Kant's Questions: What is the Human Being?

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June, 2009

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Chapter 2: Kant's Empirical Anthropology

In the last chapter, we examined Kant's "transcendental" anthropology, his examination of the cognitive, volitional, and affective dimensions of the human being from the standpoint of a priori, normative, autonomously-given laws governing those faculties. But Kant also engaged intensely in *empirical* debates about human beings. The next three chapters focus on different dimensions of Kant's *empirical* anthropology. First, in this chapter, I examine Kant's overall empirical anthropology of the human mind, that is, his empirical psychology. This psychology includes Kant's accounts of the different faculties of human beings, the causal laws that describe the activity of those faculties, and the natural bases of such powers in "natural predispositions" found in humans' biological nature.[1] In chapter four, I turn to two more specific aspects of Kant's empirical anthropology, his treatments of human evil and of the historical nature of the human species. And in chapter five, I turn to Kant's accounts of human diversity. All these elements of Kant's empirical anthropology depend upon the legitimacy of deriving general claims about human nature from observations – both introspective and external – of human beings. Kant discusses the challenges facing any such empirical study in detail, and Kant is so attentive to these challenges that he has often been taken to reject the possibility of empirical human sciences altogether. In that context, I begin this chapter with a defense of the possibility of a Kantian empirical anthropology.

1. Can there be an empirical anthropology?

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* would seem to pave the way, fairly straightforwardly, for the empirical study of human beings. Although Kant insists throughout the *Critique* that a human being cannot cognize itself "in accordance with what it is in itself," he constantly adds "that through inner sense we intuit ourselves . . . as we are internally affected by ourselves . . . [and thus] we cognize our own subject . . . as an appearance" (B156, cf. B69, 153). Like everything else we can cognize, human beings can be cognized as appearances, in which case Kant refers to them as "homo phenomenon" (MM 6:418).[2] Even where the *Critique of Pure Reason* most emphasizes the possibility of human freedom, Kant insists that human beings insofar as they appear in the world are subject to empirical study: "all actions of a human being are determined in accord with the order of nature . . . [I]f we could investigate all the appearances . . . there would be no human action we could not predict with certainty"(A549/B577, cf. 20:196). Kant gives a striking example to illustrate this general point.

> Let us take a voluntary action, for example, a malicious lie . . . . First of all, we endeavor to discover the motives to which it has been due, and then, secondly, we proceed to determine how far the action . . . can be imputed to the offender. As regards the first question, we trace the empirical character of the action to its sources, finding these in defective education, bad company, in part also in the viciousness of a natural disposition insensitive to shame . . . . *We proceed in this enquiry just as we should in ascertaining for a given natural effect the series of its determining causes.* But although we believe the action is thus determined, we nonetheless blame the agent. This blame is grounded in a law of reason, which regards reason as a cause that, regardless of all the empirical conditions just named, could have and ought to have determined the conduct of the person to be other than it is . . .; the action is ascribed to the agent's intelligible character; now, in the moment when he lies, it is entirely his fault; hence [his] reason, regardless of all empirical conditions of his deed, is fully free . . . (A554-55/B 582-83, emphasis added; cf. too 29:1019-20)

In the *Grounding*, too, Kant reiterates that "everything which takes place [is] determined without exception in accordance with laws of nature" (4:455),[3] and in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, he goes so far as to say that if we knew the relevant preconditions, "we could calculate a human being's conduct for the future with as much certainty as a lunar or solar eclipse" (5: 99)

Despite this insistence on and transcendental grounding for the empirical study of human beings, there are three reasons that many call into question whether Kant can really allow for empirical anthropology. First, humans do not seem susceptible to truly "scientific" study, since any such study must provide *universal* claims about its objects (as, for example, Newton's laws do about matter). In his

Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science, Kant even claims, "The empirical doctrine of the soul [psychology] can . . . never become . . . a science of the soul, nor even a psychological experimental doctrine" (4:471).[4] Second, a completely empirical-causal anthropology might seem to conflict with Kant's claims about human freedom (discussed in the last chapter).[5] Third and finally, empirical anthropology just seems fraught with particular practical problems. Kant discusses epistemic challenges such as the fact that "if a human being notices that someone is . . . trying to study him, he . . . either . . . *cannot* show himself as he really is or . . . does not *want* to be known as he is" (7:121) and moral dangers of self-study, such as that "self-observation . . . is the most direct path to illuminism or even terrorism, by way of a confusion in the mind of supposed higher inspirations and powers flowing into us . . . from who knows where" (7:133).[6] These comments suggest that even if empirical human science is possible *in principle*, it is unreliable and dangerous in practice.[7]

In fact, however, none of these concerns preclude an empirical anthropology suitably construed. To start with the first point, Kant does in fact reject the possibility of an empirical human *science* in his very strict sense of "science" (4:471, see too 20:238[8], 28:679). In the context, Kant uses the term "science" to refer only to knowledge that is a priori. Newton's laws count as science, for Kant, because "outside of what lies in [the empirical] concept [of matter], no other empirical principle is used" (4:470). As we saw in the last chapter, Kant holds that Newton's laws can be derived a priori from the mere concept of matter and the a priori structures of human cognition. By contrast, even if one starts with empirical, psychological concepts – such as the existence of a mind – one cannot derive synthetic claims about the mind a priori.[9] And unless one can derive claims about human psychology a priori, one cannot make strictly *universal* claims. The *Critique of Pure Reason* notes, "Experience tells us, indeed, what is, but not that it must necessarily be so, and not otherwise. It therefore gives us no true universality" (A1-2, cf. B3-4, A91/B124, A196/B241). Thus general claims about human beings, if based merely on experience, might seem to be "merely fictitious" (A196/B241). In fact, however, Kant's rejection of a scientific and strictly universal status for empirical anthropology does not preclude the possibility of what he calls a "historical systematic natural doctrine of the inner sense" (4:471), a "natural science . . . improperly so called, . . . [which] would treat its object . . . according to laws of experience" (4:468). Kant even compares certain psychological forces to "motive force[s] in the physical world" (25:577), and he remarks that because "physics is knowledge of the object of outer sense, and the knowledge of human beings as the object of inner sense, . . . [empirical anthropology] deserves . . . to be treated as a science in academia, just as is physics" (25:472-3). Kant does not here mean that empirical anthropology will be a science in the same sense as physics, since it will not have a mathematical, a priori foundation. And the claims of empirical anthropology will, correspondingly, not be necessary claims. But even in the first *Critique*, Kant admits a kind of universality that experience can provide, an "assumed and comparative *universality*" (B3): "empirical rules . . . can acquire through induction . . . comparative universality, that is, extensive applicability" (B124/A91, see too B 3-4). Empirical anthropology has comparative universality. While not "science" in Kant's strict sense, empirically-grounded laws of human beings constitute a science in a looser sense, a systematic presentation of human mental and social life.

The second concern about the possibility of Kantian empirical science arises from Kant's account of human freedom. Many commentators have rightly pointed out that the account of free action in Kant's transcendental anthropology of volition offers a different conception of moral psychology than the traditional empiricist belief-desire model according to which human beings are simply motivated by their strongest active desire. But those who take this insightful alternative approach to conflict with Kant's *empirical* account of human action[10] are misguided. Given Kant's transcendental idealism, an empirical and even causal model of human behavior *does* leave room for real choice, not *within* the empirical model but as something distinct from (and grounding) humans' empirically-knowable character. Kant's transcendental anthropology of cognition shows that humans experience *everything* – including themselves – in terms of a structure of cognition that interprets change in terms of causal relationships. But this metaphysics of the empirical world leaves room for a different standpoint from which freedom is possible, and Kant's transcendental anthropology of desire – his moral philosophy – makes clear that human agents *must* see themselves as free causes of their actions. This implies, of course, that Kant's empirical anthropology is *only* empirical; it does not provide access to the nature of the human being as it

is in itself, what Kant calls the "homo noumenon" (MM 6:418, cf. 7:397-400). Kant does believe that it is possible to have access to what the human being is like in itself (as we saw in the last chapter), but empirical anthropology provides no such access.

The final issue for rigorous empirical investigation of human beings is that there are numerous specific difficulties with self-study that make empirical anthropology – as Kant put it at the opening of his first course in anthropology – a "hard descent into the Hell of self- knowledge" (25:7). As he says in his published *Anthropology*,

> [A]ll attempts to arrive at such a [human] science with thoroughness encounter considerable difficulties that are inherent in human nature itself.
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> 1. If a human being notices that someone is observing him and trying to study him, he will either appear embarrassed (self-conscious) and *cannot* show himself as he really is; or he dissembles, and does not *want* to be known as he is.
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> 2. Even if he only wants to study himself, he will reach a critical point, particularly as concerns his condition in affect, which normally does not allow *dissimulation*: that is to say, when the incentives are active, he does not observe himself, and when he does observe himself, the incentives are at rest.
>
> 3. Circumstances of place and time, when they are constant, produce *habits* which, as is said, are second nature, and make it difficult for the human being to judge how to consider himself, but even more difficult to judge how he should form an idea of others with whom he is in contact; for the variation of conditions in which the human being is placed by his fate or, if he is an adventurer, places himself, make it very difficult for anthropology to rise to the rank of a formal science. (7:120-1)

And in a draft of his anthropology, Kant adds,

> [T]he I which has been observed by itself is a sum total of so many objects of inner perception that psychology has plenty to do in tracing everything that lies hidden in it. And psychology may not ever hope to complete this task and answer satisfactorily the question: "What is the human being?" (7:398-99)

For Kant, empirical study of human beings proceeds by means of both introspection and observation of others, and both of these forms of study face several of the problems Kant describes here: mental life is just intrinsically complex, human beings typically act differently when being observed, self-observation is inhibited by the fact that many of the most interesting and important activities in human life preclude the calm and attentive work of introspection,[11] and human beings can develop contingent characteristics – habits of time and place – that *seem* essential. We could add even more difficulties today, such as unconscious motivation or the fundamental attribution error.[12] The result of all of this can be a desperation about the possibility of ever (empirically) answering the question, "What is the human being?"

Despite these cautions, Kant regrets that while "[n]othing seems more interesting . . . than this science, . . . nothing is more neglected" (25:7) and insists that "an anthropology . . . that is systematically designed" is possible and "yields an advantage for the reading public," including the promotion of "the growth of [this] science for the common good" (7:121-2). Kant even maintains that anthropology begins with "general knowledge of human beings" (7:120) and "is provided with a content by inner sense" (7: xxxfrom draft anthro, cf. 25:252, 863-5). And while Kant warns about the dangers of such introspection, he also insists that it can be done in a way that is relatively free from such dangers, insists that observing oneself is also a duty (6:441-2), and gives both general advice and specific examples of how to introspect well. Moreover, Kant insists that this introspection provides only a basis for further study; one must make use of and accordingly adapt general knowledge through interpreting others.

