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CHAPTER ONE

BETWEEN ROUSSEAU AND FREUD: KANT ON CULTURAL UNEASINESS

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"Nous ne vivons pas dans le monde de Corneille
mais dans celui de Racine."

"[...] car les vrais paradis
sont les paradis qu'on a perdus."[1]

The paper aims at the sketch of a comprehensive reading of Immanuel Kant's philosophical project as it manifests itself under the twofold guise of a critical theory of reason and a natural history of reason. Section 1 presents the distinctly modernist character of Kant's idealist conjunction of scientific naturalism and supra-natural rationalism. Section 2 details the anthropologically based, developmentally structured and historically oriented other half of Kant's account of human reason. Section 3 investigates the peculiar position of Kant's account of cultural anthropogenesis in its productive engagement with Jean-Jacques Rousseau

[1] The first quotation is by Jules Vuillemin, who used it at one point in his lectures at the Collège de France in 1979/80; the second quotation is from the final volume of Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*, *Le temps retrouvé* (Proust 1973, 3:870).

and its foreshadowing of the much later and quite differently motivated assessment of the relation between human nature and human culture in Sigmund Freud.

I- Modernity Defended

There was a time when religious and popular beliefs of various persuasions helped assure human beings in their collective identities of their special place in the world – e.g., as a people placed at the very center of the world in a "Middle Country" (*Zhong Guo*), as a people that formed the object of divine preference making it "God's chosen people," or as an entire group of peoples united by a common language and thus set off from the linguistically inept blatherers or "barbarians." Such culturally and religiously based human superiority was typically restricted to distinct ethnic groups or groupings, lending, e.g., Han Chinese, Hebrews or Hellenes a collective sense of elevation above the rest of the world. By contrast, philosophy from its beginnings in Ionic natural philosophy through its heyday in Attic epistemology, metaphysics, ethics and politics attributed an exalted status to the human being as such, typically based on the latter's capacity for speech, discourse or argument (*logos*) and stressing its specific difference as a rational animal (*zoon logon echon*; *animal rationale*) from other, mere animals. To be sure, even the philosophical appreciation of the human being's generic cognitive and conative potential, first and for a long time, was socio-culturally mitigated and restricted to free male citizens.

Yet neither the pre-philosophical focus on ethno-religious preference nor the philosophical assurance of generic exemption have saved the human being from eventual disillusion, ensuing disappointment and lasting disorientation. The modern discoveries of geography, astronomy and biology, in turn, have removed the human being - collectively and individually – from the middle of the earth, from the center of the universe and from a position of eminence among the earth's creatures, relegating him or her to a remote location in cosmic space and a place among other living beings in the animal kingdom continuous with his apish ancestors. To be sure, there have been attempts on the part of philosophy as well as religion to preserve or retrieve the special status of the human being even in the face of the loss of his central position, such as when Blaise Pascal in the seventeenth century declares him "a reed that thinks" (*un roseau pensant*) or Helmuth Plessner in the twentieth century attributes to him an "eccentric positionality" (*exzentrische Positionalität*). But such desperate attempts at lending meaning to the loss of meaning only confirm the

profound sense of absence of formerly valid forms of sense and purpose that marks the human being under conditions of scientific modernity.

It might seem that Kant partakes in the modern-anti-modern effort to avert the destabilizing, even demoralizing consequences of a world view shaped by the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, which had replaced natural teleology with terrestrial and celestial mechanics and threatened to reduce the human being to an *automaton spirituale* operating under sufficiently determining natural laws. After all the relegation of the naturally determined domain of experience to mere "appearances" (*Erscheinungen*) and the assignment of moral agency to a non-empirical level or aspect of reality negatively free from natural causal laws and positively free for the will's purely rational self-determination (autonomy) in Kant could be seen as intellectually akin to the return to religious and philosophical supra-naturalism and theologically based anthropocentrism embraced by early modern Continental metaphysics, from Descartes through Malebranche to Leibniz.

Yet Kant's original engagement with the scientific revolution is not restorative but itself revolutionary, as the very phrase "Copernican revolution," coined on the basis of Kant's self-interpretative astrophysical comparison for the transcendental turn,[2] already suggests. For Kant there is no return to pre-modern conditions of religiously determined and theologically validated natural and supra-natural beliefs. The challenge posed by modern scientific naturalism calls for respecting the thorough-going lawful determination of the objects of experience, while seeking a comprehensive view of the world that also and essentially addresses the human being's self-understanding as a free and responsible agent. What is needed in view of scientific modernity is a philosophical modernity that reconciles the different but equally legitimate and justified needs of the head and the heart, as Kant's renegade heir apparent, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, was to express the philosophical project of Kant and the post-Kantians alike.[3]

Notoriously, Kant sought to reconcile the theoretical demands of the head and the practical demands of the heart by means of two correlated distinctions. In objective terms, Kant distinguished between the things as they appear to us finite beings, under the intuitional forms of space and time and the conceptual forms of the categories, resulting in an order of things (a world) essentially shaped, or at least, co-determined by the non-empirical forms and functions of transcendental subjectivity – and the

[2] See KrV B XVI f.

[3] See Zöller, Günter. *Fichte's Transcendental Philosophy. The Original Duplicity of Intelligence and Will.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. 121-126.

things as they are in themselves, independent of any and all such conditions of subjectivity and therefore also unknown and indeed unknowable to us humans by means of theoretical cognition or knowledge (*Wissen*). In subjective terms, Kant distinguished between the theoretical use of reason (*Vernunft*), in the latter's capacity as understanding (*Verstand*), geared toward the determination of objects in general but essentially limited to the determination of objects in space and time, and the practical use of reason geared toward the determination of the will (*Willensbestimmung*) and capable of sufficiently determining the will independent of foreign, non-rational motives and interests.

By combining the two sets of distinctions Kant was able to render compatible the conflicting demands of the head and the heart: the claims of the head pertain to the things considered as appearances in space and time and governed by the pure concepts of the understanding (categories), while the claims of the heart address themselves to the things as they are in themselves, unassailable by the understanding and open only to reason and its pure concepts (ideas; *Ideen*), most importantly, to pure practical reason and the idea of freedom.[4] To be sure, the heart to which Kant assigns the practical concerns with freedom and morality is not a faculty or capacity generically distinct from the rational capacities of the mind but reason itself, albeit in the latter's practical use, as the faculty of determining the will, in contradistinction to that very same reason's theoretical faculty of determining the object. The comprehensive unity sought by Kant in response to the modernist threat of scientific reductionism in natural and moral philosophy therefore is the unity of theoretical and practical reason – a topic that already is indirectly present in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (especially in the latter's Prefaces, the Transcendental Dialectic and the Canon of Pure Reason),[5] that forms part of the main agenda of the *Critique of Practical Reason* (especially in the latter's account of the Postulates of Pure Practical Reason)[6] and that is the main objective of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (especially in the latter's Introduction and the

[4] The first to notice and appreciate the strategic purpose of the *Critique of Pure Reason* with regard to morality – and religion – was Karl Leonhard Reinhold in his *Letters on the Kantian Philosophy*, vol. I, from 1790, which had appeared in an earlier version in installments in *Teutscher Merkur* in 1786 and 1787. See Reinhold, Karl Leonhard. *Briefe über die Kantische Philosophie*. Vol. 1. Ed. Martin Bondeli. *Gesammelte Schriften. Kommentierte Ausgabe*. Vol. 2/1. Basel: Schwabe, 2007.

