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Toward a Narrow Cosmopolitanism: Kant's Anthropology, Racialized Character and the Construction of Europe

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Abstract

This article explores the distinctions among European peoples' character established in Kant's anthropology and their connection with his politics. These aspects are neglected relative to the analysis of race between Europeans and non-Europeans, but Kant's anthropological works portray the people of Mediterranean Europe as not capable of civilization because of the dominance of passion in their faculty of desire, which he ties to 'Oriental' influences in blood or government. Kant then superimposes this racialized anthropology over the historical geopolitics of Europe, obscuring the indebtedness of Northern European trade dominance to Mediterranean historical tactics and financial wealth. By relegating the Mediterranean to the margins and dismissing contentious commercial exchange in the region as mere violence spearheaded by North African corsairs, Kant gives us an elitist cosmopolitanism unable to cope with hierarchy and inequality, diminishing its potential for egalitarian global projects today.

Keywords: anthropology; character; cosmopolitanism; Mediterranean; nation; passion; politics; race; trade; violence

1. Introduction

This article shows that, in his political writings, Kant superimposes his racialized anthropology over the geopolitical history of trade in Europe. In so doing, he recentred Europe away from the Mediterranean and toward Northern Europe, a move visibly at play in his account of violent Mediterranean trading relations. Kant's writings about character and his politics reveal the exclusion of Southern European countries from civilized Europe and his construction of the Mediterranean as a space of violence that threatens the orderly trade that he envisions for Europe. To illustrate how racialized anthropology distorts historical geopolitics in Kant's mapping of Europe, I complement my reading of Kant with a genealogy of Europe's shifting identity in his time and a historical account of Mediterranean trade and corsairing. This analysis reveals

the inability of Kant's politics to theorize conflict and difference among groups and raises questions about the uses of his framework today.

This article expands on work on Kant and race, anthropology and politics (Tully 2008; Mills 2014; Valdez 2017; Idris 2019; Marwah 2019) and on Kant's account of character (Mensch 2017; Cohen 2006, 2020) by, first, clearly specifying connections between Kant's account of Northern European and Mediterranean peoples' character and his cosmopolitan project. Second, I highlight wider racial influences on character which operate via the faculty of desire, whose vicious and virtuous features are racially distributed. Third, the article shows that Kant's well-known civilizational hierarchy applies within Europe, giving Southern European countries an inferior position within his ordering. This position is associated with failures of character, which prevent the rule of reason and, consequently, keeps these peoples from attaining Northern Europe's level of civilization. All of these contributions sustain the final, core point: that Kant superimposes his racialized anthropology over his cosmopolitan politics rather than grappling politically with trade, conflict and religious rivalry in the Mediterranean. This point is supported by engaging the social, political and economic background of Kant's writing, which illuminates the similar trajectories of England and France's development vis-à-vis its Southern European and North African precursors, despite Kant's anthropological efforts to separate them. Kant also obscures the contentious politics of the Mediterranean, something I illustrate by analysing corsairing as an important socio-political aspect of the commercial relations between Europe and the Ottoman Empire and its North African regencies. Kant's dismissive remarks about corsairing – in line with his elitist cosmopolitanism – miss its historical role as a weapon of weaker actors. By reducing this scene to mere violence, Kant makes the politics of Northern European powers and the countervailing pressures stand for international politics writ large.

I explore the historical evolution of Kant's writings on character in section 2, focusing on the changing features Kant assigns to Southern European nations and on the mediating role of desire in determining their place in his scale of civilization. In section 3, I consider how Kant's anthropological account of different European nations re-emerges in his cosmopolitanism and determines his well-known trajectory toward peace. In section 4, I contextualize Kant's account in the narratives of European identity that circulated in his time. Here I also rely (section 5) on contemporary historical accounts of Mediterranean corsairing to identify the inexactitudes built into Kant's account of this region and his claims about the origins of European wealth. In concluding, in section 6, I discuss Kant's notion of international politics, its indebtedness to racial and civilizational beliefs, and the role of these findings in the project of radicalizing Kant.

2. Character, affect and civilization in Kant's anthropology

Recent literature has analysed Kant's account of character in relation to his moral and political writings, recognizing that Kant's 'complete ethics' includes habituation, situating human beings between 'nature's mechanism and moral autonomy', and coming to terms with Kant's cosmopolitanism as grounded in history, anthropology and geography (Huseyinzedegan 2019: 4, 110–11; Marwah 2019: 58; Varden 2020: 5, 14).

Kant's writings on the character of the person distinguish between character as raw material and moral character. Kant's claims about the character of nations rely on this same distinction – i.e. the empirical base and what can be made of it – this time at the level of peoples. Understanding the character of both persons and nations, moreover, requires engaging with a third portion of Kant's anthropology: his Anthropological Didactic, where Kant depicts the role of the faculty of desire in the self-determination of subjects' powers and the sovereignty of reason. This section reconstructs how the interconnections between race and the character of nations result in the prevalence of particular forms of desire among peoples in ways that set limits to their ability to progress from a given raw material to a civilized or moral character. In particular, the character features Kant assigns to different peoples limit their natural aptitude and temperament, i.e. the character of human beings as 'sensible or natural being[s]' (*Anth*, 7: 285).¹ This is the empirical baseline for what 'can be made of the human being' or what man is 'prepared to make of himself' (*Anth*, 7: 285), including, potentially, developing a *moral* character. This model also orients Kant in his ordering of nations within Europe according to their ability to progress morally toward civilization in ways that organize his cosmopolitan politics, leading to the demotion of Southern European nations from civilized status and distorting the geopolitics of Mediterranean trade.

While existing work highlights the separation between character and race Kant establishes in his first work of pragmatic anthropology ('Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime') (Louden 2015), scholars acknowledge that – despite formally separating character from 'racial natural predispositions' – Kant does suggest that 'nations, at least originally, were made of a single racial origin' (Cohen 2006: 687–8). Jennifer Mensch further claims that, while Kant presumes character to be malleable, this malleability is limited for racialized and/or gendered subjects (Mensch 2017: 130). I build upon Cohen and Mensch but show that the racialization and differentiation of character at the level of nations and individuals in Kant is more extensive and nuanced than they allow it to be, because it is mediated both by the faculty of desire and forms of government, and it reaches within Europe, which Kant remaps in a racial way.

Kant participated in debates about character in the late eighteenth century, when it was accepted that nations exhibited unique peculiarities, even while disagreement existed regarding the physical or moral origin of such distinctions (Louden 2011). At the level of peoples, Kant acknowledged that classification was risky, but suggested nonetheless tracking 'hereditary maxims, or those which have become, as it were, second nature through long usage, as well as those maxims grafted upon them, which express the sensibility of a people' (*Anth*, 7: 312). While Kant acknowledged that the 'documents' were lacking for a thorough investigation, he presumed that the formation of peoples' present character depended on nature ('the innate character of the original people of their ancestry'), which provided the basis for their acquired 'artificial character' (*ibid.*) based on cultural/institutional conditions (Huseynzadegan 2019: 87, 96, 110).

