

## “To Save the Honor of Reason”: Quasi-Antinomial Conflict in *Troilus and Cressida*

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In the final pages of the last book published in his lifetime, Jacques Derrida put forth “a terribly ambiguous hypothesis”, namely, that under certain circumstances, and in a certain manner, it might be incumbent upon us “to save the honor of reason” (*sauver l’honneur de la raison*): “Someone in me whispered to me: ‘Perhaps it would be a matter of saving the honor of reason’”<sup>1</sup>. Underscoring the conditional character of his ‘abyssal’ hypothesis with qualifiers such as ‘perhaps’ (*peut-être*), ‘what if’ (*si*) and ‘as if’ (the Kantian *als ob*)<sup>2</sup> – Derrida continues:

The honor of reason – is that reason? Is honor reasonable or rational through and through? The very form of this question can be applied analogically to everything that evaluates, affirms, or prescribes reason: to prefer reason, is that rational or, and this is something else, reasonable? [...] What authorizes one to inscribe again or already under the authority of reason a particular *interest* of reason (*Interesse der Vernunft*), this interest of reason, this interest in reason, this interest for a reason that, as Kant reminds us, is at once practical, speculative, and architectonic, though *first of all architectonic*? [...] That is what motivates Kant in the antinomies to privilege the moment of the thesis over against an antithesis that threatens the systemic edifice and thus disturbs the architectonic desire or interest, most often so as to take into account, antithetically, themes that should be important to us today, namely, divisibility, eventfulness, and conditionality<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, Engl. transl. by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2005, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 120.

In taking up the themes of divisibility, eventfulness, and conditionality, Derrida seeks not to defend the Kantian antitheses but to acknowledge the irreducible heterogeneity of “plural rationalities” that resist architectonic integration with one another<sup>4</sup>. Observing that the Kantian antinomies call into question both the unity of the world and the unity of reason, he contrasts the architectonic interest in preserving reason’s unity with a desire to save reason’s honor at the moment it verges on “running aground” (*échouement*). Reason threatens to run aground when it becomes incapable of grounding (*échouage*) the totality of discourse. Derrida characterizes this threat as that of reason’s autoimmunity, a paradoxical, last-ditch effort to resist disintegration through self-annihilation<sup>5</sup>.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant discerned a similar danger in the antinomies, the dialectical conflicts that arise when reason attempts to determine the world as a totality. The discovery of reason’s “natural antithetic”

leads reason into the temptation either to surrender itself to a skeptical hopelessness or else to assume an attitude of dogmatic stubbornness, setting its mind rigidly to certain assertions without giving a fair hearing to the grounds for the opposite. Either alternative is the death of a healthy philosophy, though the former might also be called the *euthanasia* of pure reason<sup>6</sup>.

To avert this danger Kant seeks a critical solution to the antinomies. Instead of simply defending reason’s dogmatic metaphysical theses against its skeptical antitheses, he attempts to do justice to interests on both sides of each conflict. He does so by showing that the conflicts are only apparent. Reason generates its antinomies by striving to complete the regressive series of conditions of appearances in either of the two ways available to it: by positing a first term in the series, and by representing the series as an infinite whole. The critical insight that successively given appearances can never comprise a completed totality in either of these ways shows that the theses and antitheses don’t really contradict each other after all<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 120.

<sup>5</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 123. Cf. the reference to “transcendental autoimmunity” on p. 125.

<sup>6</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Engl. transl. by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 460 (A407/B433-34).

<sup>7</sup> Here I omit complications having to do with the different ways in which Kant resolves the mathematical and dynamical antinomies.

By resolving the antinomies Kant saves the honor not only of reason but of metaphysics. In the preface to the first edition of the *Critique* he compares pre-critical metaphysics to the dishonored Hecuba at the fall of Troy:

There was a time when metaphysics was called the *queen* of all the sciences, and if the will be taken for the deed, it deserved the title of honor (*Ehrenname*), on account of the preeminent importance of its object. Now, in accordance with the fashion of the age, the queen proves despised on all sides; and the matron, outcast and forsaken, mourns like Hecuba: *Modo maxima rerum, tot generis natisque potens – nunc trahor exul, inops* – Ovid, *Metamorphoses*<sup>8</sup>.