[5] See KrV AVII-XXII, BVII-XLIV, A293/B349-A704/B732, A795/B823-A 831/B859.

[6] KpV 5:119-148.

Doctrine of Method of the Power of Teleological Judgment).[7]

By assigning the human being as a moral agent to an order of reason different from the order of nature Kant has preserved the practical sphere of human life (ethics, law, politics) from naturalist reduction and natural-causal determination. But the exemption from the laws of nature and the dissociation from the animate and inanimate beings in nature only holds for the human being considered in a narrowly moral perspective, as the author and subject of the non-natural law of freedom (moral law). Outside of strictly moral considerations the human being remains subject to the laws of nature and an integral part of its order.

It might seem that Kant's limited anti-naturalism in moral matters involves a return of sorts to a pre-modern world view that assigns special, exempt status to the human being and places him at the center, or at least in a privileged position, in a world marked by a supra-human cosmic order. But the order to which Kant assigns the human moral agent is not pre-given and maintained by some external force or power. It is the order erected and sustained by reason itself and alone, a world "in the idea",[8] that is to be confronted and mediated with the natural world, the real world, in which rational beings live alongside a-rational and inanimate beings and, mostly, alongside each other, in effect hindering each other as much as enhancing their shared natural and cultural lives.

In relation to the real world and its order of nature, the ideal world and its order of reason in Kant is counterfactual – the object of efforts, subject to failure and exposed to ineffectiveness. Hence the new kind of centrality and resultant dignity that accrues to the human being, on Kant's moral view of the world, in the moral word, concerns the normative orientation and motivation of human rational conduct, with no guarantee to its eventual effectiveness in the real world or the natural order. By making reason – human reason, albeit the latter taken as a sum-total of principles and capabilities and not as some contingent mental capacity – the origin and arbiter of specifically human conduct, Kant has not eased the burden of self-assertion that fell on the human being with the advent of scientific naturalism but increased it. Rather than redirecting the human being to an established order, Kant has settled him or her – or rather, his or her reason – with the tremendous twofold task of generating an order that validates his or her existence and place in the world and of undertaking the enactment of that ideal order in the real world.

Given the normative nature of reason and the generic handicap of

[7] KU 5:171-199 and KU 5:416-485.
[8] KrV A670/B698.

human reason in Kant, it comes as no surprise that Kant was doubtful about human beings collectively considered capable of achieving the double task of establishing and spreading reason in reality by means of their own efforts alone. In each of the three *Critiques*, the basic discrepancy between reason's normativity and nature's facticity forms an integral part of the respective account of the bounds of reason. In the *Critique of Pure Reason* the pure concepts of reason (ideas), including the practical ideas, such as that of the perfect state ("Plato's republic"),[9] are restricted to a merely regulative function. In the *Critique of Practical Reason* the ideas involved in moral norms (existence of God, immortality of the soul) are restricted to well-grounded demands ("postulates") that reflect a need of human, interested reason rather than a fact about the world.[10] In the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* the amenability of nature to human purposes in general and to moral designs in particular is restricted to the status of a methodologically controlled fiction ("as if").[11]

Still Kant is not lacking confidence in the legislative power of human reason to issue the moral law and to validate its multiple specifications under the guise of the categorical imperative. Nor is he lacking conviction about the executive power of human reason in transforming prescription into practice and ought into willing.[12] But Kant is also enough of a realist – in the non-technical sense of being a moralist or a seasoned observer of the frailties and self-delusions of the human heart – not to leave it at the certainty that moral conduct is humanly possible. For one he devotes considerable attention to the structural obstacles to perfect practical rationality in human beings, from the countervailing role of inclinations (*Neigungen*) through the presence of radical evil (*radikales Böses*) that afflicts all members of the human species to the mechanisms of moral self-deception and social hypocrisy that entail the general inscrutability of moral intentions and actions.[13] In addition, Kant details various devices and practices for transforming the principal possibility of truly rational, moral conduct into probability and even actuality, from the methodology

[9] See KrV A316/B372.
[10] See KpV 5:122-146.
[11] See KU 5:360 f., 370 and 404.
[12] On Kant's conception of rational self-constraint, see Zöller, Günter. "Autokratie. Die Psycho-Politik der Selbstherrschaft bei Platon und Kant." *Kant als Bezugspunkt philosophischen Denkens*. Eds. Busche, Hubertus and Anton Schmitt. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2010. 351-377. See also Baxley, Anne Margaret. *Kant's Theory of Virtue. The Value of Autocracy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
[13] See RGV 6:17-53.

of pure practical reason, in the second *Critique*,[14] through the pointed enlisting of specific feelings as "aesthetic preliminary concepts" (*ästhetische Vorbegriffe*) of morality, such as conscience and moral feeling, in the Introduction to the Doctrine of Virtue in the *Metaphysics of Morals*,[15] to the role of ethical didactics and ascetics, again in the Doctrine of Virtue in the *Metaphysics of Morals*.[16]

But none of these techniques and aids can bridge the gap between ought and is reliably, nor is such an accomplishment their point. Moral action in ethical, legal and political affairs, for Kant, remains a matter of human freedom involving deliberation, choice and resolve that are not to be substituted by mechanisms of mental control or even manipulation. This leaves Kant with a thoroughly idealist assessment of reason's practical potential and a decidedly realist estimation of the obstacles and distractions faced by human moral striving. Moreover, it settles him with a dualism of the ideal that ought to be and the real that is, between norm and fact, between prescription and description that introduces an element of tension and frustration, even of alienation and estrangement into human existence as seen by Kant. On Kant's account, the human being is not at ease with himself or herself, assured and confident in his or her self-identity as well as difference from other things and animals but marked by deficiency and driven by a profound sense of lack and longing.