Yet despite Kant's own acknowledgement that he 'will not investigate . . . whether . . . national differences . . . depend upon the times or type of government, or whether they are connected with a certain necessity of the climate' (OFBS, 2: 244n.),² there is significant slippage between the language of character and the

language of race. For example, in Kant's discussion of the character of peoples, Chinese and Indian peoples are compared to Black Africans, and Indigenous peoples of North America are also mentioned (Louden 2011: 157–9). Ultimately, Kant repeatedly argues about causality and incorporates racial factors into his account of character. In other words, while Kant was cautious in separating racial character from the character of nations, questions of race pervade the separate sections devoted to the discussion of the character of nations. Similarly, while Kant noted that characteristics of nations are 'acquired and *artificial*', I show below that he assigns certain nations hard limits to what they can acquire in ways that follow racial traits.

Regarding peoples' characters, Kant opens with France and England – which are 'the *most civilized (civilisirtesten)* peoples on earth' and at odds with each other due to their opposing characters (*Anth*, 7: 311–12).³ Frenchmen are courteous, not out of interest but of 'taste's immediate need to talk with others', and are nurtured through 'association with women of high society' (7: 313). This inclination influenced their willingness to 'render[] services [and their] helpful benevolence', which gradually converges toward 'universal philanthropy according to principles' (*ibid.*). If Kant's predilection for the French was not already clear, he concludes that those features 'must make such a people as a whole *lovable*' (*ibid.*). Kant finds shortcomings too; he notes that the French exhibit a '*vivacity* that is not sufficiently kept in check by considered principles'. However, he quickly turns this around by noting that reason might allow some affects to endure if they prove satisfactory (*ibid.*), in line with the affective dimensions of moral predispositions (Burdman 2021). Kant's text then refers to the French Revolution⁴ to argue that vivacity is the right kind of affect because, rather than imperilling reason's sovereignty, it feeds into an '*infectious spirit of freedom*' and an unbounded enthusiasm 'in the relations of the people to the state' (7: 313–14).

The English character is directly opposed to the French: it 'renounces all amiability toward others . . . even among the English people' and even if great, benevolent institutions are established for compatriots, a foreigner who has fallen on hard times is left to 'die on the dunghill because he is not an Englishman, that is, not a human being' (*Anth*, 7: 314–15). Kant ties Englishmen's isolationism to 'the commercial spirit', which is generally unsociable and prevents 'friendly relations without ceremony' (7: 315). Importantly, the political character of France and England is affected by their feud, which opposes concern to hatred, and self-preservation to domination (*ibid.*).

In contrast to France and England, Southern European countries are judged negatively and not granted a role in high politics. Kant describes the 'good side' of Spanish character as '*grandiloquence*', found in even colloquial conversation, and repugnance for (French) playfulness, as well as obedience toward superiors and the laws of its ancient religion (*Anth*, 7: 316). Given the Kantian identification of enlightenment with the ability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of others (WIE, 8: 35; L-*Anth*-Me, 25: 1186),⁵ this account is damning, as is the description of Spaniards' 'worse side', i.e. being 'centuries behind in the sciences'; resisting reform; being proud of not having to work; and exhibiting cruelty, as in the inquisitorial practice of the *Auto da Fé* (*Anth*, 7: 316). Finally, Kant critiques Spain's 'taste', which reveals 'an origin that is partly non-European', which he traces to the emergence of the '*Spaniard . . . from the mixture of European with Arabian (Moorish) blood*' (*ibid.*).

The assessment of the character of certain European countries as affected by mixture with non-European blood varies somewhat between lectures, but Spain and Italy are consistently demoted as Kant's lectures evolve. For example, while both countries are considered enlightened (*ausgeklärtes Volk*) in 1781–2, Spain is excluded from the 'learned nations' (*gelehrte Nationen*) in the mid-1780s (L-Anth-Me, 25: 1186; L-Anth-Mr, 25: 1399).⁶ In the latter lectures, Spain is replaced by the Germanic peoples and by the end of the 1790s, Italy is also expelled from the list of 'civilized peoples' (*Anth*, 7: 312).

The categorization of Spain evolves alongside Kant's assessment of the relative importance of 'Moorish' strains relative to Germanic strains in their ancestry. Thus, in the early 1780s Kant asserts that the Spanish wish they descended from the Goths rather than the Moors, even if they dislike the former, before noting that this is region-dependent (L-Anth-Me, 25: 1183–4). Areas closest to France adopt many French customs, he notes, while those in New Castile and the Asturian mountains 'pass themselves off as descendants from the old Goths' because they believe they are of noble origin (25: 1184). By the mid-1780s, when Spain disappears from the list of 'learned peoples', Kant asserts that the Spanish king of the Bourbon house was unable to change the customs of the Spanish, due to the 'the old Moorish blood' (L-Anth-Mr, 25: 1403).

Thus, while Moorish influence is initially deemed to be moderated by Spaniards' own efforts to pass off as Goths' descendants and proximity to France, by the mid-1780s Kant judges that even French government is insufficient to transform Spanish customs negatively affected by mixture with 'Oriental' peoples. Kant's view of these negative effects follows from his poor opinion of the latter's character. In the early 1780s he claims that all 'Oriental peoples' – including the Hindus, the Persians, the Chinese, the Turks – 'in no way improve[] [them]sel[ves] over centuries', which suggests that 'there already exists in it a certain natural predisposition (*Natur-anlage*) which [they are] not capable of exceeding' (L-Anth-Me, 25: 1181).

As for Italians, while recognizing their artistic taste and 'sensitivity toward the feeling of the sublime', and their 'invention of *exchange, banks, and the lottery*', Kant quickly moves from their taste for public amusement through 'pompous pageantries' and the splendour of their public buildings to arguing that they 'converse . . . in halls of splendor . . . [but] sleep in rats' nests' (*Anth*, 7: 317). Further, Kant criticizes Italians' conversational style (sharing daily news without friendship), and their 'evil side', i.e. 'knifings, bandits, assassins taking refuge in hallowed sanctuaries, neglect of duty by the police, and so forth', which he blames on their 'two-headed form of government', though relativizing the latter as 'accusations . . . which the English generally circulate' (*ibid.*).

