



**CON-TEXTOS KANTIANOS.**  
**International Journal of Philosophy**  
**N.º 3, Junio 2016, pp. 122-138**  
**ISSN: 2386-7655**  
**Doi: 10.5281/zenodo.55109**

***Kant's Anthropology as Klugheitslehre***  
***La Antropología de Kant como Klugheitslehre***

HOLLY L. WILSON\*

Louisiana State University at Alexandria, USA

**Abstract**

In this essay I show that Kant intended his anthropology lectures and book, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, to be a *Klugheitslehre* (theory of prudence). The essay draws on many quotes from these sources to show that Kant wanted to develop a theory of how to use other people for one's own ends. Although so much of the lectures and book are in conversation with Baumgarten's empirical psychology, there are enough references to *Klugheit* (prudence) and *klug* (clever) action to support this thesis. Prudence is a skill that human beings should develop and hence is not excluded from human life even though it is not the basis of morality. The purpose of *Klugheit* is to achieve happiness but the means to that happiness involves using other people for one's own ends. In order to use others as a means to one's own ends, a person must in some way satisfy the inclinations of the other person so that they cooperate in one's ends. However it is also possible to dominate another person and use them as well if they are dominated by a passion but this is not prudent since it does not achieve happiness except in the case of a husband and wife. Kant's distinction between *Weltklugheit* and *Privatklugheit* also appears to be confirmed in that he advances the idea that sociable means of gaining the cooperation of others (*Privatklugheit*) leads to the lasting happiness of a person and to the development of civilization.

**Keywords**

Kant; Anthropology; Klugheit; Weltklugheit; Privatklugheit

---

\* Philosophy Professor at the University of Louisiana at Monroe in Monroe, LA (USA). E-mail for contact: [hwilson@lsua.edu](mailto:hwilson@lsua.edu).

## Resumen

En este escrito planteo que Kant entendía sus lecciones de antropología y el libro *Antropología en sentido pragmático* como una *Klugheitslehre* (teoría de la prudencia). El trabajo se basa en varias citas de estas fuentes para evidenciar que Kant pretendía desarrollar una teoría acerca de cómo usar a otras personas conforme a los propios fines. A pesar de que buena parte de las lecciones y el libro publicado en vida de Kant dialogan con la psicología empírica de Baumgarten, hay suficientes referencias a la *Klugheit* (prudencia) y la acción *prudente* (inteligente) para probar esta tesis. La prudencia es una habilidad que los seres humanos deben desarrollar, por lo que no está excluido de la vida humana, aunque no sea la base de la moralidad. El propósito de la *Klugheit* es alcanzar la felicidad, pero los medios conducentes a tal felicidad implican usar a otras personas conforme a los propios fines. Para usar a otros como medios conformes a los propios fines una persona tiene que satisfacer de alguna manera las inclinaciones de otra, de manera que cooperen con vistas a los fines de cada uno. Sin embargo, es asimismo posible dominar a otra persona y usarla también, si está dominada por una pasión, pero no se trata de algo prudente, pues no proporciona felicidad, excepto en el caso del marido y la mujer. La distinción kantiana entre *Weltklugheit* y *Privatklugheit* también aparece confirmada por cuanto implica la idea de que los medios sociales para ganarse la cooperación de otros (*Privatklugheit*) conducen a la felicidad estable de una persona y al desarrollo de la civilización.

## Palabras clave

Kant; Antropología; Klugheit; Weltklugheit; Privatklugheit

Much has been said about Kant's *Anthropology* as a handmaid to his moral philosophy.<sup>1</sup> But not much has been said about Kant's *Anthropology* as a *Klugheitslehre* or doctrine of prudence. Much has been said about prudence as having the end of happiness. However, not much has been said about the means to happiness. Most scholars agree that the end of prudence is happiness, but some even question whether prudence determines the means toward happiness.<sup>2</sup> But clearly the hypothetical imperative enjoins one to find the means to the end of happiness if it is an imperative of prudence even though what these means are is quite indeterminate.<sup>3</sup> So maxims of prudence must determine the means as well as the ends of prudence.<sup>4</sup> There were many such theories of prudence in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and although Kant used Baumgarten's *psychologia empirica* as his text for his anthropology

---

<sup>1</sup> Frierson, 2003; Loudon 2003, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Cohen (2008, 510) points out that we need to interact with human beings to know them and that knowing about temperaments is useful for controlling the inclinations of other people in order to direct and manage them according to one's intentions. See also Kant, (2007; 1900ff), Anth, AA 07: 12, 27).

<sup>3</sup> Kant, (1996), GMS, AA 04:419.

<sup>4</sup> Graband, (2015). Graband asserts that *Klugheit* determines ends but not means on page 65. Then she says that pragmatic knowledge is directed to the ends and not only the means to prudence, p. 78.

lectures, he intended to develop a *Klugheitslehre*, and not a moral anthropology, even if some of what he says in the *Anthropology* has relevance to morality. Claudia Graband acknowledges in her new book *Klugheit bei Kant*, that Kant developed a *Klugheitslehre*, but she doesn't show in Kant's words how this is so. In this article, I would like to show in Kant's words, how he intended to develop a full blown *Klugheitslehre* and how he actually did develop it in many ways in what he says in the published work - *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* and in the student notes from the anthropology lectures.<sup>5</sup>

### 1. Anthropology as a *Klugheitslehre*

In Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Kant tells us he is going to talk about what the human being "can and should be make" of himself.<sup>6</sup> He does not say 'what a human being **must** make of himself.' He uses "*soll*" rather than "*muß*" and I suggest this most likely indicates the distinction between prudence and morality. Human beings should nonetheless be prudent, even if that prudence does not carry the 'ought' of morality.

