

BOOK SYMPOSIUM

Hannah Ginsborg, *The Normativity of Nature: Essays on Kant's Critique of Judgement*, Oxford: OUP, 2015.
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Synopsis

Hannah Ginsborg

The fourteen essays in this book deal with a variety of interpretive and philosophical issues raised by the *Critique of Judgement*.¹ While each essay addresses a particular topic of discussion associated with Kant's aesthetics, theory of cognition, or philosophy of biology, the essays collectively are animated by two overarching aims. The first is to offer a reading of the third *Critique* which presents it as a unified philosophical work and, more specifically, as one which deserves its title: that is, as concerned not just with two particular forms of judgement, aesthetic and teleological, but about our capacity to judge in a more general sense. Kant thinks of the faculty of judgement as a fundamental faculty of the mind, on a par with understanding (the focus of the first *Critique*) and reason (the focus of the second), and the essays aim to show how Kant's treatment of the seemingly peripheral areas of aesthetics and teleology can be seen as having the central philosophical significance suggested by the idea of a 'critique of judgement'.

The other aim is to develop what I take to be an important philosophical insight of the third *Critique*, which is of relevance both to Kant's broader theory of cognition and to contemporary discussions in epistemology, philosophy of perception, and theory of meaning. This is that we have a basic capacity—we might also say entitlement—to regard our natural perceptual and imaginative responses to the objects around us, not merely as caused by those objects, but as appropriate to them, or as standing to them in a relation of normative fit. This capacity is basic or primitive in the sense that its exercise does not depend on any antecedent grasp of a rule which determines how we ought to respond to a given object. Our recognition of the appropriateness of our responses does not depend on the thought that they amount to true or warranted judgements, in which we correctly subsume an object under an antecedently possessed concept. Rather, as I understand Kant's insight, it is part of what makes our grasp of concepts possible.

These two aims are related in that I identify the faculty of judgement—which Kant defines as the 'capacity for thinking the particular as contained under the universal'

1 All quotations from and references to Kant's texts are followed by a citation to Immanuel Kant, *Kants Werke* (Berlin: Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1902).

(5: 179)—with the capacity for the primitive recognition of the appropriateness of our responses to the world. Judgement, at least in its paradigmatic aspect as ‘reflecting’ rather than ‘determining’, brings particulars under universals in the sense that it allows us to think individual objects as having general features which are shared in common with other objects. But it does so by allowing us to ‘think the particular ... under the universal’ in a more fundamental sense, that of regarding our responses to objects as appropriate to those objects, and hence as ‘universally valid’ in the sense that everyone ought to share them. It is our possession of judgement which, at the most fundamental level, distinguishes us from non-human animals. While both human and non-human animals are capable of responding discriminatively to objects in their environment, and thus of registering the presence of general features of those objects, it is only in humans that these responses involve a normative claim to their appropriateness with respect to the objects which occasion them, and hence amount to the subsumption of those objects under empirical concepts—that is to say, to the making of empirical judgements about them.

The five essays in the first part of the book, dealing primarily with Kant’s aesthetics, defend an interpretation of pure judgements of beauty as paradigmatic exercises of the faculty of judgement: more precisely, exercises which reveal the primitive character of the normativity characteristic of that faculty. To make a pure judgement of beauty is to respond imaginatively to an object in a way which is informed by the attitude that one is responding to the object as one ought—that is, that one is responding appropriately to the object—without that attitude’s either depending on, or engendering, the subsumption of the object under a determinate concept. I offer this interpretation in contrast to the traditional view of pure judgements of beauty as based on a pre-existing feeling of pleasure for which the subject makes a claim to universal agreement. On the most detailed elaboration of this view, offered by Paul Guyer, a judgement of beauty involves two distinct acts of reflective judgement: one, the so-called free play of the faculties, giving rise to the pleasure, and the second reflecting on that pleasure in such a way as to give rise to the judgement that all perceivers of the object should feel it. I argue against this view on textual grounds, claiming instead that the judgement of beauty involves a single self-referential act of judgement which claims its own universal validity with respect to the object. When Kant writes of imagination and understanding as being in ‘free play’, it is that non-conceptually based act of judging to which he is referring, and to engage in such an act of judgement, I argue, is to feel a certain kind of pleasure in it—specifically the disinterested pleasure characteristic of taste.