The noble (mobled?) queen of the sciences has been supplanted by "indifferentism, the mother of chaos and night in the sciences"<sup>9</sup>. That saving the honor of the good mother is equivalent to saving the honor of reason is underscored on the final page of the *Critique* when Kant uses the term "misology" (*Misologie*) to characterize the indifferentistic attitude. Hecuba reappears in the chapter on the "Discipline of Pure Reason", where Kant observes that to resolve the antinomies it is sufficient to recognize that the argumentative weapons deployed by each of the two rival parties are "apagogic" rather than "ostensive": instead of directly defending their own positions, each side indirectly does so by attacking the other. This critical insight makes it possible to discern a third position the truth of which the two indirect attacks jointly establish, namely, that human cognition is restricted to spatiotemporal appearances and so cannot resolve any of the problems of speculative metaphysics<sup>10</sup>. This time invoking the words of Virgil's Hecuba rather than Ovid's, Kant admonishes any would-be dogmatist tempted to resume the old battles: "*non defensoribus istis tempus eget*" ("the time does not need these defenses"): Hecuba's words to Priam as he arms himself during the fall of Troy<sup>11</sup>.

Why does Kant twice personify metaphysics as Hecuba? What's Hecuba to Kant, or Kant to Hecuba? Although he doesn't say so

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<sup>8</sup> Kant, p. 99 (Aviii).

<sup>9</sup> Kant, p. 100 (Ax).

<sup>10</sup> Strictly speaking, this argument itself comprises an indirect defense of transcendental idealism, buttressing the direct arguments advanced in the "Transcendental Aesthetic".

<sup>11</sup> Kant, pp. 670-71 (A793-94/B821-22).

explicitly, the answer would seem to have to do with the fact that Kant's Roman sources point in the direction of Aeneas' founding of a new Troy. The *translatio imperii* would serve as an apt metaphor for Kant's ambition to found a philosophical republic in which rational disputes could be adjudicated by law. It would be interesting to look closely at the contexts of the passages Kant quotes from Ovid and Virgil to see how they work for, and possibly against, this critical metaphor. Contexts are conditions. Since reason demands unconditioned conditions, we would ultimately have to go back to Homer and (to the extent possible) earlier sources of the Trojan myth. By reading all of the relevant texts side by side with the *Critique of Pure Reason* we would be able to consider whether they can be architectonically unified or whether they would collectively generate a quasi-antinomy in which reason's architectonic pretensions would be challenged by the very sources of its guiding metaphor. Derrida identifies, or constructs, such a quasi-antinomy in *Glas*, a two-column text whose juxtaposed readings of Hegel and Genet 'problematize' Hegel's dialectical version of Kantian architectonics<sup>12</sup>. With some such larger reading project in mind, in this modest paper I would like to highlight the special relevance of *Troilus and Cressida* to Derrida's challenge to the Kantian enterprise.

*Troilus and Cressida* is a 'problematic' play in more senses than one. It was explicitly dubbed a "problem play" by Frederick Boas at the end of the nineteenth century. This generic term was used at the time to characterize dramas in which social problems figured in a prominent way. Boas applied it to three plays that Shakespeare wrote at the turn of the seventeenth century, namely, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Troilus and Cressida*:

All these dramas introduce us into highly artificial societies, whose civilization is ripe unto rottenness. Amidst such media abnormal conditions of brain and emotion are generated, and intricate cases of conscience demand a solution by unprecedented methods. Thus throughout these plays we move along dim untrodden paths, and at the close our feeling is neither of simple joy nor pain<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Glas*, Engl. transl. by John P. Leavey, Jr. and Richard Rand, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1986.

<sup>13</sup> Frederick S. Boas, *Shakspeare and His Predecessors*, London, John Murray, 1896, p. 345.

*Troilus and Cressida* meets all of these criteria. It doesn't end in marriage, so it isn't a conventional Shakespearean comedy. Like *Romeo and Juliet* it deals with the unhappy fate of two star-crossed lovers, but Cressida's betrayal of Troilus is more sad than tragic. Conversely, the death of Hector at the hands of Achilles' Myrmidons is more sordid than tragic given the unscrupulous manner in which Achilles takes advantage of the unarmed Hector and then takes credit for having killed him himself. As we will see, Troilus associates each of these emotional climaxes with Hecuba.