In the Mronovius lectures, Kant defines what is pragmatic as teaching prudence: "Anthropology is called pragmatic if it serves prudence rather than erudition."<sup>7</sup> Here Kant explicitly associates pragmatic anthropology with prudence. We can safely conclude that Kant intends to tell us that he is developing a *Klugheitslehre* in his lectures on anthropology and in his book by calling it *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*. In the Friedländer lectures, Kant makes this point very clear when he says: "everything that has no relation to the prudent behavior of human beings does not belong to anthropology."<sup>8</sup>

Early on in 1773, Kant wrote to Marcus Herz what he intended with his lectures on anthropology: "In the meanwhile I am working on a preliminary exercise for students from this (in my opinion) very pleasant empirical study of skill, prudence, and even wisdom that, along with physical geography and distinct from all other instruction, can be called knowledge of the world."<sup>9</sup> Although he mentions skill and wisdom as his intentions too, there is not much about skill in the published book except for the skill of prudence. There is some reference to wisdom but even that is sparse (if we can read his comments on character as wisdom). So even early on, prudence is mentioned as his intent for the lectures.

---

<sup>5</sup> Jacobs (2003, 117, 127) holds that Kant explicitly conceived of his *Anthropology* as being directed to the realization of happiness. Frierson (2003, 50, 53) argues that the pragmatic is "1) one's happiness, (2) the whole sphere of the practical, and/or (3) the use of others to achieve one's ends." These are all describing prudence in one way or another, first, the end prudence, then the nature of prudence, and finally the means of prudence. Schwaiger (2002) argues that Kant's *Anthropology* is a *Klugheitslehre*, but he doesn't go into detail to prove it.

<sup>6</sup> Anth, AA 7:119.

<sup>7</sup> V-Anth/Mron, AA 25:1211, [translated by Robert R. Clewis].

<sup>8</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:471, 472, 476 [translated by G. Felicitas Munzel].

<sup>9</sup> Letters, AA 10:145-146.

The maxims of prudence have the end of happiness. Kant's *Groundwork* defines prudence: "Now skill in the choice of means to one's own greatest well being can be called prudence in the narrowest sense. Hence, the imperative that refers to the choice of means to one's own happiness, that is, the precept of prudence, is still always *hypothetical*; the action is not commanded absolutely but only as a means to another purpose."<sup>10</sup> Prudence is a skill, it has means and it has an end, happiness. Its maxims operate through the hypothetical imperative. In the Parow anthropology lecture he clarifies: "The capacity to choose the best means to happiness [*Glückseligkeit*] is prudence. Happiness consists in the satisfaction of all inclinations, and therefore to be able to choose happiness, one must be free."<sup>11</sup> As Kant puts it in the Collins lecture: "Since prudence is a capacity to satisfy our happiness as the sum of all inclinations; so it opposes everything that makes us blind, and consequently also affects."<sup>12</sup> Prudence is the skill one develops in order to find the appropriate means to happiness, which is the sum of all our inclinations. And the skill of prudence is an action of freedom of choice.

Prudence however regards not only the end of happiness, but also the means to achieving that end.<sup>13</sup> Kant writes in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: "In the precepts of prudence, the whole business of reason consists in uniting all the ends which are prescribed to us by our desires in the one single end, happiness, and in coordinating the means for attaining it."<sup>14</sup> So the task of prudence is to unify our inclinations through the appropriate means so that we can achieve happiness. We are beings who are made up of many inclinations and not just one. To force reason to be subject to just one inclination is neither moral nor prudent and does not lead to happiness. It is also clear from this passage that Kant considers it the purpose of reason to unify our inclinations and that this is a goal of reason, not something that militates against reason. In his moral writings, prudence is considered inferior to morality because Kant is differentiating it from moral motivations, but in his writings on education and in his *Anthropology*, he clearly thinks prudence is something we should develop even if it is not the same as morality. We may well agree with Kant that we have no moral obligation to fulfill our own happiness but we might also understand that the reason he says this is not because all prudence aims at self-love but rather that we naturally aim at happiness, hence we do not need to be obligated to make our own happiness our end.<sup>15</sup> However, to be effective prudence, we will see, one needs to

<sup>10</sup> GMS, AA 4:415-16. See also Kant, (1929, A806/B834). See GMS, AA 4:434n.

<sup>11</sup> V-Anth/Parow, AA 25:413 [translated by Allen W. Wood].

<sup>12</sup> V-Anth/Collins, AA 25:211 [translated by Holly L Wilson].

<sup>13</sup> In V-MS/Vigil, AA 27:500, Kant distinguishes between ways of being happy and the means to them.

<sup>14</sup> KrV, A800/B828. V-Anth/Parow, AA 25:438; V-Anth/Parow, AA 25:590; V-Anth/Collins, AA 208; V-Anth/Mensch, AA 1140-41. RGV, AA 6:58.