The main lines of this interpretation are developed in essays 2 and 3, but essay 4 offers some further defence of the view through a discussion of Henry Allison’s account of judgements of beauty. In addition, a key presupposition of my approach is defended in essay 1, where I argue against Karl Ameriks’s revisionist interpretation of the judgement of beauty as objective. On my reading, it is precisely Kant’s idea of a judgement that is *not* objective, yet nonetheless able to claim universal validity, which is responsible for the deep philosophical interest of Kant’s theory of taste. This is something I try to bring

out in essay 5 by connecting Kant's views on taste with Wittgenstein's rule-following considerations.

The four essays in the second part of the book focus more directly on the implications of the third *Critique* for the understanding of cognition. Essays 6 and 7 both argue that judgement in its reflective aspect plays an essential role in Kant's account of empirical concept-acquisition. Essay 6, chronologically the earliest in the collection, argues for a connection between aesthetic judgement and empirical conceptualization on the basis of Kant's discussion of the principle of nature's systematicity and of his distinction between judgements of perception and judgements of experience. In essay 7, written much later, I return to the role of judgement in empirical conceptualization by comparing Kant's answer to the question of how we acquire empirical concepts with the accounts offered by Locke, Berkeley, and Hume of our capacity to acquire general ideas. I argue against the claim, made by Béatrice Longuenesse and others, that the answer to Kant's question is to be found in the discussion of comparison, reflection, and abstraction in the *Logic*, proposing instead that we explain empirical conceptualization in terms of the third *Critique*'s faculty of judgement, understood as a primitive capacity to regard our imaginative responses to objects as normatively constrained. So understood, Kant's answer can be seen as a form of Humean dispositionalism with a 'normative twist': as on Hume's view, we come to bring objects under empirical concepts by acquiring dispositions to form certain imaginative associations in response to objects, but, in contrast to Hume's view, we take ourselves, in so doing, to be responding to the objects as we ought. This proposal is put to work in essay 8 to address a problem in contemporary philosophy about the possibility of a noncircular account of concept-acquisition. If we are to acquire the concept *F* from a perceptual experience it would seem that the experience must present the object *as being F*. But how can we perceive an object as being *F* if we do not antecedently possess the concept *F*? I raise a difficulty for the solution offered by Christopher Peacocke, proposing instead that we appeal for an answer to what I call 'perceptual normativity'—a special case of the 'primitive normativity' characteristic of the faculty of judgement.

My interpretation of Kant up to this point is open to the objection that it gives the third *Critique* more of a role in Kant's theory of cognition than is warranted. Has not the first *Critique* already accounted for the possibility of experience, and so, a fortiori, of the capacity for empirical conceptualization which, on my view, distinguishes us from non-human animals? Essay 9 addresses that objection by arguing that the role of the third *Critique* is to account for the possibility of cognition from a perspective which, unlike that of the first *Critique*, takes into account the fact that the subjects of cognition are empirically determinate human beings located in the spatio-temporal world. If we take that fact seriously, then we have to recognize that the spontaneity of understanding which Kant ascribes to the *I* of apperception must not only play a role in constituting the world of appearances, but also itself be realized in the world of appearances, as something which belongs to a human being. I argue that we can think of the faculty of judgement as the required empirical realization of transcendental spontaneity, that is, as the 'appearance of spontaneity'. What makes it possible for us, as human beings, to adopt the standpoint of the *I* of apperception is that we are capable of responding to the objects

around us not merely causally, but in a way which involves a claim to the normativity of those very responses.