It is the hallmark of Kant's response to the naturalist and scientist challenges of modernity that he maintains the complexity, indeed the conflicted constitution of human existence. Other philosophers, under his influence and in meta-critical response to his precarious positioning of the human being, have sought to substitute the Kantian dualist, if not divisionist outlook on the human condition with simpler solutions in response to the challenges of modernity, such as the nostalgic return to an imaginary classical Greece in Hölderlin, the retrograde vision of medieval Christian Europe in Hardenberg-Novalis, the aesthetic resolution of antagonistic life by means of aesthetic play (*ästhetisches Spiel*) in Schiller, the retrieval of order and purpose in mythology and revelation in the late Schelling, the theologically inspired program of reconciliation (*Versöhnung*) with reality in Hegel, the Eastern-geared road of redemption (*Erlösung*) in Schopenhauer or the rebirth of an archaic Greek conception of the "tragic human being" (*tragischer Mensch*) in Nietzsche. None of these ways out of the predicament of modern life found, or would have found, the approval of Kant, who remained committed to the unconditional

[14] See KpV 5:149-163.
[15] See MS 6:399-403.
[16] See MS 6:475-485.

claims of reason and mindful of the way the world is – and the human beings in it.

II- Modernity Derived

But even Kant did not leave it at the confrontation of norm and fact in his account of the human condition in general and the human predicament in modern times in particular. In addition to the critical trilogy, the works surrounding it (*Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*; *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*) and the works building on it (*Metaphysical First Principles of Natural Science*; *The Metaphysics of Morals in Two Parts*), Kant left a substantial body of work that addresses the human being as originally rooted in the order of nature and as remaining within that order but also as gradually emerging within the order of nature as a being with its own designs in the use of animate and inanimate things in nature and in the conduct toward its kind. Most of that other half of Kant's work can be subsumed under the title "anthropology," a title employed by Kant himself for the popular lectures he gave over several decades, in coordination with a more general lecture course on the natural conditions and the human populations on the surface of the earth (*Physical Geography*).[17]

The term "anthropology" here can be taken to address the human being on the basis of his or her factually belonging, however tenuously, to the order of nature – as opposed to a consideration of the human being in terms of his or her belonging to the normative order of reason or the moral order. In the specific sense of a disciplinary perspective on the human being on the basis, if not exclusively within the confines, of nature, a good number of other works by Kant can be counted as contributions to an overall anthropological *œuvre* of his. These are in particular, the early essayistic work on the anthropology of aesthetics, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764); the tract on the taxonomy of mental illnesses, *Essay on the Maladies of the Head* (1764); the article on the anatomical distinction between animals and humans, *Review of Moscati's "Of the Corporeal Essential Difference Between Animals and*

[17] On Kant's geo-anthropological project, see Zöller, Günter. "Mensch und Erde. Die geo-anthropologische Parallelaktion von Herder und Kant." *Herders Metakritik. Transformationen vorkritischer Figurationen nachkantischer Philosophie*. Eds. Heinz, Marion and Angelica Nuzzo. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2011a; and Zöller, Günter. "Kant's Political Anthropology." *Kant Yearbook 3. Anthropology*. Ed. Dietmar H. Heidenmann. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011b. 131-161.

Humans" (1771); the trilogy of writings on the geographically influenced differentiation of the human species into relatively stable subspecies ("races") – *Of the Different Races of Human Beings* (1775), *Determination of the Concept of a Human Race* (1785) and *On the Use of Teleological Principles in Philosophy* (1788) –; as well as the occasional reflections on the bodily influence of the mind, *On the Philosopher's Medicine of Body* (1786), and on the relation between mind and brain, *From Soemmerring's "On the Organ of the Soul"* (1796).

In addition, Kant's anthropological thought has entered into his contributions to the philosophy of history and pedagogy, in particular *Essays Regarding the Philanthropinum* (1776/1777); *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim* (1784); *Review of J. G. Herder's "Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Humanity", Parts 1 and 2* (1785); *Conjectural Beginning of Human History* (1786) and *Lectures on Pedagogy* (1803).[18]

The perspective on the human being shared by these writing, which stretch over Kant's entire academic career, is that of an animal endowed with reason but not necessarily completely rational in its conduct – of an *animal rationabile*, rather than an *animal rationale*. The human being figures in Kant's anthropological works as a being that is compromised in two complimentary ways: as an animal, the human being is compromised by its reason, and as a rational being, the human being is compromised by its animality. But Kant's diagnosis of the human being as both deficiently animalistic and deficiently rational is not meant as a complaint or accusation. Kant's interest is with the ways in which compromise and handicap turn into advantage and enhancement for the human being. More specifically, the negative freedom of human beings from comprehensive instinctual control ("free choice", *freie Willkür*) entails the comparative disadvantage of threatening indetermination and indecision but also the comparative advantage of a larger range of options to choose from than in the case of mere animal or "brute choice" (*tierische Willkür*).[19]

The conceptual space for Kant's anthropological perspective is opened up by the equidistant position (to continue the spatial metaphor) of the human being between a mere animal, the choice of which is not free but instinctually driven, and a purely rational animal, the choice of which is

[18] For a comprehensive edition of Kant's published anthropological works, including his overtly historical and pedagogical publications, in modern English translations with detailed introductions, notes and bibliographical information, see Kant, Immanuel. *Anthropology, History, and Education*. Eds. Zöller, Günter and Robert Louden. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

[19] On the difference between non-free and free choice, see KrV A801 f./B829 f.

essentially free and determined by practical reason alone. Moreover, the space of freedom in the human being – a human freedom equally distinct from the condition of sheer animality as from that of sheer rationality – entails a special kind of freedom on the part of the human being with regard to nature as well as reason. Being free from the rule of the instincts alone is not already being determined by reason alone. In Kant's anthropological perspective, the human being is in possession of a first, negative kind of freedom (free choice), a possible use of which is the realization of the second, positive kind of freedom (moral autonomy). The human being considered anthropologically, disposes of comparative, gradual and incremental freedom, while the human being morally considered also possesses non-comparative, complete and absolute freedom.

But for Kant the specifically anthropological perspective on the human being is not merely an additional way of addressing the gap between ought and is in the human condition already diagnosed in Kant's critical account of human reason and dealt with by each of the three *Critiques*, most overtly so in the third *Critique*'s project of bridging the gap between nature and freedom.[20] The far reaching freedom from the instincts that marks the specifically human animality is the natural, or rather quasi-natural, basis for a use or employment of such human freedom to establish conditions and forms of life that may serve to substitute and surpass the lost instinctual guidance. The instinctually reduced and rationally enhanced human being is essentially a being capable of change and innovation and, moreover, of bringing about such change and innovation on his or her own, even if not in complete freedom but under the guidance of his or her own, reduced, animality. On Kant's pre-Darwinian outlook on nature, the human ability to alter the terms of one's life represents a distinct difference to the other animals.

To be sure, on Kant's view and on that of traditional thinking about animal life, all animals, and also all plants, exhibit change over their life time, as evidenced in the phenomena of growth and maturation, along with the reverse processes of decline and aging. But this change occurs, at least on a pre-Darwinian view, in fixed forms and is the instantiation of rigid rules and does not involve the introduction of novelty. Most importantly, again on a pre-Darwinian view, the regular changes in non-human animals occur exclusively at the level of the individual, while the species remains constant.