When Troilus sees Cressida give his sleeve to Diomedes, his initial response is one of complete denial. "Was Cressid here?" he asks Ulysses, "She was not, sure" (V.ii.131-32). When Ulysses retorts: "Most sure she was [...] Cressid was here but now" (V.ii.133-34), Troilus exclaims:

Let it not be believed, for womanhood!  
Think, we had mothers. Do not give advantage  
To stubborn critics, apt, without a theme  
For depravation, to square the general sex  
By Cressid's rule. Rather think this not Cressid. (V.ii.135-39<sup>14</sup>)

Puzzled, Ulysses replies: "What hath she done, Prince, that can soil our mothers?", Troilus: "Nothing at all, unless that this were she" (V.ii.140-41). Without explicitly naming Hecuba, Troilus seeks to save her honor. His reasoning appears to run like this: if Cressida has given my sleeve to Diomedes, then every woman must be false; and, since Hecuba is a woman, she must have been false to Priam. Ulysses "cannot conjure" (V.ii.131) either Troilus' denial or his reasoning.

Ulysses could be said to personify the architectonic interest in, of, and for reason. "By an *architectonic*", Kant writes, "I understand the art of systems"<sup>15</sup>. Ulysses is a master practitioner of this art. We first meet him when the Greek generals are in council during a lull in the seventh year of the Trojan War. Their commander, Agamemnon, and their elder statesman, Nestor, attribute the protracted length of the war to the greatness of the task and the trial of the gods. Respectfully disagreeing,

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<sup>14</sup> All citations from the play are to the third edition of the Arden series: William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, ed. David Bevington, London, Thomson Learning, 2006.

<sup>15</sup> Kant, p. 691 (A832/B860).

Ulysses argues that the walls of Troy would long since have fallen had it not been for the Greek army's violation of *rule* and *degree*:

The specialty of rule hath been neglected;  
And look how many Grecian tents do stand  
Hollow upon this plain, so many hollow factions. (I.iii.78-80)

O, when degree is shaken,  
Which is the ladder to all high designs,  
The enterprise is sick. (I.iii.101-3)

Take but degree away, untune that string,  
And hark what discord follows. Each thing meets  
In mere oppugnancy. (I.iii.109-11)

Ulysses blames the general oppugnancy – discord or conflict – on the pride of Achilles. His insubordination – his neglect of the specialty of rule and disdain for degree (i.e., rank) – has spread like an infection throughout the Greek camp, prompting even “blockish” Ajax to emulate him (I.iii.376). (“Emulation” is another one of Ulysses’ diagnostic terms, I.iii.134.) The result is a kind of general indifferentism and – what especially galls the rational Ulysses – contempt for those who, by virtue of their intelligence, deserve to command those who are physically strong but lacking in intelligence. With a hint of the *ressentiment* that consumes the equally intelligent but servile Thersites, the prince of Ithaca complains about the misologic attitude of Achilles and Patroclus:

The still and mental parts,  
That do contrive how many hands shall strike,  
When fitness calls them on, and knows by measure  
Of their observant toil the enemy's weight –  
Why, this hath not a finger's dignity.  
They call this bed-work, mapp'ry, closet war;  
So that the ram that batters down the wall,  
For the great swinge and rudeness of his poise,  
They place before his hand that made the engine  
Or those that with the fineness of their souls  
By reason guide his execution. (I.iii.200-10)

For much of the rest of the play, Ulysses uses his architectonic skills to get Achilles back into line in order to restore the unity of

rule necessary to defeat the Trojans. In this endeavor he is unexpectedly aided by a "roisting challenge" that Hector sends to "[t]he dull and factious nobles of the Greeks" to rouse "their drowsy spirits". Having heard that "their great general slept / Whilst emulation in the army crept" Hector expects to "wake him" by offering to fight any Greek soldier who professes to have a mistress more beautiful than his (II.ii.208-13). This apparently open-ended challenge is perceived by the Greek generals to be aimed at Achilles, but for the sake of restoring rule and degree Ulysses advises Nestor to arrange a false lottery so that Ajax will fight Hector instead.