The five essays in the final section of the book are concerned with Kant's account of biological teleology in the third *Critique* and its relation to Kant's aesthetics and theory of cognition. The focus of these essays is the notion of purposiveness, which Kant sees as standing in intimate connection to the faculty of judgement. Essay 10 interprets the notion of purposiveness in terms of that of normativity, arguing more specifically that an aesthetic judgement and a judgement of biological teleology (e.g. that the eye is meant for seeing) are related in that both involve the ascription of an 'ought' which does not involve the antecedent recognition of a rule or principle specifying how things ought to be. In the aesthetic case, I take myself to be judging the object as I ought to judge it, and, in the teleological case, I take the object itself to be the way it ought to be, but in neither case is there a requirement that I antecedently conceive of some specific way that either my judging, or the object, ought to be. Essay 11 uses this interpretation of purposiveness as normativity to explain both why Kant thinks that organisms have to be understood in teleological terms (in spite of his denial that we should appeal to purposes to explain their origin), and how our thinking of them teleologically is compatible with our thinking of them as natural. Essay 12, which aims to clarify Kant's notion of mechanical explanation and to draw a parallel between the structure of his view and that of Aristotle, suggests reasons for holding that Kant's commitment to a teleological understanding is not undermined either by the advent of molecular biology or by the Darwinian revolution. In order for there to be an autonomous science of biology, I suggest, we have to think of events and processes in living things as governed by norms. But this does not commit us either to vitalism or to any non-Darwinian view about how organisms came to be the way they are.

How does what I described as Kant's important insight about cognition—that we have a primitive capacity or entitlement to think of our responses to the world not merely as caused by the objects around us, but as appropriate to them—relate to his views about biological teleology? I argue in essay 13 that he sees this insight as removing a conceptual obstacle to conceiving nature in teleological—that is, on my interpretation, normative—terms. If it is granted that we can regard our own perceptual and imaginative responses to objects not only as processes in the natural world, but also as exemplifying norms, then the way is opened, if the need arises, to think of other natural processes too as normatively governed. In other words, our primitive entitlement to think of nature within us as normative can be extended, at least in principle, to nature outside us. I suggest that this reverses the relation that is sometimes thought to hold—for example by Fred Dretske and Ruth Millikan—between natural teleology and the representational character of mind. On the view I ascribe to Kant, our capacity to have representations with intentional content is more basic than, and explains, our entitlement to view nature as teleological. Essay 14 suggests that we can apply Kant's argumentative strategy to make sense of the notion of function in biology, by simply identifying the function of a biological entity as what it should, or ought to, do. The search for naturalistic accounts of the notion of function has been motivated by qualms about the application of normative or teleological concepts to natural phenomena. But if Kant is right about our entitlement

to take a normative attitude to the natural functioning of our own cognitive capacities, then we need have no worries in principle about the ascription of normative concepts to nature, and there turns out to be no need to seek a non-normative substitute for our everyday notion of a function.

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Ginsborg, Nature, and Normativity

Karl Ameriks

This is an appreciative critical comment on Hannah Ginsborg's book, The Normativity of Nature. The comment expresses agreement with the book's general theme that normativity is a broad feature of human experience that cannot be explained by attention to prior rules, but it also suggests that this view may be compatible with some ideas that Kant has with respect to what can be regarded as objectively aesthetic features of nature.

I

Hannah Ginsborg's *The Normativity of Nature* is a tour de force and arguably the most philosophically stimulating book written on Kant's third *Critique*, even though it deals with only select portions of the text. The book is divided into three parts: aesthetics, cognition, and teleology. The first and third parts correspond, in turn, to the well-known first sections of Kant's account of pure judgements of taste (which will be my primary focus) and then the sections in the latter half of the *Critique* that contrast judgements concerning organisms with those concerning either artifacts or broadly mechanical features of nature. The book's second part is also oriented largely toward Kant's treatment of taste, but it places extra emphasis on how his conception of reflective judgement is relevant to contemporary understandings of the content and role of empirical concepts in perception in general.