<sup>15</sup> Predisposition to humanity manifests itself in "self-love which is physical and yet involves comparison (for which reason is required); that is, only in comparison with others does one judge oneself happy or unhappy." RGV, AA 6:26-28. See also KpV, AA 5:25.

aim at the happiness of others as well as at one's own happiness. This seems to be the meaning of Kant's differentiation of *Weltklugheit* and *Privatklugheit* in the *Groundwork*. *Weltklugheit* aims at using other people as means to one's own ends.<sup>16</sup> But *Privatklugheit* makes sure that these ends are to one's lasting advantage and that can only be so, if one aims at the happiness of others at the same time as one aims at one's own happiness. This can only be so if the means one chooses to achieve one's own happiness are means that fulfill the inclinations of others as well. Remember that prudence is not morality, so it is not necessary to treat the human being as a rational being only; one may take the other human being's inclinations into consideration.

One of the means of prudence that is successful in achieving this end of mutual happiness is civilization or even the semblance of civilization. The Friedländer anthropology lectures (1775-76) speak of the pursuit of "semblance" and how "civilized people play a role" to make life "pleasant" and "force people" to "have respect for one another."<sup>17</sup> Although Kant does not mention "having an influence on people" as the purpose of the lectures in this lecture series, he does speak of "forcing" people to have respect for one another. Kant goes on to define freedom in the lecture as "the general object to satisfy the entirety of inclinations."<sup>18</sup> Satisfaction of the entirety of one's inclinations is Kant's definition of happiness. Scholars agree that happiness is the end of prudence. But what are the means to happiness? Kant argues that people seek their "reputation and means, or honor and riches, [and these] are resources which are determined in the society of other people, in order to satisfy an inclination."<sup>19</sup> Some of the means of prudence are having a good reputation, having honor and riches since these can be used to satisfy the inclinations of oneself and of other people.

## 2. The Means to the End of Prudence

Again, satisfying inclinations is what leads to happiness and that is the goal of prudence. Kant goes on to say in the Friedländer lectures that one gains an advantage through one's authoritative tone. An authoritative tone gives one power and influence over other people. Further, he asserts that people "have sway over other's understanding" through being respected and having honor.<sup>20</sup> Respect and honor are means for gaining influence over other people. Passion, on the other hand, he goes on to say makes it impossible to "estimate the object with the sum total of all inclination"<sup>21</sup> or the "proportion of inclinations."<sup>22</sup> All this talk of inclinations and the proportion of inclinations is of

---

<sup>16</sup> GMS, AA 4:416fn.

<sup>17</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:502, 504.

<sup>18</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:581.

<sup>19</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:583.

<sup>20</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:586.

<sup>21</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:590. Kain (2001, 244) points out that it is the purpose of practical reason to harmonize and systematize the inclinations.

<sup>22</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:591.

course referring to the end of prudence, happiness, but when Kant speaks of being civilized and developing honor he is speaking of the means to happiness through other people.

In the Friedländer lecture, Kant tells us people can gain power over the one who is possessed with a passion.<sup>23</sup> For this reason, the inclinations should be brought under control so that others can't gain power over one.<sup>24</sup> Presumably this must be the case so that one can achieve the proportion of ones' inclinations and happiness. If one inclination dominates it is impossible to systematize one's inclinations and bring about a harmonization of them. When other people know that a person is dominated by one passion or by one inclination, it is possible to gain power over them and dominate them. Being dominated does not lead to happiness. Hence dominating people through their own passions is imprudent as well as immoral.

Much is said by Kant about how women, however, gain power over men through art.<sup>25</sup> Such things as "courtesy, modesty, decency, decorum, refinement and improvement of taste" are mentioned as positive means that promote social intercourse.<sup>26</sup> Women use the tools of civilization to gain power over men. Women use flattery and the "innocent expression in their eyes."<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, some women are inclined to introduce despotism or bickering<sup>28</sup> in order to gain power over men. Interestingly, men want to be dominated according to Kant and men use flattery to bring about this domination.<sup>29</sup> Presumably, men are happier when they are dominated by a woman. This is the one case where domination does seem to lead to happiness. This may be so because through a marriage relationship many different inclinations are fulfilled and not just one inclination. For one, the inclination to sex which is a dominant inclination in human beings is fulfilled through marriage and even though the inclination to freedom is frustrated, the person is happy.<sup>30</sup> It is interesting to note that Kant does not condemn this kind of domination the way he condemns so immediately the cognitive domination of a pastor or a doctor.<sup>31</sup> Even though in both cases people want to be dominated, Kant appears to tolerate the domination of charm and even bickering as opposed to the domination of thinking. Clearly in this case

---

<sup>23</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:613.

<sup>24</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:621-23.

<sup>25</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:697.

<sup>26</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:701.

<sup>27</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:703.

<sup>28</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:702.

<sup>29</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:704.

<sup>30</sup> Anth, AA 07:

<sup>31</sup> In his essay "An answer to the question: What is enlightenment?" Kant condemns people who are dominated in their thinking by other people: "It is because of laziness and cowardice that so great a part of humankind, after nature has long since emancipated them from other people's direction (*naturaliter maiorennnes*), nevertheless gladly remains minors for life, and that it becomes so easy for others to set themselves up as their guardians. It is so comfortable to be a minor! If I have a book that understands for me, a spiritual advisor who has a conscience for me, a doctor who decides upon a regimen for me, and so forth, I need not trouble myself at all. I need not think, if only I can pay; others will readily undertake the irksome business for me," in Kant (1999) (WA, AA, 8:35). Yet, Kant does not condemn domination between men and women.

the wife or the husband are using each other as means to each others' ends and hence this is relevant to prudence.