Meanwhile, in a parallel council scene in Troy, Priam reports that Nestor has "once again" (II.ii.2) pledged that the Greeks will end their campaign if the Trojans will restore Helen to Menelaus. Hector recommends that they do so. The outcome of the war is uncertain, he observes, and a great deal of Trojan blood has already been spilt for the sake of keeping "a thing" (II.ii.22) they have stolen. Even if Helen were rightfully theirs she would not have the "value" (II.ii.23) of any one of the Trojan soldiers' lives lost in her defense. Concluding that all prudential reasoning is on the side of accepting Nestor's offer, Hector ends his argument with a rhetorical question: "What merit's in that reason which denies / The yielding of her up?" (II.ii.24-25).

Troilus indignantly replies to Hector that the "worth and honour" of their "dread father" cannot be measured by "fears and reasons" (II.ii.26-27, 32). This remark prompts their brother Helenus, a priest, to come to reason's defense:

No marvel though you bite so sharp at reasons,  
You are so empty of them. Should not our father  
Bear the great sway of his affairs with reason,  
Because your speech hath none that tell him so? (II.ii.33-36)

Troilus will have none of this. Ridiculing his brother's prudence he drives a wedge between reason and honor:

You are for dreams and slumbers, brother priest;  
You fur your gloves with reason. Here are your reasons:  
You know an enemy intends you harm;  
You know a sword employed is perilous,  
And reason flies the object of all harm.  
Who marvels, then, when Helenus beholds

A Grecian and his sword, if he do set  
 The very wings of reason to his heels,  
 And fly like chidden Mercury from Jove,  
 Or like a star disorbed? Nay, if we talk of reason,  
 Let's shut our gates and sleep. Manhood and honour  
 Should have hare hearts, would they but fat their thoughts  
 With this crammed reason; reason and respect  
 Make livers pale and lustihood deject. (II.ii.37-50)

This withering rebuke silences Helenus, who (if we can believe Pandarus) can but “fight indifferent well” (I.ii.215). But it doesn't satisfy the valiant Hector: “Brother”, he admonishes, “she is not worth what she doth cost / The keeping” (II.ii.51-52<sup>16</sup>). Troilus retorts: “What's aught but as 'tis valued?” But Hector, who has evidently read Plato's *Euthyphro*, replies that “value dwells not in particular will; / It holds his estimate and dignity / As well wherein 'tis precious of itself / As in the prizer” (II.ii.53-56). Troilus, however, still isn't persuaded. With dramatic irony he illustrates the binding character of an honorable commitment:

I take today a wife, and my election  
 Is led on in the conduct of my will,  
 [...]  
 Two traded pilots 'twixt the dangerous shores  
 Of will and judgement. How may I avoid,  
 Although my will distaste what it elected,  
 The wife I chose? There can be no evasion  
 To blench from this, and to stand firm by honour. (II.ii.61-68)

Suddenly, Cassandra breaks in to warn that if the Trojans don't give Helen back to the Greeks, Troy will burn. Yet Troilus remains unmoved by even “these high strains / Of divination” (II.ii.113-14). Paris now concurs that they should continue to fight to keep Helen. When Priam admonishes him that he has “the honey” (II.ii.144) of “her fair rape” (II.ii.148) but his brothers “the gall” (II.ii.144) Paris protests that Helen is a common cause of honor. At this point Hector chides both Paris and Troilus, revealing, albeit anachronistically, that he has actually read Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*:

<sup>16</sup> Here I follow the Quarto. The Folio, which Bevington follows, has “holding” for “keeping”.

Paris and Troilus, you have both said well  
And on the cause and question now in hand  
Have glozed – but superficially, not much  
Unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought  
Unfit to hear moral philosophy.  
The reasons you allege do more conduce  
To the hot passion of distempered blood  
Than to make up a free determination  
'Twixt right and wrong. (II.ii.163-71)

Hector clinches his defense of the moral interests of reason by observing that Helen is Menelaus' lawful wife. To have stolen her in the first place was wrong, and "to persist / In doing wrong extenuates not wrong, / But makes it much more heavy" (II.ii.186-88). After reaching this conclusion through sober practical reasoning in which he all but invokes Kant's categorical imperative, Hector unexpectedly flip-flops, forsaking the honor of reason in favor of the reason of honor:

Hector's opinion  
Is this in way of truth; yet, ne'ertheless,  
My sprightly brethren, I propend to you  
In resolution to keep Helen still;  
For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependence  
Upon our joint and several dignities. (II.ii.188-93)

Delighted with this reaffirmation of the "goodness of a quarrel / Which hath our several honours all engaged" (II.ii.123-24), Troilus applauds his older brother for "touch[ing] the life of [their] design" (II.ii.194). A "theme of honour and renown" (II.ii.199), Helen trumps all prudential and moral interests of reason.