A point that is stressed in almost every one of the essays is that Kant should be read as enlightening us in general about not only the normativity of nature, but also the *nature of normativity*—or at least about one species of a very important and relatively neglected instance of self-generated normativity. This is what Ginsborg argues for as the 'primitive' normativity (129) of taking *as appropriate* one's own *immediate* responses in sorting out matters with which one is confronted—so that one can, for example, understandably come to acquire a simple empirical concept without *antecedently* making use of that concept (77, 185). Despite what it might have seemed to some, I am (and have long been) wholly on board with this general quasi-Wittgensteinian approach to what has often been called the problem of 'rule-following', and I agree that it has a wide-ranging and fundamental significance, one bearing on all the topics of Kant's third *Critique*.¹ The main idea here is that one can be said to be *governed* by a rule or concept, as one *initially* goes about the process of learning how to organize various materials (e.g. sorting pieces of chalk together with stones rather than cottage cheese) without being first *guided* by *that* rule (162), that is, having it already in view and deducing results from it. This point is related to Kant's basic distinction between determinative and reflective judgement. A determinative judgement deduces something about

1 See, for example, my *Interpreting Kant's Critiques* (Oxford: OUP, 2003), 299; and 'Recent Work on Wittgenstein and the Philosophy of Mind', *New Scholasticism* 49 (1975), 94–118.

particulars from what one already knows about a relevant universal, whereas reflective *judging* is a *process* of moving from particulars—originally in a context of normal perception—to the discovery of a relevant universal, such as a concept, explicit rule, or kind term.

Characterizing this approach properly involves a lot of tightrope walking. One constantly needs to avoid, on the one hand, the assumption that nature, *all by itself*, is magically normative in the sense of traditional dogmatic teleology, as well as, on the other hand, the relativistic view that what we call normativity is simply a *fact* of arbitrary and merely individual imposition. With respect to the first worry, the very phrase ‘normativity of nature’ might seem to encourage a position that can be called ‘bald naturalism’, that is, the presumption that we can account for apparently norm-governed phenomena, and in particular for our fundamental practices of judgement, by relying *merely* on scientific or ordinary *causal* accounts of perceptual sensitivity, discrimination, and behavioural response. In fact, in some of her earliest essays, I was subjected to some criticism by Ginsborg for seeming to suggest such an account myself in aesthetic contexts (20)—but I hope it has become clear more recently that this was not my intention, and that I agree with her that we cannot understand such contexts apart from the use of some kind of normative notions such as ‘apt’ and ‘normal’.³ More generally, as Ginsborg points out in a Kantian spirit, a *merely* causal approach would never be enough to account for the distinctive human capacity to judge at all, for this involves a basic appreciation of what it is to go on *properly* (and hence, in principle, sometimes possibly improperly too) whether or not one’s claims are veridical or in fact accepted by others. In the end, although Ginsborg also makes the substantive and controversial claim that the notion of the normativity of nature itself rests on ‘oughts without intentions’ (the title of her challenging concluding essay), this is a claim that is still being made from the stance of our reflective judgement. In a sense, then, it is always an exercise of our own normative judgemental capacity that underlies the normative characterization of what is outside us.

There is, however, a significant twist to this Kantian sounding story because Ginsborg also stresses that our very capacity to make these crucial claims relies on the appropriateness of our ‘shared reactive propensities’ (127), and thus it is dependent on the fact that for human beings there is a kind of regular and proper functioning made possible by factors that lie deeper than what ordinarily is understood by the intellectual term ‘judgement’. I take this functioning to require more than what, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant calls a transcendental ‘affinity’ (A 122) in what is given to us, that is, an *outer* environment with a minimal orderliness that at least excludes a chaos of data undermining the possibility of making any use of our capacity for apperception. What is also required is a kind of affinity *within*, a minimal harmony in our own capacities for taking up matters, so that as subjects as well we are not chaotically undermined from the very start.

In fact, we all must presuppose, at the least, not only a minimal internal as well as external harmony, but also some kind of minimal matching of these harmonies.² That is, I take it that the primitive subjective orderliness within our mind’s basic reflective capacities is something that Ginsborg allows to be regarded as embedded in nature in a

2 Ginsborg says imagination ‘is appropriate to these objects [which are given to us], and these objects are appropriate to it ... nature stands in a relation of mutual appropriateness to our faculties’ (84, n. 48).

broad sense—presumably in the fact that, as spatiotemporal beings, we have a distinctively endowed material species nature that allows us *all* to emerge at some early point in our lives with the ability to function effectively with at least a child-like intelligence. And yet, Ginsborg argues, there are no *sciences* of the ‘bare’ material world alone that could explain this capacity *non-circularly*, that is, without already taking for granted the proper functioning of any mind that could begin to construct anything like a science of matter.