Kant's esteem of Italians decreases in time, just as he associates them more with non-European races, in particular in relation to the operation of the faculty of desire. The faculty of desire – which constitutes humans' mental powers, along with the faculties of cognition and feeling (Cohen 2020: 433) – mediates between raw material and moral ends. This is because the development of moral character requires reason to rule over other impulses, and the wrong kind of desire can limit this process by preventing reflection and threatening reason's sovereignty (*Anth*, 7: 251). Kant notes that only those individuals not afflicted by 'unfortunate desires' possess character understood as a 'property of the will by which the subject binds himself to definite practical principles that he has prescribed to himself irrevocably by his own reason' (7: 292).

The interaction between character and desire is central here, but has not received equivalent attention compared to each of these separate topics (Cohen 2020, 2006). Desire contains two affective states: affect and passion (the ‘normal’ and ‘pathological’ state: *Anth*, 7: 251). According to Kant, affect works like a fit of anger that is easily forgotten, while passion resembles ‘consumption or emaciation’, in that it affects the soul and can receive only palliative remedies. Kant then identifies French vivacity and English impetuosity as examples of affects, and Italians, Spaniards, Indian and Chinese peoples as taken over by passions, which is akin to giving up freedom by having oneself put in chains, for example by ‘brood[ing] over revenge in their rage or [persisting] in their love to the point of dementia’ that ‘nestles itself deeper and deeper’ (7: 252–3, 266).

The identification of the Chinese and the Indian with the passions is longstanding in Kant, who contrasts them with the French (who are ‘full of affect’) in his 1777–8 lectures (L-Anth-Pi, 25: 837).⁷ The innovation in the late 1790s is to assimilate Italy and Spain to non-Europeans afflicted by passions, which is not completely surprising, given Kant’s consistent remarks about the racial mixing of Italian and Spanish peoples. About Italians’ character, Kant claims in the 1750s that it is difficult to identify because of their ‘very mixed blood’ and about Spaniards, he notes that they retain characteristics of Arabian and Moorish blood despite other ancestries (PhyG, 9: 318, 423, 426).⁸ This shift in Kant is significant, because the passions block freedom and morality, and thus imperil ‘the political constitution of the form of government [and] education’, which is grounded in character (L-Anth-Mr, 25: 1414–15). Accordingly, Kant declares that the ‘essential difference’ between Oriental and European character – persistent despite variations in government – is the ‘capacity to act in accordance with concepts and principles’ (L-Anth-Fried, 25: 655).⁹ Unlike Europeans, all ‘Oriental nations are completely incapable of judgment in accordance with concepts’ and can only explain properties of morality or justice ‘based on appearance’ (*ibid.*). This is significant for Kant, who notes that ‘the imitator (in moral matters) is without character’ (*Anth*, 7: 293).

In sum, the joint reading of Kant’s account of character and desire reveals a three-step argument. First, desire mediates the transition to a moral character by enabling or preventing the rule of reason. Second, passionate desires that prevent reflection systematically afflict certain races. Third, because of this systematic association, certain races or those mixed therewith cannot reach civilization, which requires reason to rule sovereign over desires.

Given this line of argument, Kant’s association of Southern Europeans with Asian traits in his writings on character separates the European margins from its English and French core. This separation is not simply a malleable one, according to which Italians’ character can be slowly reformed through better government to root out bandits, knifings and neglectful police, but traits that Kant associates with the ‘Oriental’ influences in Italian blood and the Moorish effects over Spaniards, which makes them vulnerable to the passions, which set a hard limit on the ability of freedom to rule over desires. Kant’s language is unequivocal in his view of Oriental peoples as facing hard limits to the development of a moral character. In his published anthropology, in particular, Kant paints a picture in which, after acknowledging the domination of Europe by Slavic and Arabic peoples in the past, he asserts that their decadence is close to insurmountable:

If the Turks . . . travelled in order to get to know human beings and their national character (which no people other than the European does, [proving] the limitedness in spirit of all others), they would perhaps divide the European people in the following way, according to the defects shown in its character: 1) the *land of fashion* (France). – 2) *The land of moods* (England). – 3) *The land of ancestry* (Spain). – 4) *The land of splendor* (Italy). – 5) *The land of titles* (Germany, together with Sweden and Denmark . . .). – 6) *The land of lords* (Poland) . . . – Russia and European Turkey, both largely of Asiatic ancestry (*von größtentheils asiatischer Abstammung*), would lie outside Frankistan: the first is of Slavic, the other of *Arabic* origin, both are descended from two ancestral peoples who once extended their domination over a larger part of Europe than any other people, and they have fallen into the condition of a constitution of law without freedom, where no one is therefore a citizen. (*Anth*, 7: 320n.)

Kant adopts a supposedly Turkish voice before returning to his own to separate Turkish and Russian peoples from proper Europeans despite the territorial unity, due to their ‘Asiatic ancestry’ and decaying institutions in which neither law nor subjects have freedom. Later, he expands his account of these peoples, saying that ‘Russia has *not yet* developed what is necessary for a definite concept of natural predispositions which lie ready in it’ and that ‘the nationals of European Turkey *never have* attained and *never will* attain what is necessary for the acquisition of a definite national character’ (*Anth*, 7: 319). The one exception to Kant’s blanket statements about peripheral European states is his account of Greek character as having suffered the oppression of ‘the Turks and . . . their own Caloyers’, but able to re-establish itself if their religion and government allow them freedom to do so (7: 321–2).¹⁰

Kant’s late 1790s assessment is not casual or offhand but rooted in earlier negative assessments of the characters of peoples located at the margins of Europe and their ability to reason. Since his 1750s Geography lectures, Turkey and Russia’s European and Asian regions are analysed separately in the sections devoted to the peoples of each of these regions. ‘Asian Turkey’, ‘of Tataric descent’, is hospitable and generous toward travellers, though they are also lazy and their dominant vice is ‘meanness’ (PhyG, 9: 406). As for ‘Asiatic Tatory’ Russia, Kant notes the mixture between ‘Christians, . . . Mohammedans, . . . and . . . heathens of all kinds’ (9: 400), praises their agriculture, but finds that it decays as one approaches China due to laziness, i.e. individuals in these areas only work when forced, the industrious Tungusi excepted (9: 401–2). Drinking and/or vice and venereal disease also prevail in areas of this region. Kant’s assessment of European Turkey and Russia is brief and not related to character, beyond remarks on the hospitality toward travellers in European Turkey/Bulgaria (9: 421). By the 1780s Kant no longer lectured on non-European peoples’ character, and thus described only the European side of Turkey and Russia, though heavily emphasizing their Asian influences: Turkish peoples are considered hospitable, honest, brave and of sober character, yet they are also unwilling ‘to adopt any culture, or least of all discipline’ (L-*Anth-Mr*, 25: 1414).¹¹ Russians ‘have more of an oriental character mixture than all the other nations of Europe’ (L-*Anth-Me*, 25: 1186) and, while cultivated, they ‘cannot understand . . . anything out of principles’ and, like ‘Oriental peoples’, ‘cannot create any concept of freedom for themselves’ (L-*Anth-Mr*, 25: 1413). Thus, Russians are not moralized because

their concepts 'are not broadened at all', in contrast to the British, who have 'the most broadened concepts of all peoples' (L-Anth-Me, 25: 1185–6).