> If we want to judge about other people, we must alter our point of view, namely
>
> 1. transpose my point of view and then
>
> 2. put myself in the other's point of view . . . To take a point of view is a skill which one can acquire by practice. (25:475)

Reading good literature – Kant suggests Shakespeare, Montaigne, and Fielding[13] – further cultivates and supplements proper self-observation. Travel and the reading of travel literature provides further material

for reflection on both human nature in general and “local knowledge” of the varieties of human beings (see 7: xxx).[14] In the end, disciplined self-study supplemented by careful study of others and reading literature by those skilled in putting themselves into others’ points of view can alleviate the problems faced by any attempt “to observe human beings and their conduct, [and] to bring their phenomena under rules, [which] is the purpose of anthropology” (25:472). While Kant doubts the possibility of a *wholly* satisfactory empirical anthropology, he aims to develop as full an empirical account as possible, or at least a sufficient account “from which a prudent use in life can . . . be drawn” (25:472, cf. 7: 119, xxx).

An empirical anthropology, then, will be general rather than strictly universal, and thus a science only in a loose sense. And even as such a science, it is particularly vulnerable to error given humans’ tendencies to get ourselves wrong. But a fallible quasi-science laying out empirically-justified general laws of human beings is, for Kant, possible, interesting, and useful. The rest of this chapter will look at three key elements of this Kantian empirical anthropology. First, I explain the role of “faculties” and “powers” in Kant's account of the human being. Second, I discuss how Kant moves from his account of powers to accounts of the causal laws in accordance with which human mental life operates. Finally, I turn to the biological bases of these powers in “natural predispositions” and “germs” in human nature.

2. Kant’s Faculty Psychology

When Kant began working on empirical anthropology, the dominant approach to the empirical study of human beings in Germany (promoted by Christian Wolff and Alexander Baumgarten) involved laying out different human mental states in terms of various “faculties of soul” and then showing how these faculties could be reduced to a single faculty of “representation.” The idea was that rational cognitions were the clearest and most distinct representations of the world, and sensory cognitions, feelings, and desires were representations with varying degrees of obscurity and indistinctness.[15] Against this view, many philosophers and emerging psychologists (most prominently, Moses Mendelssohn, Johannes Tetens, and August Crusius[16]) argued that human mental states were irreducibly distinct; the main alternatives suggested were either a very wide diversity of human mental states, a bi-partite model within which belief and desire are irreducible to each other, or some combination of these within which irreducibly distinct mental states can be classified broadly into beliefs and desires. Although he lectured from a textbook (Baumgarten’s) that promoted the single-faculty approach, Kant’s own work defended mental state pluralism. Unlike his compatriots, however, Kant insisted upon combining a broad mental state pluralism with a fundamentally *tri*-partite structure. The basic idea was that there are a large number of irreducibly distinct sorts of mental states that can be grouped into three irreducibly distinct types: cognition, feeling, and desire.

Kant’s argumentative strategy for this view is two-fold. First, he develops a general philosophy of science according to which one should seek to “deriv[e] diverse powers, which we know only through observations, as much as possible from basic powers” (28:564, cf. 8:180-1; 28:210; 29:773-822; A648-9/B676-7) but also assume as many basic powers as are really necessary. He puts this point in terms of a comparison of Descartes, who “explains all [physical] phenomena from the shape and the general motive power of bodies,” with Newton’s “more satisfactory” method that allows the assumption of “certain basic powers . . . from which the phenomena are derived” (29:935-6, cf. A649-50/B677-8). The actual phenomena one finds in both the physical and mental worlds require more than a single basic power. So while Kant seeks to reduce powers as much as possible (for instance, by showing that memory is a form of imagination), his focus is on not *overly* reducing mental powers. Second, Kant lays out some specific arguments to show that particular mental powers are irreducible to one another (e.g. 8:181n). For example, Kant emphasizes his isolation of feeling as a state distinct from both cognition and desire/volition, noting that feeling is not merely a confused cognition of a thing, and emphasizing that aesthetic pleasures, no matter how intense, do not give rise to volitions (29:877-8). He points out that while cognition is “related merely to the object and the unity of the consciousness of it” a volition is “the cause of the reality of this object” (20:206). More generally, Kant argues that one can only reduce distinct powers if one can find a power from which they “could be *derived*” (8:181n). In the end, Kant insists, “there must be several [basic powers] because we cannot reduce everything to one” (29:773-822).

For Kant, the set of distinct basic powers includes each of the five senses; an "inner sense" by virtue of which we are aware of our own mental states; the imagination; higher cognitive powers of reason, understanding, and judgment; a power of feeling pleasure and displeasure; and various powers of volition. Kant groups these distinct powers into the general faculties of cognition, feeling, and desire, and further sub-divides them between "higher" and "lower" faculties. "Lower" faculties are primarily receptive, while "higher" faculties are "self-active" (28:228, 29:880, 28:584), by which Kant does not mean the transcendental freedom of the *homo noumenon* but a "*comparative* concept of freedom" according to which "actions are caused from within" (5:96).[17] Thus we can lay out Kant's overall taxonomy of mental powers as follows:

The faculties (and *powers*) of the soul

	Cognition	Feeling	Desire/Volition
Higher	*Judgment, Understanding, Reason*	"satisfactions or dissatisfactions which depend on the manner in which we cognize the objects through concepts"	*"Motives" based on practical principles*
Lower	*Sight, hearing, taste, smell, feeling, inner sense, imagination (including memory*)	"satisfactions and dissatisfactions which depend on the manner in which we are [sensibly] affected by objects" (28: 254)	*"Stimuli," impulses rooted in instinct or inclination.*

3. Causal Laws Governing Human Beings

Kant did not discuss the structure of human mental faculties simply to argue against Wolff's reduction of the mind to a single faculty of representation. Getting clear on different mental faculties is crucial for developing a full empirical anthropology because "the concept of cause lies in the concept of power" (28:564) and in empirical human science we seek "natural laws of the thinking self" based on "observations about the play of our thoughts" (A347/B405, cf. 25:472). Each distinct mental power is governed by its own causal laws (including laws governing how it relates to other mental powers), and a complete empirical anthropology describes these laws.

For Kant, faculties of soul are causally ordered such that "pleasure precedes the faculty of desire, and the cognitive faculty precedes pleasure" (29:877-8). Moreover, "all desires have a relation to activity and are the causality thereof" (25:1514, cf. 29:1024); desire plays the same role in psychology that motive forces like momentum play in physics (25:577). In fact, desire is defined as a representation that is the ground of an action that brings about some state of affairs (6:211, 399; 7:251; 29:1012),[18] so there are no actions not preceded by and caused by desires, and no desires that do not lead to actions (at least in the absence of external impediments). For any human *action*, a sequence of causes can be traced as follows:

Cognition → Feeling of pleasure (or pain) → Desire → Action

At any step along this progression, the causal chain could be cut off. For example, when a normal human being tastes a mango (cognition), that taste gives pleasure (feeling), that pleasure causes a desire for the mango, and that desire leads one to eat (or continue eating) the mango. But one's mango might be snatched away, preventing one from eating (or continuing to eat) the mango. Or one might see a beautiful flower (cognition) and experience a "disinterested" pleasure that gives rise to no subsequent desire. Or one might learn that the capital of Iceland is Reykjavik and thus have a cognition, but without this cognition giving rise to any pleasure or desire.

This overall sketch requires a lot of filling in. In particular, Kant needs to explain what gives rise to cognitions in human beings, how and when those cognitions give rise to pleasures, and how and when those pleasures give rise to desires. As Kant offers the details of these causal laws, his account gets extremely detailed, so here I only highlight aspects of his account. With respect to the lower faculty of cognition, Kant distinguishes between the five traditional senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell), "inner sense" (our ability to "observe" our own inner mental states), and imagination (which, for Kant, includes memory, foresight,[19] and the imagination as a "fictive faculty" to think of things that we never experience). Kant does not say much about the five senses, laying out only the most general descriptions, such as that "the sense of touch lies in the fingertips and the nerve endings (papillae) and enables us to discover the form of a solid body by means of contact with its surface" (7:155) and that sight, touch, and hearing are "mechanical" while taste and smell are "chemical" (25:495). Kant speculates about "a faculty of the nerves [that] underlies the mind . . . in separating and combining given sensory representations" and even suggests that some sort of "water of the brain" that is encountered by the "ends" of the "stimulated optic nerve" or "auditory nerve" (12:34). But Kant's dominant approach is basically Newtonian, that is, not to try to explain how light, for instance, causes a visual sensation by stimulating the optic nerve, but simply to classify what physical causes bring about this mental state. In that sense, just as Newton does not solve the "problem" of gravitational action at a distance but instead names and classifies the phenomenon, Kant does not even try to "solve" the so-called "mind-body problem" of *how* states of the brain cause mental states, instead merely classifying the basic powers that underlie these connections.

The most extensive psychological discussion of lower cognitive faculties comes with the imagination. Kant posits that imagination is governed by three fundamental laws: affinity, forming intuitions in space, and association. Association, for example, is the principle that "empirical ideas that have frequently followed one another produce a habit in the mind such that when one idea is produced, the other also comes into being" (7:176; cf. 25: xxx, xxx, xxx; 28:236, 585, 673, 739; 29:883). Thus hearing a particular song may trigger thoughts of the person with whom one often listened to that song, or the thought of a certain book may cause one to think of the place where one read that book. The imagination also figures centrally in Kant's account of language: it is by virtue of customary association between sounds and thoughts that those sounds (and eventually written words) come to stand as symbols for those thoughts.

Kant's discussion of the higher faculty of cognition is more complex. This faculty is subdivided into three basic powers: reason, the understanding, and judgment. Most generically, "Understanding draws the general [i.e., concepts] from the particular . . . . Reason draws the particular from the general . . . . The power of judgment is the subsumption of one concept under others [or of particulars under concepts]" (29:890). The power of judgment operates according to the principles governing analogy[20] – "things . . . which . . . agree in much, also agree in what remains" – and induction – "what belongs to many things of a genus belongs to the remaining ones too" (9:133, see too 24: 772). The understanding generates certain concepts as an immediate consequence of sensory perceptions, but most concepts of the understanding are generated through chains of comparison, reflection, and abstraction. With respect to the former, Kant argues that "on the occasion of experience" certain "concepts have arisen through the understanding, according to its nature" (28:233), such as the basic concepts of causation and substance that make it possible for our experience to be intelligible as experience of an objective world.[21] In other cases, sensory cognition leads to empirical concepts, such as when seeing "a spruce, a willow, and a linden" leads one to

> *compare* these objects with one another [and] note that they are different from one another in regard to the trunk, the branches, the leaves, etc.; but next . . . *reflect* on that which they have in common among themselves, trunk, branches, and leaves themselves, and . . . *abstract* from the quantity, the figure, etc. of these; and thus . . . acquire a concept of a tree. (*Jasche Logic*, 9:95; see too 24: 252-3, 753, 907)

Reason, finally, operates through principles of logic: the cognition of the premises of an argument give rise to a cognition of the conclusion of that argument. When I think about the facts that "Socrates is a human" and "All humans are mortal," I am led to the thought that "Socrates is mortal."

