

adequately come to know the organized beings and their internal possibility in accordance with merely mechanical principles of nature, let alone explain them; and indeed this is so certain that we can boldly say that it would be absurd for humans even to make such an attempt or to hope that there may yet arise a Newton who could make comprehensible even the generation of a blade of grass according to natural laws that no intention has ordered; rather, we must absolutely deny this insight to human beings.⁸ But for us to judge in turn that even if we could penetrate to the principle of nature in the specification of its universal laws known to us there **could** lie hidden no ground sufficient for the possibility of organized beings without the assumption of an intention underlying their generation would be presumptuous: for how could we know that? Probabilities count for nothing here, where judgments of pure reason are at stake. – Thus we cannot make any objective judgment at all, whether affirmative or negative, about the proposition that there is an intentionally acting being as a world-cause (hence as an author) at the basis of what we rightly call natural ends; only this much is certain, namely, that if we are to judge at least in accordance with what it is granted to us to understand through our own nature (in accordance with the conditions and limits of our reason), we absolutely cannot base the possibility of those natural ends on anything except an intelligent being – which is what alone is in accord with the maxims of our reflecting power of judgment and is thus a ground which is subjective but ineradicably attached to the human race.

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§ 76.
Remark.

This consideration, which would certainly deserve to be elaborated in detail in transcendental philosophy, can come in here only as a digression, for elucidation (not for the proof of what has here been expounded).

Reason is a faculty of principles, and in its most extreme demand it reaches to the unconditioned, while understanding, in contrast, is always at its service only under a certain condition, which must be given. Without concepts of the understanding, however, which must be given objective reality, reason cannot judge at all objectively (synthetically), and by itself it contains, as theoretical reason, absolutely no constitutive principles, but only regulative ones. One soon learns that where the understanding cannot follow, reason becomes excessive, displaying itself in well-grounded ideas (as regulative principles) but not in objectively valid concepts; the understanding, however, which cannot keep up with it, but which would yet be necessary for validity for objects, restricts the validity of those ideas of reason solely to the subject, although still universally for all members of this species, i.e., understanding restricts the

validity of those ideas to the condition which, given the nature of our (human) cognitive faculty or even the concept that **we can form** of the capacity^a of a finite rational being in general, we cannot and must not conceive otherwise, but without asserting that the basis for such a judgment lies in the object. We will adduce examples, which are certainly too important as well as too difficult^b for them to be immediately pressed upon the reader as proven propositions, but which will still provide material to think over and can serve to elucidate what is our proper concern here.

5: 402 It is absolutely necessary for the human understanding to distinguish between the possibility and the actuality of things. The reason for this lies in the subject and the nature of its cognitive faculties. For if two entirely heterogeneous elements were not required for the exercise of these faculties, understanding for concepts and sensible intuition for objects corresponding to them, then there would be no such distinction (between the possible and the actual). That is, if our understanding were intuitive, it would have no objects except what is actual. Concepts (which pertain merely to the possibility of an object) and sensible intuitions (which merely give us something, without thereby allowing us to cognize it as an object) would both disappear. Now, however, all of our distinction between the merely possible and the actual rests on the fact that the former signifies only the position of the representation of a thing with respect to our concept and, in general, our faculty for thinking, while the latter signifies the positing of the thing in itself (apart from this concept).^c Thus the distinction of possible from actual things is one that is merely subjectively valid for the human understanding, since we can always have something in our thoughts although it does not exist, or represent something as given even though we do not have any concept of it. The propositions, therefore, that things can be possible without being actual, and thus that there can be no inference at all from mere possibility to actuality, quite rightly hold for the human understanding without that proving that this distinction lies in the things themselves. For that the latter cannot be inferred from the former, hence that those propositions are certainly valid of objects insofar as our cognitive faculty, as sensibly conditioned, is concerned with objects of these senses, but are not valid of objects in general, is evident from the unremitting demand of reason to assume some sort of thing (the original ground)^d as existing absolutely necessarily, in which possibility and actuality can no longer be distinguished at all, and for which idea our understanding has absolutely no concept, i.e., can find no way in which to represent such a thing and its way of existing. For if understanding **thinks** it (it can think it as it will), then it is represented as merely possible. If understanding is conscious of it as given in intuition, then it is actual without understanding being able to conceive of its possibility. Hence the concept of an absolutely necessary being is an indispensable idea of reason but an unattainable problematic concept for the human

^a *Vermögen*

^b “as well as too difficult” added in the second edition.

^c The phrase in the parentheses was added in the second edition.