In sum, Kant's construction of Europe depends on its separation from the geographically continuous lands of Asian, Slavic and Arabic peoples and the construction of these groups as underdeveloped because of their 'innate, natural character', the raw material out of which man makes something of himself. Blood and government mixture are important for delimiting Europe, for it helps explain Spain's and Italy's decadence as well as the stunting of Greek character due to mixture with Moorish blood, mixed-blood/government and Turkish oppression, respectively. The supposed malleability of character is undermined by unappealing forms of desire that certain Europeans acquire following their mixture with Oriental blood, passionate attachments that prevent the rule of reason and moralization of individuals as well as peoples as a whole. Yet, Kant's opposition to mixture (because it 'is not beneficial to the human race': *Anth*, 7: 320) disappears for the 'ancient tribe (Stamm) of Britons', whose mixture with 'tribes of German and French peoples (*Volkerstämmes*)' obliterated their originality (7: 314). Despite this, the British became a 'powerful people of maritime commerce', through which they acquired a character for themselves (*ibid.*). Conversely, Kant denies the effects upon England of the Mediterranean-centred Roman empire, which 'could leave no noticeable trace' in their character (*ibid.*). Elsewhere, mixing with 'German peoples and tribes' contributes positively to the characters of England, France, Italy and the Germanic peoples – which Kant took to be the only four learned nations by the mid-1780s (L-Anth-Mr, 23: 1398).

In other words, even though, anthropologically, character refers to what man can make of himself, a frame that conveys malleability, certain peoples' are constrained by blood mixture and propensity to pathological forms of desire. Jennifer Mensch recognizes as much, noting that the reconciliation between bodily characteristics and the goodwill that allowed men to acquire an intelligible moral character applied only to white European males, because for non-European whites (Arabs, Turks and Persians), non-whites and women, bodily limitations acted as barriers to freely developing a moral character (Mensch 2017: 130). But this article shows, first, that Kant's exclusions reach Southern Europeans and Slavs because of their mixing with Oriental or Arabic blood and, second, it illuminates how the faculty of desire plays a central role in this exclusion. It is the passionate attachments of peoples, systematically assigned to Oriental peoples in Kant's anthropology and, through mixture, to Southern and Slavic Europeans, that prevent them from developing a character that is moral and conducive to freedom. The problem is not mixing *per se*, but the races involved. Kant's account of the governmental influence on character is also racialized, in that Oriental government is detrimental to the development of character and even 'civilized' government cannot overcome character traits emerging from racial mixing with groups who are not adept at freedom.

Thus, while formally distinct from racial categories, Kant's national character is affected by biological and 'innate' features of human beings that are either original or follow racial mixing. By assigning different propensities to affective states within the faculty of desire to different races, and then assimilating nations to these traits, Kant recasts character-as-raw-material as insurmountable rather than malleable for all but Northern European nations. Kant's account is racialized because mixture with Asians or 'Orientals' (which include both Asian and Arabic groups) is deemed

detrimental to nations' progress toward civilization because passionate desires prevent them from developing moral character. Partial or full Asian descent repeatedly appears as an obstacle to the development of a free and moral character. Asian, Oriental and Arabic, moreover, appear as partially overlapping catch-all categories whose traits he assigns to more than one nation. In calling Kant's account of character 'racialized', I do not so much depart from the literature, which recognizes race as part of the origins of character, as extend their insights to show that racial hierarchies demote groups within Europe that have mixed with non-European races, with consequences for their character development, and clarify that desire plays a crucial mediating role constraining progress toward freedom.

3. Kant's cosmopolitanism and his anthropology

Kant's anthropological writings echo in his cosmopolitan politics by shaping his expectations about countries' behaviour and interaction in the trajectory toward peace. A first aspect of this connection concerns unsocial sociability, which, in both his anthropology and his politics, is indebted to the core rivalry between England and France, which display opposing character traits. Here the anthropology explains what they can expect from each other and how they can use the other to their own advantage (*Anth*, 7: 312),¹² a dynamic that reappears as 'unsocial sociability', a central animating principle of interaction that will – through controlled conflict – fuel progress toward peace. A second and related aspect of the connection between anthropology and politics is the link between having 'a character' and sovereignty and freedom. Here, Kant's anthropology makes clear what is implicitly suggested in his politics, i.e. that Britain with its commercial spirit and France with its political sense, while often at odds, are the only two countries which can develop a character that will enable them to lead the continent toward peace, a process enabled by their benign forms of desire, which express themselves as affect. Southern European countries, in contrast, are disqualified from these roles because of their inability to let reason rule over passions. While Kant remarks upon the 'social incompatibility' between France's and England's 'definite character' and the natural opposition between their 'self-seeking inclinations' in external relations, he thinks this opposition provides the 'means [used by reason] to prepare the way for its own end, the rule of right, . . . [and] the nations internal and external peace' (*Anth*, 7: 311; *IUH*, 8: 20–2; *TPP*, 8: 367).¹³ Kant's anthropology includes a note – ultimately omitted – that war between England and France 'is difficult to avoid' because of 'the difference in their natural predispositions'.¹⁴

A third interconnection between Kant's anthropology and his politics is cosmopolitanism itself, which is not only central to his politics and philosophy of history but also assigned an important role in his anthropological ranking of characters. Britons' broadened concepts, for example, mean that they attend 'to the universal best for the world' rather than just 'the welfare of his family . . . [or] his fatherland' (*L-Anth-Me*, 25: 1185–6).¹⁵ The French's inclination to 'talk with others', moreover, will gradually result in 'universal philanthropy according to principles' (*Anth*, 7: 215). Germans are men 'of all countries' and have an (enlightened) lack of passionate attachment to their fatherland (*Anth*, 7: 317–18; *L-Anth-Me*, 25: 1185). Both Germans and French peoples have a spirit of disinterested curiosity to get to know the outside world with their own

eyes, which prompts them to travel or be transplanted ‘as citizens of the world’ (*Anth*, 7: 316n.). These traits contrast with the aforementioned unwillingness to travel of Turkish people, also attributed to the Spanish, who refuse to learn French, or ‘accept anything from other nations’ (L-*Anth*-Me, 25: 1184; L-*Anth*-Mr, 25: 1403; *Anth*, 7: 215n., 316).