This far, Kant's account of how higher faculties work tracks how they *ought* to work, but Kant knows that people's higher faculties often do not function according to these ideal laws, and he develops an account of how "other activities of the soul . . . are connected with the judgments of the understanding" to generate a "mixed effect" that can be mistaken for "a judgment of the understanding" (R2244, 16:283-4).[22] Such mixed effects result from what Kant calls "prejudices," which function as alternative principles by which some cognitions give rise to others according to causes distinct from the understanding strictly speaking. For example, "the prejudice of the prestige of the age" leads some to favor the writers of antiquity more than they should, thereby "elevating the relative worth of their writings to an absolute worth" (9:79). For those affected by this prejudice, cognitions of claims associated with a particular ancient writer will immediately give rise to affirmation of those claims, a transition inexplicable in terms of properly functioning higher cognitive powers alone. Prejudices primarily arise from "imitation, custom, and inclination" (9:76), and Kant especially highlights the role of intellectual laziness in cultivating prejudices. Of course, prejudices do not wholly displace higher cognitive faculties, but they provide a way for Kant to make sense causally of transitions between beliefs that are not actually justified, and thus cannot be explained in terms of the higher cognitive faculties alone. This account of prejudice, supplemented with detailed accounts of various prejudices and an account of how the higher and lower faculties of cognition relate, make up his overall account of the faculty of cognition.

Kant's account of the faculty of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure is the most original, complex, and confusing aspect of his faculty psychology. The originality lies in Kant's claim the faculty of feeling can be reduced to neither cognition nor volition, and Kant's basis for this claim is his account of aesthetic pleasure. Even those who argued against Wolff's attempt to reduce all the basic powers of the soul to a single one generally ended up describing pleasure as either a subjective form of cognition like color or scent or as a constitutive part of desire. But Kant explains,

> We have pleasure or displeasure without desiring or abhorring, e.g. if we see a beautiful area, then it enchants us, be we will not on that account wish at once to possess it. Pleasure or displeasure is thus something entirely different from the faculty of desire. (29:877)

The difference between pleasure and volition cannot be explained merely in terms of strength. Even a mild pleasure in the thought of a sweet treat brings with it a desire to eat (more of) that treat, while the most intense purely aesthetic pleasure gives rise to no volition at all. Because there can be pleasures that are not connected with volition at all, Kant argues, pleasure cannot be seen as merely a component part of volition. But pleasure is also a sort of feeling towards an object that cannot be reduced to cognition of it. Someone could understand everything there is to know about an object that pleases me and still not find pleasure in it. So while many feelings might be intimately linked with cognitions and volitions, feeling in general cannot be reduced to these cognitive-volitional aspects. Thus Kant is led to articulate an account of precisely what the faculty of feeling is in its own right.

On Kant's general account of feeling, there can be very different kinds of feelings, but all feelings are, in some sense, feelings of satisfaction (pleasure) or dissatisfaction (displeasure).[23] Because he insists that pleasure is not merely a kind of cognition, Kant rejects the dominant (at the time) Leibnizian-Wolffian definition of pleasure as "the [obscure] sensible representation of the perfection of an object" (20:226, cf. 5:227). Instead, Kant offers two "definitions" of pleasure:

> (1) "The consciousness of the causality of a representation with respect to the state of the subject *for maintaining* it in that state can here designate in general what is called pleasure" (5:220, cf. 20:230, xxxcheck: R556, 15:241; 25:459, 785; 28: 247, 586; 29:890; 6:212, 7:231)
>
> (2) "Pleasure is the representation of the agreement of an object or of an action with the subjective conditions of life" (5:9n; cf. 5:204; check xxx R567, 15:246, R586, 15:252, R1838-9, 16:133, 25:167-8, 181, 1501; 7:231; 28:247, 586, 29:891).

First, then, pleasure is defined simply as a mental state (a "representation") oriented towards preserving itself. The feeling of pleasure just *is* a self-persistent mental state. But Kant relates this feeling oriented to persisting in one's state with the concept of "life," which he connects with self-activity and sometimes defines as a "faculty of a being to act in accordance with laws of the faculty of desire" (5:9n, cf. 28:275). In the case of human beings, Kant identifies "life" with the full set of mental powers of cognition, feeling, and desire (28:xxx). The general idea is that when something seems to promote the activity of one's

powers, a distinctive mental state arises that reflects this advancement of activity; this mental state is called "pleasure." When something seems to inhibit activity, one feels displeasure. In a lecture on metaphysics, Kant connects these two definitions:

> The feeling of the promotion of life is pleasure, and the feeling of the hindrance of life is displeasure. Pleasure is when a representation contains a ground for being determined, for producing again the same representation, or for continuing it when it is there. (28:586)

Thus we might say that when one feels pleasure, one feels like continuing in one's state because one's state seems conducive to the activity of one's powers. When one feels displeasure one feels like ending one's state because one's state feels like an inhibition of activity.

Given his definition(s) of pleasure, Kant divides possible objects of pleasure into different categories. Most fundamentally, and central to Kant's insistence that pleasure is not merely an aspect of desire, Kant claims that pleasures can be distinguished into those that give rise to desires and those that do not. The key to this distinction is that desires are "objective" in that they are directed towards bringing about their objects in the world, while pleasures, in themselves, are wholly subjective, both in that they reflect something about the subject (whether one's overall state is conducive to life) and in that they aim to preserve themselves subjectively (as mental states). Generally, preserving pleasurable states requires acquiring objects or objective states of affairs that bring pleasure. Pleasure in a mango depends upon actually eating the mango. Such pleasures, in order to "produce again the same representation or . . . continue it" (28:586), give rise to desires, mental states that actually affect the world by causing one to act (e.g. eat the mango). Kant calls such pleasures "interested" or "practical" pleasures, and Kant proposes that some pleasures – aesthetic ones – are *not* interested: "[A] judgment about beauty in which there is mixed the least interest is very partial and not a pure judgment of taste" (5:205). Kant takes this point quite far, claiming that if "the palace that I see before me [is] beautiful" I will feel a distinct pleasure in the contemplation of it, even if "were I to find myself on an uninhabited island . . . and could conjure up such a magnificent structure through my mere wish, I would not even take the trouble of doing so" (5:204-5, cf. 29:878). Aesthetic pleasures arise from reflection, and the actuality of the object of one's reflection is not necessary in order to promote the "free play of the powers of representation" (5:217) that grounds the feeling of pleasure. Kant's aesthetics (discussed in chapter two) is focused on a transcendental account of these disinterested pleasures. For the purpose of his empirical account, his main purpose is to show that there are such pleasures and thereby distinguish the faculty of feeling from that of desire.

With the exception of aesthetic feelings, pleasures sustain themselves by means of the faculty of desire. The faculty of desire is, in many respects, the most complicated faculty in terms of its causal laws, and explaining it fully requires a discussion of the biological roots of causal laws in Kant's account. In general, though, the faculty of desire is "the faculty to be, by means of one's representations, the cause of the objects of those representations" (5:9n, 6:211) or "the self-determination of a subject's power through the representation of something in the future as an effect of this representation" (7:251). The key point here is that desire is a mental state by virtue of which one becomes a cause of the objects of that mental state. Whereas cognition merely *thinks about* its objects and feeling merely *enjoys* its objects, desire actually *brings about* what it represents.[24] To desire something is to have the requisite mental state for bringing that thing about. Even when desire is not fully self-conscious (as in animals, or as with bare urges) or when it is merely a response to sensory stimuli, it still represents a mental state directed towards an object as a cause of bringing that object about. When desires are more deliberate and self-conscious, when they follow from the higher faculty of cognition such that we want something because we understand what it is, then Kant describes such desire as "a faculty to *do or to refrain from doing as one pleases*" (6:213). When one has a desire, one might also lack the ability to *actually* bring about the end of that desire. A desire, for Kant, always involves a volitional commitment to an object, but when one is committed to bringing about the object while still recognizing that one lacks the power to actualize that commitment, one's desire is called a mere "wish" (6:213). When one desires an object and is also aware of one's power to bring about that object, one "chooses" it (6:213). It should be clear, here, that "desire" is in some ways actually closer to what we consider "choice" than it is to what we typically consider "desire." When a person "desires" something in Kant's sense, it means that they have the sort of mental state that will bring about its object if it can. Thus what we might consider a mere "desire" would for

Kant be an inactive *ground* for a possible desire. "Concupiscence (lusting after something) must be distinguished from desire itself, as a stimulus to determining desire. Concupiscence is always a sensible modification of the mind but one that has not yet become an act of the faculty of desire" (6:213).

