dispersal, and globalization and fragmentation) through which ethical and political 'responsibility' has become subsumed under the 'programmatic' discourses of modernity (scientism, positivism, functionalism etc.). Thus, if the spirit of Kant's idea of Enlightenment is to be respected, there must be an acknowledgement of the value of the European 'archive'; and of the necessity of placing the contingent moments of translation and (non-expropriative) exchange which occur between the margin and the centre (the 'third' and the 'first'), within the textual resources of the logos. For Derrida, it is this 'dual responsibility'—to the singularities and idioms unforeseen in the writing of the law, and to the categories and mediations through which the law is written as the promise of rational autonomy—which constitutes the ethical 'stricture' of cosmopolitanism. The Enlightenment categories of identity, subjectivity, autonomy, heteronomy, etc., cannot simply be discarded as 'metaphysical', or 'ideological' forms which confound the 'critique' of global modernity. Their ideality demands that even the most exploitative powers of late-capitalism (and their success in subjecting indigenous populations to radical cultural and material expropriations), be 'thought' in terms of the Enlightenment promise of universal equality and recognition before the law. For as Derrida has pointed out in his essay in admiration of Nelson Mandela,[61] 'we' in the West are under an obligation to respond to the ways in which particular structures of silencing, exclusion and restriction have been deployed in the political constitution of the 'third world' (the mythology of a 'nature' which has always already conferred its blessing upon the authority of white race, for example), and to judge those structures in terms of their transgression of the very ideals of 'radical democracy' which led Kant to postulate Europe as morally, ethically and politically legislative for the whole of humanity.

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