In sum, this view of France and England’s way of relating to each other in productively antagonistic ways, their ability to reason freely and their cosmopolitan orientation is grounded in Kant’s anthropological account of character. These features locate them atop the European civilizational pyramid and leading the trajectory toward peace, confirming the centrality of Kant’s anthropology to his political theory noted by other scholars but illuminating original forms of interconnection between these two realms. The narrow conception of Europe at play in Kant’s international and cosmopolitan right, then, is directly imported from his anthropological conception of Southern European nations’ character, disqualifying the margins of Europe from the kind of self-given law that Kant expects from republics that will join in peaceful federation.

As if to further confirm the tight connection between Kant’s anthropology and his politics, North African corsairs unexpectedly appear in *Perpetual Peace*:

The inhospitableness that coastal dwellers (e.g., on the Barbary Coast [*der Barbaresken*]) show by robbing ships in neighbouring seas and by making slaves of stranded seafarers, or of desert dwellers (the Arabic Bedouins), who regard their proximity to nomadic peoples as giving them a right to plunder, is contrary to natural right, even though the latter extends the right to hospitality, i.e., the privilege of aliens to enter, only so far as makes attempts at commerce with native inhabitants possible. (*TPP*, 8: 358)

In the absence of the context provided, this excerpt is puzzling because it is the single critique of a non-European people in an article that predominantly criticizes Europe. But assessed against the anthropological background, *Perpetual Peace*’s main innovation (the right to hospitality), and its core foci (trade and violence), the mention of Maghrebi corsairs makes sense as a stark contrast with Kant’s orderly vision of communication and trade. Maghrebi corsairing disrupted coastal towns in Italy, Spain and beyond (Weiss 2005; Semple 1916) and the crowded and conflict-ridden Mediterranean routes could be seen as predecessors to the disruptive over-extended and unconventional sea battles that Kant lamented had become the rule through imperial expansionism. Most importantly, while Kant was writing *Perpetual Peace*, privateers from the Moroccan coast had targeted the fleets of the young republic of the United States, eventually leading to the creation of the US’s permanent standing navy in 1794 (Lambert 2007: 199–200).

Perhaps this latest event motivated Kant to revise his drafts – which originally remarked upon the hospitality of Bedouins – and single out Barbary Coast pirates as a threat to peace. It would fit with Kant’s concern with the intermingling of commerce/war and sailors/soldiers and war and military expenses as an obstacle to republics’ consolidation (Valdez 2017), but it further fits with Kant’s anthropological account of ‘Orientals’ as ill-fitted to partake as free and sovereign peoples in the world of peaceful commerce he envisioned. Indeed, corsairs are only mentioned one more

time in Kant's works, back when his anthropology was still part of his geography lectures:

The Arabs are of medium size, slim, blackish, have a fine voice, and are brave. They like to puncture their skin with needles and then rub caustic pigments into them. . . . They are honest, earnest, amiable, and charitable. *How their piracy on sea and land is to be excused.* (PhyG, 9: 398, my emphasis)

Thus, North African pirates are salient enough for Kant to highlight the contradiction between these practices and Arabs' charitable features in his original lesson on character. Their reappearance in *Perpetual Peace* many decades later indicates a longstanding concern with the violent potential of Arabs' operations on the southern coasts of Europe. Kant's account of violent corsairs paints the Mediterranean in a menacing light that echoes his devaluing accounts of Oriental character and implicates European peoples bordering this sea. Thus Kant's anthropology orients the substance of his cosmopolitanism by remapping Europe and posits a desirable form of antagonism (taking place among equal European partners) and an undesirable disorderly one. In so doing, he echoes other voices remapping Europe during his time, which leave behind the non-hierarchical accounts of the Ottoman Empire that had prevailed in the past.¹⁶ Two aspects of this remapping are worrying. First, how it distorts the historical geopolitics of the region, and second, its inability to grapple with global conflict in the presence of unequal power and difference. The next two sections illustrate this by expanding on the global geopolitics over which Kant's superimposes his racialized anthropology.

4. Kant's Mediterranean and the construction of Europe

The previous section reconstructs Kant's picture of Europe as a self-standing continent helmed by Northern European nations with the Mediterranean in its periphery. This identity was relatively novel, considering the weight of the Mediterranean-centred Roman empire (which included North Africa) and the recentring of the continent around the Alps during the Arab conquest. Europe becomes centred around the Frankish empire only starting with Charlemagne (Dainotto 2007: 21–5). The end of the Crusades, the Ottoman control of the Balkans and the fall of Constantinople, in turn, shaped a new European geography now bordered on the east and set against Muslims and Turks (Dainotto 2007: 33; Marino 2007). This was aided by the development of cartography as a discipline, which facilitated the establishment of 'arbitrary boundaries, disconnected from the physical territory and grounded in the alleged impartiality and universality of mathematics' (Piechocki 2019: 16; Marino 2007: 145–57). By the end of the sixteenth century Europe had 'taken shape' as a powerful sovereign that embodied land and sea and strategically erased memories of its Asian origin and connections to other continents (Hazard 2013 [1953]: 53–6; Piechocki 2019: 3). Europe recentred itself around Britain and France after the discovery of the printing press in Europe, the conquest of America and the decline of the Portuguese and Spanish empires, as well as Italy's eastern reorientation (Dainotto 2007: 41; Hazard 2013 [1953]: 53–6). Notably, intellectual writings on peace and unity of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were central to the consolidation of the (Northern)

European project, including the genre of perpetual peace, initiated by William Penn in 1693, of which Kant's 1795 essay was one among the last contributions before the age of nationalism (Dainotto 2007: 46–7).

These constructions of European identity and Kant's own account obscure that the dominance of Northern Europe was indebted to Southern Europe and the Mediterranean. Britain's naval power, which looms large in Kant's politics and anthropology, can be traced to alliances and intermarriage between the Portuguese and British monarchies in the second half of the fourteenth century, which cemented connections between the emerging capitalist aristocracy in Britain and Italian merchant capital already active in the Iberian peninsula (Robinson 2000 [1983]: 102–4). The latter had been central to bringing Spain and Portugal into the fold of international commerce in the thirteenth century, eventually advising and funding Iberian empires. Italians' commercial and colonial economic skills stemmed from their possessions in the Levant and on the Black Sea, including the Venetians' use of slave labour in Crete, Cyprus and Chios (Verlinden 1953: 199; Robinson 2000 [1983]: 109–10). In fact, in the fifteenth century, Portugal and Italy controlled the most coveted maritime markets: the African and south Atlantic trade for gold, salt, gum, cereals, sugar and slaves (Robinson 2000 [1983]: 107; Newton 1953: 78). This, in fact, inspired Columbus, the Spanish crown and its Italian backers to search for other routes to India. Once succession, debts and other factors decimated Spain and Portugal's power in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, England seized these markets, with only France left to oppose it. This access to colonial wealth allowed England to further expand, consolidate possessions, monopolize commerce with the Orient and protect its trading routes from corsairs (Dainotto 2007: 41; Hazard 2013 [1953]: 55–6).