Beyond this general description of desire, Kant must explain why it is that desires arise for certain objects and not others. Generally speaking, the account is fairly simple. Given a cognition that gives rise to a practical pleasure, one will experience a desire for the object of that pleasure. The problem is explaining why certain cognitions give rise to practical pleasures while others do not. Kant's solution to this problem is, justifiably, extremely complex. Generally speaking, he distinguishes between higher and lower faculties of desire based on whether they are moved by pleasures in higher cognitions (principles informed by concepts or ideas) or lower cognitions (brute sensations or imagination). But within these classifications, Kant must explain the variety of forms of human desire, and he articulates that account in the context of a description of biological and environmental factors that characterize human beings. To get a fuller empirical anthropology, then, we need to turn to Kantian biology.[25]

4) Human Natural Predispositions

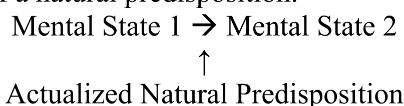
One of the central claims of Kant's biology is his claim that "it would be absurd . . . to hope that there may yet arise a Newton who could make comprehensible even the generation of a blade of grass according to natural laws that no intention had ordered" (5:400).[26] In rejecting a "Newton of a blade of grass," Kant denies one dominant strand of 17th and 18th century biology, theories of mechanistic "epigenesis" that aimed to explain the origin and nature of life in terms of purely physical forces.[27] But Kant also rejects the dominant alternative, "preformationism," which assumed that all humans (and other animals) pre-existed in the egg or sperm of their most distant ancestors, formed in miniature and waiting to emerge. The dominant concept in Kant's biology is the "natural predisposition" (*Naturanlage*), a concept that combines important aspects of both epigenesis and preformationism. Natural predispositions are "grounds of a determinate unfolding which are lying in the nature of an organic body" (2:434). Kant argues that "chance or universal mechanical laws could not produce such agreements [adaptive homologies], [so] we must consider such arrangements as *preformed* . . . [and] the mere faculty to propagate its character is already proof that a particular . . . natural predisposition for it was already to be found in the organic creature" (2:435). But Kant still insists not only that "outer things can well be occasioning causes" (2:435) for the development of these predispositions but also that "even in the case of the structure of an animal, it can be assumed that there is a single predisposition that has the fruitful adaptiveness to produce many different advantageous consequences" (2:126). Like epigenesists, in order words, Kant wants to explain the variety of natural organisms in terms of the smallest number of explanatory principles, but like preformationists, he is willing to allow that at least some elements of biological structure cannot be explained in terms of mechanism alone.[28] Moreover, the way in which Kant suggests that outer things affect the development of natural predispositions ends up being selective rather than purely mechanical. That is, natural predispositions "lie ready . . . to be on occasion either unformed or restrained, so that [an organism] would become suited to his place in the world" (2:245). Kant's use of predispositions is thus a sort of adaptationist[29] account of biological (including human) development: various predispositions are given that develop in response to various environmental conditions in accordance with what is needed to thrive within those conditions.[30]

By appealing to "predispositions" in living beings, Kant does not primarily intend to commit himself to any particular metaphysical conception of the development of living things. Instead, he aims to effect an epistemic and methodological shift. Unlike epigenesists, who try to account for the emergence of biological structures from simpler processes, Kant argues that investigation of living beings proceeds best when one seeks to discover the minimal number of predispositions from which one can best explain the full range of biological phenomena one finds in the world. One corollary of this epistemic use of predispositions is that Kant's pessimism about a Newton of a blade of grass is not a denial that the generation of a blade of grass may *in fact* be causally determined according to mechanistic laws, but only an admonition to distinguish biology from physics and allow forces in the former that might be inadmissible in the latter.[31]

This gives rise to a further aspect of Kant's biology. Given that organic predispositions serve *purposes* within organisms, Kant adds, as a "heuristic principle for researching the particular [biological] laws of nature" (5:411), a "principle of final causes" (5:387) "in order to supplement the inadequacy of [mechanical explanation] in the empirical search for particular laws of nature" (5:383). According this heuristic principle, "nothing in [an organized product of nature] is in vain, purposeless, or to be ascribed to blind mechanism" (5:376). By relegating teleology to the status of a heuristic, a "maxim of the reflecting power of judgment" (5:398) that "is merely subjectively valid" (5:390), Kant is free to adopt a biology that explains natural organisms in terms of purposive structures. Predispositions that are not further explainable either physically (through mechanist epigenesis) or supernaturally (through divinely ordained preformationism) *are* susceptible to a scientific, teleological analysis. One can biologically explain why these developmental possibilities and not others are present through explaining what *purpose* they serve. The result is that in Kant's biology, one can legitimately ask, about any biological structure, what purpose that structure serves, and answers to such questions are legitimate scientific (biological) explanations of the structure.

Kant's preformationism has several important implications for his empirical anthropology. First, it allows Kant to forego the necessity of providing an account of how human predispositions came into existence. As he explains in his "Conjectures on the Beginning of Human History," "we must begin with something that human reason cannot derive from prior natural causes – that is, with *the existence of human beings*," including all of their natural predispositions (8:110). The work of Kant's empirical anthropology is primarily to reduce given powers to as few natural predispositions as possible, to explain the environmental factors that allow certain predispositions (but not others) to flourish in (certain) human beings, and then to use this small number of natural predispositions to explain what we observe of human beings. Second, Kant's emphasis on teleological explanation of these predispositions gives him additional resources for "explaining" predispositions without *mechanistically* explaining them. Thus Kant gives teleological explanations of phenomena as diverse as sleep (7:166, 175, 190), laughter (7:261), distinctions between the sexes (7:305), and that "illusion" by which someone "who is naturally lazy" mistakes "objects of imagination as real ends" (7:175, 274). Third, Kant's preformationism contributes to his general disinterest in giving materialist explanations of psychological predispositions. Kant contrasts his approach to the empirical anthropology of his contemporary Ernst Platner, which Kant identified with "subtle, and . . . eternally futile inquiries as to the manner in which bodily organs are connected with thought" (10:145). Through positing predispositions as fundamental concepts in biology, Kant's empirical anthropology can focus on explaining diverse mental phenomena in terms of as few basic powers as possible, tracing these basic powers back to purposive natural predispositions and the environmental influences that cause these predispositions to unfold, without being preoccupied with finding the physical structures that underlie those predispositions.

In laying out his empirical anthropology, then, Kant takes basic powers to be developed forms of natural predispositions. These natural predispositions provide bases for connections between mental states, grounds in human beings for observed laws covering such connections. Thus for any two mental states, we can describe their connection in terms of a causal law that is grounded in a basic power, which is itself the determinate unfolding of a natural predisposition.



The concept of natural predisposition allows Kant to expand the sense of "basic power" beyond the limited and abstract structure of his empirical psychology. Especially in the context of the faculty of desire, Kant develops a vocabulary for natural predispositions that provides the flexibility and variety needed to make sense of the myriad different ways in which human beings can be motivated to actions.

With respect to the faculty of cognition, Kant's treatment of natural predispositions is fairly straightforward. Each cognitive power is the expression of a distinct natural predisposition. Thus the senses, inner sense, the imagination, and the higher faculties of judgment, understanding, and reason are

all different natural predispositions in the human being (KrVA66, MS 6:444-5, LA 25:1172, LMxxx 29:915). Humans have natural predispositions to sense, imagine, and think in accordance with the laws described above. Thus in explaining the connection between one cognition and another, one appeals to the natural predispositions active in effecting that transition. For example, when the transition from the thought of one's dog to the thought of dog food is effected by the imagination, one can describe this transition as follows:

Thought of dog → thought of dog-food
↑
Imagination (the predisposition governed by the law of association)

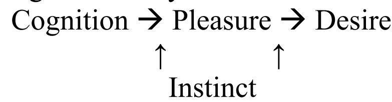
By contrast, the transition from the thought of one's dog to the thought "animal" would be effected by the understanding, hence the relevant predisposition would be different. In both cases, however, a complete explanation of the origin of a particular cognition must include, for Kant, not only the prior state that caused the cognition and the causal law according to which that state caused that transition, but also the natural predisposition that is the ground of that law.

There are of course important variations amongst human beings in terms of the exercise of natural cognitive predispositions. Some of these are rooted in variations amongst predispositions themselves, such as certain forms of mental illness. Others involve a deficiency in the development of natural predispositions. And others, including all prejudices, involve circumstances in which some predispositions (linked either to imagination or to the faculty of desire) override the understanding and reason, leading to erroneous judgments. There are also positive variations in cognitive powers, such as wit or originality of thought, which Kant calls calls "talents," a sort of "excellence of the cognitive faculty which depends not on instruction but on the subject's natural predisposition" (7:220). Altogether, Kant develops an account of cognitive predispositions that identifies the basic powers of cognition as predispositions and then accounts for variations in cognitive abilities through either hereditary or acquired defects in these predispositions or their expression.

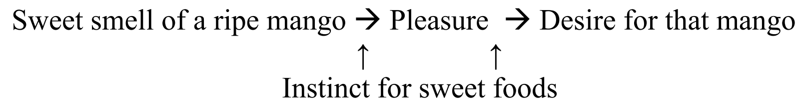
Predispositions become more important and complex with respect to the faculty of desire and the practical pleasures related to one's desires. As noted in the last section, the causal structure that determines whether a particular cognition will give rise to a desire or aversion in a human being can be exceedingly complex. Many things that give rise to desires in one person do not do so in others, things can give rise to desires sometimes and not other times, and human beings – even as objects of empirical study – seem capable of a kind of freedom of choice that might seem to preclude a naturalistic account. In every case, desires are preceded by cognitions that provoke feelings of pleasure that in turn provoke desires. But while virtually all feelings of pleasure cause desires for their objects (the only exceptions being the special cases of aesthetic pleasures), cognitions can cause pleasure, displeasure, or no feelings at all. Kant seeks to explain this complex volitional structure using a set of basic categories of desire, all fundamentally tied back to two basic kinds of natural predispositions: instinct (*Instinkt*) and propensity (*Hang*).

The nature and role of instincts is fairly straightforward. Among the natural predispositions present in human beings are a set of instincts that ground connections between various cognitions and practical pleasures (or pains) that give rise to desires (or aversions) to the objects of those cognitions. Given the distinctness between the faculties of feeling and desire, there would be, strictly speaking, separate predispositions underlying the connection between, on the one hand, a particular cognition and subsequent feeling, and, on the other hand, that feeling and its consequent desire. But because all practical pleasures give rise to desire and Kant has already offered an account of non-practical desires that explains how they cause feelings without subsequently generating desires, in his detailed account of human motivation, Kant does not distinguish between the power that grounds a connection between cognition and feeling and the power that grounds the connection between the feeling and desire. Instead, Kant ascribes the transition from cognition to desire to a single basic natural predisposition. (For ease of presentation, I sometimes drop the reference to the intermediary practical feeling in Kant's account and

simply describe the role of natural predispositions as relating cognitions to desires.) In the case of instinct, Kant's model of motivation maps straightforwardly onto his account of predispositions in general.



For example,



Often, instincts become operative when one is in the presence of the object that one's instinct predisposes one to desire (or avoid). Kant explains, "little chicks already have from nature an instinct of aversion to the hawk, of which they are afraid as soon as they merely see something fly in the air" (28:255). With respect to human beings, Kant explains how smell, by means of "its affinity with the organ of taste" and "the latter's familiar sympathy with the instruments of digestion," serves as an "instinct" that "guided the novice . . . allow[ing] him a few things for nourishment but for[bidding] him others" as though it were a kind of "faculty of pre-sensation . . . of the suitability or unsuitability of a food for gratification" (8:111). Central to these operations of instinct is that instincts ground connections between cognitions and *anticipatory* pleasures that give rise to desires. And these connections occur even *before* any experience of pleasures that might *follow* from the satisfaction of the desire. In cases where the objects of instincts are not present, Kant even suggests that instincts can be "directed to an indeterminate object; they make us acquainted with the object" (25:584). As he illustrates,

> One knows that children, who are hardly born, show an instinct for nutrition, without knowing what they need, and immediately carry out the art of the physical law to suckle the breast; if they did not have the instinct, but one first had to accustom them to this, then many would perish. . . . We can see that the sexual instinct is a natural instinct by the fact that, even if they were in the monastery, when [the time of] puberty comes, persons are still disturbed by the instinct, and feel the need for an object which they do not yet know. (25:584)

One can have instincts with definite objects of present awareness, but one can also have instincts with indeterminate and unknown objects, instincts that agitate to activity in such a way that one comes into the presence of their objects. Moreover, the power of imagination can greatly expand the scope of instinct. Kant describes a scene where "a fruit which, because it looked similar to other available fruits which he had previously tasted, encouraged him to make the experiment" of eating it (8:111).[32] Given an association between a particular visual experience and a particular olfactory experience, a similar visual experience will – by virtue of the laws that govern the imagination – give rise to an imaginative idea that corresponds to that olfactory experience. Given a sufficiently strong instinctual connection between that olfactory experience and practical pleasure, the mere sight of a similar fruit will give rise to a desire to consume that fruit.