### 3. The End of Prudence

All of this makes sense only if you understand that Kant is speaking about prudence whose end is happiness (the satisfaction of all inclinations or the proportion of all inclinations)<sup>32</sup> and whose means are gaining influence over other people. Much has been said about the end of prudence, because Kant defines the end of prudence as happiness in his *Groundwork to the Metaphysics of Morals*, but not much has been said about the means to happiness because he doesn't speak of this in his moral writings for the most part.<sup>33</sup> Most authors acknowledge Kant's statement that the definition of happiness is wavering but very few speak about what the means to happiness might be.<sup>34</sup> But Kant is making it clear in his definition of prudence as "having an influence over other people" or "using people as a means to one's own ends" that he intends to identify the means to happiness as influencing or using other human beings as means to one's own ends. Having influence over people is a key to happiness for Kant. This doesn't have to be a kind of influence that demeans another person since we see in the case of women and men, men gladly allow women to have power over them.<sup>35</sup>

True, morality is defined by Kant in the second categorical imperative as "*so act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means,*" but it does not exclude prudence as an end that human beings can and should pursue, since treating human beings as a means does not necessary mean one is treating them as a means only.<sup>36</sup> In his *Religion within the Boundaries of Reason Alone*, Kant articulates that all the natural predispositions are good.<sup>37</sup> Although he does not mention the pragmatic predisposition there, he does mention it in the *Anthropology* and we can assume that it too is good and should be developed. The pragmatic predisposition is developed through the skill of prudence.<sup>38</sup> Prudence is a skill that one should develop as one educates young people.<sup>39</sup> Prudence is a skill that leads to a

---

<sup>32</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:591.

<sup>33</sup> In the *Groundwork*, he mentions the means of riches, cognition and insight, long life, health, and argues that they are all uncertain in the achievement of happiness. GMS, AA 418.

<sup>34</sup> GMS, AA 4:419; 399.

<sup>35</sup> Clearly people want to be used as means to other people's ends. An administrative assistant thrives on being used as a means to students' ends as long as they are polite.

<sup>36</sup> GMS, AA 4:429

<sup>37</sup> RGV, AA 6:58.

<sup>38</sup> Claudia Schmidt also agrees that pragmatic is about prudence in "Kant's Transcendental, Empirical, Pragmatic and Moral Anthropology" in *Kant-Studien* 98 (2007), 156-182; p. 174. See also Anth, AA 7:332.

<sup>39</sup> "It is the human being himself who is supposed to first develop his predispositions toward the good," (Louden, 2007), Päd, AA 9:445. The third end of education is prudence: "It must be seen that the human being becomes prudent also, well suited for human society, popular, and influential. This requires a certain form of culture, which is called civilizing" – (Louden, 2007) Päd, AA 9:450.

necessary end, happiness that all people necessarily want. Hence, if people want the end of happiness, they need to negotiate the means of influencing and using other people as means to their own ends. As Kant says in the *Menschenkunde* lecture, “prudence [is directed] toward human beings.”<sup>40</sup> Kant defines prudence there as “knowledge of the art of how one human being has influence on another and can lead him according to his purpose.”<sup>41</sup> At the same time, he defines prudent as what “serves to fulfill our overall aims.”<sup>42</sup> Prudence leads to happiness. Prudence makes us “useful in public matters.”<sup>43</sup> Prudence is not something that is simply directed toward oneself, but is intrinsically directed toward other people. Prudence is a matter of public interest.

In the *Mron* lectures (1784-85), Kant defines prudence in a very similar way: “...prudence is a proficiency or knowledge in reaching one’s aims, and making use of this skill or using other human beings for one’s aims; but to do this I must avail myself of what everyone understands and interests everyone.”<sup>44</sup> Prudence cannot achieve its end without appealing to what interests other people. So to use others or gain influence over others, one has to appeal to what interests them and hence this is a public matter not just a private matter.

Prudence, however, can also be a private matter since “abstemiousness should therefore be praised not merely as virtue, but also as prudence.”<sup>45</sup> This can either mean that abstemiousness is a prudent lifestyle that benefits the person and leads to greater happiness, or it could also mean that one’s reputation is harmed if one is not abstemious. And hence one’s happiness is harmed by not being respected by other people. Another more private way of construing prudence can be found in what Kant has to say about one’s attention. One can increase one’s happiness by means of controlling one’s attention: “For the greatest perfection of man is that of being able to act according to his power of choice, to direct his cognition to an object and again turn away from it.”<sup>46</sup> Presumably if looking at someone who is ugly makes you unhappy, you can make yourself happy by directing your attention elsewhere.<sup>47</sup> With respect to one’s attention, it is “prudent, to *look away from* the misfortune of others, yes even from our own good fortune.”<sup>48</sup> Apparently, judging something as a misfortune or as good fortune, or looking at it that way, is not prudent because fortune is not based on one’s free will and hence under one’s control. However, one’s ability to pay attention or look away is under one’s control.

<sup>40</sup> V-Anth/Mensch, AA 25:855. (Trans. by Robert B. Louden).

<sup>41</sup> V-Anth/Mensch, AA 25:855-56.

