

CHAPTER 6

*“A new sort of a priori principles”  
Psychological Taxonomies and the Origin of  
the Third Critique*

Patrick Frierson

In *Early German Philosophy*, Lewis White Beck lays out a clear and straightforward account of the nature and origin of Kant’s commitment to a distinct faculty of feeling and a corresponding third *Critique* for that faculty.<sup>1</sup> For Beck, Kant holds that “Art [has] its own rules,” so he is committed to offering “a phenomenological examination of art and . . . a transcendental justification of its conditions,” which requires “the establishment of a *third faculty of the mind*, with its own a priori principles and its own operations which supply an a priori form to aesthetic and critical judgments.”<sup>2</sup> In order to provide a priori principles for art, “Kant [becomes] the first author to maintain clearly and consistently the three-faculty theory.”<sup>3</sup> On Beck’s account, then, Kant’s commitment to a distinct faculty of feeling coincides with and even follows from his key insight that a priori normative principles govern aesthetic judgment. In contrast to this view, Paul Guyer has recently drawn attention to the wide range of features from Kant’s *Critique of the Power of Judgment* that were present in anthropology lectures as early as 1772 – including Kant’s early commitment to a three-faculty theory of soul – and has rightly focused attention on the question of what *changed* in Kant’s thought to explain his sudden shift from pessimism about any possible Critique of Taste to writing and publishing one. For Guyer, the key to this change is Kant’s concern with “teleology” as a way of bridging the gap between nature and freedom.<sup>4</sup> In this chapter,

<sup>1</sup> A full discussion of the origin of Kant’s three-faculty theory of the soul would require discussion of Tetens, but that is beyond the scope of this chapter. For some discussion of the influence of Tetens on Kant, see Lewis White Beck, *Early German Philosophy: Kant and His Predecessors* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969); Corey W. Dyck, *Kant and Rational Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); and Thomas Sturm, *Kant und die Wissenschaften vom Menschen* (Münster: Mentis Verlag, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, 497. <sup>3</sup> Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, 497.

<sup>4</sup> See Paul Guyer, “Beauty, Freedom, and Morality: Kant’s *Lectures on Anthropology* and the Development of his Aesthetic Theory,” in *Essays on Kant’s Anthropology*, ed. Brian Jacobs and Patrick Kain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 135–63.

I defend (against Guyer) a close connection between Kant's psychological commitment to a three-faculty theory of soul and his *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, but argue (against Beck) that it was precisely insights *from* his psychology that made possible his transcendental insights, rather than vice versa. In particular, Kant's psychological taxonomy of mental powers provoked consideration of the possibility that there could be a special connection between *judgment* and aesthetic feeling, and the realization of this possibility led to Kant's focus on teleology and ultimately to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*.

Recent commentators rightly point to the central place in any story of the origin of the third *Critique* that must be given to the letter Kant wrote at the end of December 1787 to Carl Leonhard Reinhold.<sup>5</sup> In this letter, Kant describes how he came to write the "manuscript" that became the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*:

Without becoming guilty of self-conceit, I can assure you that the longer I continue on my path the less worried I become that any individual or even organized opposition (of the sort that is common nowadays) will ever significantly damage my system. My inner conviction grows, as I discover in working on different topics that not only does my system remain self-consistent but I find also, when sometimes I cannot see the right way to investigate a certain subject, that I need only look back at the general picture of the elements of knowledge, and of the mental powers pertaining to them, in order to discover elucidations I had not expected. I am now at work on the critique of taste, and I have discovered a new sort of a priori principles, different from those heretofore observed. For there are three faculties of the mind: the faculty of cognition, the faculty of feeling pleasure and displeasure, and the faculty of desire. In the *Critique of Pure* (theoretical) *Reason*, I found a priori principles for the first of these, and in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, a priori principles for the third. I tried to find them for the second as well, and though I thought it impossible to find such principles, the analysis of the previously mentioned faculties of the human mind allowed me to discover a systematicity, giving me ample material at which to marvel and if possible to explore, material sufficient to last me for the rest of my life. This systematicity put me on the path to recognizing the three parts of philosophy, each of which has its a priori principles, which can be enumerated and for which one can delimit precisely the knowledge that may be based on them: theoretical philosophy, teleology, and practical philosophy, of which the second is, to be sure, the least rich in a priori grounds of determination. I hope to have a manuscript on this completed though not in print by Easter; it will be entitled "The Critique of Taste." (AK 10:514–15)

<sup>5</sup> Guyer, "Beauty, Freedom, and Morality," and Julian Wuerth, *Kant on Mind, Action, and Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

As Paul Guyer has rightly noted, this account of the origin of the third *Critique* involves three key claims.<sup>6</sup> First, Kant claims to have discovered an unforeseen fertility in his general account of humans' "mental powers." By reflecting on that general account, he "discovered a new sort of a priori principles." Somehow, his psychological taxonomy of mental powers helped him see a possibility he had not previously seen and thereby helped him solve a problem he had not previously solved. Second, Kant makes clear what precisely this problem was, that is, to find "a priori principles" for "the faculty of feeling pleasure and displeasure." His failure to find such principles had prevented him from writing such a *Critique* earlier, but his psychological taxonomy "put [him] on the path" to find them. Finally, he claims that "teleology" was the key to such a priori principles.

In this chapter, I argue that the most important factor for bringing Kant to the insights of the third *Critique* is the discovery of a new way to make use of his psychological taxonomies to open a path to further philosophical discovery. In focusing on this point, my interpretation differs from that recently offered by Guyer, who claims that the only really important new element is the connection between aesthetics and teleology. I argue, in fact, that it was precisely by drawing on his psychological taxonomy of mental powers that Kant was able to make this connection. In laying out this story, I start with the second point, Kant's effort to find an a priori principle governing aesthetic feeling. I then turn to a brief explanation of Kant's psychological taxonomy of mental powers, highlighting in particular the key insight to which Kant alludes in his letter to Reinhold, a parallel between the tripartite structure of the soul as a whole and a corresponding tripartite structure of the higher faculty of cognition. Finally, I show how this parallelism with its consequent focus on judgment could have inspired several features of the third *Critique*, including the emphasis on teleology; relatedly, I discuss the important way that Kant unifies three formerly distinct critical projects under the single banner of a critique of *judgment*. I conclude with some remarks about the implications of this story for the relationship between psychology and philosophy in Kant's work.