Just as Ulysses personifies the Greeks' architectonic interest in the unity of reason, so Troilus personifies the Trojan ideal of pure honor. By 'pure' honor I mean the kind of honor that adheres to a cause simply for being identified as a cause. Aeneas uses this word to characterize the "praise" (I.iii.243) that worthiness earns from "the repining enemy" (I.iii.244): "That breath Fame blows; that praise, sole pure, transcends" (I.iii.244). The debate in the Trojan council scene represents a kind of antinomy or quasi-antinomy between the claims of pure honor and the claims of pure practical reason. This conflict is replicated by the war itself, with Troilus and Ulysses representing,

respectively, its dogmatic thesis and skeptical antithesis. Ulysses is a skeptic rather than a dogmatist because his architectonic interest in rule and degree supports no genuine moral or metaphysical ideal. In what George Wilson Knight calls the play's "metaphysical universe" Troilus personifies Trojan idealism, Ulysses and Thersites Greek cynicism<sup>17</sup>. The Greeks' open mockery of Menelaus makes it difficult for them to sustain any enthusiasm for the war. To the extent that they are motivated to fight at all it is less by the notion that Helen is a theme of honor than by a competitive desire to best the Trojan soldiers in man-to-man combat. (Even this motivation is lacking in Thersites, who would, however, prefer beating Ajax to railing at him.)

While older critics such as Knight tend to idealize the idealistic Trojans, more recent critics, influenced by feminism, have had more sympathy for the skeptical Greeks and less respect for the dogmatic Trojans, who openly conflate chivalry with the commodification of women (representing Helen as the ultimate 'trophy wife'). As in a good Kantian antinomy, each of the two camps does best when it is on the attack, apagogically deriving performative contradictions from the other side's guiding principles. They do less well when defending their own positions directly, which fact suggests that their conflict cries out for a critical solution. Cressida, a theme of honor for Troilus, highlights the play's quasi-antinomial character when she warns Troilus that "[b]lind fear, that seeing reason leads, finds safer footing than blind reason, stumbling without fear" (III.ii.68-69). Somewhat like the Thracian maiden who laughed when Thales fell into the ditch, Cressida realizes that Troilus is prone to stumbling because he runs headlong into dangerous territory without letting himself be guided by reason. Like Helenus, Cressida knows that it is more reasonable to be guided by reason, even if this involves the acknowledgment of fear: "To fear the worst oft cures the worse" (III.ii.70). Troilus, however, is not entirely fearless. At first he fears the physical consummation of his desire for Cressida. Then, after learning that she must be handed over to the Greeks in exchange for Antenor, he fears that she will prove false to him. In this case seeing reason leads blind fear when for once it would be better to let blind reason stumble without fear. When

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<sup>17</sup> George Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearean Tragedy* [1930], New York, Routledge, 2001, p. 51. Knight discerns "an antinomy between 'individualism' and 'social order'".

Ulysses, who cynically classifies Cressida among the "sluttish spoils of opportunity / And daughters of the game" (IV.v.63-64), enables Troilus to witness her flirtation with Diomedes, the Trojan prince succumbs to a quasi-antinomial shock:

If beauty have a soul, this is not she;  
If souls guide vows, if vows be sanctimonies,  
If sanctimony be the gods' delight,  
If there be rule in unity itself,  
This is not she. O, madness of discourse  
That cause sets up with and against itself!  
Bifold authority, where reason can revolt  
Without perdition, and loss assume all reason  
Without revolt! This is and is not Cressid.  
Within my soul there doth conduce a fight  
Of this strange nature, that a thing inseparate  
Divides more wider than the sky and earth,  
And yet the spacious breadth of this division  
Admits no orifex for a point as subtle  
As Ariachne's broken woof to enter. (V.ii.145-59)