<sup>42</sup> V-Anth/Mensch, AA 25:855-56.

<sup>43</sup> V-Anth/Mensch, AA 25:856.

<sup>44</sup> V-Anth/Mron, AA 25:1210. (Trans. by Robert R. Clewis).

<sup>45</sup> V-Anth/Mron, AA 25:1322.

<sup>46</sup> V-Anth/Mron, AA 25:1231.

<sup>47</sup> Anth, AA 07:131 Kant speaks of paying attention and turning away from an idea of which one is conscious; It is abstracting from the representation and “demonstrates a freedom of the faculty of thought and the authority of the mind.”

<sup>48</sup> Anth, AA 07:132.



#### 4. Appealing to Inclinations in order to Use Other People

Further in the Mrongovius lecture, Kant clarifies how reason relates to inclination through prudence: “Desire is also called volition. Either our reason, or our inclination, wills according to the diverse kinds of delight. When reason does not will something that the inclination wills, reason is often used in the service of inclination, as reason must find out the means by which inclination can attain its end.”<sup>49</sup> It is the purpose of prudent reason then to find the means to fulfill one’s inclinations so that they lead to happiness. Or one can allow one’s reason to be dominated by inclination, which does not lead to happiness. Passion is an example of this.

Passion, Kant goes on to say, impedes one from being “able to compare the inclination with the sum of all other ones.”<sup>50</sup> Hence passion makes happiness impossible. Likewise, affect “makes us incapable of comparing this sensation with the sum of all sensations,” and again makes it impossible to be happy.<sup>51</sup> Affects and passions make us imprudent and incapable of achieving the end of prudence. One attempts to satisfy one inclination at the cost of all the other inclinations. One inclination dominates reason and makes it impossible to create a proportion of the inclinations or a system of the inclinations, which is happiness.

In the Mrongovius lectures, Kant elaborates on the role of inclinations and prudence: “The inclination to means is based on the aim of having an influence on other human beings. (The more power I can use for my will, the more ends I achieve. But the number of powers I can use is based on the extent of the influence.) - This influence can be threefold: 1. Through respect from others, through honor; 2. Through fear others have of us, i.e., authority; 3. Through one’s own interest, i.e., through money. This last influence is the strongest.”<sup>52</sup> Kant defines at least three dominant types of inclinations to the means of having an influence on other people: honor, fear or authority, and interest or money. It does not mean necessarily that these are prudent means to having an influence on other people since if they are passions they defeat their purpose, which is happiness. But these kinds of means are of importance to the discussion of prudence since they are also ways in which people attempt to have an influence on other people or use them for their own ends. Their success can sometimes depend upon whether the other person has a passion toward these means. People who do not have passions are not likely to be moved by these means.

And as Kant explains in the *Anthropology*: “The passions are divided into passions of natural (innate) inclination and passions of inclination that result from human culture (acquired). The passions of the first kind are the inclinations of freedom and sex, both of which are connected with affect. The second kind are manias for honor, dominance, and

---

<sup>49</sup> V-Anth/Mron, AA 25:1334.

<sup>50</sup> V-Anth/Mron, AA 25:1339-40.

<sup>51</sup> V-Anth/Mron, AA 25:1340.

<sup>52</sup> V-Anth/Mron, AA 25:1355-6.

possession, which are not connected with the impetuosity of an affect but with the persistence of a maxim established for certain ends.”<sup>53</sup> Passions are only desires directed toward human beings, not to things. Reason is involved with the passions but it is dominated by the inclination and again it makes it impossible to achieve the desired happiness because of the domination by only one inclination. Other human beings are motivated by many different inclinations and trying to appeal to them through only one inclination by means of which one is imprisoned makes one inflexible and unable to adjust to the various inclinations that motivate people to cooperate in one's ends.

Nonetheless, one can be fooled by the passions, because they do aim at the means to the end of happiness as does all prudent action: “since passions are inclinations that aim merely at the possession of the means for satisfying all inclinations which are concerned directly with the end, they have, in this respect, the appearance of reason; that is, they aspire to the idea of a faculty connected with freedom, by which alone ends in general can be attained.”<sup>54</sup> But passions give only the appearance of prudent reason, not the real thing. They aim only at the means for satisfying inclinations and not at the end itself of happiness. They may achieve the means but miss the end. Without consideration of how the means lead to happiness, they will miss their mark.

Hatred is a good example of a passion that misses the mark. It is motivated by a sense of revenge behind which is the inclination to justice. Having justice gives a sense of peace and a feeling of equality with all people. But revenge motivated by hatred does not achieve this end: “So hatred arising from an injustice we have suffered, that is, the desire for *vengeance*, is a passion that follows irresistibly from the nature of the human being, and, malicious as it may be, maxims of reason are nevertheless interwoven with the inclination by virtue of the permissible *desire for justice*, whose analogue it is.”<sup>55</sup> The maxims of prudent reason enjoin us to aim at equality with other people which is justice and this brings about happiness, and the passion for vengeance almost looks like a sense of justice since it means doing to another what was done to oneself and thereby trying to bring about equality through punishment. But being motivated by hatred, the vengeance does not achieve happiness but only a bitter sense of satisfaction and fear of further retaliation.