### **6.1 A Priori Principles for Feeling and the "Universal Validity" of Aesthetic Judgment**

One of the key claims of the letter to Reinhold is that, after having "thought it impossible to find any such principles," Kant suddenly "discovered a new

<sup>6</sup> Guyer, "Beauty, Freedom, and Morality," 136–37.

sort of *a priori* principles, different from those heretofore observed” (AK 10:514). Guyer argues that nothing is particularly new in this discovery: “the lectures on anthropology make it clear as no other sources do that Kant had in fact long considered the possibility and sometimes even asserted that there are *a priori* principles for the feeling of pleasure and displeasure in the form of principles of taste.”<sup>7</sup> Or, as he puts it later,

At the beginning of the 1770s, Kant had already arrived at the idea that a judgment of taste is based on an immediate yet universally and necessarily valid feeling of pleasure in an object, a response that in some sense could even ground an *a priori* judgment.<sup>8</sup>

The possibility of *a priori* principles for feeling cannot have been the basis for the third *Critique*, Guyer’s argument claims, because Kant held that such principles were possible twenty years before the *Critique*.

But Kant’s claim to have “thought it impossible to find any such principles” is well supported by his published works from the decade preceding the third *Critique*, as well as from notes and lectures during that period. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant describes as a “failed hope” the desire of “bringing the critical estimation of the beautiful under principles of reason and elevating its rules to a science,” contrasting this with what he then took to be the case, which is that “the putative rules or criteria are merely empirical as far as their sources are concerned, and can therefore never serve as *a priori* rules according to which our judgment of taste must be directed” (A21/B35–36). At the time of the first *Critique*, Kant had not yet considered the possibility of an *a priori* transcendental critique of *judgment* that would be neither empirical nor subsumed under reason, and thus he despaired of any transcendental analysis of the feeling of the beautiful.

The impossibility of such *a priori* principles for feeling is confirmed throughout Kant’s notes and lectures during this period. In lectures on metaphysics from the mid-1770s, Kant reportedly says, “Taste has its rule, for every universal agreement in a feature is the ground of rules. These rules are not *a priori*, and now in and for themselves, but rather they are empirical, and sensibility must be cognized *a posteriori*” (AK 28:251). And in notes from the late 1760s through the late 1780s, he repeatedly emphasizes that taste is “not to be cognized *a priori*” (R1851 AK 16:137; also see R1787, 1821–23, 1928; AK 16:114, 128–29, 159).

Strikingly, throughout the lectures and notes of the 1770s and 1780s, this emphasis on empirically grounded rules persists alongside Kant’s consistent

<sup>7</sup> Guyer, “Beauty, Freedom, and Morality,” 136.

<sup>8</sup> Guyer, “Beauty, Freedom, and Morality,” 138; also see 140–42.

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reaffirmation of the “universal validity” of aesthetic feeling (e.g., AK 25:179, 1316, 1325, 28:248–49). Unlike merely private (agreeable) feelings, “the beautiful pleases universally” so that “with the beautiful, we believe and demand that it is pleasing to others as well” (AK 25:1316). Kant even raises the central question of the third *Critique*, “how can a human being pass a judgment according to the universal sense, since he still considers the object according to his private sense?” (AK 28:248). But rather than seeking a priori grounds for this validity, Kant’s dominant strategy during the 1770s and 1780s explains rules of taste “borrowed from experience” (AK 25:1326) in terms of pleasures that are “general” within communities. Thus Kant parses the term “*allgemein*” – “universal” or “general” – in terms of what is “social” (*gesellschaftlich*, e.g., AK 25:179, 25:1509) or “communal” (*gemeinschaftlich*, e.g., AK 28:249) and explains that “out of the intercourse among human beings a communal sense arises which is valid for everyone” (AK 28:249). He distinguishes between “what satisfies ... according to private grounds of the senses of a subject” and taste, which “moderates what is produced [by appetite so] that it please all”; and he emphasizes that “only in the community of others does one have taste” (AK 28:251; also see AK 25:1325–26).

During this period, Kant also experiments with grounding the unique status of taste in the distinction between formal and material features of a sensible representation (e.g., R1891 AK 16:150) or in the basic “laws of sensibility” (R1908 AK 16:154; AK 28:892), and he introduces several key elements of the eventual account of aesthetic pleasure in the third *Critique*, such as the distinctions between agreeable, aesthetic, and moral pleasure, and the notion that “free play” of mental faculties is the source of aesthetic pleasure (CJ 217; AK 25:559–60). Kant’s claims that taste is something fundamentally social, based on formal features, and related to a play among faculties, could be combined with belief in an a priori principle, and Kant unites all of these commitments in the third *Critique*. But during the 1770s and 1780s, the notion of a set of *empirical* principles that specify what brings social satisfaction seems to be the focus of Kant’s aesthetics. In none of his earlier lectures does one find the appeal to “universal validity and necessity” that Kant defends in the third *Critique* (AK 20:225; emphasis added).<sup>9</sup> Even in that third *Critique*, moreover, Kant explains that universality need not imply necessity:

<sup>9</sup> Thus it is misleading to claim, about the passage at AK 20:225, that “this claim was part of Kant’s view on judgments of taste from the outset of his lectures on anthropology in 1772–73” (Paul Guyer, “Editorial Notes,” in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant: The Critique of the*

One says of someone who knows how to entertain his guests with agreeable things (of enjoyment through the senses), so that they are all pleased, that he has taste. But here the universality [*Allgemeinheit*] is understood only comparatively, and in this case there are only **general** [*generale*] rules (like all empirical rules are), not **universal** [*universale*] ones. (CJ 213)

However, whereas his early notes and lectures allow for a universality of aesthetic judgment that could be merely general, this passage from the third *Critique* goes on to *contrast* mere empirical generality with true universality, “which the judgment of taste about the beautiful ventures or claims” (CJ 213). Aesthetic feeling is an *exception* to a general prohibition on a priori rules of feeling. The evidence from lectures, notes, and the first *Critique* thus supports Kant’s claim that the key shift that made a *Critique of Taste* possible was that he “discovered a new sort of a priori principles.”

Further confirmation of Kant’s pessimism about a priori principles for aesthetic feeling as late as 1787 comes from the *Critique of Practical Reason*, in which he exposes both his interest in a priori principles for feeling *and* his continued pessimism about finding such principles for taste. Kant’s *Critique of Practical Reason*, which focuses on establishing “that there is pure practical reason” (CPR 3), reiterates the first *Critique*’s pessimism about a priori principles of feeling: “pleasure or displeasure cannot of themselves be connected a priori with any representation of an object” (CPR 58). But what is arguably the longest single section of the book (CPR 71–89), titled, “The Incentives of Pure Practical Reason” (CPR 71), actually shows “not the ground from which the moral law . . . supplies an incentive but rather what it effects (or, to put it better, must effect) in the mind insofar as it is an incentive” (CPR 72). And what the moral law effects is a *feeling*. This section of the second *Critique* thus provides a detailed transcendental critique that establishes a priori the necessity, and we might even say the “universal validity,” of a certain feeling. And Kant emphasizes, no fewer than eight times in the first eight pages of this section, the fact that through this analysis there is a feeling that we can “show a priori” (CPR 72) or “see a priori” (CPR 73, 74, 80) or “cognize

*Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 360n17). Guyer’s reference to the 1772 Collins lectures (AK 25:181, see Guyer, “Editorial Notes,” 360n17, 368n17) does include the aforementioned a priori claim, but neither there nor elsewhere before the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* does Kant use the language of necessity. In fact, in one important early lecture, Kant specifically endorses the view that, while taste judges satisfaction “according to . . . *universally valid* sense,” still “the beautiful does not please everyone *necessarily*” (AK 28:249; emphasis added).



