Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View
All cultural progress, by means of which the human being advances his education, has the goal of applying this acquired knowledge and skill for the world’s use. But the most important object in the world to which he can apply them is the human being; because the human being is his own final end. Therefore to know the human being according to his species as an earthly being endowed with reason especially deserves to be called knowledge of the world, even though he constitutes only one part of the creatures on earth.

A doctrine of knowledge of the human being, systematically formulated (anthropology), can exist either in a physiological or in a pragmatic point of view. – Physiological knowledge of the human being concerns the investigation of what nature makes of the human being; pragmatic, the investigation of what he as a free-acting being makes of himself, or can and should make of himself. – He who ponders natural phenomena, for example, what the causes of the faculty of memory may rest on, can speculate back and forth (like Descartes) over the traces of impressions remaining in the brain, but in doing so he must admit that in this play of his representations he is a mere observer and must let nature run its course, for he does not know the cranial nerves and fibers, nor does he understand how to put them to use for his purposes. Therefore all theoretical speculation about this is a pure waste of time. – – But if he uses perceptions concerning what has been found to hinder or stimulate memory in order to enlarge it or make it agile, and if he requires knowledge of the human being

---

1 The Preface and contents are missing in the Handschrift (H).
2 seine Schule macht.
3 See, e.g., Descartes's Passions of the Soul (1649), Art. 42.
for this, then this would be a part of anthropology with a pragmatic purpose, and this is precisely what concerns us here.

Such an anthropology, considered as knowledge of the world, which must come after our schooling, is actually not yet called pragmatic when it contains an extensive knowledge of things in the world, for example, animals, plants, and minerals from various lands and climates, but only when it contains knowledge of the human being as a citizen of the world. Therefore, even knowledge of the races of human beings as products belonging to the play of nature is not yet counted as pragmatic knowledge of the world, but only as theoretical knowledge of the world.

In addition, the expressions “to know the world” and “to have the world” are rather far from each other in their meaning, since one only understands the play that one has watched, while the other has participated in it. But the anthropologist is in a very unfavorable position for judging so-called high society, the estate of the nobles, because they are too close to one another, but too far from others.

Travel belongs to the means of broadening the range of anthropology, even if it is only the reading of travel books. But if one wants to know what to look for abroad, in order to broaden the range of anthropology, first one must have acquired knowledge of human beings at home, through social intercourse with one’s townsmen or countrymen. Without such a plan (which already presupposes knowledge of human beings) the citizen of the world remains very limited with regard to his anthropology. General knowledge always precedes local knowledge here, if the latter is to be ordered and directed through philosophy: in the absence of which all acquired knowledge can yield nothing more than fragmentary groping around and no science.

***

However, all such attempts to arrive at such a science with thoroughness encounter considerable difficulties that are inherent in human nature itself.

---

4 die Welt kennen und Welt haben. 5 die sogenannte große Welt aber, den Stand der Vornehmen.

a A large city such as Königsberg on the river Pregel, which is the center of a kingdom, in which the provincial councils of the government are located, which has a university (for cultivation of the sciences) and which has also the right location for maritime commerce – a city which, by way of rivers, has the advantages of commerce both with the interior of the country and with neighboring and distant lands of different languages and customs, can well be taken as an appropriate place for broadening one’s knowledge of human beings as well as of the world, where this knowledge can be acquired without even traveling.
Preface

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.

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.

Finally, while not exactly sources for anthropology, these are nevertheless aids: world history, biographies, even plays and novels. For although the latter two are not actually based on experience and truth, but only on invention, and while here the exaggeration of characters and situations in which human beings are placed is allowed, as if in a dream, thus appearing to show us nothing concerning knowledge of human beings – yet even so, in such characters as are sketched by a Richardson or a Molière, the main features must have been taken from the observation of the real actions of human beings: for while they are exaggerated in degree, they must nevertheless correspond to human nature in kind.

An anthropology written from a pragmatic point of view that is systematically designed and yet popular (through reference to examples which can be found by every reader) yields an advantage for the reading public: the completeness of the headings under which this or that observed human quality of practical relevance can be subsumed offers [122]

6 seinem Zustand im Affekt (or, “his emotional condition”).
7 Samuel Richardson, 1689–1761: English writer whose epistolary novels include Pamela; or Virtue Rewarded (1740) and Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady (7 vols., 1747–1748). Jean-Baptiste Poquelin Molière, 1622–1673: French playwright, author of the comedies Tartuffe (1664) and The Misanthrope (1666).
readers many occasions and invitations to make each particular into a theme of its own, so as to place it in the appropriate category. Through this means the details of the work are naturally divided among the connoisseurs of this study, and they are gradually united into a whole through the unity of the plan. As a result, the growth of science for the common good is promoted and accelerated.