Even with this expanded conception of instinct, however, the vast majority of human life is not directly governed by instinct, for two important reasons. First, many of the things that human beings desire are not reducible to particular instincts. Human desires for the company of one's friends, wearing fashionable clothes, resting on comfortable sofas, watching one's favorite television programs, attending baseball games, and even for things like smoking cigarettes and eating fine foods, cannot be explained by appeal to brute instincts. These are all, in varying degrees, connected with habits that give rise to desires for certain objects. Second, even when we pursue objects for which we have instincts, humans typically do not pursue those objects *directly* from instinct. Our instincts give rise to what we might call a desire, but we have a capacity to reflect on whether or not to pursue the object of that desire. Humans frequently decide not to follow through on an instinct for the sake of something else, often something for which one does not have a particularly strong instinctual desire at that moment. When I decide not to eat that delicious ice cream because I know that it will make me sick later, I do not act from any instinctual desire for long term health. If humans acted only from instinct, the task of explaining human motivation would

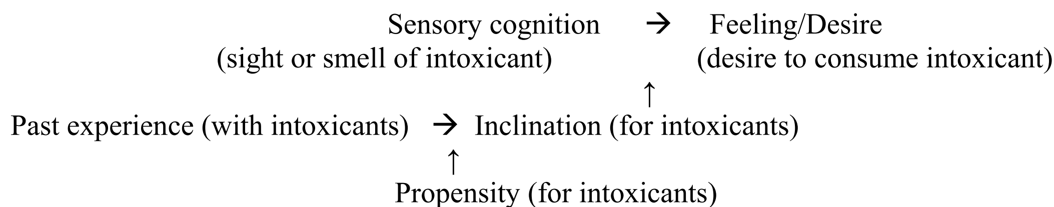
require merely a catalog of relevant instincts and careful descriptions of environments in which those instincts play out. But human behavior is, as Kant recognized, much harder to explain.

One might be tempted, at this point, to appeal to human freedom as a reason for the difficulty of explaining human behavior. And many have thought that the complexity of human motivation provides some support for Kant's account of freedom. But within his empirical anthropology, Kant takes the complexity of human action *not* as a reason to posit any kind of transcendental human freedom, but rather as a basis for a much more complicated but still wholly *empirical* anthropology. Kant adds the requisite complexity through a generous use of the category of a "propensity." In one lecture, Kant defines a propensity as a "natural predisposition" that provides "the inner possibility of an inclination" (25:1111-2; cf. 7:265, 25:1517). More generally, a propensity is a natural predisposition that does not itself provide a ground for connections between cognitions and practical pleasures (and thereby desires), but that makes it possible for the human being, in the context of environmental factors, to develop a ground for such connections. Having introduced this notion of a propensity, Kant puts it to use to address the two problems mentioned in the previous paragraph.

First, Kant focuses on human propensities for "inclinations," which Kant identifies as "habitual grounds of desire" (25:1114) and which, for the purposes of his empirical anthropology, are distinguished from instincts.[33] Like instincts, inclinations provide bases for connections between cognitions and desires. Unlike instincts, however, inclinations are not natural predispositions but rather tendencies that are brought about in human beings through certain experiences. For example,

> [S]avages have a propensity for intoxicants; for although many of them have no acquaintance at all with intoxication, and hence absolutely no desire for the things that produce it, let them try these things but once, and there is aroused in them an almost inextinguishable desire for them. (6:29; cf. 25:1112, 1339, 1518)

In some cases, one needs only a single experience of an object for an inclination to be awakened. Generally, however, inclinations require "frequent repetition" (25:1514). Kant suggests that there is a generic propensity to develop habits, such that when one experiences something consistent over a long period of time, one develops an inclination for it (cf. 9:463-4). In any case of inclination, however, it is not enough to simply have exposure to something to develop an inclination for it. Experiences give rise only to inclinations when human beings already have requisite propensities. The model for explaining human action in those cases looks like:



In these cases, the immediate explanation for why a particular cognition gives rise to a practical pleasure and thereby a desire will be similar to the case of instinct, but because inclinations are not themselves innate, the account requires an extra level of complexity. And this complexity provides for much of the richness and diversity that one finds in human desires. Fancy clothes, comfortable sofas, cigarettes, and baseball are all possible objects of inclination, even when we have no *instinctual* desire for them. And because humans differ in their experiences, even those with the same propensities (and Kant allows for some, but not much, variation in basic human propensities[34]) will end up with very different patterns of desire. A general propensity for competitive sport (or, even more generally, for esteem and physical exertion), for example, leads to widely varying inclinations depending on the particular sports to which one is first exposed. Because propensities are natural predispositions, Kant does not give mechanical accounts for them, but he does aim to reduce the number of posited propensities to as few as possible; ideally, he would also provide teleological explanations for each propensity.

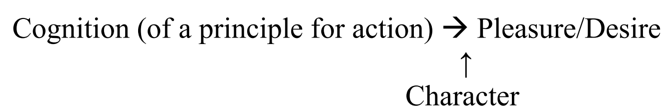
Kant also suggests that inclinations generally involve pleasure in ways that differ from instinct. For both instinct and inclination, experience of the object of desire brings a subsequent pleasure distinct

from the practical pleasure that causes the desire. For instincts, this subsequent pleasure plays no explanatory role in the development of the instinct. The instincts for nursing or for sex motivate human beings to seek milk or sex innately, not because one has experienced their pleasures already. Instincts ground *pre*-sensations (8:111) of pleasure. But in the case of inclinations, the anticipatory practical pleasure that gives rise to desires generally follows from *past* experiences of the pleasure that one experiences when one attains the objects of desire. One accidentally experiences some object, gets pleasure from the experience, and forms an inclination that grounds future connections between the cognition of that object and the desire to experience it. One might taste an intoxicating beverage out of thirst (rather than a desire for intoxicants), for example, or might literally fall into a pleasantly cool pool of water on a hot day. When the experience of such objects brings pleasure, one will seek intoxicating beverages even when one is not thirsty, or one will intentionally seek out and immerse oneself in cool pools of water. In these cases, we might specify the past experience as past experience *of pleasure* in the objects. Of course, one need not *always* experience pleasure in order to form an inclination. One who has started smoking can find herself craving cigarettes even while the actual experience of smoking is still generally unpleasant, and one who develops a habit of acting in a particular way can develop an inclination to continue acting in that way, even if it is not, in itself, particularly pleasurable. Generally, however, a propensity brings about a corresponding inclination at least in part through pleasure in its object.

The addition of inclinations to Kant's account of human motivation greatly enriches that account, and it makes it possible to explain why there is such a wide range of divergent human interests. But inclinations, like instincts, still do not seem to involve the kind of *reflective* desires that characterize much of human action. Kant captures this limitation by ascribing both instinct and inclination to the "lower" faculty of desire. Both affect human beings insofar as we are motivated by sensory or imaginative mental states, but not insofar as we govern our actions by means of concepts, principles, or maxims (the "higher" faculty of desire). For Kant, the higher faculty of desire, to which Kant assigns the term "choice" (6:213), "cannot be determined to action through any incentive except so far as the human being has incorporated it into his maxim" (6:24).[35] To explain how "maxims," or cognitive principles, can give rise to volitions and thereby actions, Kant cannot merely appeal to instincts or inclination. Instead, he appeals to yet another propensity, a propensity to what he calls "character."

Kant uses the term character in several senses throughout his writings. In the broadest sense, the character of a thing is the "law of its causality, without which it would not be a cause at all," such that "every effective cause must have a character" (A539/B567, cf. 25:634). In this sense, gravity reflects the "character" of matter, and one's instincts are part of the "character" of one's lower faculty of desire. In a quite different sense, Kant uses "character," in the context of one's "intelligible character," to refer to the free ground – "which is not itself appearance" – of one's appearances in the world (A539/B567). Character in this sense has no role to play in empirical explanations of action, although Kant will end up arguing that this intelligible character grounds the empirical character of the higher faculty of desire. The character that plays an important role in Kant's empirical theory of the higher faculty of desire is distinct from though grounded in intelligible character, and more specific than the character of an efficient cause in general. Kant defines this sense of character as "that property of the will by which the subject has tied himself to certain practical principles" (7:292) or "a certain subjective rule of the higher faculty of desire" (25:438, cf. 25:277), and this sense of character plays the same role for the higher faculty of desire that instincts and inclinations play for the lower. As Kant explains, "the man of principles, from whom we know for sure what to expect, not from his instinct, for example, but from his will, has character" (7:285, cf. 25:1514).

One can describe such motivations as follows:



"Character" is a matter of *commitment* to various principles or "maxims" of action. Thus, one may have a commitment to the principle "early to bed, early to rise." In such a case, one's actions might be explained as follows:

"Early to bed…" → Desire to go to bed
↑
Fixed commitment to "Early to bed, early to rise"

Of course, this example is too simple in several respects. For one thing, the cognition of the principle "Early to bed, early to rise" is not in itself sufficient to generate the desire to go to bed, since one must also have some awareness of the fact that it is early evening – time for bed – rather than early morning or late afternoon. In order for one's character to ensure that the principle will be efficacious in generating its corresponding action, one requires both perception of one's situation – the sky is growing darker, the clock says 9 PM, etc – and the consciousness of the relevant principle.[36]

Moreover, one's commitment to the principle "early to bed, early to rise" is itself the result of other causes. Kant needs an account of the causes of character *as such*, that is, the ability to act in accordance with principles at all, and an account of the origins of the particular principles upon which individuals act. With respect to the first point, Kant's account of character development is similar to his account of the development of inclinations. There is a "propensity to character" (25:1172, cf. 25:651, 823, 1176) that is actualized by various experiences (cf. 25:1172; cf. 7:294), such that one might have the propensity but lack character, just as one might have a propensity to intoxicants but never develop the inclination. In the case of character, habit does not play a role in its formation.[37] Instead, Kant emphasizes the role of education (25:1172), examples (7:294), and "moral discourses" (25:1173n1, cf. too 9:492-3), and he gives specific recommendations regarding the kinds of education that are most effective, such as education that avoids "imitation" (25:635, cf. 7:325; 5:154; 25:599, 722ff., 1386) and "discipline" (9:449) that can "first clear away the passions" so that character can develop without hindrance (9:486). Beyond these direct influences, Kant suggests oblique factors that play roles in character cultivation, such as stable and just political regimes, peace, and even progress in the arts and sciences. He even suggests that politeness cultivates character by combating passions and promoting self-control.[38] And finally, Kant points out how other natural predispositions (especially temperament[39]) facilitate character development (cf. 7:285, 290; 25:1388). All these elements work together to transform a mere propensity into an active ability to govern oneself with conscious principles rather than reactive instincts and inclinations.