Kant equates the inclination for getting power over other people as something that is very close to prudence: “This inclination comes closest to technically practical reason, that is, to the maxim of prudence.—For getting other human beings' inclinations into one's power, so that one can direct and determine them according to one's intentions, is almost the same as possessing others as mere tools of one's will. No wonder that the striving after such a capacity becomes a passion.”<sup>56</sup> People who use honor, authority, and money are able to gain possession over other people and can “get to every human being and use him according to his purposes, if not by means of one of these influences, then by means of

---

<sup>53</sup> Anth, AA 07:268.

<sup>54</sup> Anth, AA 07:269-270.

<sup>55</sup> Anth, AA 07:270.

<sup>56</sup> Anth, AA 07:270.

another.” People who are motivated by these passions become dupes of their own inclinations and miss the final end of happiness. They are vulnerable to manipulation by other people. Kant calls this prudence “by which one can manage fools.”<sup>57</sup> Kant tends to call both this kind of manipulation and having an influence over others, prudence.

### **5. Domination as a Type of Using**

Domination is another way in which one tries to use others as a means to one’s own ends. But Kant distinguishes between domination that is motivated by fear and that which is motivated by charm. Female art is indirect and is not using force and therefore is not really domination, he tells us. She is not inspiring fear but love and charm. Nonetheless she dominates the male through his own inclination. The male has the inclination to be dominated.<sup>58</sup> So women, according to Kant, at least in his time, were able to gain power over men through their charm and men allowed themselves to be dominated by this charm. This too is a kind of prudence but one that is effective through appealing to the inclination of the other person who wants that inclination to be fulfilled. Prudence is effective if it appeals to other people’s inclinations. On the other hand, Kant also notes that domination by fear is one of the most dreaded types of domination and is intrinsically unjust.<sup>59</sup>

If the man has a passion however, it becomes easy to gain power over him but if he simply has an inclination to love then he has more power over himself: “The reason is this: passion is a means of ruling the other. Who has passion can be ruled by means of it by the one toward whom it is directed, and therefore, if the man loves her due to passion, the woman has power over him. But if the man loves solely due to inclination, so that he is not in love, then he is that much less [subject] to being ruled by his wife, for thereby, that he becomes weak, his wife becomes strong.”<sup>60</sup> The wife can influence her husband through his inclinations but she has power over him if he is ruled by passion. Prudence would dictate that she influence him through her charm rather than dominate him through his own passion for he becomes weak when he is supposed to protect her, an inclination that men have toward women. Kant distinguishes between love that is based on inclination and that which is based in passion: “Passion is that degree and state of the desires which makes us unable to estimate the object with the sum total of all inclination. For example, if an individual wants to marry a [woman] and desires her not according to one inclination, but in accordance with all inclinations; if he is particular about her qualities, virtue, station, and skill, then his love arises from deliberate choice, thus not from passion.”<sup>61</sup> A man should keep his happiness in mind as he chooses to marry a woman and not just be driven by the sexual passion for instance. One way he can gain power over his wife is by being

---

<sup>57</sup> Anth, AA 07:271.

<sup>58</sup> Anth, AA 07:273.

<sup>59</sup> Anth, AA 07:273.

<sup>60</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:613.

<sup>61</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:590.

accommodating: "He is a conciliatory husband, and knows how to establish dominion over his wife and relatives by seeming to comply with everyone's wishes: for by his unbending but considerate will he knows how to bring their wills round to his—just as bodies with small mass and great velocity penetrate an obstacle on impact."<sup>62</sup> A husband uses civilized means of complying with her wishes or inclinations to influence his wife and thereby does not dominate her with fear but with charm, as she does the same to him. In this way, he is able to gain influence over his wife and get her to cooperate in his ends.

## 6. Maxims of Prudence

Friendship too has to guard against affects that can pull a person down: "In friendship one must not let it get to the point of affect, for otherwise one will thereby be ruled by the other against whom one is harboring it, and will finally be dragged along by him in all his misfortune."<sup>63</sup> It would be imprudent to invest too much emotion into a friendship in case something bad happens to the other person and it creates a strong affect in oneself. We have already seen that affects cause one to miss the end of happiness. Kant defines affect as something that unsettles one's mind: "Affect is surprise through sensation, by means of which the mind's composure (*animus sui compos*) is suspended."<sup>64</sup> However, affect "does a momentary damage to freedom and dominion over oneself."<sup>65</sup> Affects are not as bad as passions, but are also imprudent if one lets them affect one's decision-making.

Passions miss their mark and usually do not achieve their aim of happiness so people find sociable ways to achieve influence over other people. It is prudent to gain the cooperation of others rather than manipulate them: "On the whole, the more civilized human beings are, the more they are actors. They adopt the illusion of affection, of respect for others, of modesty, and of unselfishness without deceiving anyone at all, because it is understood by everyone that nothing is meant sincerely by this."<sup>66</sup> People affect the virtues and sociable qualities like politeness and taste and respect for others in order to get their way and gain the cooperation of others. People may see through these attempts to conceal the desire to use others as means to their own ends but people allow themselves to be fooled and Kant finds this a good inclination on the part of people since it tends toward virtue.<sup>67</sup> It also allows people to achieve their ends of using other people while at the same time making the other person happy. Kant also notes that influencing another person through their passions is really using them as a mere means.<sup>68</sup>

Kant is especially enamored of the role that taste can play in a prudent life:

---

<sup>62</sup> Anth, AA 07:290.

<sup>63</sup> V-Anth/Fried, AA 25:616.