^d Reading *Urgrund* instead of *Urgund*, a typographical error in both the first and second editions.

understanding. It is still valid, however, for the use of our cognitive faculties in accordance with their special constitution, thus not for objects and thereby for every cognitive being: because I cannot presuppose that in every such being thinking and intuiting, hence the possibility and actuality of things, are two different conditions for the exercise of its cognitive faculties. For an understanding to which this distinction did not apply, all objects that I cognize would be (exist), and the possibility of some that did not exist, i.e., their contingency if they did exist, as well as the necessity that is to be distinguished from that, would not enter into the representation of such a being at all. What makes it so difficult for our understanding with its concepts to be the equal of reason is simply that for the former, as human understanding, that is excessive (i.e., impossible for the subjective conditions of its cognition) which reason nevertheless makes into a principle belonging to the object. – Now here this maxim is always valid, that even where the cognition of them outstrips the understanding, we should conceive all objects in accordance with the subjective conditions for the exercise of our faculties necessarily pertaining to our (i.e., human) nature; and, if the judgments made in this way cannot be constitutive principles determining how the object is constituted (as cannot fail to be the case with regard to transcendent concepts), there can still be regulative principles, immanent and secure in their use and appropriate for the human point of view.

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Just as in the theoretical consideration of nature reason must assume the idea of an unconditioned necessity of its primordial ground, so, in the case of the practical, it also presupposes its own unconditioned (in regard to nature) causality, i.e., freedom, because it is aware of its moral command. Now since here, however, the objective necessity of the action, as duty, is opposed to that which it, as an occurrence, would have if its ground lay in nature and not in freedom (i.e., in the causality of reason), and the action which is morally absolutely necessary can be regarded physically as entirely contingent (i.e., what necessarily **should** happen often does not), it is clear that it depends only on the subjective constitution of our practical faculty that the moral laws must be represented as commands (and the actions which are in accord with them as duties), and that reason expresses this necessity not through a **be**^a (happening) but through a should-be:^b which would not be the case if reason without sensibility (as the subjective condition of its application to objects of nature) were considered, as far as its causality is concerned, as a cause in an intelligible world, corresponding completely with the moral law, where there would be no distinction between what should be done and what is done, between a practical law concerning that which is possible through us and the theoretical law concerning that which is actual through us. Now, however, although an intelligible world, in which everything would be actual merely because it is (as something good) possible, and even freedom, as its formal condition, is a transcendent concept for us, which is not serviceable for any constitutive principle for determining an object and its objective reality, still, in accordance

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^a *Seyn*

^b *Seyn-Sollen*

no difference
between thinking &
willing in divine
being

normatively as
relational to our plural
faculties

with the constitution of our (partly sensible) nature, it can serve as a universal **regulative principle** for ourselves and for every being standing in connection with the sensible world, so far as we can represent that in accordance with the constitution of our own reason and capacity,^a which does not determine the constitution of freedom, as a form of causality, objectively, but rather makes the rules of actions in accordance with that idea into commands for everyone and indeed does so with no less validity than if it did determine freedom objectively.

Likewise, as far as the case before us is concerned, it may be conceded that we would find no distinction between a natural mechanism and a technique of nature, i.e., a connection to ends in it, if our understanding were not of the sort that must go from the universal to the particular, and the power of judgment can thus cognize no purposiveness in the particular, and hence make no determining judgments, without having a universal law under which it can subsume the particular. But now since the particular, as such, contains something contingent with regard to the universal, but reason nevertheless still requires unity, hence lawfulness, in the connection of particular laws of nature (which lawfulness of the contingent is called purposiveness), and the *a priori* derivation of the particular laws from the universal, as far as what is contingent in the former is concerned, is impossible through the determination of the concept of the object, thus the concept of the purposiveness of nature in its products is a concept that is necessary for the human power of judgment in regard to nature but does not pertain to the determination of the objects themselves, thus a subjective principle of reason for the power of judgment which, as regulative (not constitutive), is just as necessarily valid for our **human power of judgment** as if it were an objective principle.

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§ 77.

On the special character of the human understanding, by means of which the concept of a natural end is possible for us.

In the remark, we have adduced special characteristics of our cognitive faculty (even the higher one) which we may easily be misled into carrying over to the things themselves as objective predicates; but they concern ideas for which no appropriate objects can be given in experience, and which could therefore serve only as regulative principles in the pursuit of experience. It is the same with the concept of a natural end, as far as the cause of the possibility of such a predicate is concerned, which can only lie in the idea; but the consequence that answers to it (the product) is still given in nature, and the concept of a causality of the latter, as a being acting in accordance with ends, seems

^a *Vermögens*

to make the idea of a natural end into a constitutive principle of nature; and in this it differs from all other ideas.

This difference, however, consists in the fact that the idea at issue is not a principle of reason for the understanding, but for the power of judgment, and is thus merely the application of an understanding in general to possible objects of experience, where, indeed, the judgment cannot be determining, but merely reflecting, hence where the object is, to be sure, given in experience, but where it cannot even be **determinately** (let alone completely appropriately) **judged** in accordance with the idea, but can only be reflected upon.