By contrast, on Kant's account, the human being is the object as well as

[20] See KU 5:171-199.

the subject of changes that manifest themselves at the supra-individual level, potentially involving the entire species in a process of change over time. Moreover, Kant thinks of the changes that the human being accomplishes at the supra-individual level not as random alterations with the merely contingent acquisition of a lasting or peremptory character. Rather the changes are to be viewed, at least in the big picture or in the long run, as amounting to directional change or "development" (*Entwicklung*) of the human being at the supra-individual level.

By resorting to the term, "development," to characterize human change, Kant draws on a conceptuality taken from contemporary biology or rather, to replace an anachronistic term with a historically accurate one, from "natural history" (*historia naturalis*, *histoire naturelle*, *Naturgeschichte*).[21] In particular, Kant understands human development of all kinds on the model of the origin and growth of animal life. On the contemporary account, the basis for all development are "germs" (*Keime*) and "natural predispositions" (*Naturanlagen*) that predetermine the subsequent unfolding of the nascent individual animal.[22] On the standard, preformationist account of animal development, all growth is quantitative, consisting in the incremental expansion of an already fully formed individual. On the non-standard, epigenetic account – favored by Kant –, growth involves the generation of new parts on the basis of a quasi-genetic code that guides the formation and placement of new parts, most importantly, organs.[23]

In his account of anthropogenesis Kant transposes the notion of development from the natural sphere, in which the human being partakes as an animal among others, to the sphere of human self-development or of the changes in and about himself or herself brought about by the human being himself or herself. Earlier, pre-modern accounts of human life had considered the human being a creature of divine wisdom and omnipotence that may be morally flawed due to its own primeval fault or fall but that is essentially perfect for his or her position and purposes. By contrast, Kant shares the distinctly modern view of the human being as capable and also as in need of improvement, a feature of the human condition for which Rousseau in the second *Discourse* had coined the term, "perfectibility"

[21] On the concept of natural history and its distinction from that of the description of nature (*Naturbeschreibung*) in Kant, see VvRM 2:434 note and ÜGTP 8:161-163/Kant 2007, 89 note, 197 f.. See also KU 5:428 note.

[22] On the distinction between germs and natural dispositions in Kant, see VvRM 2:434/Kant 2007, 89.

[23] On the distinction between preformation and epigenesis in the theory of generation in Kant, see KU 5:421-424.

(*perfectibilité*).[24]

Kant's original contribution to the contemporary account of human ameliorative self-development consists in introducing a strict separation between the individual level and the species level in matters of human development.[25] On the standard account, represented, e.g., by Moses Mendelssohn, the individual self-improvement or "formation" (*Bildung*) occurs under the twofold guise of intellectual self-improvement or "enlightenment" (*Aufklärung*) and moral self-improvement or "culture" (*Kultur*). For Mendelssohn, who herein is following the popular treatise by Spalding on *The Vocation of the Human Being* (*Die Bestimmung des Menschen*), the calling or destination of the human being for self-improvement addresses itself to each individual human being, who is to perfect himself or herself cognitively and culturally over the course of his or her lifetime. For Mendelssohn the twin course of self-formation through enlightenment and culture is limited to the given individual's lifespan and comes to an end with the latter.

By contrast, Kant locates the process of human self-development at the species level. The focus is not on some individual improvement that does not outlast the respective individual but on the contribution that plural individuals make over time to the advancement of the human species. As a consequence of this move from ontogenetic to phylogenetic hominization, the course of human development is seen no longer as a parallel or successive series of individual intellectual and moral biographies but as a synchronic and diachronic process of human self-education that unites human beings across space and over time and constitutes "human history" (*Menschengeschichte*) in the modern, cosmopolitan sense of that term.[26]

The history of humankind envisioned by Kant is a comprehensive

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[24] Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Diskurs über die Ungleichheit/Discours sur l'inégalité. Kritische Ausgabe des integralen Textes*. Ed. Heinrich Meier. 4th edition. Paderborn/Munich/Vienna/Zurich: Schöningh, 1997. 102.

[25] On the following, see also Zöller, Günter. "Die Bestimmung der Bestimmung des Menschen bei Mendelssohn und Kant." *Kant und die Berliner Auflärung. Akten des 9. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses (26. bis 31. März 2000 in Berlin)*. Eds. Gerhardt, V., R. P. Horstmann and R. Schumacher. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001. Vol. 4. 476-489; and Zöller, Günter. "Aufklärung über Aufklärung. Kants Konzeption des selbständigen, öffentlichen und gemeinschaftlichen Gebrauchs der Vernunft." *Kant und die Zukunft der europäischen Aufklärung*. Ed. Heiner F. Klemme. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009. 82-99.

[26] On the concept of human history in Kant, see MAM 8:107-123; Kant 2007, 163-175; on the cosmopolitan conception of human history, see IaG 8:15-31; Kant 2007, 108-120.

development of the human species stretching over numerous generations and encompassing many parts of the world. More importantly, the world-historical process of anthropogenesis involves the technical, social and moral self-perfection of the human species. Over the course of human history, as envisioned in Kant's cosmo-anthropological perspective, the human species progresses in its ability to use reason in the arrangement of its material and immaterial life. The dynamics behind this long-term history of reason is both natural and human-made. It is natural in that prior to its emergence and fruition – a process of enormous duration, retardation and frustration – human reason is not yet sufficiently developed to motivate and orient the very process that first leads to its unfolding. Even during later stages of human development, when the rational capacity already is engaged, the prevailing use of reason is not marked by rationality itself and alone but by the subordination of reason as a means for serving other, extra-rational ends that have their basis in human animality rather than rationality. While Kant does not endorse the Humean reduction of reason to the role of the "slave of the passions," he regards reason as a capacity – or rather a sum-total of capacities – the actualization of which, on the large scale of human species life, involves other resources than human reason itself and alone.

In particular, Kant's natural history of reason takes recourse to the natural constitution of the human being as an animal bound on self-preservation and self-propagation but disengaged from complete instinctual control and capable of employing reason to pursue its animal advantage more efficiently than under conditions of mere animality. As a result of this incipient rationality that is coextensive with incipient freedom, the human being becomes more dangerous to the other animals but also, and most importantly, to other human beings and thus, given the mutuality of the endangerment of human beings through human beings, to himself or herself. The existential threat posed to the human being by his or her own kind and hence by himself or herself in turn brings forth further forms of reasoning suited to containing and controlling the threat that the human animal is to himself or herself. On Kant's global account of the (pre-)history of reason, the reasoning ability of the human animal is as much the object and target of human development as it is its medium or tool. Only the further unfolding of reason is able to harness its destructive potential and turn "wild," animal reason into ruled reason. No reason may be a stupid thing; but a little reason is a dangerous thing; and more reason is a difficult thing.