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completely a priori" (CPR 73, 78) or "know a priori" (CPR 79) or "discover a priori" (CPR 80). Crucially, Kant's claim here is *not* about the moral law itself, the a priori status of which he has emphasized throughout his practical philosophy. Rather, what we discover or cognize or know a priori is "a feeling that is positive" (CPR 79) or the fact "that the moral law can exercise an effect on feeling" (CPR 74). And – crucially for understanding the origin of the third *Critique* – Kant insists that "respect for the moral law is a feeling that is produced by an intellectual ground, and this feeling is *the only one that we can cognize completely a priori* and the necessity of which we can have insight into" (CPR 73; emphasis added). Kant's emphatic concern with giving an a priori proof of the necessity of a particular feeling shows that he has not *lost* his interest in a priori principles for feeling. But the fact that he so decisively limits the scope of this ambition shows that his early hopes about an a priori principle for taste have been abandoned. Moral feeling is his consolation prize for having failed to discover an a priori principle of taste.<sup>10</sup>

In apparent refutation of this argument that Kant's discovery of a priori principles for feeling was genuinely new, Guyer quite rightly draws attention to an important passage from lecture notes in Kant's first anthropology course in 1772, one in which Kant seems already to have the key insight he emphasizes in the third *Critique* – the insight that there is a sort of aesthetic judgment that has a priori principles. Kant reportedly says, "With regard to actual taste I must make the judgment about what pleases universally on the basis of experience, but in regard to ideal taste one can make it a priori" (AK 25:179). As Guyer notes in relation to this passage:

The early Kant often seems to suppose that all judgments of taste are merely empirical observations about what happens to please people . . . The present passage shows that matters are not quite that simple, that Kant recognized as early as 1772–3 that there is at least some sense in which judgments of taste are a priori, and that the innovation of the *Critique of Judgment* cannot lie simply in this assertion, as a hasty reading of the letter to Reinhold might suggest.<sup>11</sup>

Guyer may be over-reading the reference in this set of lecture notes. Lecture notes are not entirely reliable, and in this particular case, variant notes from the same set of lectures transcribed the key term differently

<sup>10</sup> Thus when the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* considers and rejects moral arguments for genuinely *affective* a priori principles (see CJ 213; AK 20:206–7), Kant is identifying his earlier efforts in the second *Critique* as insufficient.

<sup>11</sup> Guyer, "Beauty, Freedom, and Morality," 141.

(Parow has “a posteriori” rather than “a priori”; see AK 25:376). Moreover, even if the Collins transcription is reliable (as I think probable), we need not take Kant to claim that taste is “a priori” in the sense relevant to transcendental critique. In the first *Critique*, Kant pointed out that “it is customary to say of many a cognition derived from experiential sources that we are capable of it . . . *a priori*, because we do not derive it immediately from experience, but rather from a general rule that we have nevertheless itself borrowed from experience” (B2). And Kant makes precisely the same distinction, with reference to taste in particular, in lectures on empirical psychology from the mid-1770s:

One could say that some rules of taste are *a priori*; but not immediately *a priori*, rather comparatively, so that these *a priori* rules are themselves grounded in universal rules of experience. E.g., order, proportion, symmetry, harmony in music are rules which I cognize *a priori* and comprehend that they please all; but they are again grounded on universal *a posteriori* rules. (AK 28:251)<sup>12</sup>

Thus Kant says in one fragment from 1776–1778 that with “taste . . . one can judge *as it were* [*gleichsam*] a priori what will please all others,” and in another, when he says that “by means of taste something can be judged *a priori* with universal validity,” he adds that this is so only for someone with “the ability to perceive that which is touching for all sorts of sensitivities *by means of frequent practice*” (R818 AK 15:365; R856 AK 15:378; emphases added). In these early writings, including the Collins lectures, Kant might well claim for taste merely a comparative sense of “a priori,” one ultimately grounded in experience. In that sense, his claim in the third *Critique* that aesthetic feeling has rules that are “*universale*” rather than “*generale*” could represent a shift from seeing feeling as susceptible to a priori rules in a very loose sense (*generale*) to seeing it as susceptible to rules that are a priori in the strict sense (*universale*).

Nonetheless, despite the ambiguity about the term “a priori” in these early lectures, Guyer may be right that, in 1772, Kant held out hope for an a priori principle of taste, one that would justify the universal validity that we take aesthetic feelings to have. Strikingly, of course, this lecture was given about a year after Kant’s claim that he was “busy on a work . . . [that] will

<sup>12</sup> Even in the Collins notes themselves, Kant emphasizes that “one can arrive at [the rules of taste] only through experience” (AK 25:179); what it means that they are “a priori” is that “taste is grounded in humanity” in that “the grounds of judgment are not merely abstracted from experience, but lie in humanity” (AK 25:179, 180). Whether the relevant anthropological claims about humanity will themselves be a priori is left undetermined.



work out in some detail the foundational principles and laws that determine the sensible world together with an outline of what is essential *to the Doctrine of Taste*, of Metaphysics, and of Moral Philosophy" (to Herz, June 7, 1771; AK 10:123; emphasis added). The early 1770s thus represent a period of optimism on Kant's part about the possibilities of *both* a priori principles for feeling *and* a philosophical doctrine of taste. Over the next decade, the attempt to work out "foundational principles" blossomed into the *Critique of Pure Reason*, but during that same period, Kant gave up on the possibility of a corresponding Critique of Taste precisely because no a priori principles for feeling can be found. Guyer might be correct that Kant had an early confidence about finding such a priori principles, which would explain both his optimism in 1771 about a "Doctrine of Taste" and why that *Critique* described his pessimism about such an a priori principle as a "failed hope" (A21/B35). As of 1787, however, this hope for such a priori principles had given way to empirical principles of socially sharable satisfactions.