What is at issue is therefore a special character of **our** (human) understanding with regard to the power of judgment in its reflection upon things in nature. But if that is the case, then it must be based on the idea of a possible understanding other than the human one (as in the *Critique of Pure Reason* we had to have in mind another possible intuition if we were to hold our own to be a special kind, namely one that is valid of objects merely as appearances),¹⁰ so that one could say that certain products of nature, as far as their possibility is concerned, **must**, given the particular constitution of our understanding, **be considered by us** as intentional and generated as ends, yet without thereby demanding that there actually is a particular cause that has the representation of an end as its determining ground, and thus without denying that another (higher) understanding than the human one might be able to find the ground of the possibility of such products of nature even in the mechanism of nature, i.e., in a causal connection for which an understanding does not have to be exclusively assumed as a cause.

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What is at issue here is thus the relation of **our** understanding to the power of judgment, the fact, namely, that we have to seek a certain contingency in the constitution of our understanding in order to notice this as a special character of our understanding in distinction from other possible ones.

This contingency is quite naturally found in the **particular**, which the power of judgment is to subsume under the **universal** of the concepts of the understanding; for through the universal of **our** (human) understanding the particular is not determined, and it is contingent in how many different ways distinct things that nevertheless coincide in a common characteristic can be presented to our perception. Our understanding is a faculty of concepts, i.e., a discursive understanding, for which it must of course be contingent what and how different might be the particular that can be given to it in nature and brought under its concepts. But since intuition also belongs to cognition, and a faculty of a **complete spontaneity of intuition** would be a cognitive faculty distinct and completely independent from sensibility,

and thus an understanding in the most general sense of the term, one can thus also conceive of an **intuitive** understanding (negatively, namely merely as not discursive),^a which does not go from the universal to the particular and thus to the individual (through concepts), and for which that contingency of the agreement of nature in its products in accordance with **particular** laws for the understanding, which makes it so difficult for ours to bring the manifold of these^b to the unity of cognition, is not encountered – a job that our understanding can accomplish only through the correspondence of natural characteristics with our faculty of concepts, which is quite contingent, but which an intuitive understanding would not need.

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Our understanding thus has this peculiarity for the power of judgment, that in cognition by means of it the particular is not determined by the universal, and the latter therefore cannot be derived from the former alone; but nevertheless this particular in the manifold of nature should agree with the universal (through concepts and laws), which agreement under such circumstances must be quite contingent and without a determinate principle for the power of judgment.

Nevertheless, in order for us to be able at least to conceive of the possibility of such an agreement of the things of nature with the power of judgment (which we represent as contingent, hence as possible only through an end aimed at it), we must at the same time conceive of another understanding, in relation to which, and indeed prior to any end attributed to it, we can represent that agreement of natural laws with our power of judgment, which for our understanding is conceivable only through ends as the means of connection, as **necessary**.

Our understanding, namely, has the property that in its cognition, e.g., of the cause of a product, it must go from the **analytical universal** (of concepts) to the particular (of the given empirical intuition), in which it determines nothing with regard to the manifoldness of the latter, but must expect this determination for the power of judgment from the subsumption of the empirical intuition (when the object is a product of nature) under the concept. Now, however, we can also conceive of an understanding which, since it is not discursive like ours but is intuitive, goes from the **synthetically universal** (of the intuition of a whole as such) to the particular, i.e., from the whole to the parts, in which, therefore, and in whose representation of the whole, there is **no contingency** in the combination of the parts, in order to make possible a determinate form of the whole, which is needed by our understanding, which must progress from the parts, as universally con-

^a The words contained in the parentheses were added in the second edition.

^b *derselben*; this could refer back to any of “nature,” “its products,” or its “particular laws.”

ceived grounds, to the different possible forms, as consequences, that can be subsumed under it. In accordance with the constitution of our understanding, by contrast, a real whole of nature is to be regarded only as the effect of the concurrent moving forces of the parts. Thus if we would not represent the possibility of the whole as depending upon the parts, as is appropriate for our discursive understanding, but would rather, after the model of the intuitive (archetypal)^a understanding, represent the possibility of the parts (as far as both their constitution and their combination is concerned) as depending upon the whole, then, given the very same special characteristic of our understanding, this cannot come about by the whole being the ground of the possibility of the connection of the parts (which would be a contradiction in the discursive kind of cognition), but only by the **representation** of a whole containing the ground of the possibility of its form and of the connection of parts that belongs to that. But now since the whole would in that case be an effect (**product**) the **representation** of which would be regarded as the **cause** of its possibility, but the product of a cause whose determining ground is merely the representation of its effect is called an end, it follows that it is merely a consequence of the particular constitution of our understanding that we represent products of nature as possible only in accordance with another kind of causality than that of the natural laws of matter, namely only in accordance with that of ends and final causes, and that this principle does not pertain to the possibility of such things themselves (even considered as phenomena) in accordance with this sort of generation, but pertains only to the judging^b of them that is possible for our understanding. From this we at the same time understand why in natural science we are far from being satisfied with an explanation of the products of nature by means of causality in accordance with ends, since here we are required to judge^c the generation of nature as is appropriate for our faculty for judging^d them, i.e., the power of reflecting judgment, and not according to the things themselves as is appropriate for the determining power of judgment. And further, it is not at all necessary here to prove that such an *intellectus archetypus* is possible, but only that in the contrast of it with our discursive, image-dependent understanding (*intellectus ectypus*) and the contingency of such a constitution we are led to that idea (of an *intellectus archetypus*), and that this does not contain any contradiction.