Many of the influences responsible for the development of character as such also foster specific practical principles, but Kant emphasizes that most of these principles still "rest on sensibility, and . . . merely the means for arriving at the end are presented by the understanding" (28:589). For example, one might learn "early to bed . . ." through instruction, but this instruction is effective because it proposes a plausible principle for satisfying one's instincts and inclinations. Even in the absence of specific instruction, one with experience can form principles of action based on what sorts of action best promote instincts and inclinations. Such principles are intellectual rather than sensible, but they still "rest on sensibility" because one formulates them for the sake of "lower" (i.e., sensible) inclinations and instincts. Even actions described as following "from inclination" are generally grounded in a character committed to *principles* that make objects of inclination its ends.[40] Generally, inclinations for sweets do not *directly* cause one to eat them; rather, one *understands* that eating this food will satisfy a felt inclination, and (because of one's character) this thought causes one to eat it.

Actions motivated by these "impure" principles of character are explained by an extremely complicated motivational picture. Through natural higher cognitive powers, sensory data are transformed into a conceptual understanding of one's situation. At the same time, by virtue of one's instincts and inclinations, one's sensory awareness of one's situation gives rise to various lower desires.[41] The understanding then provokes the thought of one or more practical principles based on how reason connects its conception of one's situation with one's felt lower desires. Thus one who recognizes the darkening sky under the concept of "early evening" might be led to think of the principle "early to bed…"

by virtue of understanding this as the time at which going to bed will best facilitate the satisfaction of various inclinations over the long term. These practical principles give rise to practical pleasures and thereby desires – which Kant, in these cases, calls "choices" – by means of a character that has been formed through education, social-cultural influences, one's own past behavior, and the cooperating or hindering influence of inclinations and instincts. Both character in general and the inclinations that largely determine the content of the principles on which one acts are grounded in natural propensities. Thus human beings, due partly to different natural propensities but largely to different past experiences, will be motivated by similar sensory data to behave in different ways.

As complicated as this picture is, Kant thinks that human motivation is even *more* complicated, for three important reasons. First, the account given above assumes that for any given set of sensory data, there is only one way in which one's natural powers can conceptualize that content and, more importantly, that this conceptualization only lends itself to a single practical principle. But it might well be that the recognition of the darkening sky is conjoined with a recollection of an invitation to a social gathering that promises to be particularly enjoyable. Here one may be led to think of the principle "early to bed, early to rise" but also the principle "don't forgo opportunities for enjoyable social gatherings" (cf. 6:473, 7:277-82), when one cannot in fact act in ways that follow from both practical principles. In such cases, even one with a well-formed character will have conflicting possible grounds of action. One's character could enable the former principle to give rise to a practical pleasure that would motivate one to stay home, or it could enable the latter principle to give rise to a practical pleasure that would motivate one to go out. From *within* practical reflection (*transcendental* anthropology), what one does is a matter of free choice. But *empirical* anthropology must provide a psychological explanation. Kant first insists, "in empirical psychology, wholly equal incentives cannot be thought" (28:678; cf. 25:278) because in the case of equal incentives, there would be no choice and thus no action (29:902). As a result, Kant distinguishes "living" and "dead" grounds of desire. Even when one has only a "dead" ground, one might still be left with something *like* a desire, with what Kant calls a "wish," where the "ground determining one to action . . . is [not] joined with one's consciousness of the ability to bring about its object" (6:213), in this case due to one's pursuit of other ends. Thus one goes to bed because one's overall character subordinates the principle of socialization to that of prudent rest, but one falls to sleep wishing that one could somehow *both* go to bed early *and* partake in the enjoyable party.

The second added complication to this account of choice is that although, strictly speaking, character requires commitment to act from *consistent* principles, very few people have character in this fully developed sense. In a lecture, Kant specifically mentions difficulty with the practical maxim "early to bed, early to rise":

> [one] who is not steadfast in this, often lays hold of a resolve, of which he knows for sure that nothing will come, because he knows that he has already often broken resolutions. Then the human being is in his [own] eyes a wind-bag. He no longer has any confidence in himself . . . This is how it is with things for which one wants to break one's habit . . ., such as sleeping in; for it is always said, just one more time, but then no more, and thus one again philosophizes oneself free of one's plan . . . (25:624)

Sometimes inclinations directly overpower one's higher faculty of desire, such that in the strict sense, one acts on the inclination alone, without the reflection that characterizes choice. But such cases are rare. More often, inclination corrupts the grounds of choice and one "philosophizes oneself free of one's plan" by acting on a maxim that differs from what one had resolved. For Kant, this tendency is quite common. Truly firm character "is fixed very late," only "com[ing] at a ripe old age" (25:654, 1385, cf. 7: 294). Most people have a kind of "bad" or "flawed" character (*schlechte Character*: 25:650, 1172; *Fehlerhafte im Character:* 25:1172). Such "character" is a "constitution of one's higher powers" (25:227) according to which, rather than acting on from fixed principles, one allows the principles of choice to vary based on inclinations active at the time of choice. Here inclinations and instincts not only affect to which practical principles one commits oneself but also determine whether and to what extent those affect deliberation at particular moments. One with a firmly established character decides, by assessing the impact of various principles on her life as a whole, how to prioritize such principles. When the time comes for action, which practical principles determine action are set by this prioritization. One without true character might

similarly rank practical principles, resolving, for instance, to prioritize an early start to the day over satisfying the inclination to sleep in, but inclinations of the moment, rather than resolved-upon rankings, determine which principles become effective.

A final, crucial component of Kant's account is that humans are capable not only of "impure" principles of action that are "intellectual . . . in some respect," but also of *purely* intellectual principles of action. Human beings have a "predisposition to the good" (6:xxx), a "moral predisposition" (7:xxx) that gives motivational force to a principle that is "purely intellectual without qualification" because it is an "impelling cause" that "is represented by the *pure* understanding" (28:589). A purely intellectual principle is not based in any way on one's instincts or inclinations but proceeds solely from practical reason itself. In chapter two, we saw the importance from the standpoint of transcendental anthropology (moral philosophy) of the possibility of an "autonomous" moral law, a principle governing human actions that does not require appeal to inclination for its *justification*. Within Kant's psychology, the role of pure practical principles is different. They are principles of the higher faculty of desire that do not require positing any instincts or inclinations as factors in its *explanation*. In chapter two, we noted that Kant must show how moral laws can motivate human beings that are objects of empirical description. Kant's empirical anthropology in general provides the basic biological-psychological background for such an account. Like other natural predispositions, the predisposition to the good is simply posited in human nature. Like instincts, Kant suggests that this predisposition is innate in human beings (6:27-8, 7:324), and he even offers empirical evidence for it (7:85). But like all predispositions of the faculty of desire (including instincts), experiential factors determine the extent to which the moral predisposition is living and efficacious or amounts to mere wish. Thus, for example, when one person "confronts [another] with . . . the moral law by which he ought to act . . . , this confrontation [can] make an impression on the agent, [so that] he determines his will by an Idea of reason, creates through his reason that conception of his duty which already lay previously within him, and is . . . quickened by the other . . . [to] determine himself accordingly to the moral law" (27:521). And Kant discusses various ways in which, for instance, moral education (5:155, 6:479), polite society (xxx), and moral-religious communities (6:xxx) can enliven one's innate moral predisposition.

From the standpoint of the environmental and predispositional bases of moral motivation, Kant's account of moral motivation thus fits well into his general empirical anthropology. Because of the importance of moral motivation for his transcendental anthropology, however, and especially the importance of making sense of how a finite, empirically situated being can be motivated by a pure moral law, Kant adds detailed specific accounts of the nature of the "feeling of respect" that serves as the anticipatory "pleasure" causing choice in accordance with the moral law. Kant's account of respect for the moral law is notoriously difficult to interpret. On the one hand, Kant says that "there is indeed no feeling for this [moral] law" (5:75), but he proceeds to give a detailed analysis of the "feeling of respect for the moral law," the "moral feeling" that is "produced solely by reason" (5:75-6).[42]

Given that Kant posits both a transcendental and an empirical anthropology, it is understandable that he might give different accounts of the role of pleasure in moral motivation. From the standpoint of transcendental anthropology, pleasure cannot play any role in grounding decisions to act in accordance with the moral law. If I choose to do what is right because it is (or will be) pleasurable, I do not choose autonomously, and hence do not really choose to do what is right. Kant insists,

> If the determination of the will takes place . . . by means of a feeling, of whatever kind, that has to be presupposed in order for the law to become a sufficient determining ground of the will, so that the action is not done *for the sake of the law*, then the action [may] contain *legality* indeed, but not morality. (5:71)

As an account of moral choice from the (transcendental) perspective of deliberation, this is exactly right. Whereas non-moral choices are often based, directly or indirectly, on various feelings or anticipated feelings, when one decides to do what is morally good, it should be done *because* the choice is morally good. And Kant rightly adds that, from this *transcendental* perspective, "how a law can be of itself and immediately a determine ground of the will . . . is . . . insoluble . . . and identical with . . . how a free will is possible" (5:72). But the fact that one must see oneself as free, and as bound to freely adopt the moral law as the law of one's will, does not preclude an *empirical* analysis of what such a free choice "effects . .

. in the mind insofar as it is an incentive" (5:72). That is, Kant can still explain how it *appears* when a person freely chooses to follow the moral law.