## 6.2 From Psychological Taxonomy to Philosophical Insight

In September 1787, Kant delivered to his publishers the *Critique of Practical Reason*, in which he argued that respect for the moral law was the *only* feeling for which there could be an a priori principle.<sup>13</sup> Two months later, he announced to Reinhold the discovery of a "new sort of a priori principles," from which would grow the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. What brought about this new discovery? Kant claims that the key to his discovery came from "looking back at the general picture of the elements of knowledge and of the mental powers pertaining to them" and in particular something about the "three faculties of mind: ... cognition, ... feeling ..., and ... desire" (AK 10:514). And his first introduction seems to rest his entire confidence about a third *Critique* on this three-faculty theory:

[S]ince in the analysis of the faculties of the mind in general a feeling of pleasure which is independent of the determination of the faculty of desire ... is incontrovertibly given, the connection ... with the other two faculties in a system ... requires that this feeling of pleasure, like the other two faculties, not rest on merely empirical ground but also on a priori principles. (AK 20:207)

<sup>13</sup> See AK 10:494, and Mary J. Gregor, "Critique of Practical Reason: Introduction," in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant: Practical Philosophy*, ed. Mary J. Gregor (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 136.

And so, Kant argues, “a critique of feeling” is both required and possible (AK 20:207). But Guyer rightly claims that “the lectures on anthropology as well as those on logic and metaphysics make it clear that there was nothing new in Kant’s tripartite division of the power of the human mind,” and Kant had – just a few months earlier – despaired of finding any a priori principle for feeling.<sup>14</sup> So what precisely was new? What did Kant suddenly “look at” that had been implicit but unseen in his psychological taxonomy?

Importantly, Kant does not claim in his letter that anything is new in his psychology as such; what is new is a way of *using* that psychology to find a path to a new a priori principle. But this cannot be the mere fact that there are three faculties and thus three possible domains for normative principles, for Kant had long held that. Fortunately, Kant’s letter to Reinhold refers not only to his “three faculties of mind” but also to the “general . . . elements of knowledge and . . . the mental powers pertaining to them.” Given that Kant did not say which “mental powers” he had in mind, one might think “mental powers” and “faculties” refer to the same thing, and that what Kant is claiming to have insight into is the three-faculty conception of soul. But there is another possible referent for “mental powers” here. Throughout his lectures on empirical psychology and anthropology, Kant had long held not only that there are three basic mental faculties, but that each of these – and especially the faculty of cognition – is divided into a lower and a higher faculty, where the “higher” faculties are “self-active” or “spontaneous” (AK 28:228, 584, 29:880). Kant had also long held that the higher faculty of cognition “is threefold: *understanding, power of judgment, and reason*” (AK 28:241; also see AK 25:537, 773–74, 1032f., 1296, 1476, 28:863–65, 29:888–90).<sup>15</sup> Thus there are really two different “tripartite” conceptions of mind in Kant. There is a tripartite structure to the soul as a whole, divided into cognition, feeling, and desire, and there is a tripartite conception of the “spontaneous” higher cognitive faculties, divided into understanding, judgment, and reason. Kant’s unpublished first introduction to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* shows how his new insight arose from “looking back” at this *pair* of trichotomies.

<sup>14</sup> Guyer, “Beauty, Freedom, and Morality,” 136.

<sup>15</sup> Note, too, that Kant often uses the terms “reason” or “the understanding” to refer to the higher mental faculty as a whole, such that reason or the understanding in the broad sense includes reason in the narrow sense, understanding in the narrow sense, and judgment. Kant’s placement of the power of judgment (*Urteilkraft*) in the higher cognitive faculty is a notable departure from Baumgarten, who places it in the lower cognitive faculty (see *Metaphysica* §§ 606–9).

Now the **faculty of cognition** in accordance with concepts has its *a priori* principles in the pure understanding (in the concept of nature), the **faculty of desire**, in pure reason (in its concept of freedom), and there remains among the properties of the mind in general an intermediate faculty or receptivity, namely the **feeling of pleasure and displeasure**, just as there remains among the higher faculties of cognition an intermediate one, the power of judgment. What is more natural than to suspect that the latter will also contain *a priori* principles for the former? (AK 20:207–8)

Kant had never lined up the three powers of higher cognition with the three faculties of the soul in order to find in the former the source of a priori principles for the latter.<sup>16</sup> It was the sudden albeit “natural” suspicion that there might be such a correspondence that provoked the discovery of new a priori principles of judgment that could regulate feeling.

A few developments may have prompted Kant to attend to the connection between his three cognitive powers and his three faculties of soul. For one thing, Kant had moved beyond his early view that understanding and judgment differ from reason in that “reason is the faculty of a priori rules” (AK 28:242; also see AK 25:147, 537), replacing this with a conception of *all* higher faculties as having a priori principles. In the first introduction, Kant makes this strong connection between a priori principles and the higher faculties plain in a particularly salient way:

[I]f the aesthetic judgment carries [a “universally valid and necessary”] claim with it, then . . . its determining ground must lie **not merely in the feeling** of pleasure and displeasure in itself alone, but **at the same time in a rule** of the higher faculty of cognition, in this case, namely, in the rule of the power of judgment, which is thus legislative with regard to the conditions of reflection *a priori*. (AK 20:225)

A priori principles, Kant now sees, must come from higher cognitive powers, but there is one such power – judgment – that has not yet been

<sup>16</sup> Admittedly, Kant had occasionally connected the power of judgment with aesthetic feeling in earlier notes (see especially R1844, 1847; AK 16:135, 136; c. 1776–78), but he had not done so in any systematic way. Even in 1772, when Kant says that “Taste is rare, for to it belongs the power of judgment” (AK 25:178), he is clearly using “judgment” in a colloquial rather than a technical-psychological sense since he shortly thereafter refers to the rules of taste as rules, not of judgment, but of “sensibility” (AK 25:181). There is one important note (R806 AK 15:351–55) in which Kant both connects taste with the power of judgment rather than sense *and* develops the first recorded distinction in his notes between reflecting and determining judgment. Unfortunately, the dating of this note is a complete mess, with a range of possible dates from 1773 to 1788–89. Given the thesis of this chapter, I am in agreement with the editors of the *Cambridge Edition* of the notes and fragments that the presence of these ideas in this note “could [and I would add should] argue for a late dating of this note” (Paul Guyer, “Notes,” In *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant: Notes and Fragments*, ed. Paul Guyer [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 617n87).

exploited for any such principles. Moreover, for Kant, just such a connection with a higher cognitive power is what would make it possible for aesthetic feeling to be properly *a priori*, where this now brings both universality *and necessity*:

[Insofar as aesthetic] judgment . . . carries with it a universality and necessity which qualifies it for derivation from a determining ground *a priori* . . . the judgment would certainly determine something *a priori* by means of the sensation of pleasure or displeasure, but it would also at the same time determine something *a priori*, through the faculty of cognition (namely, the power of judgment), about the universality of the rule for combining it with a given representation. If, on the contrary, the judgment contained nothing but the relation of the representation to the feeling (without the mediation of a cognitive principle), as is the case in the aesthetic judgment of sense (which is neither a cognitive judgment nor a judgment of reflection), then all aesthetic judgments would belong merely to the empirical department. (AK 20:229)

That is, it is only by being linked with a higher *cognitive* faculty that the faculty of feeling can have an *a priori* principle and thus both universality *and necessity*; for this, his previous “laws of sensibility” (R1908 AK 16:154; AK 25:181, 28:892) simply would not do. And so when Kant opens his published version of the third *Critique* with the apparent repetition of the claim that “the faculty of cognition from *a priori* principles can be called **pure reason**” (CJ 167), he makes clear that what he really means here is a “critique of the [entire] higher pure faculty of cognition” (AK 20:243), which higher faculty is made up of understanding, reason in the narrow sense, and judgment, such that “a critique of pure reason, i.e., of our faculty for judging in accordance with *a priori* principles, would be incomplete if the power of judgment, which also claims to be a faculty of cognition, were not dealt with as a special part of it” (CJ 168). Thus “the present [third] critique . . . is concerned” with the question of “whether the **power of judgment** . . . also has *a priori* principles” (CJ 168), a question Kant comes to answer solidly in the affirmative.

In addition to opening the sphere of “*a priori* principles” to include the whole higher faculty, a few months before writing the letter to Reinhold, Kant finished his second *Critique* and completed a major revision of the first. In his new preface to the revised *Critique of Pure Reason*, he emphasized that metaphysics is “secure in its first part, where it concerns itself with concepts *a priori* to which . . . objects corresponding to them can be given in experience,” that is, when it limits itself to “experience” as a “cognition requiring *the understanding* [emphasis added], whose rule I have

to presuppose ... *a priori*" (Bxviii, xvii), but that in terms of theoretical cognition, "we can never get beyond the boundaries of possible experience" despite what "*reason* [emphasis added] necessary and with every right demands" (Bxx). That is, as he puts it in his preface to the third *Critique*, "the [first] critique, which looks to the faculties of cognition as a whole ... is left with nothing but what the **understanding** prescribes *a priori* as law for nature" (CJ 167). At the same time, in his *Critique of Practical Reason*, he establishes the universal validity of the moral law precisely by grounding this law in *reason*. Moreover, he establishes "the primacy of pure practical reason in its connection with speculative reason" (CPR 119), or as he puts it in the third *Critique*, the fact that "**reason** ... contains constitutive principles *a priori* nowhere except strictly with regard to the **faculty of desire**" (CJ 168). The completion of these two projects thus provided a natural backdrop for Kant to notice the peculiar parallel between the cognitive powers and the faculties of the soul: understanding lays down a priori principles for cognition while reason lays them down for desire. And this could well have prompted the "susp[icion]" (AK 20:208) of a "systematicity" that could "put [him] on the path to recognizing the three parts of philosophy, each of which has its a priori principles" (AK 10:514–15).

What Kant obliquely reports in his letter to Reinhold and makes clear in his first introduction is his new appreciation of the potential fruitfulness of his faculty psychology. In particular, by recognizing the parallel between his tripartite conception of soul and the tripartite structure of the higher cognitive faculty, he comes to see the power of judgment as a possible locus for a priori principles for feeling, corresponding to the ways in which the understanding in the narrow sense provides such principles for cognition and reason provides them for volition (or what Kant calls "the faculty of desire"). This hunch that the power of judgment could prescribe rules for feeling catalyzed a series of further insights that gave rise to the third *Critique*.

### 6.3 Feeling, Teleology, and Reflective Judgment

Once Kant suspected a parallel between the three higher powers of cognition and his three basic faculties of the soul, he needed to figure out how judgment could have an a priori principle of its own. This problem seemed particularly intractable given Kant's standard definition of judgment as "the faculty of applying concepts in a given case" where "the understanding is the faculty of rules [and] the power of judgment the faculty of applying rules" (AK 25:537, see too A132/B171; AK 28:242, 29:888–89).

On this account of judgment, it looks as though any rules governing judgment will come from the understanding; there is no room for a priori rules of judgment as such. The case here is similar to that Kant describes for hypothetical imperatives in the *Groundwork*, that “when I think of a *hypothetical* imperative in general I do not know beforehand what it will contain; I do not know this until I am given the condition” (G 420). So too it seems that judgment cannot have an a priori principle “beforehand” but can only apply whatever principle it takes from the understanding. Kant specifically highlights this problem in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, pointing out that what he there calls “determining” judgment “operates only . . . under laws of another faculty (the understanding)” (AK 20:248).<sup>17</sup> Moreover, insofar as judgment is the faculty of applying rules, it seems that there can be no further *rule* for judgment because “in that case one would have to have rules of application, but these would again have to have new rules since their application always presupposes the power of judgment, and it would progress like this to infinity” (AK 25:1297). Judgment must be a mental power that does not have its own rules but applies rules given by the understanding.

In the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, however, Kant shifts from defining judgment as the faculty of subsuming particulars under given concepts or rules to a subtly more general definition: “the faculty for the **subsumption of the particular** under the universal” (AK 20:201) or “the faculty for thinking of the particular as contained under the universal” (CJ 179). The key move here, particularly subtle in the first introduction and a bit clearer in the published introduction, is a deliberate ambiguity about whether or not the relevant universal is *given*. Thus Kant immediately adds:

If the universal (the rule, the principle, the law) is given, then the power of judgment, which subsumes the particular under it . . . , is **determining**. If, however, only the particular is given, for which the universal is to be found, then the power of judgment is merely **reflecting**. (CJ 179)

The search for an a priori principle of judgment led Kant to see that judgment really has *two* functions, the application of universals to particulars and the discovery *of* universals *from* particulars. While the first takes its

<sup>17</sup> There is another problem with taking determining judgment as a source of a priori principles *for feeling*. Kant’s rejection of the Wollfian-Baumgartenian identification of aesthetic pleasure as a sort of cognition precluded an account of taste according to which the proper application of a universal (a concept) to a particular could be the source of aesthetic pleasure.



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principles from elsewhere and thus cannot properly have a priori principles of its own, the second can, and does, have its a priori principle:

The reflecting power of judgment, which is under the obligation of ascending from the particular in nature to the universal, therefore requires a principle that it cannot borrow from experience, precisely because it is supposed to ground the unity of all empirical principles . . . The reflecting power of judgment, therefore, can only give itself such a transcendental principle as a law, and cannot derive it from anywhere else. (CJ 180)

Kant's recognition of the parallel between the three faculties of soul and the three higher powers of cognition led him to search for a priori principles of judgment. From this search, he discovered not only a new kind of judgment ("reflecting") but also, as he put it in the letter to Reinhold, "a new sort of a priori principles" (AK 10:514).