<sup>64</sup> Anth, AA 07:252.

<sup>65</sup> Anth, AA 07:267.

<sup>66</sup> Anth, AA 07:151.

<sup>67</sup> Anth, AA 07:152.

<sup>68</sup> Anth, AA 07:269-270.

«Taste (as a formal sense, so to speak) concerns the communication of our feeling of pleasure and displeasure to others, and includes a susceptibility, which this very communication affects pleurably, to feel a satisfaction (*complacentia*) about it in common with others (sociably). Now satisfaction that can be considered valid not merely for the subject who feels it but also for everybody else, that is, universally valid, must contain necessity (of this satisfaction). So, in order to be considered universally valid, this satisfaction must contain an *a priori* principle. Consequently, it is a satisfaction in agreement of the subject's pleasure with the feeling of everyone else according to a universal law, which must spring from the subject's giving of a universal law and so from reason».<sup>69</sup>

Taste not only is something that appeals to the pleasure of everyone, it has in this way the capability of being universal and the sign of universality is its connection to morality. Kant doesn't argue in the *Anthropology* that prudence is good for morality, but if it is prudent to be tasteful in order to gain the cooperation of others since it appeals to the pleasure of all people, then prudence does have a tendency to lead to morality in the sense that it leads to universality. Kant argues that civilization means subjecting one's private ends to ends common to all people: "[Human beings] feel ever more keenly the ills they do to one another through selfishness as culture increases, and since they see no other means against them, they submit, though reluctantly, to a discipline (of civil coercion), subjecting the private mind (of the individual) to the common mind (of all united)."<sup>70</sup> Prudence leads to the civilization of the human species because it requires that people act in more cooperative ways that take the other person's inclinations into account as well as one's own desire for happiness. Sociable means are indications of civilization.

The arrogant person, on the other hand, is especially imprudent because he demands that others "should despise themselves in comparison with him [and this] is directly counter to his own purpose (like that of a madman), since through this demand he provokes others to undermine his self-conceit in every possible way, to torment him, and to expose him to ridicule because of his offensive foolishness."<sup>71</sup> The arrogant person arouses the ire of other people and they do not cooperate in his ends and allow themselves to be used by him. Instead, they turn against him. It is very imprudent to be arrogant. "Arrogance is buffoonery, for in the first place it is *foolish* to expect others to attach little value to themselves in comparison with me; and so they will always play *tricks* with me, which defeat my purpose."<sup>72</sup> So the imprudent person is also a fool who does not achieve happiness but misses it because it is unreasonable to expect others to lower themselves in their own eyes. Happiness implies equality with other people, not inequality. Everyone

---

<sup>69</sup> Anth, AA 07:244.

<sup>70</sup> Anth, AA 07:329.

<sup>71</sup> Anth, AA 07:203.

<sup>72</sup> Anth, AA 07:210-211.

wants to be equal and no one wants to be inferior. We have an intrinsic inclination to justice and that implies equality, not inequality.

There are semblances one should not be influenced by. A scholar who appears very knowledgeable is not necessarily so: "Scholars can be limited in their rational use of historical knowledge and hence suffer want of freedom in thinking for oneself." He is a pedant and doesn't think for himself.<sup>73</sup> Kant also speaks about craftiness, slyness, and cunning to distinguish them from prudence: "Craftiness, a head for intrigue, is often regarded as great though misused understanding; but it is only the way of thinking of very limited human beings and is very different from prudence, whose appearance it has. One can deceive the naïve person only once, which in the course of time is very disadvantageous to the personal intention of the crafty person."<sup>74</sup> Craftiness does not achieve the end of happiness because it doesn't take into consideration one's long term advantage or *Privatklugheit*.<sup>75</sup> Once other people see through the deception they will no longer cooperate. One can no longer use them as means to one's own ends or have any influence over them.

## 7. The Pragmatic Predisposition and Prudence

The purpose of the pragmatic predisposition is to develop prudence but prudence is best achieved through civilized means, which take other people's inclinations into consideration.<sup>76</sup> So Kant writes: "The pragmatic predisposition to become civilized through culture, particularly through cultivation of social qualities, and the natural tendency of his species in social relations to come out of the crudity of mere personal force and to become well-mannered (if not yet moral) being destined for concord, is now a higher step."<sup>77</sup> Someone who is civilized is also someone who is disciplined and is not dominated by affects and passions. This person knows how to take other people's inclinations and desires into consideration. Such means as tact, politeness, cooperativeness, and being agreeable are prudent means for influencing other people and achieving one's ends. These means charm people instead of forcing them through fear or through their own passions. One doesn't dominate the other person through civilized means since one gains the free will cooperation of the other person in the pursuit of one's ends. Both people are charmed into cooperation. One actually influences the other person rather than dominates them. Being influenced by another person does not mean one is

---

<sup>73</sup> Anth, AA 07:139.

<sup>74</sup> Anth, AA 07:198.

<sup>75</sup> Anth, AA 07: 205: "Craftiness, cunning, slyness (*versutia, astutia*) is skill in cheating others." "The cheater is really a fool."

<sup>76</sup> Graband (2015, 70) argues that the *Anthropology* doesn't restrict itself to prudent action with other human beings but also points to civilization through the pragmatic predisposition.