Compared to the normative theory of reason presented by Kant in the three *Critiques* the natural history of reason in Kant's anthropological

corpus could appear to be a rival account of reason in human beings potentially contradicting the a priori laws and apodictic certainties set forth in Kant's critical analysis of human understanding, judgment and reason. Alternatively, the less principled and more historically situated consideration of the potential and the actualization of reason in Kant's anthropological perspective might be welcome by those objecting to the methodological and doctrinal rigors of Kant's critical philosophy in general and his moral philosophy, especially his ethics, in particular. Yet neither view of the matter captures fully the philosophical significance of Kant's two parallel, rather than diverging or intersecting, accounts of human reason.

In his critical philosophy Kant considers reason *objectively*, analyzing reason as the sum-total of capacities under strict rules of engagement with extra-rational factors, specifically with (sensible) intuition, inclination and feeling. In his anthropological works Kant consider reason *subjectively*, with regard to the conditions that enhance or hinder its development as well as employment, chiefly conditions that are to be met within the very being that is to emerge as rationally guided in his or her thinking, willing and feeling. Moreover, the two accounts can be seen as mutually supplementing each other to form a comprehensive philosophical project on the human being in its natural conditioning and rational calling. Kant's critical philosophy adds a normative basis and orientation to the descriptive account of the genesis of human reason. His anthropological thought, in turn, adds to the presentation of its priori principles the factual conditions for the effective enactment of reason throughout space and over time. To be sure, supplying the context of discovery to the a priori theory of reason does not alter the latter's self-contained context of justification; just as little as supplying the standards of full-blown rationality obliterates the natural, or quasi-natural, origin and developmental history of human reason for Kant.

Moreover, joining a strictly principle-theoretical and a more broadly historico-anthropological approach to the human condition in a comprehensive, dual yet not dualist account of human reason allows Kant to balance his optimist assessment of reason's potential to rule supreme in human affairs with his equally engrained realist assessment of the arduous road to a critically shaped and rationally formed human life. As a result of this division of labor between the two essential halves of Kant's overall philosophical project, his anthropological *œuvre* exhibits a frank and forthright portrayal of the human condition in all its frailties and fortitudes that could be mistaken for belying his more confident and more generous depiction of reason in its principled purity, independent of history and

geography, to be found in the critical trilogy.

III- Modernity Justified

While a main inspiration behind Kant's critical philosophy, by his own admission, had been the challenge posed to traditional metaphysics, embodied by the Leibniz-Wolffian school philosophy, through David Hume's skeptical analysis of causal relations, Kant's developing views in anthropology, history and education were decisively shaped by the works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.[27] Kant admired in Rousseau both the moralist who set out to reveal the secrets of the human heart and the political thinker who sought to transpose the lessons of ancient republicanism into life within modern society. For the general orientation of Kant's anthropological works Rousseau's so-called second *Discourse*, viz., the *Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality Among Human Beings* (*Discours sur l'origine et les fondemens de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*), from 1755 proved the most influential and consequential.

In the second *Discourse* Rousseau had answered the prize essay question posed by the Academy of Dijon in 1754, "What is the origin of inequality among men, and is it authorized by natural law?", by distinguishing between "natural or physical inequality," (*inégalité [...] naturelle ou Phisique*), which he regarded as a matter of fact, and "moral or political inequality" (*inégalité morale*, *ou politique*), which he considered brought onto human beings by themselves.[28] Moreover, with respect to the possible justificatory authority of natural law in matters of human-made inequality, Rousseau had distinguished between the "state of nature" (*état naturel*),[29] in which the human being stands under the twin principles of self-preservation (*conservation de nous-mêmes*) based on natural "self-love" (*amour de soi même*) and sensitivity to the suffering of fellow human beings (*pitié*, *commisération*),[30] on the one hand, and culturally informed rights instituted by competing and potentially conflicting partisan interests and driven by a socially mediated concern for one's standing and worth in relation to others, which Rousseau had termed "selfish love" (*amour proper*),[31] on the other hand. On Rousseau's analysis, the wild or savage human being exists only for and in himself,

[27] See BGSE 20:44: "Rousseau set me straight." (*Rousseau hat mich zurecht gebracht*.).
[28] Rousseau 1997, 66.
[29] Rousseau 1997, 76.
[30] Rousseau 1997, 56, 150.
[31] Rousseau 1997, 148.

while the "sociable human being" (*homme sociable*)[32] exists outside of himself, viz., before the eyes of the others and in the eyes of the others.

Moreover, in the second *Discourse* Rousseau had juxtaposed the self-sufficiency of the life of the individual human being in the "state of nature" (*homme sauvage*),[33] who desires or lacks nothing than what he[34] possesses or can obtain by himself, and human life in the "state of society" (*état [...] de société*),[35] which introduces novel needs that are to be satisfied under conditions of scarcity and hence through competitive striving for resources and goods, resulting in social inequality and the constitutive societal experiences of labor, servitude and misery (*travail*, *servitude*, *misère*).[36] For Rousseau, in the second *Discourse*, the transition from the state of nature to the state of society is marked by the institution of property as the chief device and medium for social differentiation and the object of a civil legislation different from the "natural law" or "law of Nature" (*loi naturelle, Loy de Nature*).[37] In the process, the human being, once and over a long period of time a "barbarous" or "wild human being" (*homme barbare*, *homme sauvage*), becomes a "civilized human being" (*homme civilisé*).[38]

The basic feature of Rousseau's critical account of the origin and character of civil society that proved crucial for Kant's own anthropological thinking is the differential definition of the human being in terms of freedom (*liberté*) rather understanding (*entendement*).[39] For Rousseau the human being, even when still living in the state of nature, is set off from the other animals by his or her freedom from natural fixation and the resultant "capacity for self-perfection" (*la faculté de se perfectionner*), in short, "perfectibility" (*perfectibilité*).[40] Eventually the originally complete human freedom is subject to social partitioning in the process of which part of the freedom is given up ("sacrifice"; *sacrificier*)[41] in order to preserve another part. For the Rousseau of the second

[32] Rousseau 1997, 268.
[33] Rousseau 1997, 70.
[34] Throughout the *Second Discourse* Rousseau uses the French noun "homme," which can mean "human being" and "man," to refer to the male members of the species.
[35] Rousseau 1997, 162.
[36] Rousseau 1997, 218.
[37] Rousseau 1997, 8, 50, 52, 220.
[38] Rousseau 1997, 70, 230.
[39] Rousseau 1997, 100.
[40] Rousseau 1997, 102.
[41] Rousseau 1997, 218.