In the context of his search for an a priori principle of judgment, Kant drew from and revised an important discussion from his recently revised *Critique of Pure Reason*. His discussion of the "hypothetical use of [speculative] reason" (A647/B675) has been widely seen as anticipating the roles Kant eventually assigned to reflecting judgment.<sup>18</sup> There, he strikingly anticipates his distinction between determinative and reflecting judgment:

If reason is the faculty of deriving the particular from the universal, then: Either the universal is **in itself certain** and given, and only **judgment** is required for subsuming, and the particular is necessarily determined through it. This I call the "apodictic" use of reason. Or the universal is assumed only **problematically**, and it is a mere idea, the particular being certain while the universality of the rule for this consequent is still a problem; then several particular cases, which are all certain, are tested by the rule, to see if they flow from it . . . This I will call the "hypothetical" use of reason. (A646–47/B674–75)

As in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, it is this hypothetical use of reason that brings with it "a priori . . . heuristic principles" (A663/B692). Of course, in the first *Critique*, Kant specifically identifies "judgment" exclusively with what he later calls determining judgment, and the

<sup>18</sup> See, e.g., R.-P. Horstmann, "Why Must There Be a Transcendental Deduction in Kant's *Critique of Judgment*?" and Reinhard Brandt, "The Deductions in the *Critique of Judgment*," both in *Kant's Transcendental Deductions*, ed. Eckhart Forster (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989); but cf. Rudolf A. Makkreel, *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant: The Hermeneutical Import of the Critique of Judgment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). Note, too, that Kant elsewhere assigned the function of reasoning from the particular to the universal to the "understanding" in contrast to judgment and reason – "understanding draws the general from the particular" (AK 29:890) – and also to "wit" as a distinct cognitive power (see APV 201; A654/B682; for interesting connections between wit, judgment, and aesthetic feeling, cf. AK 25:760, 1262–72).

function of the hypothetical use of reason is not exactly identical to the later roles of reflecting judgment.<sup>19</sup> But the general structure of the account in the third *Critique* is already present. Kant distinguishes between two ways in which particulars are subsumed under universals, in one of which the universal is given and in the other not, and the latter requires its own a priori regulative principles. And in his *Prolegomena* (1783) Kant emphasizes this incompleteness of his arguments in this section, noting that “I have indeed presented this problem as important, but have not attempted its solution” (P 364) and leaves it to the “discretion” of “experts” to decide “how far [each] will take his investigation, when he has been just apprised of what may still need to be done” (P 364n). Kant thus left as an unfinished task of the first *Critique* the job of working out the precise status of the regulative principles that take one from particulars to universals, but this unfinished task provided just the resources he needed to articulate a new a priori principle, albeit now a principle of *judgment* rather than reason.

Moreover, in the second section of this same appendix, when Kant goes on to offer a detailed “transcendental deduction” of the ideas of pure reason, not only does he emphasize their merely regulative status (see A671–72/B699–700) but he describes the function of bringing unity to diverse particulars in terms of “the purposive unity of things” and in particular the “systematic unity, order, and purposiveness of the world’s arrangement” (A686/B714; A697/B725). These themes relate directly to the third key point alluded to in Kant’s letter to Reinhold: teleology. That letter was sent along with Kant’s essay, “On the Use of Teleological Principles in Philosophy” (UTP 158–84), in which he anticipates his argument for an a priori principle of reflective judgment in defending “a need to start from a teleological principle where theory abandons us” (UTP 157) in order to engage in “*methodically* conducted experience” as opposed to “mere empirical groping without a guiding principle” (UTP 161). Strikingly, that essay does not discuss the power of judgment at all. Like the first *Critique*, Kant there describes teleology as one of the “claims of *reason*” or a “demand to which *the understanding* submits only reluctantly” (UTP 160, 159; emphasis added). He even treats teleology as a reluctantly accepted but not merely regulative principle of natural explanation, built into “the concept of an organized being” (UTP 179; also see UTP 169), and he entertains the notion that teleology would be explained with “metaphysics” (UTP 179). During the 1780s, particularly in his race theory and his philosophy of history, Kant

<sup>19</sup> Makkreel, *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant*, 57–58.

made use of teleological principles as organizing principles of empirical investigation into human beings.

As Kant sought to articulate the nature of reflecting judgment, it was natural to draw on these other contexts in which he had discussed a priori teleological principles governing the investigation of nature. The teleology that made possible methodical observation (UTP 161), the "purposive unity of things" (A696/B714), and the "presupposed" "sameness . . . in the manifold of possible experience" (A654/B682) could all be seen as different articulations of the a priori principle governing reflecting judgment, a teleological "principle [that] can be nothing other than this: that . . . particular empirical laws . . . must be considered in terms of the sort of unity they would have if an understanding . . . [had] given them for the sake of our faculty of cognition, in order to make possible a system of experience" (CJ 180).

But even if the third higher power of cognition – judgment – had its own a priori principle (teleology), Kant needed to connect this principle – and this cognitive power – with the faculty of *feeling*. As Guyer notes in the context of his own emphasis on teleology, it is precisely the "intimate connection between aesthetics and teleology" that is "unprecedented."<sup>20</sup> On my account, what is really new is a systematic connection between (aesthetic) feeling and judgment. The initial *provocation* to this connection came from an analogy, that just as there are three faculties, there are three higher powers.<sup>21</sup> Kant emphasizes this analogy throughout both introductions to his *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (see CJ 176–77; AK 20:207–8). But a mere analogy is insufficient to *justify* the claim that judgment's a priori principle is a principle *for the faculty of feeling*. In fact, the arguments from both the first *Critique* and his "Teleological Principles" essay suggest that the relevant principle governs the *cognitive* faculty – albeit regulatively – rather than feeling per se. But in the third *Critique*, Kant goes so far as to say that "the power of judgment's concept of a purposiveness of nature" is "a constitutive principle with regard to the feeling of pleasure or displeasure" (CJ 197) and that "[t]he representation of a subjective purposiveness of an object is even *identical with* the feeling of pleasure" (AK 20:228; emphasis added). But how can Kant philosophically justify such a tight connection between reflecting judgment and the faculty of feeling?

<sup>20</sup> Guyer, "Beauty, Freedom, and Morality," 136.

<sup>21</sup> Kant also draws on another important analogy, that just as feeling is the "intermediary" between cognition and desire, so too judgment is intermediate between the understanding and reason.