<sup>77</sup> Anth, AA 07:323.

being used as a mere means but rather one is treated as an end. Influence through civilized means appeals to the other's inclinations and they hence consent to the cooperation.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it is obvious that Kant's *Anthropology* contains much regarding prudence and how to gain an influence over other people and also much about how one may fail to gain an influence over other people. Not every passage in the *Anthropology* lends itself to a clear discussion of prudence. There is much more in the *Anthropology* than what one would expect in a *Klugheitslehre*, but then we have to keep in mind that Kant was using Alexander Baumgarten's (1714-1762) *psychologia empirica* of his *metaphysica* (1739) as a textbook for his lectures on anthropology. One can tell how closely he followed the text by perusing Kant's reflections on the text in volumes 15 of Kant's *gesammelte Schriften*. He used the textbook at the request of his students because they found it "more fundamental."<sup>78</sup> There were certainly *Klugheitslehre* in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and Kant was probably well aware of them. He read quite a lot from Crusius and although he doesn't mention his *Anweisung vernünftig zu leben, und allgemein Klugheitslehren* (Leipzig, 1744), it is very likely that he knew of it.<sup>79</sup> My argument does not depend upon every aspect of Kant's *Anthropology* clearly mentioning that it is a *Klugheitslehre*. He mentions enough his intent for the lectures and the book and we see that he makes many comments regarding prudence, and we should take this seriously. A *Klugheitslehre* is very different than empirical psychology and moral philosophy. Its purpose is to produce prudence in the person. The human being is looked at in a way that one is involved with the action of other human beings. It is the difference between knowing a world and having a world.<sup>80</sup> It is the difference between knowing the world theoretically and being able to navigate human action in a graceful and efficient and successful way. It is about knowing the difference between dominating others and influencing them so that one has their consent. And finally it is about knowing how to use other people for one's own ends without alienating them and turning them against oneself. Kant puts it this way in the Parow lecture notes: "One is always safer when one entrusts himself to someone whose inclinations already agree with the principles of reason than to someone who always has to struggle with them..."<sup>81</sup> This is a maxim of prudence. Kant further asserts: "We must trouble ourselves to form the way of thinking and the capacities of those people with whom we have to do, so that we are not too hard nor too offensive. So we are taught anthropology, which shows us how we can use people to our ends."<sup>82</sup> Clearly, Kant is providing a maxim of prudence here as well. In order to gain influence over others and gain their cooperation in our actions one needs to

---

<sup>78</sup> EACG, AA 2:10. See Wilson (2006, 22).

<sup>79</sup> Kant mentions Christian Crusius 40 times in his works up to volume 20. See *Bemerkungen zur Beobachtung*, AA 20:23. See also Wilson, (2001).

<sup>80</sup> *Anth*, AA 07:120.

<sup>81</sup> V-*Anth*/Parow, AA 25:248

<sup>82</sup> V-*Anth*/Fried, AA 25:143.

use civilized means that appeal to others' inclinations as well as to one's own, and for that one needs to know people. The *Anthropology* teaches prudence in many places and Kant's intent was to teach a *Klugheitslehre* in his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* and in his lectures on anthropology.

## Bibliography

- Cohen, A. (2008), "Kant's answer to the question 'what is man?' and its implications for anthropology," in *Studies in the History of Philosophy and Science*, 39, pp. 506-514.
- Frierson, P. (2003), *Freedom and Anthropology in Kant's Moral Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Graband, C. (2015), *Klugheit bei Kant*, Walter de Gruyter, Frankfurt am Main.
- Jacobs, B. (2003), "Kantian Character and the Problem of a Science of Humanity" in *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, ed. by Brian Jacobs and Patrick Kain, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 105-134.
- Kain, P. (2001), "A Preliminary Defense of Kantian Prudence," in *Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung. Akten des neunten Kant-Kongresses*, hrsg. Volker, Gerhardt, Rolf-Peter Horstmann, Ralph Schumacher, New York, Berlin, pp. 239-246.
- Kant, I. (2007), *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. by Robert B. Louden, in *Anthropology, History and Education* (The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- (1929), *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith, St. Martin's Press, New York.
- (1900ff), *Gesammelte Schriften* Hrsg.: Bd. 1–22 Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Bd. 23 Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, ab Bd. 24 Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Berlin.
- (1996), *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, in *Kant's Practical Philosophy*, ed. and trans. by Mary Gregor, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- (2012), *Lectures on Anthropology* (Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant), edited by Allen W. Wood and Robert B. Louden, translated by Robert R. Clewis, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- (1999), *Practical Philosophy*, trans by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Louden, R. (2003), "The Second Part of Morals," in *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, ed. by Brian Jacobs and Patrick Kain, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Louden, R. (2000), *Kant's Impure Ethics: From Rational Beings to Human Beings*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Schmidt, C. (2007), "Kant's Transcendental, Empirical, Pragmatic and Moral Anthropology" in *Kant-Studien* 98, pp. 156-182.
- Schwaiger, C. (2002), "Klugheit bei Kant: Metamorphosen eines Schlüsselbegriffs der praktischen Philosophie, in *Aufklärung* 14, pp. 147-159.



Wilson, H. (2001), "Kant's Experiential Enlightenment and Court Philosophy in the 18th Century," in *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 18, no. 2, pp. 179-205

Wilson, H. (2007), *Kant's Pragmatic Anthropology: Its Origin, Meaning, and Critical Significance*, State University of New York Press, Albany.