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Now if we consider a material whole, as far as its form is concerned,

^a *urbildlich*

^b *Beurtheilung*

^c *beurtheilen*

^d *beurtheilen*

5: 409 as a product of the parts and of their forces and their capacity to combine by themselves (including as parts other materials that they add to themselves), we represent a mechanical kind of generation. But from this there arises no concept of a whole as an end, whose internal possibility presupposes throughout the idea of a whole on which even the constitution and mode of action of the parts depends, which is just how we must represent an organized body. But from this, as has just been shown, it does not follow that the mechanical generation of such a body is impossible; for that would be to say the same as that it is impossible (i.e., self-contradictory) to represent such a unity in the connection of the manifold **for every understanding** without the idea of that connection being at the same time its generating cause, i.e., without intentional production. Nevertheless, this would in fact follow if we were justified in regarding material beings as things in themselves. For then the unity that constitutes the ground of the possibility of natural formations would be merely the unity of space, which is however no real ground of generatings but only their formal condition; although it has some similarity to the real ground that we seek in that in it no part can be determined except in relation to the whole (the representation of which is thus the basis of the possibility of the parts).¹¹ But since it is still at least possible to consider the material world as a mere appearance, and to conceive of something as a thing in itself (which is not an appearance) as substratum, and to correlate with this a corresponding intellectual intuition (even if it is not ours), there would then be a supersensible real ground for nature, although it is unknowable for us, to which we ourselves belong, and in which that which is necessary in it as object of the senses can be considered in accordance with mechanical laws, while the agreement and unity of the particular laws and corresponding forms, which in regard to the mechanical laws we must judge^a as contingent, can at the same time be considered in it, as object of reason (indeed the whole of nature as a system) in accordance with teleological laws, and the material world would thus be judged in accordance with two kinds of principles, without the mechanical mode of explanation being excluded by the teleological mode, as if they contradicted each other.

From this we may also understand what we could otherwise easily suspect but only with difficulty assert as certain and prove, namely, that the principle of a mechanical derivation of purposive products of nature could of course subsist alongside the teleological principle, but could by no means make the latter dispensable; i.e., one could investigate all the thus far known and yet to be discovered laws of mechanical gener-

^a *beurtheilen*

ation in a thing that we must judge^a as an end of nature, and even hope to make good progress in this, without the appeal to a quite distinct generating ground for the possibility of such a product, namely that of causality through ends, ever being canceled out; and absolutely no human reason (or even any finite reason that is similar to ours in quality, no matter how much it exceeds it in degree) can ever hope to understand the generation of even a little blade of grass from merely mechanical causes. For if the teleological connection of causes and effects is entirely indispensable for the possibility of such an object for the power of judgment, even merely for studying it with the guidance of experience; if for outer objects, as appearances, a sufficient ground related to causes cannot even be found, but this, which also lies in nature, must still be sought only in its supersensible substratum, from all possible insight into which we are cut off: then it is absolutely impossible for us to draw from nature itself any explanatory grounds for purposive connections, and in accordance with the constitution of the human cognitive faculty it is necessary to seek the highest ground of such connections in an original understanding as cause of the world.

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§ 78.

On the unification of the principle of the universal mechanism of matter with the teleological principle in the technique of nature.

It is of infinite importance to reason that it not allow the mechanism of nature in its productions to drop out of sight and be bypassed in its explanations; for without this no insight into the nature of things can be attained. As soon as it is granted to us that a highest architect immediately created the forms of nature as they have always existed or has predetermined those which in their course are continuously formed in accordance with one and the same model, our cognition of nature is not thereby in the least advanced, because we do not know the mode of action of such a being and the ideas which should contain the principles of the possibility of natural beings at all, and we cannot explain nature from that being as if from above (*a priori*). But if, in order to explain the forms of the objects of experience from below (*a posteriori*), we appeal from them to a cause acting in accordance with ends because we believe that we find purposiveness in these forms, then our explanation would be entirely tautological, and reason would be deceived with words, not to mention that where we stray into excess with this sort of explanation, where knowledge of nature cannot follow

^a *beurtheilen*