Judgment closely relates to feeling in at least three important ways. First, both judgment and feeling are “subjective.” Second, judgment is an activity that aims for an end (subsumption of the particular under the universal), and “the attainment of every end is combined with the feeling of pleasure” (CJ 187). Finally, the relevant power of judgment is *reflecting*, and not only had Kant long associated aesthetic feeling with reflection, but the notion of reflecting implies *activity* of cognitive powers; as such, it would be intrinsically linked to the feeling of pleasure, which Kant identifies with the “feeling of the promotion of life” (AK 28:586; cf. CPR 9n; CJ 204; APV 231; AK 15:246, 15:252, 16:133, 25:167–68, 181, 1501, 28:247, 586, 29:891).

First, then, reflecting judgment is uniquely well suited to govern feeling because, like feeling, it is subjective. In the first *Critique*, Kant had already insisted that the hypothetical uses of reason were merely “subjective” (A680/B708), and judgment had long been considered subjective, at least in the sense that it “cannot be learned” but “merely exercised” (AK 25:1297). And Kant had long treated the faculty of feeling as the subjective faculty par excellence, that wholly “subjective representation” (AK 28:247). And aesthetic feeling was *particularly* subjective: “The beautiful is thus not the relation of cognition to the object, but rather to the subject” (AK 28:247). Kant rejected Baumgarten’s placement of the faculty of feeling *within* his general account of the cognitive faculty (§ 655, Fugate 237) by insisting that “the faculty of pleasure and displeasure is no faculty of cognition, but rather is wholly distinguished from it” (AK 28:245) because “with pleasure and displeasure what matters is not the object, but rather *how* the object affects the mind” (AK 28:246). He picks up this theme in the third *Critique* to argue that this “purely subjective” nature of feeling ensured that any a priori principle of judgment, even if “constitutive” for feeling, would be “only . . . a regulative principle of the faculty of cognition” (CJ 197). Even more importantly, in his first introduction to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Kant argues that what primarily indicates “a certain suitability of the power of judgment to serve as the determining ground for the feeling of pleasure” is that “the power of judgment is related solely to the subject” and the “feeling of pleasure and displeasure is only the receptivity of a determination of the subject” (AK 20:208; cf. CJ 189). Precisely because judgment is the only purely subjective cognitive power and feeling is the only purely subjective faculty, “if the power of judgment is to determine anything for itself alone, it could not be anything other than the feeling of pleasure, and conversely, if the latter is to have an *a priori* principle at all, it will be found only in the power of judgment” (AK 20:208).

In the published introduction, Kant takes this argument further, showing how reflecting judgment in particular relates to the faculty of feeling precisely through its teleological principle:

[T]he subjective aspect in a representation **which cannot become an element of cognition at all** is the **pleasure** or **displeasure** connected with it . . . Now the purposiveness of a thing, insofar as it is represented in perception, is also not a property of the object itself . . . Thus the purposiveness that precedes the cognition of an object . . . is the subjective aspect of it that cannot become an element of cognition at all. The object is therefore called purposive in this case only because its representation is immediately connected with the feeling of pleasure. (CJ 189)

The a priori principle of *reflecting* judgment is a teleology that *precedes* any cognition of the object, a teleological suitability of the object *for us* and our faculties of cognition, that is, subjectively. But then this teleological principle cannot regulate any *objective* faculty. Purposiveness, properly speaking, is *felt* rather than cognized or desired. So the a priori principle of reflecting judgment, teleology, can only be a principle for the faculty of feeling.

Moreover, and this takes us to the second justification for connecting judgment with feeling, reflecting judgment has a goal-directed character in that it directs the understanding toward "an end that is necessary for it, namely to introduce unity of principles into [the multiplicity of nature]" (CJ 187). But for Kant, "the attainment of every end is combined with the feeling of pleasure" (CJ 187), so if reflective judgment gives an a priori aim valid for everyone, "then the feeling of pleasure is also determined through a ground that is a priori and valid for everyone" (CJ 187). The a priori principle of reflective judgment that makes possible the search for systematicity in our understanding of nature thus provides the first guide to a transcendental anthropology of feeling, since it proposes a necessary *end* for all human beings – unifying particulars under increasingly general laws – the attainment of which is a necessary and universal basis of pleasure for human beings. The presumption of purposiveness in nature grounds a necessary pleasure in actually discovering such purposiveness.

Paul Guyer takes this argument for a connection between pleasure and reflecting judgment to be the primary basis for Kant's posited connection: "Essentially, Kant finally connects pleasure to the faculty of reflective judgment by the theory that all pleasure results from the fulfillment of some aim of the subject."<sup>22</sup> But Henry Allison has rightly shown serious

<sup>22</sup> Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 70.

problems with this view, including the fact – acknowledged by Guyer – that Kant nowhere here says that all pleasure requires the attainment of an end (but rather that all attainment of an end brings pleasure) and especially that reading *aesthetic* pleasure under this rubric conflicts with Kant's core claim that such pleasures are "disinterested."<sup>23</sup> Allison then reads this discussion of pleasure as the attainment of a necessary end as a "transitional section" in the introduction, "intended as a bridge between the initial discussion of logical . . . purposiveness . . . and the central concerns with judgments of taste."<sup>24</sup>

My own suspicion is that this argument is transitional in another sense as well. As Kant sought a priori principles for the faculty of feeling, he first – in the second *Critique* – settled for respect for the moral law as the only possible feeling that could have an a priori basis. Once he decided that judgment might provide for a priori principles and developed the notion of reflecting judgment, he (relatively) quickly discovered a new feeling of pleasure for which he could give a new a priori argument, one closely akin to that in the second *Critique*. Just as the morally necessary subordination of our faculty of desire to a priori principles of reason can prompt feelings of pleasure (and displeasure), so too the epistemically necessary subordination of our faculty of cognition to an a priori principle of judgment can prompt feelings of pleasure. And because both principles are a priori necessary, so too are the respective feelings. What we have in the introduction to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* is yet another consolation prize, one closer to the ultimate goal of an a priori principle for *aesthetic* feeling, but not quite there yet.

What finally took Kant all the way was a third important connection between reflecting judgment and (aesthetic) feeling. The reflecting power of judgment is specifically a judgment involved in *reflection*, and Kant had long associated reflection with the aesthetic pleasure distinctive of taste: "In everything beautiful, the object must please through reflection in itself, not through impression" (R851 AK 15:376). Connecting judgment with (aesthetic) reflection allowed Kant to move from a concept of the hypothetical use of reason as a relation among concepts of the understanding (subsuming more particular ones under more general ones) to a broader notion of reflecting judgment as a subsumption of particulars, including those that may be preconceptual. And this allowed him to integrate the

<sup>23</sup> Henry E. Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste: A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 56–57.