Discourse the social, more precisely, political process of civilization amounts to an overall loss of freedom and the replacement of the "wild human being" (*homme Sauvage*) with the "policed human being" (*homme policé*).[42]

Typically Rousseau's dual portrayal of self-sufficient human life in the state of nature and societally manipulated human life in the civil state has been taken, or rather mistaken, for the call for a return to the natural state, which Rousseau himself – so the reading continues – subsequently mitigated by showing the conditions for an unalientated form of life within civil society in his main works in the philosophy of education and political philosophy, viz., *Emile or On Education* (*Emile* ou de l'éducation; 1762) and *Of the Social Contract* (*Du contrat social*; 1762). For Kant, though, who shows familiarity with all of Rousseau's major works, the point of the second *Discourse* is not a call for social and cultural regression to an original, pristine condition but a reminder of what is at peril in the process of civilization. Accordingly, for Kant Rousseau does not advocate "*going* back" (*zurück gehen*) to the state of nature but "*looking* back" (*zurück sehen*) to it,[43] being mindful of its existence, however past and lost, and having it serve as a guidance in assessing and mending the ails of modern, civilized life.

Kant's revisionist reading of Rousseau's second *Discourse* forms part of a comprehensive account of technical-cultural, socio-political and ethico-moral anthropogenesis developed by Kant in a parallel fashion to Rousseau's writings on those matters. In particular, Kant refers to two sets of three works each by Rousseau that address areas and stages of human development distinguished by Kant and subject to a dual portrayal in Rousseau as seen by Kant, with the first set of three works exhibiting the ailments of advanced human life and the second set their possible remedy under conditions of modern life.[44]

The three stages or areas distinguished by Kant and correlated to specific works by Rousseau, cast by Kant in the natural-historical conceptuality of generation and growth, are the "technical predisposition" (*technische Anlage*), the "pragmatic predisposition" (*pragmatische Anlage*) and the “moral predisposition” (*moralische Anlage*) of the human species.[45] The three predispositions pertain to specifically distinct manners of human activity. While the technical predisposition of the human being consists in his or her ability to act upon things by intentionally employing

[42] Rousseau 1997, 266.
[43] Anth 7:326; Kant 2007, 422.
[44] The following pages take up the analyses in Zöller 2011b.
[45] Anth 7:322-324; Kant 2007, 417-419.

mechanical means, the remaining two human predispositions concern the human ability to interact with other human beings. The pragmatic predisposition consists in the ability to employ other human beings for one's own purposes. The moral predisposition consists in the human being's ability to act upon oneself and others in accordance with the moral law.[46] Each of the three predispositions aims at the successful and expansive employment of reason, with the technical predisposition providing mechanical skills for the efficacy of reason and the pragmatic and moral predispositions furnishing social skills for reason's prudential and moral efficacy.[47]

Kant distinguishes the processes involved in the unfolding of the three basic human predispositions as the "cultivating" (*cultiviren*), the "civilizing" (*civilisiren*) and the "moralizing" (*moralisiren*) of the human being, respectively.[48] The notion of cultivation and particularly of the cultivation of talents of all kinds – derived from the Latin word for the working of the soil (*cultura*) – covers the development of technical skills that reach from the artisanal to the artistic and that involve the able operation of mechanical means for intelligently chosen ends of all kinds. The notion of the human being becoming civilized involves the social transformation of the human being from the "natural state" (*Naturzustand*) to the "civil state" (*Civilzustand*)[49] and consists in substituting the crudity of mere "personal force" (*Selbstgewalt*) with a "well-mannered" (*gesittet*) conduct, even if the latter is not yet ruled by principles that are genuinely "ethical" (*sittlich*).[50] In essence the unfolding of the pragmatic, socio-political predisposition of the human species constitutes the course of human history, including a long-distance future that may, or rather is to, encompass the political perfection of the human species. Short of reaching this elusive end, human beings, on Kant's account, can be considered refined and polished but not really "civically minded" or "civilized" (*bürgerlich gesinnet*, *civilisirt*).[51]

Less successful yet than the political progress toward true civility is, for Kant, the progress toward the perfect actualization of the moral predisposition. Kant diagnoses "morals" (*Sitten*) without "virtue" (*Tugend*), "sociableness" (*Geselligkeit*) instead of "righteousness" (*Rechtschaffenheit*) and "vanity" (*Eitelkeit*) rather than "love of honor"

[46] See Anth 7:322; Kant 2007, 417.
[47] See Anth 7:323-325; Kant 2007, 418-420.
[48] Anth 7:324f.; Kant 2007, 420.
[49] Refl 1521 (AA 15/2:889).
[50] Anth 7:323; Kant 2007, 418.
[51] Refl 1524 (AA 15/2:897).

(*Ehrliebe*) and regards human beings "on the whole" (*im Ganzen*), i.e., considered as a species, as "almost not at all [...] moralized" (*beynah gar nicht [...] moralisirt*).[52] From an anthropological point of view, moralization is a lengthy formative process by which the socially camouflaged pursuit of one's own will gradually is superseded by genuine concern for the common good and the latter's pursuit for its own sake. For Kant moral anthropogenesis chiefly involves a motivational reorientation in the social life of human beings from practical "solipsism"[53] to the felt ("moral feeling") distinction between "right" (*recht*) and "wrong" (*unrecht*) in actions that concern the agent himself or herself as well as others.[54]

Kant goes on to pair his own, essentially progressist and ameliorist assessment of the development of each of the three predispositions with Rousseau's, seemingly, pessimist picture of human cultural development. First, Kant correlates his discussion of the technical predisposition and the growth of learning and knowledge with Rousseau's analysis of the physical and mental "weakening" involved in cultural progress, especially in the development of the arts and sciences, as detailed in Rousseau's *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences* (*Discours sur les sciences et les arts*; 1750). Second, Kant correlates his analysis of the pragmatic predisposition of the human species and the process of civilization with Rousseau's discussion of the cultural-political origin of inequality and mutual suppression among human beings, as detailed in the *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality* (1755). Finally, Kant confronts his treatment of the moral predisposition and the progressive moral education of the human species with the portrayal of "education contrary to nature and deformation of the mind-set" in Rousseau's novel, *Julie or the New Heloise* (*Julie ou La Nouvelle Héloïse*; 1761).[55]

The point of the parallel drawn by Kant between his own account of human development and that of Rousseau is not to contrast a positive, optimist and a negative, pessimist account of the transition from nature to culture. Rather Kant appropriates substantial aspects of Rousseau's cultural pessimism for his own account of human progress, just as he incorporates elements of his own optimist general outlook on human

[52] Refl 1524 (AA 15/2:897).
[53] Refl 1471 (AA 15/2:649).
[54] Anth 7:324; Kant 2007, 419 (translation modified).
[55] See Anth 7:326; Kant 2007, 422. On the identification of the works alluded to by Kant, see Kant 2007, 542 note 145. For a more detailed discussion, see Brandt, Reinhard. *Kommentar zu Kants Anthropologie.* Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1999. 326f.

history into his revisionist interpretation of Rousseau. In particular, Kant supplements the threefold pairing of the specifically human predispositions in his own cultural anthropology and in Rousseau's three works in the critique of culture with a second triad of writings by Rousseau which, according to Kant, adds to the negative assessment of culture in the first triad the outlines of a counter-culture envisioned by Rousseau and destined to overcome the shortcomings of failed arts-cum-sciences, failed politics and failed pedagogy. More specifically, Kant regards Rousseau's *On the Social Contract (Du contrat social*; 1762), *Emile* (1762) and *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar* (*Profession de foi du vicaire Savoyard*, from Book IV of the *Emile*) as indirect results of the threefold negative critique of culture, which had provided the "guiding thread" (*Leitfaden*)[56] for the alternative vision of politically, pedagogically and morally redeemed culture.