In other words, there are more continuities than breaks in the maritime strategies and aims of European countries throughout history. Colonial and trade dominance was held subsequently by Italy through its North African possessions and their control over the transport of silk and spices between the East and Western Europe in the late Middle Ages (Newton 1953: 129); by Portuguese and Spanish trading dominance in goods and human beings from Africa, which facilitated wealth extraction from America and its shipment to Europe (Robinson 2000 [1983]: 109–10); and by France, England and the Netherlands, whose clout increased in areas formerly under Iberian control, in South Asia and in the slave trade (Dainotto 2007: 41; Rodney 2012 [1972]: 99; Robinson 2000 [1983]: 110–11). Every time, countries secured access to valuable commodities, monopolized their distribution and protected the trading routes for transporting the prized goods. Corsairs threatened the completion of voyages, the cargo and the lives and freedom of the crews.

But over this historical trajectory, Kant superimposes his account of peaceful trade and its opposite (barbaric violence). This story is grounded in his racial anthropological account of the character of different nations, where only those with broadened concepts, a universal philanthropy according to principles and politically constructive affect can interact antagonistically in ways that are conducive to peace. This picture encourages Northern Europeans to retreat into safer commercial interactions with one another and away from the violent Mediterranean, where nations lack the cosmopolitan orientation to relate to others or only allow for violent relations like those established by Maghrebi pirates, who threatened peaceful trade by robbing

in ‘neighboring seas’ and enslaving ‘stranded seafarers’. Were it not for Kant’s distaste for mixing with Arabic and Asian peoples, he could, as noted below, have accounted for the corsairs’ scene as more geopolitically complex, potentially offering a model for commercial exchange that could target inequalities of power.

5. Pirates of the Mediterranean

Given the importance of trade in Kant’s project of perpetual peace, his focus on corsairing as violent trade is both indicative of what he saw as a threat to this project and – when contrasted with the historical geopolitics of the Mediterranean – an apt illustration of how his racialized anthropology distorted the actual geopolitics of the region.

A historical overview of corsairs’ operations in the Mediterranean, the English Channel and the Caribbean suggests that countries not in control of trading routes accessed wealth and undermined dominant trading powers through corsairing.¹⁷ This was the case for North African corsairs at the time Kant was writing but also for the British, Dutch, French and Danish governments seeking to undermine monopolistic trading networks established by the Spanish empire in the seventeenth century, as well as those of Italian traders bringing goods from the Mediterranean.¹⁸ These activities were romanticized by fictional accounts popular in Northern Europe that pointed to the illegitimacy of the Spanish empire to justify the actions of corsairs, whose commercial activities were eventually taken over by the newly chartered French West India Company (Arnold 2010: 214–16). While the seventeenth century witnessed conflict around Spanish royal succession, the subsequent decline of its empire and the emergence of Britain as a dominant maritime power (Rodney 2012 [1972]: 99; Abulafia 2011: 488), European powers and the Christian corsairs that they backed still contended with Ottoman power in the Mediterranean throughout the early modern period.

The Mediterranean scene shifted after the 1571 battle of Lepanto, where a Christian coalition led by Spain and the Venetian republic defeated the Ottoman Empire, which no longer attempted to extend authority into the western Mediterranean. Consequently, North African pirates affiliated with the Ottoman provinces of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, and the independent kingdom of Morocco, were allowed a freer hand in the area. A second consequence was to expose these routes to attacks of Christian pirates, leading Ottomans to delegate their transportation to French ships. This context was disavowed by treatments of Christian corsairs in Western scholarship, which, until the 1980s, equated Christianity with civilization and its corsairs with piety-led ‘last crusaders’, in contrast to the barbarous and infidel Muslims who profited through robbery and looting (Fontenay 1988: 363). Yet the most lucrative activity of the best-known Christian corsairs, the Order of Malta – supported by a range of trading centres like Sicily, Naples, Leghorn, Venice and Marseilles – was the capture of predominantly Muslim and Ottoman subjects to use as galley slaves, sell into slavery or keep for ransom (Fodor 2017: 882, 5–6). The Maltese Knights were joined by the Knights of Santo Stefano, founded in 1562 by the Medici duke of Tuscany, by Dutch and English corsairs and the *Uskoks*, i.e. South (Slav refugee) corsairs. Northern corsairs openly supplemented their states’ trading and transportation business and weakened Venetian and French control of trade in the Mediterranean.

Slavs, on the other hand, were supported by the Habsburgs and the pope and badly damaged Venetian and Turkish shipping in the Baltic (Abulafia 2011: 452; Tucker 2019: 124, 6; Fodor 2017: 880–1).

Thus, when Kant refers to the violent scene of the Mediterranean he unduly singles out North Africans and ties them to a practice that is not unique to this group, moment or region but constitutes an age-long practice of contesting trade monopolies and maritime dominance and supporting states' projects of building territorial and trading advantage. By relying on corsairs, impoverished societies that were excluded from mainstream development could 'compensate themselves – at least in part – for the losses caused by the commercial ascendancy of the northerners' (Tucker 2019: 127; Fodor 2017: 882).

Until the late eighteenth century, pirate activity had been moderated by diplomatic treaties between the regencies of the Ottoman empire and Europe and the banning of corsair activity (Panzac 2005: 76). In the late seventeenth century, Ottomans were prevented from reaching other imperial provinces by the Venetian blockade of the Dardanelles, and transported the bulk of their western commerce through French 'maritime caravans' (Panzac 2005: 147–8).¹⁹ Muslim ships making the trip would have faced aggressive Christian corsairs funded by Venice, Naples and Spain and harassment in European ports, where, against reciprocity agreements, Ottomans were prevented from selling their goods and discouraged from returning (Panzac 2005: 146). Given the profitability of caravan contracts, the French government was interested in Christian corsairs' activity to discourage Muslim navigation, leading the minister of the Navy to repeatedly intervene and fund – on behalf of Marseilles businessmen – continuing attacks by the Malta Order against North African corsairs. French caravaners, in turn, were interested in the continuous modest activity of Barbary corsairs, which justified the ongoing operation of Christian corsairs (Panzac 2005: 148).

The connections between these regions were not strictly commercial. The period surrounding the French Revolution witnessed political shifts and experimentation in the Ottoman domains over a background of intense communication and interest in the happenings in France (Coller 2016). These experiments entailed both efforts by powerful local leaders to increase their autonomy, and revolutions affecting the centre of the Ottoman Empire, leading to new – though short-lived – accommodations between the latter and its North African provinces (Coller 2016: 57–8).