<sup>24</sup> Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste*, 57.



sort of reflection involved in the (successful) efforts to bring systematic unity to particulars with the reflection involved in aesthetic judging. And it allowed him to incorporate the notion of a "free play" among faculties, which he had used to make sense of aesthetic pleasure, into his account of reflective judgment. Thus Kant transforms earlier claims that aesthetic judgment is a matter of "intuition" or "laws of sensibility" into the claim that in aesthetic pleasure "the pleasure can express nothing but the suitability [of the form of an object of intuition] to the cognitive faculties that are in play ... and thus merely a subjective purposiveness" (CJ 189–90; also see 20:223–25). The effort to bring a given representation under a concept employs the a priori principle of reflective judgment according to which manifold particulars *can* be so subsumed, and the very same a priori principle allows for taking aesthetic pleasure in the conformity of given "forms in the imagination" to one's "faculty for relating intuitions to concept" (CJ 190). Hence is born a free play between the imagination – as the locus of "intuitions" or "sensibility" – and the understanding, which play is regulated by an a priori principle of reflective judgment.

Once Kant sees that judgment can provide an a priori principle governing the activity of reflection, he can straightforwardly tie judgment to pleasure. He standardly gives two related definitions of pleasure, both of which are evident in the activity of reflection. Pleasure is, on the one hand, "[t]he consciousness of the causality of a representation with respect to the state of the subject, **for maintaining** it in that state" (CJ 220; cf. AK 20:230, 15:241; 25:459, 785, 28:247, 586, 29:890; MM 212; APV 231).<sup>25</sup> Reflecting judgment, governed by its a priori principle, precisely sustains a state of interaction among imagination and the understanding. And in the case of properly aesthetic reflection, there is no limit to how long this state can be maintained. On the other hand, pleasure is also "the representation of the agreement of an object or of an action with the subjective conditions of life" (CPR 9n; cf. CJ 204; APV 231, 15:246, 15:252, 16:133, 25:167–68, 181, 1501, 28:247, 586, 29:891). "Life" – the feeling of which frames the whole project of the third *Critique* (see CJ 204) – is synonymous with the activity of "the entire

<sup>25</sup> Melissa Zinkin, ("Kant and the Pleasure of 'Mere Reflection,'" *Inquiry* 55, no. 5 (2012): 433–53) has rightly emphasized this definition of pleasure, and she also provides an excellent overview of recent accounts of the relationship between judgment and feeling in the third *Critique* (also see Hannah Ginsborg, "Kant's Aesthetics and Teleology," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, February 13, 2013), though my account differs from hers in seeing pleasure as the consciousness of state that continues rather than a consciousness by which a state continues.

power of the mind” (AK 28:247) and in particular a power of spontaneity by which “something . . . determines itself from inner grounds” (AK 28:765). Reflection consists precisely in an intense activity of free play among powers of mind. Thus it is the “purposiveness of the object with regard to the cognitive faculties of the subject,” in that the object gives rise to the spontaneous activity of those powers, that justifies the “universal validity” of aesthetic feeling, the judgment that “pleasure is . . . necessary combined” with reflection on such an object (CJ 190).<sup>26</sup> Because pleasure involves consciousness of a mental state that is both self-perpetuating and involves the activity of one’s powers, the ongoing activity of mental powers in reflection necessarily brings a feeling of pleasure. And because this ongoing activity is governed by an a priori principle of purposiveness, that principle governs the faculty of (aesthetic) feeling.

Once Kant turned to judgment as a possible source for a priori principles governing the faculty of feeling, he drew on the resources of the first *Critique* and his essays on teleology, along with his earlier conjectures about the role of reflection and the free play of faculties as grounds of taste, to articulate a new sort of “reflecting” judgment. Unlike what he came to call “determining judgment,” reflectively judgment has rules of its own. These rules are subjective and thus particularly well suited to govern the faculty of pleasure. And they are rules of *reflection*, that ongoing activity of mental powers the consciousness of which just *is* a sort of pleasure.

#### 6.4 Conclusion

In his 1787 letter to Reinhold, Kant bears witness to an important role for his faculty psychology in generating the insights that led to the third *Critique*. For as long as he held a three-faculty theory of the soul, Kant sought normative principles governing the faculty of feeling, and at some periods he held out hope for a *priori* normative principles. At the time of the first edition of the first *Critique*, he had given up on any such principles. While writing the second, he took moral feeling to be the only feeling one could argue for a priori. But having completed those *Critiques*, and particularly given his recognition that the understanding governs cognition while reason governs volition, Kant saw in his faculty psychology

<sup>26</sup> I thank Kristi Sweet for comments in which she rightly pointed out both the prominence of the *Lebensgefühl* for the whole *Critique* and the role that *freedom* plays in Kant’s account of life. These comments enriched this paragraph and helped me see afresh how the pleasure of a judgment of taste is a feeling of our own cognitive freedom.

a possible new route to a priori principles for aesthetic feeling. By lining up the three powers of higher cognition with his three faculties, he was invited to consider whether the power of *judgment* might provide the a priori principles for (aesthetic) feeling. This invitation bore fruit in a new kind of judgment – reflecting – and a “new sort of a priori principles.”

This story of the origin of the third *Critique* also suggests a new sort of way in which systematicity at the level of psychology can bear fruit in philosophy. On the one hand, philosophical naturalisms of various kinds engage in “philosophical investigations [that] are not superior to . . . investigations in the natural sciences but . . . [that] clarify and unify the often warring [natural scientific] perspectives into a single vision of the universe.”<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, I have argued that, for Kant, and particularly in his pragmatic anthropology, “transcendental analyses provide a priori normative principles for our human powers, and empirical [psychology] shows how to cultivate powers that conform to these norms.”<sup>28</sup> What Kant’s letter to Reinhold suggests is a more fluid interaction between empirical psychology and transcendental philosophy, according to which normative concerns can prompt psychological claims and these psychological claims in turn inspire fruitful philosophical reflection, but where each requires *justification* within the terms of its own sphere. In this particular case, the “universal validity” of aesthetic feeling, a properly philosophical concern, helped Kant carve out a place for a separate faculty of feeling, a claim that was justified empirically in part through the empirical possibility of human beings having (aesthetic) feelings that are neither merely cognitive nor volitional (see especially AK 29:877–78). This empirical taxonomy of mental powers in turn provided a path for transcendental critique, even though this critique could not be justified *merely* on empirical-psychological grounds.

<sup>27</sup> Daniel C. Dennett, *Freedom Evolves* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 15.

<sup>28</sup> Patrick R. Frierson, *Kant’s Empirical Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 128–29.