In sum, I read at least a threefold lesson into the title ‘normativity of nature’: first, a reassurance that talk of the normativity of nature in familiar objects *outside* us is not to be reduced away, not an illicit projection; second, a transcendental argument that although this normativity is truly there, it nonetheless comes out, so to speak, only *through* the proper functioning of human subjectivity; and then, third, an implicit presumption that the instantiation of this normative subjectivity is not grounded in theistic metaphysics—as on Alvin Plantinga’s argument that explanatory naturalism requires attributions of design that make sense only when backed by reference to the intentions of a supernatural agent³—but remains ultimately a matter of nature itself, now in a broad sense that includes objects *and* subjects together, somehow, mysteriously encompassing and working ‘properly’ only through us.⁴

Here, what I would like to mischievously add is not any further reference to Plantingianism, let alone Thomism or even its embroiled new New York cousin, Thomas-Nagelianism, but just one complication coming from what I take to be Kant’s most radical thoughts near the end of the third *Critique*. We need to keep in mind that Kant grew up in an extraordinarily teleological environment, one in which for a long time he, like almost all other thinkers then—including British and Leibnizian scientists and not just scholastic apologists and metaphysicians—presumed there is an evident teleological structure to the world, whether or not this has to be accompanied by the thought of a separate divinity with special powers of intervention. By the time of his critical period, however, Kant was deeply influenced by Hume, that is, not by Hume’s general scepticism but very much by his specific challenges to popular arguments concerning design and the purposiveness of the universe as a whole. The long strategy of the third *Critique* is to lay out in detail the seemingly inescapable formal and material modes of purposive thinking that dominate our aesthetic and biological conceptions of nature, while in the end also sceptically stressing the point that, if we do not have any recourse to a pure practical perspective and the transcendental idealism underlying it, then we have to be ready to back off from *knowing any* claims of ‘objective’ teleology. In particular, Kant ultimately argues, from the perspective of theoretical knowledge alone, we must concede that, however complex the

3 Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism* (Oxford: OUP, 2011); Thomas Nagel, *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature is Almost Certainly False* (Oxford: OUP, 2012).

4 At one point, Ginsborg identifies Kant’s transcendental I and the *human* subject (206), whereas I would rather say that these can *overlap* in specific instances, but there is not an *absolute* (transworld) identity because Kant wants to leave philosophical room for the transcendental I to be able to be instantiated in other contexts. Similarly, whereas Ginsborg repeatedly speaks of an ‘identity’ (123) of aesthetic judgement and feeling, I believe it is more precise to speak of an overlap, where feeling has to do just with the ‘phenomenological’ (39) result of an act that has an intellectual side that cannot be defined in terms of mere feeling.

luxuriant growth of *Kraut* and the constructions of clever beavers may appear, and however practically irreplaceable our ‘regulative’ and organic judgemental tendencies about them remain, this complexity might ultimately be due simply to *broadly mechanical* processes (even if carried out by a kind of super-architect), albeit ones that human minds are too feeble ever to be able to comprehend.⁵