This complex interaction between corsairs from the Mediterranean northern and southern coasts, the reliance of various governments on these actors and treaties that protected certain states from attack and gave them a strategic shipping advantage, speaks to the continuing commercial importance of the Mediterranean well into the eighteenth century. Despite a certain shift away from diplomatic treaties and toward international norms that North African powers began to accept (Coller 2016: 54–5), and without a dominant power that imposed order and predictability, the 'legal and institutional culture of piracy' itself normalized diplomatic relations and integration (Greene 2002: 44; Tucker 2019: 124). By the late eighteenth century, in other words, corsair activities and their moderation were a key political element that allowed southern Mediterranean actors to maintain diplomatic relations with stronger powers and uphold trade (Morsy 1984; cited in Coller 2016).

These trading structures were radically upset by the Revolutionary Wars, which motivated Kant's *Perpetual Peace*. The expiration of Ottoman–French treaties in

1792 suspended French corsair protection payments to the Ottoman North African regencies. This disrupted North African economies and sent their corsairs back on the seas (Panzac 2005: 152–3), and allowed the opportunistic advance of England in this area given France's entanglement in the war. Thus, Kant's singling out of North African corsairs as the source of trade disruption might have referred to the immediate resurgence of corsairing in the region, but it deceptively minimizes the more widespread violence in the Mediterranean region and the overall geopolitical context that gave meaning to these actions. Interestingly, this exclusive focus on North Africa in the published essay also departs from the apparent condemnation of European states' corsairs in the *Drafts for Perpetual Peace*:

Compare this to the actual behavior of *civilized, especially coastal people* on the seas, one sees that they recognize no limitation to their presumptions except whatever their own powerlessness prevents them from doing, and all the foreigner's goods, indeed *even the person of the foreigner himself, are treated like booty* thrown into their hands by nature. – If we also look over the inhospitable inhabitants of the *Barbary Coast* who, in an element that belongs to no one, take control of *ships* of all nations, *none of which they have purchased, and also enslave* any of these people who get stranded, hence perpetuating war on their part, then one will note with horror the ills that overstepping the borders of hospitality has brought to the human species, and indeed to *Europe, which brought all this commerce to all people on earth under the tutelage of the most active part of the earth*, through wars which Europe has not merely waged against others but finally brought upon itself, wars that with the awakening of commerce threaten to become more and more frequent and to follow faster upon one another. (*DPP*, 23: 173–4, emphasis mine)²⁰

Here, Kant chastises Northern (civilized) Europeans operating in the Mediterranean for their attacks on trading ships, their appropriation of goods and their kidnappings. Yet even in this more balanced account, Kant centres Europe for bringing 'all this commerce to all people on earth', in a misleading account of the relatively late arrival of France and England to commercial dominance, or the fate of European merchants vis-à-vis the Ottoman empire, which controlled significant territorial portions of Europe and reached well into Southern and Eastern Europe. This account, however, fits Kant's anthropological diagnosis, which posits France, England and Germany as unique in their drive to travel and know the world.

By either singling out the Barbary Coast corsairs in the published version or offering a more balanced account in the *Drafts* that nonetheless placed the commercial leadership squarely in Europe, Kant's racialized anthropology is visibly at work in his politics. While arguably also concerned with English expansionism and dominance in world politics (Valdez 2017), Kant cannot see the space of the Mediterranean as a site of alternative politics, i.e. where weaker actors prompt transfers of resources from and contest the dominance of powerful European states. This is because his international politics are concerned with states whose character he deems civilized. Kant sees England's character as shaped by its commercial spirit and untouched by the Roman empire, let alone the Mediterranean financiers that supported England's dominance. Beyond England, Kant's anthropology sees France as the one enlightened

nation that relates antagonistically to England, giving us a 'politics' that occurs narrowly between relatively equal actors and leaves out conflict around the distribution of resources taking place beyond his limited mapping of the continent. The hierarchy that corsair activities sought to even out would solidify in the nineteenth century, not least through discourses about the French conquest of Algeria 'under the banners of the campaign against slavery and the institution of orderly and civilized conditions' (Luxemburg 2015 [1913]: 273), replacing trading relationships between European and northern Mediterranean peoples with imperialism (Greene 2014: 101–2).

Kant's distaste for the mixing of different peoples (*Anth*, 7: 320) – excepting the British, the German and the French – also takes on new meaning when understood in this context. Religious hostility remained an important dividing force in the Mediterranean, and scholars argue that it alone can explain the reluctance to establish otherwise extremely desirable trade between the Ottoman Empire and the French, Dutch and English in the seventeenth century. In this period, uncertainty remained about the Mediterranean regime of trade: was it a set of states with reciprocal obligations? Or a cultural frontier between two hostile religions? (Greene 2002: 45). Toward the end of the seventeenth century, the exclusion of Muslim actors from the commercial and maritime life of the sea spoke for the latter, whereas religiously based solidarity and antagonism against others became a given and religion turned into a tool for the support of commerce under the direction and for the benefit of states (Greene 2002: 46). Thus, the 'ethno-religious disorder', and the unsettling of the political order entailed by the Mediterranean system of bondage of Muslims and Christians which transplanted 'Muslims to Europe and Christians to Muslim territory' (Hershenson 2017: 1), likely troubled Kant and animated the strategies of separation in his politics and anthropology. While Kant advocates peaceful commerce with Europe's Mediterranean neighbours (through 'ships' and 'camels': *TPP*, 8: 358), his singling out of Mediterranean violence in *Perpetual Peace* and the racialization of the differences between Northern Europeans, on the one hand, and Southern European, Ottoman and North African actors, on the other hand, ultimately supports a hierarchy of civilizations that could be readily deployed for the imperial relations that replaced commercial exchange in the Mediterranean.

6. Conclusion

This article expands the scholarship on character and empire in Kant by reconstructing racialized facets of character and uncovering strategies of separation in Kant's anthropological accounts of Mediterranean peoples that reappear in his politics. This follows from the mediating role of the faculty of desire in the transition between the raw material of human beings and moral character. By tying passion (a desire that prevents the rule of reason) to 'Oriental' races, and then associating these traits with supposedly mixed Southern and Eastern European nations, Kant relativizes the malleability that his own account of character presumes. In so doing, Kant narrows down 'civilized Europe' to its northern region and separates its wealth and commercial savvy from its origins in the Mediterranean, whose peoples he characterizes as stunted due to mixing with non-European blood or government forms. In the process, he posits the Mediterranean as a space of violence that threatens the orderly trade that he envisions for Europe.

Kant's constructive project depends on the superimposition of his racialized anthropology over the historical geopolitics of the region, which results in an elitist and narrow cosmopolitanism that excludes Mediterranean European countries due to their faulty character. This distorted picture of Europe precludes a more complex account of conflict in the Mediterranean and reveals a cosmopolitanism uninterested in grappling with the nature and implications of global inequality and conflict, except when this conflict occurs among relatively equal *civilized* powers. This contrasts with the contentious politics at play in the Mediterranean in Kant's time and with the reliance on corsairing by weaker actors (including Britain and France in times of Iberian dominance which preceded Kant's) eager to partake of the riches of trade from which they were excluded. By superimposing his racialized anthropology over these historical geopolitics, Kant discards the contentious commercial relations between Europe, the Ottoman Empire and its North African regencies as mere 'violence', misses their political content and ultimately makes the politics of Northern European powers and the countervailing pressures that will lead to perpetual peace stand for international politics writ large.