In the context of *empirical* anthropology, Kant could allow, consistent with his general account of human motivation, that the thought of the pure moral principle gives rise to volition by means of pleasure. In his lectures on empirical psychology, Kant even talks about an "intellectual pleasure" that arises from "representation of the [moral] law" (29:1024)[43] and that serves as the motivational transition from cognition of that moral law to action in accordance with it. Elsewhere, however, Kant worries about subsuming his account of moral motivation too closely under his account of motivation in general. In those contexts, Kant suggests that "this singular feeling . . . cannot be compared to any pathological feeling" (5:76, cf. 20:207). In addition to its wholly intellectual ground, Kant suggests that the feeling of respect is not, strictly speaking, a feeling at all. The idea would be that the cognition of the moral law directly causes one to choose in accordance with it, without any specific feeling functioning as an intermediary. But "inasmuch as it moves resistance [of inclinations] out of the way, in the judgment of reason this removal of a hindrance is esteemed equivalent to a positive furthering" and so "this . . . can be called a feeling of respect for the moral law" (5:75). This account would involve modifying Kant's empirical account of action in the context of moral actions, for which feeling would not properly speaking mediate between cognition and volition but only provide the subjective impression of cognition directly causing volitions counter to our inclinations. Whether, in the end, respect for the moral law functions just like any other feeling in mediating higher cognition (of the moral law) and volition, the fundamental structure of Kant's empirical anthropology allows him to posit a predisposition to morality that, in conjunction with one's character, can ground volitions that are empirically caused by the cognition of the moral law as such. Kant thus provides a framework for empirically describing what, from the standpoint of transcendental anthropology, are free choices of a morally good will.

6) Conclusion[44]

Insofar as they are objects of empirical study, human beings are biological beings with complex mental lives. As biological beings, we have various predispositions that are best discussed in terms of the purposes that they serve, and these predispositions provide grounds for causal laws that determine how our environment shapes our cognitions, feelings, and desires. The result is a complex causal account of human beings that allows for significant differences between individual human beings in terms of their beliefs, pleasures, and choices, while still situating these differences in the context of a set of universal laws of human psychology. So far, this account of human beings has been relatively free of moral implications. As a strictly *empirical* anthropology, there is no direct basis for ascribing moral value to any particular psychological structures over others. But Kant uses his empirical anthropology to argue for an important moral claim about human beings. As we will see in the next chapter, Kant argues that there is good empirical evidence that human beings have a predispositional structure that can rightly be called "radically *evil*." Moreover, this chapter has emphasized humans' empirical nature as both universal and fixed. But Kant's empirical anthropology also includes accounts of the *historical change* of the human species and of significant *diversity* in humans' make-up. The next chapter will investigate Kant's account of human historicity, and we will turn to Kant's account of human diversity in chapter five.

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[1] Xxx ***Alternative possible introduction:*** There are four key aspects of Kant's empirical account of the human being. First, as we saw in chapter two, one crucial issue in the development of empirical psychology in the second half of the 18th century was the structure of the human mind. Whereas Christian Wolff had sought to reduce all human mental states to the single category of "representation" and all capacities to a single "xxx capacity for representation," there was an increasing sense that this reduction obscured essential differences between, for example, volition and cognition. In this context, Kant developed his own elaborate faculty psychology, defending a three-fold set of faculties each of which could be further subdivided into irreducibly distinct mental powers. Second, Kant overlaid onto his discussion of human mental powers an account of various causal laws that govern those powers and their relations. For Kant, "the concept of cause lies in the concept of power" (28:564),[1] so the elucidation of different mental powers provides the framework for a discussion of the causal laws that govern those powers. Third, Kant entered into 18th century debates within biology and embryology about the extent to which various human (mental) tendencies and capacities are innate or acquired. In that

context, Kant developed an account of the human being rooted in the presence of various "germs" (Keime) and "predispositions" (Anlagen) that could be cultivated in different ways depending on human's context. The way in which these germs and predispositions develop determines, in large part, the way in which human mental powers operate. Fourth, this account of predispositions (and germs) provided a background for an account of human history and human differences. In that context, Kant entered into a growing interest within the 18th century in thinking of the human being as a fundamentally historical being. Herder, one of Kant's students and an eventual philosophical rival, explained that "xxx." And Kant himself pointed out that "xxxhuman progress as a species and in history xxx."

[2] When Kant lays out the a priori principles of possible experience, he even defends these principles as transcendental conditions of the possibility of objects in time -- the form of inner sense that governs both inner psychological "objects" and external, physical objects – precisely in order to ensure that all experience – inner as well as outer – will be governed by these principles.

[3] In a lecture on metaphysics, Kant reiterates this, making clear that "nature" here refers not simply to the realm of outer sense – bodies – but to inner sense – the mind – as well: "All things in nature, be they inner or outer events, have their determining cause, they all happen according to natural laws and are also determined according to them" (28:582). Working out the precise relationship between inner and outer events is beyond the scope of this paper, although it would have important implications for the extent to which Kant allows reductionism with respect to mental events. For my purposes, I focus on showing Kant has a causal account of mental events. Whether this is in principle reducible to a physical account is beyond the scope of this paper.

[4] E.g. Gouax 1972, Westphal xxx.

[5] Cf. Reath, Baron.

[6] The idea here is that "we make supposed discoveries of what we ourselves have carried into ourselves" (7:133), acting as though the apparently involuntary flow of our thoughts is due to some sort of supernatural inspiration.

[7] Cf. wood, louden.

[8] Cf. Wood 1999: 198.

[9] Kant gives several reasons for this, including the fact that because the form of inner sense is time, "which has only one dimension," "mathematics in inapplicable to the phenomena of inner sense" (4:471) and the fact that "observation itself already changes and displaces the state of the observed object" (4:471).

[10] One such commentator has said, "if the moral law determines choice by exerting a force that is stronger than the alternatives, moral conduct will result from the balance of whatever psychological forces are acting on the will . . . It is not clear that this model leaves room for any real notion of will or choice" (Reath 1989: 290-91). Cf. too Baron 1995:189, Westphal 357-8, and even Wood (2003: 50).

[11] When one is overcome with anger, for example, it is impossible to actually observe the nature of that anger because anger prevents the calm interest and introspective attention involved in self-study. And when the anger has passed, one can no longer see – and may not accurately remember – what the anger looks like in action.

[12] See chapter 9 for more.

[13] Kant also includes such authors as Samuel Richardson, Moliere, the English Spectator (by Allison and Steele), xxx. For references to literature as a source of anthropology, see 7: 221, 25:473, Add refs and more literature.

[14] For more discussion, cf. Frierson 2003: xxx.

[15] This view was promoted by Wolff and Baumgarten, drawing on Leibniz. Kant used Baumgarten's textbook for his lectures on empirical psychology and anthropology.

[16] Cf. Crusius 1745, §§ 73 and 444; Watkins 2005: 91; Hatfield 1990.

[17] For a discussion of the relation between these sorts of freedom, see Frierson xxx (Empirical Markers).

[18] This account of desires as representational provides room for semantic connections between the cognitions and desires. In general, the content of the cognition that gives rise to a desire will be closely linked to the object of desire. For example, the smell of a mango (cognition) will give rise to a desire to consume the mango. Theoretically, cognitions could give rise to desires radically different from themselves – thus a smell of a mango could give rise to a desire to play baseball – but for Kant these connections do not generally occur because of the nature of cognition, feeling, and desire.

[19] Put briefly, Kant sees both memory and foresight as governed by the same "principle of association" that governs the reproductive imagination generally (7:182), though memory is different from reproductive imagination in general in that one can recall previous associations of ideas *"voluntarily"* (7:182) while foresight builds foresight combines with a voluntary recollection of the past an "anticipation of similar cases" for the future (7:186). In both cases, Kant gives detailed pragmatic suggestions for the improvement of memory of foresight.

[20] It is important to distinguish the role of analogy as a principle of imagination and a principle of judgment. In the imagination, "empirical ideas that have frequently followed one another produce a habit in the mind such that when one idea is produced, the other also comes into being" (7: 176). Here the transition from one idea to the next is immediate. In the case of the faculty of judgment, the cognition of a particular judgment (that two things are similar in many respects) gives rise to a further judgment (that they are similar in other respects) by means of an implicit principle of

judging.
[21] Even in the case of these basic concepts, one "understands" them only in an implicit sense, sufficient for applying them for cognizing the world. Coming to articulate one's implicit understanding of causation in terms of the generic concept "cause" takes a process of "reflection" (28:233) on the experience that they help to structure. (Small children make use of causal inferences long before they understand what the word "cause" means.)
[22] My account of deviations from proper functioning of the higher cognitive faculties here focused on those deviations that take place in ordinary human knowers. Kant's account of mental illness will be discussed in chapter six.
[23] Kant sometimes uses these terms synonymously, and sometimes distinguishes pleasure as sensuous satisfaction, where satisfaction is a more generic term. (So God can feel satisfaction but not pleasure, and we find satisfaction but not pleasure in obeying the moral law.)
[24] Thus, contra Wolff, the differences between these faculties, as well as differences between higher and lower faculties, are not reducible to differences in clarity and distinctness.
[25] Ultimately, even Kant's biology is insufficient for understanding human nature, since human beings are essentially an historical species, so one must turn to his account of human history xxx.
[26] By denying even the hope of a biological Newton who might "adequately come to know the organized beings and the internal possibility in accordance with merely mechanical principles of nature" (5:400), Kant is rejecting, at least in practice, a major view within 18th century biology. During this time, there were two dominant approaches within biology for dealing with the emergence of organic structures, including the complex organization of human beings.[26] One, called "epigenesis," was put forward by Descartes and held (in its strongest form) that matter self-organizes into complex living beings by mere interactions of physical forces.[26] The other, "preformationism," was put forward in its classic form by Malebranche and held in its strongest form that living beings existed preformed in ancestral organisms, like little Russian dolls present in miniature in the eggs of Eve (or the sperm of Adam). This view was endorsed by most medical textbooks in the early 18th century. Both views had more subtle variations. Buffon, who Kant called "the great author of the system of nature" (7: 221) for his 44 volume Natural History, held an epigenesist view that saw organic beings emerging from matter, not by means of mere mechanism but via an "interior mold" in "organic matter." Kant's student Herder posited an epigenesist account based on a "living, organic power" (Ideen Bk. 7, ch. 4, in Sloan 2002: 242). And Charles Bonnet, a Swiss biologist influential in Germany, held that living beings were preformed, not in the sense that such beings literally preexisted as miniature versions of their eventual selves but in the sense that certain "seeds" or "germs" (Keime) preexist and develop into complex living beings. These two different approaches to biological organization, if applied to human mental powers, would yield very different conceptions of human science. An epigenesist anthropology would require showing how physical forces (or, for more complex epigenesists, "organic powers") develop into human mental structures. For classic preformationists, all that would be required is an account of what mental structures one actually finds in human beings, since these could not be further explained.
[27] Propenents included Descartes, Hobbes, LeMettrie, and xxx.
[28] As we will see in chapter nine, there is a sense in which current biology does account for natural predispositions in terms of purely physical causes. What for Kant are inexplicable natural predispositions turn out to be genes that evolved through processes of natural selection. Even in Darwin, of course, the causes of the genes themselves, on which selection acts, are left mysterious. Only with the rise of molecular biology has the xxx.
[29] One might even say "proto-Darwinian" here. See chapter nine.
[30] As Kant's work in the philosophy of biology develops, this account becomes more nuanced and less preformationist. In response to Herder's quasi-epigenesist account according to which Herder dispenses with anything preformed by positing an "organic power" that forms matter into living beings, Kant claims to "fully concur" but adds a "reservation":