Kant's revisionist reading of Rousseau leads to a three-stage scheme of human development according to which the state of nature is followed by the state of culture and civilization, the long-term development of which ultimately is to lead to a state in which "perfect art again becomes nature" (*vollkommene Kunst wird wieder zur Natur*).[57] Drawing on Rousseau's "three paradoxical propositions" (*drey paradoxe Sätze*)[58] – about the ills and harms engendered by the apparent benefits of artisanal and scientific progress, of a civil constitution and of artificial pedagogical means – and turning Rousseau's negative critique of cultural development into the latter's modulated defense, Kant presents his paradox about culture: the inventions of culture prove both objectionable, even reprehensible, when compared to the lost state of nature, and functional, even beneficial, when considered in their indirect preparatory role for the eventual restitution of nature under the terms of culture (and civilization). What in Rousseau could be seen as an overall attack on culture citing its constitutive ills, is worked by Kant into a defense of culture citing the benefits that eventually are to result from those very ills. On Kant's revisionist reading of Rousseau, culture is both anti-nature and ante-nature, the very opposite of nature and the condition for its eventual return. The same evidence that leads Rousseau to the indictment of culture has Kant – and Rousseau, as interpreted by Kant – mount its defense.

Kant's reading of Rousseau with its ensuing Rousseauian inspiration behind Kant's anthropology also manifests itself when it comes to ascertaining the predispositional presence or absence of good or of evil in

[56] Anth 7:327f.; Kant 2007, 422.
[57] Refl 1454 (AA 15/2:635) and Refl 1523 (AA 15/2:896).
[58] Refl 1521 (AA 15/2:889).

the human species. In his anthropological reflections Kant recognizes the dual presence of good and evil in the human predisposition arguing that the "inborn propensity" (*angeborener Hang*) to the good constitutes the "intelligible character of humanity in general" (*intelligibeler Charakter der Menschheit überhaupt*), while the equally "inborn propensity to the evil" (*angeborener Hang [...] zum Bösen*) constitutes the human being in his or her "sensible character" (*sensibeler Charakter*).[59] Kant maintains that any contradiction between the opposed basic inclinations falls away upon considering that the "natural vocation" (*Naturbestimmung*) of the human being is to progress continuously toward (moral) improvement.[60]

Kant goes on to widen the scope of the specifically moral treatment of good and evil to an outright anthropology of good and evil that builds on Rousseau's identification of naturalness with goodness and on Rousseau's condemnation of the evils of a culture broken away from natural goodness, while maintaining Kant's own positive assessment of human cultural development as involving, potentially, progression and improvement. In particular, Kant detects in the overall course of human history the "production" (*Hervorbringung*) of the good from the evil, more precisely, the coming about of a good that is not intended by the human beings themselves but that, once developed, preserves itself – a good that results from evil being "always internally at odds with itself" (*innerlich mit sich selbst immer sich veruneinigendes Böses*).[61]

In Kant's genealogical analysis of culture the conception of an "origin of the good from the evil" goes together with the reverse conception of the "origin of the evil [...] from the good".[62] Upon leaving the state of nature and with it nature's instinctual tutelage, human beings employ their newly discovered ability to reason for freely pursuing their own well-being in ways that infringe upon each other giving rise to all kinds of "vice" (*Laster*) and "misery" (*Elend*). But due to the essential instability of a merely selfishly governed social life, the lapsarian transition from the good to the evil at the beginning of human history, on Kant's assessment, will find its eventual inner-worldly redemption in the inverse origin of the good from the evil. In revealing the evil as an "incentive for the good"

[59] Anth 7:324; Kant 2007, 420 (translation modified).
[60] On the distinction between the "natural vocation" (*Naturbestimmung*) of the human being, which is culturo-political, to be promoted by natural means and to be fulfilled in the natural order, and the "rational vocation" (*Vernunftbestimmung*) of the human being, which is ethico-religious, to be promoted by non-natural means and to be fulfilled in the moral order, see Refl 1521 (AA 15/2:885, 888).
[61] Anth 7:328; Kant 2007, 423.
[62] Refl 1521 (AA 15/2:891).

(*Triebfeder zum Guten*),[63] Kant turns Rousseau's, or rather a Rousseauian, vilification of culture into the self-overcoming of culture's defects and deficiencies.

By supplementing Rousseau's recollection of the original goodness of human beings with his own prediction of their eventual goodness Kant undertakes an anthropodicy, or a justification of the evils and ills of human culture in view of the good they secretly serve. Kant's apologetic reading of world history, which is inspired by the earlier religious project of the justification of God in the face of the evils of the world (theodicy), furnishes the philosophical reflection on the nature and the course of human history with a point of view that integrates spatially and temporally diverse historical processes into a comprehensive structure of significance on a global, cosmo-anthropological scale. Moreover, the anthropological prospect of an inner-worldly self-redemption of the human being, by means of cultivation, civilization and moralization, undertaken with the aid of nature, lacks the otherworldly perspective characteristic of Kant's moral philosophy[64] and its extension into ethico-theology and moral religion.[65]

In an anthropological perspective the radical reality of evil in the human being is not the result of a sinful fall and its lasting moral consequences;[66] nor is the restitution of the good the accomplishment of an individual human being's act of inner moral revolution under divine assistance (grace). In the perspective of Kant's anthropodicy good and evil are features of the development of human culture. They are qualifications used to classify the modalities of the interaction between nature, freedom and reason in determining the course of human existence. In particular, animality combined with instinct, as characteristic of the state of nature under a Rousseauist description, amounts to the good; so does freedom combined with reason, as characteristic of the eventual perfectly civilized state of the human being, as envisioned by Kant. But animality combined with freedom, as characteristic of the imperfectly civilized state of the human being, for Kant amounts to the evil, which yet is ultimately productive of the good due to the eventual maturation of reason beyond its merely instrumental beginnings.[67]