Here my guess is that Ginsborg’s overall reaction to Kant’s third *Critique* is somewhat like Strawson’s reaction to the second *Critique*. That is, perhaps she believes that even without recourse to any orthodox transcendental or theistic metaphysics—although perhaps with the hidden cushion of commitment to some kind of opaque and optimistic transcendental materialism—we can and will always *remain* properly confident in our primitive *normative* reflective responses—just as P. F. Strawson believed, contrary to what Kant himself suggests, that we can and will remain confident in our basic practical ‘reactive’ attitudes (e.g. resentment) even without recourse to, or embattlement with, orthodox libertarian doctrines of human agency.⁶ But—I cannot help point out, and it appears that Patricia Kitcher agrees⁷—after Darwin, Nietzsche, Quine, and others, many philosophers might wonder if here we are not just struggling schizophrenically to prop up comfortable illusions that will disappear as our conception of ‘mind and its place in nature’ advances, just as animism and dogmatic theology have lost their lustre in most quarters in recent centuries. And yet—I also cannot help but point out—if one could only maintain strong orthodox Kantian metaphysical commitments—which admittedly are themselves quite controversial—then at least one would not have to worry that, even with the growing popularity of naturalistic philosophies, the notion of nature’s normativity must face an ever-diminishing half-life.

II

So much for initial overview and provocation; now I wish to engage with some more specific points of basic agreement and possible difference relevant to the old disputed issue of how to characterize Kantian taste. The most fundamental assumption, perhaps, in Ginsborg’s work is a point that I have also always deeply agreed with, which is that, despite Kant’s primary focus on the issue of pure concepts, he also needs to say something about the fundamental philosophical issue of *empirical* concepts—and yet most of what he says on this topic is put off until the third *Critique*, and even then Kant’s general views are not easy to dredge out because they are buried under all the particular points that arise in the specific contexts of aesthetic and organic phenomena. As Ginsborg notes, Kant tends to speak as if it is quite easy to account for empirical concepts, in contrast to pure ones, and yet the fact is that all modern philosophers have quite a problem with providing an account of the acquisition of empirical concepts, and it would be especially odd to presume that, as a revolutionary transcendentalist, Kant can simply build on earlier approaches (150).

5 See Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, 5: 464 n.; and my *Kant’s Elliptical Path* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 244–245.

6 P. F. Strawson, ‘Freedom and Resentment’, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 48 (1962), 1–25.

7 See Patricia Kitcher’s online review of Ginsborg, *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews* (published online 25 October 2016) <<http://ndpr.nd.edu/news/61821-the-normativity-of-nature-essays-on-kant-s-critique-of-judgement/>> (accessed 29 December 2016).

It is striking that is only in the third *Critique* that Kant finally focuses at least a bit on our perception of empirical particulars—saying, for example, that we actually perceive grass as green (5: 224)—as well as on the sensory faculty of feeling as such, in contrast to the other basic faculties of intellect and will. Moreover, Kant’s treatment of these issues is very much in flux, as is especially clear from his incautious statement in the first edition of the first *Critique* that there cannot even be a pure component of taste (A 21 n. a)—a statement that Kant had to sharply modify by the end of the decade, along with some other significant changes he made in the hectic 1780s, even while retaining the fundamentals of his transcendental philosophy.

Taking as my cue, then, the thought that, contrary to what one might initially suppose, there is an unsettled and underdeveloped character to Kant’s treatment of something as simple and basic as judgements of perception, I will now focus on an obscure but important passage that Ginsborg cites twice (18, 140), and that, on my view, reveals that Kant should have developed a more *explicitly complex* multilevel account than he did. Sorting out the basic levels *implicitly* involved here can be a useful first step in resolving some puzzles that have arisen concerning how best to characterize the subjective and objective aspects of Kant’s account of pure judgements of beauty regarding nature. The passage appears in *Reflexionen* R3145 (16: 678–679), from around 1790, as well as the *Jäsche Logic* (9: 113):

I who perceive a tower, perceive the red colour on it. But I cannot say: it is red, for that would not be an empirical judgement, but also a judgement of experience, i.e. an empirical judgement through which I first conceive of the object. E.g. ‘In touching the stone, I feel warmth’ is the first, but ‘the stone is warm’ is the second. It belongs to the latter that I do not ascribe to the object that which is merely in my subject; for a judgement of experience is that in which a concept of the object arises.⁸

The first main point to notice here is Kant’s tendency to oversimplify matters by seeming to simply contrast claims about what an ‘object’ ‘is’—for example, its allegedly *being* red, with what, as he says here, ‘is merely in my subject’. This is an oversimplification because it masks the fact that, even at a merely empirical level, Kant’s own theory by this time had begun to work with what is a basic *threefold* rather than *twofold* distinction. This is because, as is clear from the *Prolegomena* (4: 289) and B Deduction, Kant realizes that there is a need to distinguish a judgement of experience not only from what is merely subjective in an absolutely sensory and individual subjective sense, but also from what he usually calls a ‘judgement of perception’ (although in the *Logic* passage it is called an ‘empirical judgment’).