> that if the cause organizing itself from within were limited by its nature only perhaps to a certain number and degree of differences in the formation of a creature (so that after the institution of which it were not further free to form yet another type under altered circumstances), then one could call this natural determination [Naturbestimmung] of the forming nature also "germs" or "original predispositions," without thereby regarding the former as primordially implanted machines and buds that unfold themselves only when occasioned (as in the system of [preformationism][30]), but merely as limitations, not further explicable, of a self-forming faculty, which latter we can just as little explain or make comprehensible. (8:62)

This concession to Herder makes clear that Kant does not consider himself a traditional preformationist, including even an outright denial of the language of "occasioning" outer causes that he used earlier (2:435). But Kant does not actually withdraw into anything like a traditional epigenesist account of organisms, and his Critique of Judgment (published two years after this review) emphasizes that his view still fits into a "system of generic preformation, since the productive capacity of the progenitor is still preformed" (5:423). But Kant uses the increasing complexity of epigenesis to clarify the primarily epistemic sense in which he understands his own preformationism.
Metaphysically, preformationists are free to consider these predispositions as primordially implanted structures that unfold, and epigenesists are free to think of them as inexplicable limitations on the range of new structures that can

epigenetically emerge in an organism. But humans lack the ability to explain basic predispositions in terms of merely physical mechanisms, so they will also retain an irreducible epistemic role in the investigation of organic beings.

[31] Kant insists, "the principle that everything that we assume to belong to nature (phaenomenon) and to be a product of it must also be able to be conceived as connected with it in accordance with mechanical laws nonetheless remains in force" (5:422). And even in scientific inquiry, we have an "obligation to give a mechanical explanation of all products and events in nature, even the most purposive, as far as our capacity to do so" (5:415, cf. 5:411). But Kant supposes that human beings will find themselves unable, ultimately, to reduce all natural predispositions to mechanical causes.

[32] In this essay, Kant emphasizes the cooperation between imagination and reason in the extension of one's natural instincts and inclinations. However, one can also conceive of an extension that is purely due to imagination, as I suggest here.

[33] Within his moral philosophy, when Kant refers to "inclinations," this term includes instincts as well. Kant adds, in his empirical anthropology, a special category of inclination called "passion." I discuss passions in chapter six.

[34] Even in the case of intoxicants, Kant's famous reference to the propensity of "savages" for intoxicants is more likely an assertion of the *universality* of this propensity than a limitation of it to a particular group. Kant's view seems best captured by his claim in a lecture on anthropology that "Human beings across the whole world have a propensity to drink [alcohol]" (25:1112). Elsewhere he uses "northern peoples" (25:1339), "the wildest peoples" (25:1112), "nations that have wine" (25:1518), and even (with respect to intoxicants more generally) the "people in Kamtschatka, [who] have a certain cabbage, which when they eat it, works in them a kind of madness, for which they love to have it" (25:1518). The point of these examples is not to pick out any particular group as uniquely susceptible to intoxicants, but to show that a propensity to drink that is undeniable in the case of Europeans is equally present in savage, or "raw" (*rohe*), people.

[35] This passage is typically, and rightly, used to analyze the practical perspective from which we are transcendentally free vis a vis all of our actions. Kant's specific language in this passage confirms that he primarily has this transcendentally free power of choice in mind, rather than the specifically empirical faculty of choice. But the claim about acting on the basis of maxims here also has an empirical correlate. Empirically, the higher faculty of desire is the human capacity to have volitions that result from consideration of maxims, or principles of action, rather than mere stimuli. Insofar as one's volition falls under the higher faculty of desire, any lower incentives based on instinct or inclination must be conjoined with the recognition of a principle of action in order to motivate.

Seeing the connection between the transcendental importance of incorporating incentives into maxims and the empirical nature of higher volition highlights the distinctive role of maxims for Kant's account of motivation. What essentially distinguishes higher from lower volitions is that the motivating cognitions for lower desires are particular, while the motivating cognitions for higher desires are general. Thus, for example, Harry Frankfurt's discussion of first and second order desires (in Frankfurt xxx) does not track Kant's distinction between higher and lower cognitions, since one could – at least in principle – have general first order desires and particular second-order desires. For Kant, the *generality* of a desire – its lawlike form – is distinctive of human (rational) agents. For Frankfurt, it is second-order desires.

[36] These elements might themselves be causally related, and often are. When a practical principle comes to mind, one may be led to look for the presence of its conditions of application and thereby come to perceive those conditions. Alternatively, the perception of conditions of application (a darkening sky, a late clock) may remind one of one's practical principles.

[37] In this respect, Kant's account of "character" is quite different from the use of "character" in neo-Aristotelian "virtue ethics."

[38] For more on the role of politeness in cultivating character, see Brender 1997, 1998, and Frierson 2005.

[39] See chapter five for more on temperament.

[40] In general, in fact, human desires flow from principles to which we are committed in order to satisfy the instincts and inclinations of our lower faculty of desire. Sometimes these connections will be straightforward: human beings in wealthy nations typically consume food not immediately from instinct but from principles according to which we recognize the eating of food to be both immediately worthy of pursuit (because pleasurable) and ultimately useful for providing nourishment. Even foolish consumption of junk food is generally not directly instinctual but is a deliberate effort to satisfy the cravings of instinct according to principles – "Snickers really satisfies" – that we incorporate into the character of our higher faculty of desire.

[41] Or, more strictly speaking, proto-desires. If one reserves the term "desire" for the active desires that constitute real volitions (as Kant often does), then these are not yet desires in the strict sense.

[42] Understandably, readers of Kant are largely split into those that favor a "cognitivist" reading of respect – for whom mere cognition of the moral law, independent of feeling, motivates action in accordance with it – and those that favor a "sentimentalist" reading of respect within which the feeling of respect plays an essential motivational role. For detailed studies of these passages, see Allison 1989, Ameriks ("Kant on Moral Motivation"), Beck 1960, Grenberg xxx, McCarty 1993 and 1994, and Reath 1989. I discuss respect in more detail in Frierson xxx (Phil Imp) and in Frierson xxxforthcoming KEPxxx.

[43] This account fits well with Kant's insistence in the Critique of Practical Reason that "respect for the moral law is a feeling that is produced by an intellectual ground" (5:73). See too 19:185-6, R6866; 28:253-4, 674-5; 29:890, 899-900, 1013.

[44] Option: reorient conclusion to focus on differences between humans and animals:

Insofar as they are objects of empirical study, human beings are biological beings with complex mental lives. As biological beings, we have various predispositions that are best discussed in terms of the ends that they serve, and these predispositions provide the grounds for the causal laws that determine how our environment shapes our cognitions, feelings, and desires. But even if the picture in this chapter lays out Kant's empirical account of human beings (at least with respect to their mental life), how distinctively human is the account here? Humans are not the only entities with natural predispositions; Kant insists that postulating such predispositions is central to biology as such, so all living things will have at least some natural predispositions. For Kant, too, none of the three faculties that are so important to human beings – cognition, feeling, and desire – are uniquely human. Most animals also have such faculties. And Kant even describes animals as having "choice [Willkühr]" (cf. 6:213, 442; 28:588; 29:1015). So what sets humans apart?[44]

One key difference between humans and animals will be discussed in the next chapter: whereas animals realize their potential unintentionally and as individuals, human beings fully actualize their predispositions "only in the species" over a long period of self-directed effort (8:18-20). In the context of his empirical anthropology more generally, though, the most basic difference between humans and other animals is that only humans have higher faculties of cognition, feeling, and desire (at least as far as we know).[44] Kant's primary emphasis is on higher cognitive faculties. Unlike predecessors such as Descartes, Kant insists that animals are living beings with "souls" by virtue of which they have distinctively mental states as well as a "faculty for practicing actions in conformity with one's representations" 28:594, cf. 28:690). Kant even argues that, in addition to senses, "Animals have . . . reproductive imagination" and "their actions happen according to laws of the power of imagination" (28:594, 690; cf. 15:944). Thus animals have a lower faculty of cognition that is nearly as complex as that of humans. But they lack a higher faculty altogether, and Kant insists, here as elsewhere, that this is not merely a difference of degree but of kind: "The soul of an animal as brute soul can develop itself to infinity, grow, but always only sensitively, never up to a rational being" (28:690). Kant traces the lack of higher faculties in animals to an absence of self-consciousness:

> The fact that the human being can have the "I" in his representations raises him infinitely above all other living beings on earth. Because of this he is a person, and by virtue of the unity of consciousness through all changes that happen to him, one and the same person. (7:127)

Kant argues – based on the empirical claim that their behavior "can be explained merely through their sensibility" (28:594) – that animals lack self-consciousness, or "apperception." Thus, "Animals indeed compare representations with one another, but they are not conscious of where the harmony or disharmony between them lies. Therefore they also have no concepts, and also no higher cognitive faculty, because the higher cognitive faculty consists of these" (29:888, cf. 29:878-9). Of course, because animals lack a higher faculty of cognition, they also lack higher faculties of feeling and volition, and they are capable only of governing their actions by instinct, not by character. While Kant does not explicitly discuss "inclinations" in animals and clearly thinks that even with respect to lower volitions, animals have less flexibility than humans (see especially 28:690), he does allow that animals can be "trained" and "conditioned" (9:450), which allows a role for inclination-like motivational grounds in animals.[44]

In the end, Kant's empirical anthropology presents human beings as natural, living beings with predispositions that are actualized into law-governed patterns of thinking, feeling, volition, and action. Like other animals, we cognize the world by means of sensory cognitions, supplemented by imaginative associations. And like other animals, these sensory and imaginative cognitions are capable of motivating our choices and actions. But unlike other animals, we have innate natural predispositions by virtue of which we are capable of conceptualizing the world in general terms and thereby formulating general principles of thought and action, principles upon which we can act because of a propensity to develop character. Among the practical principles that can govern human behavior is a pure principle of reason, the cognition and motivational force of which arises in the context of certain social contexts because of an innate moral predisposition.