For Kant the precarious position of the human being between good and evil results from his or her duplex constitution as, at once, an "animal

[63] Refl 1501 (AA 15/2:790).
[64] See KpV 5:122-132; Kant 1996, 238-246.
[65] See RGV 6:18-53; Kant 1996, 69-97. See also KU 5:434-474.
[66] See MAM 8:107-123.
[67] Refl 1501 (AA 15/2:790).

human being" (*Tiermensch*) and a "moral human being" (*moralischer Mensch*).[68] As an animal human being, the human being is an "animal capable of reason (*animal rationabile*)" (*vernünftiges Thier [animal capable of reasoning]*), i.e., a being capable of employing its reasoning ability in the service of its animality and of the latter's naturally selfish needs of self-preservation, self-propagation and self-enjoyment. As a moral human being, the human being is a "rational being (*animal rationale*)" (*Vernunftwesen*)[69] able to act on purely rational grounds. Brought together the two halves of human existence only fit on to each other, if and when the human being himself or herself, with nature's aid, has turned his freed animality, which first and for a long time is enhanced by merely instrumental reason, into a freed rationality enhanced by a good will. In his anthropological works Kant's concern is not, as in his practical philosophy, with the norms and forms of morally good willing and acting but with the long-term development of the human species through rationally enhanced animality toward morally conditioned rationality – a development that takes place not in the hearts of individual moral agents but through history and that engages not primarily the inner constraints of conscience, moral respect and moral feeling but chiefly the outer means of socially induced self-constraint.

One and a half centuries after Rousseau's vehement accusation of the alienation, betrayal and crime that is culture and Kant's judicious attempt at defending its liberating potential, another analyst of the cultural psyche, the later Sigmund Freud, who had turned from the diagnosis and therapy of individual psychoses and neuroses to those of culture and civilization at large, took up the skeptical regard that Rousseau and Kant had cast upon the trade of nature against culture undertaken by the human being since prehistoric times. The standard English title of Freud's extensive essay from 1930, "Civilization and Its Discontents," does not fully capture the broad scope of the work, which encompasses all phases and forms of human development from prehistoric to modern times, and the peculiar "uneasiness" that Freud attributes to all human life shaped by any kind of culture, as indicated in the title of the German original, "*Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*."[70]

In Freud the opposition between nature and culture that underlay Rousseau's as well as Kant's portrayal and assessment of human

[68] Refl 1521 (AA 15/2:888).
[69] Anth 7:413 note; Kant 2007, 416 note; see also Anth 7:321; Kant 2007, 416.
[70] A more recent adaptive reuse of the original title of Freud's book involves its modified reversal. See Ehrenberg, Alain. *La Société du malaise.* Paris: Odile Jacob, 2010.

development is cast in terms of the relation between animal sexuality and the constraints placed on the exercise of the sexual drive (*libido*) in human beings by processes of suppression and sublimation[71] arising from the confrontation of the pleasure principle (*Lustprinzip*)[72] with a recalcitrant reality (*Realitätsprinzip*).[73] Freud's focus throughout the piece is on the pervasive presence of suffering (*Leiden*) in human life, marked as it is by restriction, compromise and denial. Among the three main sources of human suffering identified by Freud – the bodily frailty of the human being, the exigencies of the material world and the relation of the human being to other such beings – he considers the social source of suffering by far the most serious and substantial.[74]

Freud details the techniques and institutions designed to minimize the impact of pain and displeasure, chiefly involving drive renunciation (*Triebverzicht*), which introduces into all culture a trait of self-denial (*Kulturversagung*).[75] Under conditions of culture, no matter how seemingly primitive or advanced a culture it may be, the gaining of pleasure (*Lustgewinnung*) is replaced by the avoidance of suffering (*Leidvermeidung*).[76] Rather than facilitating life by means of progress and advancement in material and immaterial ways, culture burdens the human being with "work" (*Arbeit*), in fact culture *is* work (*Kulturarbeit*).[77] For Freud the price for the institutionalized self-development through self-denial that is culture are societal neuroses akin to those of the individual psyche.[78] Among the ambivalent cultural devices that help as much as they hinder in dealing with the hardship of natural and cultural life Freud counts religion and science.

Yet culture is not all bad, on Freud's analysis. Nor is there an alternative to culture as the shaping form of human life after the animal stage. In fact, for Freud, culture – with all its constraints and constrictions – performs a great service for humanity in helping assure its survival in a battle for life (*Lebenskampf*) shaped by the fundamental antagonism of the drive for love and life (*Lebenstrieb*, *Eros*) with the drive for death and

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[71] Freud, Sigmund. *Abriß der Psychoanalyse. Das Unbehagen in der Kultur. Mit einer Rede von Thomas Mann als Nachwort.* Frankfurt/M.: S. Fischer Verlag, 1972. 292. All translations from Freud 1972 are my own.
[72] Freud 1972, 74.
[73] Freud 1972, 67.
[74] Freud 1972, 75, 82.
[75] Freud 1972, 92.
[76] Freud 1972, 75.
[77] Freud 1972, 96.
[78] See Freud 1972, 83f., 127.

destruction (*Todestrieb*, *Destruktionstrieb*),[79] with the latter manifesting itself as an "inborn inclination of the human being toward 'evil'" (*angeborene Neigung des Menschen zum "Bösen"*).[80] Yet unlike Kant Freud does not identify evil with principled selfishness in relation to others but locates it entirely outside of the functioning of (civil) society. For Freud the antagonism involved in the operations of culture, in particular the clash of the individual that seeks personal happiness with a societal culture that forbids and forestalls such individual pursuits for the sake of the common good, represents an internal conflict within the libidinal economy (*Haushalt der Libido*),[81] viz. between Eros in its wild, unrestrained form and civilized, contained and controlled Eros.

By locating the operations of the drive for death and destruction outside the cultural conflict between the individual human being and human society, Freud has not only assigned culture to the libidinal sphere, subsuming the suppression and sublimation of Eros under the latter's range of manifestations. He also has identified a radical opposite to human culture and its however defective strategies of enabling and enhancing human life – a sphere of utter death and destruction so dark and deep that it barely had come into view for Rousseau and Kant but was announcing its presence and imminence much more clearly already to Freud in his experiences with authoritarian politics and racial antisemitism, only to come to the fore a few years later and reveal the thin veneer that is culture, eventually leading Adorno in the aftermath of unimaginable death and destruction to declare: "Alle Kultur nach Auschwitz, samt der dringlichen Kritik daran, ist Müll."[82]

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[79] Freud 1972, 107 f., 110.
[80] Freud 1972, 108.
[81] Freud 1972, 125.
[82] Adorno, Theodor W. *Negative Dialektik*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970. 357: "After Auschwitz all culture, including its urgently needed critique, is trash." (III. Meditationen zur Metaphysik, 3).

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