This conclusion does not depend on the materials Kant knew or consulted. He must have been aware of less adverse accounts of the Ottoman empire by Voltaire and Montesquieu, whose books he owned, and familiar with the operations of Christian corsairs (based on their ubiquity and the portrait of Mediterranean conflict in the *Drafts*). Regardless, my core claim is not that *he* should have better characterized the Mediterranean but that *political theorists* should think twice before adopting his framework to theorize the global today, because his elitist account of politics fails to theorize global economic inequalities, intercultural conflict and the relation between the two. As such, his framework is too blunt to consider these problems today. In contrast, the linkages and ambitions of Northern European powers in the Mediterranean and the role of corsairing in contesting and partially decimating their power and counteracting the exclusion of Muslims from commercial activities suggest that the more productive and politicized arena that preceded the establishment of European colonial empires in the region is worth considering today.

Ultimately, what is at stake in this rereading of Kant is which model to adopt to think about world politics. The elite cosmopolitanism proposed by Kant and its disregard for the agency of marginal actors echoes the operation and ideological foundations of liberal multilateral institutions and theories, for which the Kantian system is foundational. The contentious account of politics I reconstruct redirects our attention to the messier reality of international politics under racialized hierarchy. As such, it can serve to critique hegemonic actors' disavowal of their dominant power, to understand the hierarchies that still mark relations within Europe and to grasp the historical background of the hostility that marks contemporary attitudes toward travellers that cross the Mediterranean to reach the European bloc.

Finally, the account put forward in this piece contributes to the first step of Charles Mills' project of appropriating Kant for the Black radical tradition – which reconstructs Kant's systematically racist system and his bifurcated ethics – and precedes the second step, i.e. the '*race-sensitive* re-articulation of the apparatus to take account of, and redress, a racial subordination' and the legacy of structural injustice it has left behind (Mills 2017: 7, 10). The first step of this project contests the reluctance to engage with the entirety of Kant's writings – including its racist parts – which

prevents Kantian scholars from understanding the ‘role of white supremacy in contemporary political theory and praxis’ and diminishes our ability to combat it (Huseyinzadegan 2022: 659). This article makes clear that Kant’s cosmopolitan trajectory toward peace is built upon a racialized anthropology that deems only a few nations able to lead an orderly transition toward peace, i.e. those which can develop a moral character unencumbered by passionate desires. This piece thus makes visible the racism in Kant’s global politics by showing that Kant’s focus was on trade and asocial sociability between major European powers and their path toward peace rather than on attempting to understand and to overcome a highly unequal world fastened by racial domination, violence and their contestation. To address the latter problem, it is necessary to theorize how racism secures domination, how racist exclusion and economic domination are entangled and how our core political concepts both contain and disavow these facts. While my work pursues this project through the framework of racial capitalism (Valdez 2021, *forthcoming*), the challenge remains for Kantians to radically modify their tradition to remain relevant interlocutors in the global struggle against racial injustice.

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Notes

1 In Kant 2006 and 2007. In all quotes, emphasis is in the original unless otherwise specified.

2 In Kant 2007.

3 Kant also considers Germanic peoples civilized, but does not list them to avoid ‘self-praise’ (*Anth*, 7: 312n.).

4 Robert B. Louden ‘Editorial Notes’ in Kant 2007 (note to 7: 313).

5 In Kant 1991 and 2012a.

6 In Kant 2012a.

7 In Kant 2012a.

8 In Kant 2012b. In the early 1780s, Kant locates Italy ‘between the French and the Spanish’ and characterizes them positively as having ‘more true strength of spirit’ than the French (L-Anth-Me, 25: 1185). By the mid-1780s Kant wonders if the excess of affect results in the ‘murders’ that characterize this country, likely associated with the ‘many bandits . . . and many preparers of poison’ (L-Anth-Mr, 25: 1405–6).

9 In Kant 2012a.

10 The discussion of Greek decadence is associated with Turkish government rather than blood mixture, leaving a door open for their return to civilization. This is perhaps a testament to Kant’s intellectual indebtedness to Greek thought, notably Aristotle, and the centrality of Greek civilization in the founding myth of Europe.

11 So confident is Kant of his account that he openly argues that Armenians – given their commercial spirit, reasonableness and industriousness – must have separate origins from their Greek neighbours (whose fickle and grovelling character is comparatively inferior, though likely affected by their being oppressed by the Turks and ‘their own Caloyers’) (*Anth*, 7: 320).

- 12 Elsewhere Kant identifies Spain as the antipode of France, but this opposition is less about alternative strengths or strategic interaction, as with his comments about France and England, than about the failings of the Spanish people, who detest change and are a hundred years behind in the sciences because they reject anything coming from abroad (L-Anth-Me, 25: 1183).
- 13 In Kant 1991 and 1996.
- 14 Louden, 'Editorial Notes', in Kant 2007 (note to *Anth*, 7: 214).
- 15 This, however, contrasts with his statement elsewhere in the same lectures that the English 'travel a lot but despise foreign lands' (L-Anth-Me, 25: 1184).
- 16 Early modern Europeans' opinions of their powerful Ottoman neighbours varied widely, from disapproval to fascination and even envy, and were 'active ingredients to be worked into their theories' (Malcolm 2019: 417). Pro-Ottoman views abounded among Western thinkers – notably Bodin, Voltaire and Montesquieu, in addition to authors who analysed Islam alongside Christianity to inquire into the social effects of religions. Thus, the 'prejudices of the era' cannot be adduced to explain Kant's orientalist views.
- 17 Unlike the general noun 'pirate', referring to sailors who attack other ships to steal from them, 'corsair' and 'privateer' refer to pirates who pursue these activities with permission from a government which benefits from attacks on ships of enemy states.
- 18 In 1476, St Malo-based French corsairs operating in the English Channel attacked the Genoese ships commanded by Giovanni di Negro and Nicolas Spinola, transporting goods to England, as well as none other than Christopher Columbus, who would survive this attack and land in Lisbon (Newton 1953: 77–8; Richter 2017: 6–7).
- 19 The Ottomans, including their non-Muslim Greek and Armenian subjects, had earlier prevailed over Italian merchants, continued to supply Eastern Europe and Russia and handled exchanges 'between the [Ottoman] Empire and western finance' (Greene 2014: 94, 102).
- 20 In Kant 2016.

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