In my work with pure philosophy, at first freely undertaken, later included as part of my teaching duties, I have for some thirty years given lectures twice a year aimed at knowledge of the world—namely (in the winter semester) anthropology and (in summer) physical geography, which, because they were popular lectures, were also attended by people of different estates (andere Stände). This is the present manual for my anthropology course. As for physical geography, it is scarcely possible at my age to produce a manuscript from my text, which is hardly legible to anyone but myself. [Kant first offered his geography course in 1757. The anthropology course, which to a certain extent grew out of the geography course, was first offered in the winter semester of 1772–1773. A poorly edited version of Kant’s physical geography lectures was eventually published by Friedrich Theodor Rink in 1802 (9: 151–436).]
Contents

Part I  Anthropological Didactic. On the way of cognizing the interior as well as the exterior of the human being  page 13

Book I  On the cognitive faculty  15
   On consciousness of oneself  15
   On egoism  16
   Remark. On the formality of egoistic language  18
   On the voluntary consciousness of one’s representations  19
   On self-observation  20
   On the representations that we have without being conscious of them  23
   On distinctness and indistinctness in consciousness of one’s representations  26
   On sensibility in contrast to understanding  29
   Apology for sensibility  34
   Defense of sensibility against the first accusation  35
   Defense of sensibility against the second accusation  36
   Defense of sensibility against the third accusation  37
   On ability with regard to the cognitive faculty in general  37
   On artificial play with sensory illusion  40
   On permissible moral illusion  42
   On the five senses  45
   On the sense of touch  46
Contents

On hearing 47
On the sense of sight 48
On the senses of taste and smell 49
General remark about the outer senses 49
Questions 50
On inner sense 53
On the causes that increase or decrease sense impressions according to degree 54
a Contrast 54
b Novelty 55
c Change 56
d Intensification extending to perfection 57
On the inhibition, weakening, and total loss of the sense faculties 58
On the power of imagination 60
On the productive faculty belonging to sensibility according to its different forms 67
A On sensibility’s productive faculty of constructing forms 67
B On sensibility’s productive faculty of association 69
C On sensibility’s productive faculty of affinity 70
On the faculty of visualizing the past and the future by means of the power of imagination 75
A On memory 75
B On the faculty of foresight (praevision) 79
C On the gift of divination (facultas divinatrix) 80
On involuntary invention in a healthy state, i.e., on dreams 82
On the faculty of using signs (facultas signatrix) 84
Appendix 88
On the cognitive faculty, in so far as it is based on understanding 90
Division 90
Anthropological comparison of the three higher cognitive faculties with one another 90
On the weaknesses and illnesses of the soul with respect to its cognitive faculty 96
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A General division</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B On mental deficiencies in the cognitive faculty</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C On mental illnesses</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random remarks</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the talents in the cognitive faculty</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the specific difference between comparative and argumentative wit</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A On productive wit</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B On sagacity, or the gift of inquiry</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C On the originality of the cognitive faculty, or genius</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book II The feeling of pleasure and displeasure</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On sensuous pleasure</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A On the feeling for the agreeable, or sensuous pleasure in the sensation of an object</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elucidation through examples</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On boredom and amusement</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B On the feeling for the beautiful, that is, on the partly sensuous, partly intellectual pleasure in reflective intuition, or taste</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste contains a tendency toward external advancement of morality</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropological observations concerning taste</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A On taste in fashion</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B On taste in art</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On luxury</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book III On the faculty of desire</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On affects in comparison with passion</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the affects in particular</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A On the government of the mind with regard to the affects</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B On the various affects themselves</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On timidity and bravery</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On affects that weaken themselves with respect to their end (impotentes animi motus)</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contents

On the affects by which nature promotes health mechanically 161
General remark 163
On the passions 165
Division of the passions 167
A On the inclination to freedom as a passion 168
B On the desire for vengeance as a passion 170
C On the inclination toward the capacity of having influence in general over other human beings 171
a The mania for honor 172
b The mania for domination 173
c The mania for possession 174
On the inclination of delusion as a passion 175
On the highest physical good 176
On the highest moral-physical good 178

Part II Anthropological Characteristic. On the way of cognizing the interior of the human being from the exterior 183
Division 183
A The character of the person 185
I On natural aptitude 185
II On temperament 186
I Temperaments of feeling 188
A The sanguine temperament of the light-blooded person 188
B The melancholy temperament of the heavy-blooded person 188
II Temperaments of activity 189
C The choleric temperament of the hot-blooded person 189
D The phlegmatic temperament of the cold-blooded person 189
III On character as the way of thinking 191
On the qualities that follow merely from the human being’s having or not having character 192
On physiognomy 195
### Contents

- On the guidance of nature to physiognomy 196
- Division of physiognomy 197
  - A On the structure of the face 197
  - B On what is characteristic in the features of the face 200
  - C On what is characteristic in facial expressions 200
  - Random remarks 201
- B The character of the sexes 204
  - Random remarks 207
  - Pragmatic consequences 210
- C The character of the peoples 213
- D The character of the races 223
- E The character of the species 225
  - Main features of the description of the human species’ character 235