Echoing Ulysses' earlier representation of the cosmic and social disorder that follows the loss of respect for degree and rule, Troilus exclaims that "The bonds of heaven are slipped, dissolved and loosed" (V.ii.163). But the loss of "rule in unity" means something for the traumatized metaphysical dogmatist that is different from what it means for the architectonic skeptic. By "rule in unity" Troilus means not hierarchical unity but self-identity. Were there rule in unity, Cressida would be Cressida. But Cressida is not Cressida. Coming to terms with this metaphysical and even logical contradiction involves coming to terms with the loss of the unity of reason. In the opposition between Ulysses and Troilus, Shakespeare has portrayed not just a quasi-antinomy but a kind of meta-antinomy between two different ways of responding to antinomial conflicts. On one side stands Ulysses' salvific effort to restore rule in unity; on the other, Troilus' disillusioned farewell. The difference between these two attitudes is nicely captured by Derrida:

Between running aground and grounding, we would endure the desperate attempt to save from a disastrous shipwreck, at the worst moment of an admitted defeat, what remains honorable at the end of a

battle lost for a just cause, a noble cause, the cause of reason, which we would wish to salute one last time, with the eschatological melancholy of a philosophy in mourning. When nothing more can be saved, one tries to save honor in defeat. To save honor would thus be not the salvation [*salut*] that saves but the salutation [*salut*] that simply salutes or signals a departure, at the moment of separation from the other<sup>18</sup>.

Thrust into an experience of eschatological melancholy, Troilus bids farewell to rule in unity. Yet it isn't reason that threatens to run aground in the final scenes of *Troilus and Cressida*. It is honor. Troilus personifies the autoimmunity of honor when he chides Hector for showing mercy to his defeated enemies rather than ruthlessly slaughtering them. Without explicitly naming Hecuba, he dissociates himself from her: "Let's leave the hermit Pity with our mother" (V.iii.45<sup>19</sup>). Hector's response – "Fie, savage, fie!" (V.iii.49) – sums up the danger posed by honor's autoimmunity. After he has been savagely slaughtered by the ruthless Achilles, and Troilus has suffered the personal ignominy of losing his horse to Diomedes, the only remaining task is to save the honor of honor. On the verge of defeat, Troilus cries to the heavens: "I say at once: let your brief plagues be mercy, / And linger not our sure destructions on!" (V.xi.8). When Aeneas objects: "My lord, you do discomfort all the host" (V.xi.10), Troilus replies:

You understand me not that tell me so.  
I do not speak of flight, of fear, of death,  
But dare all imminence that gods and men  
Address their dangers in. Hector is gone.  
Who shall tell Priam so, or Hecuba? (V.xi.11-15)

Earlier I suggested that *Troilus and Cressida* is a problematic play in more than one sense. For Kant, a problematic concept is one

that contains no contradiction but that is also, as a boundary, for given concepts, connected with other cognitions, the objective reality of which can in no way be cognized. The concept of a *noumenon*, i.e., of a

<sup>18</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, pp. 122-23.

<sup>19</sup> Here again I follow the Quarto's singular "mother" rather than the Folio's plural "mothers".

thing that is not to be thought of as an object of the senses but rather as a thing in itself (solely through a pure understanding)<sup>20</sup>.

Kant's critical solution to the antinomies consists in recognizing that ideas of reason pose unresolvable metaphysical problems. Critique saves reason's honor by highlighting its own problematicity. If Derrida goes further than Kant it is by problematizing this very conception of problematicity. At the heart of the experience of deconstruction is not just the fracturing of the world of appearances, but the fracturing of the "unity of the regulative Idea of the world"<sup>21</sup>. That there isn't "rule in unity itself", that a "thing inseparable does divide more wider than the sky and earth", is the melancholy truth to which Derrida, like *Troilus*, bears witness. Whether saving the honor of reason is a sufficient response to this predicament, or whether it might be necessary to save the honor of honor itself, is one of the questions with which *Troilus and Cressida* leaves us. Perhaps, at the very moment when honor threatens to succumb to autoimmunity, we should say to ourselves: "Let's save honor's honor", or, as *Troilus* puts it: "Strike a free march to Troy! With comfort go. / Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe" (V.xi.30-31). But this rhyming couplet is a false ending that hints at the lingering problem of autoimmunity. No wonder Pandarus reappears, bequeathing to us the play's final problematic word: "diseases" (V.xi.56).

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<sup>20</sup> Kant, p. 350 (A254/B310).

<sup>21</sup> Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 121.