The striking thing about this kind of judgement is its *in between* status (cf. Ginsborg, ‘middle ground’, 182 n. 37). It is not a mere sensory state, with no cognitive or intersubjective structure at all, even though it does not have the categorical determinativeness and ultimately scientifically backed status of a paradigmatic judgement of experience. In the first *Critique*’s B Deduction (B 142), Kant uses the contrast between something’s ‘feeling heavy’ and its ‘having weight’ as a way to mark the perception-and-appearance vs. experience-and-in-the-object contrast, which parallels the contrast the *Logic* passage

8 Ginsborg’s translation, with her added quotation marks.

draws between something's giving a feeling of warmth and its being warm. Here it is significant that even in this passage, and despite the talk of what is 'merely in my subject', the perception context is described in partially objective terms.

The example focuses on what happens when one 'touches the stone' (cf. judging colour 'on' a tower), that is, when one really does perceive something (albeit in a fallible sense). This kind of awareness, which is explicitly characterized as a kind of 'judgement', cannot be reduced simply to a fleeting, private, individual, and totally subjective fact, as a matter of a particular subject just having one sensation after another, or even an association of mere sensations—even though of course the having of such sensations is something that is also relevant and part of perception. What all the examples of redness, warmth, and heaviness illustrate is a common *way* that in normal contexts actual objects regularly *appear to normal* human beings as such, that is, with these features 'on' them.

All this implies that (although he is not always clear about it) Kant does acknowledge an in between, truly phenomenological and intentional level of *common* appearances, one that contrasts, as Husserl relentlessly reiterated, *both* with what is fleeting and simply private, and with what is permanent and fundamental in an explanatory empirical sense. The stability and universality of this manifest image character of the human perceptual life-world—how it *normally appears* (in non-visual as well as visual 'looks') in general, and not how it *merely seems* to be on occasion⁹—has a rich conceptual and judgemental structure, even though it is not at the same level as what Kant calls the determination of phenomena through categories and laws. But it is also not a matter of what is literally and merely 'in *my* subject', in the way that a mere brute feeling can be, that is to say, the kind of not genuinely cognitive sensation that, for Ginsborg as well (188), exhausts the mental life of mere brutes. This level of the normal appearances of objects of 'observation' also explains why, in an example that Ginsborg herself invokes (141 n. 8), we can *correct* blind people with respect to the red appearance of certain objects, and can do so without considering whether, at the level of judgements of experience, which can call upon the unseen theoretical structure of things, the objects in question actually match up with various wavelengths that can be referred to without perception of a coloured appearance. Similarly, we can say that, in a life-world sense, something yellowish can still be called 'gold', where we are just referring to its common apparent colour, even though at the level of theory, it might be said to lack the atomic weight essential to what we now mean by 'gold' as a kind of mineral element.

Philosophers who have followed earlier discussions of the question of whether Kantian judgements of pure taste can—despite his own undeniable *apparent* tendencies otherwise—be understood as in a sense objective rather than merely subjective, should by now be able to see where this point is leading. It is leading back to the idea that Kantian judgements of nature's beauty can most appropriately be taken as yet another example of a reference not to mere private sensations but to how the *appearances of objects* normally strike human beings in their direct perception, whatever the inner character of the 'being' of those objects may be in the deeper sense that Kant reserves for the law-like determinate

9 In German one might mark this contrast with the terms *Erscheinung* and *Schein*.

nature of things. (Sometimes, as with the notion of thoroughly pink ice cubes, there might be a close relation between these levels.)

And here we finally come to a point where Ginsborg might disagree with the kind of approach that I am proposing, because she wants to emphasize the feature of the ‘autonomy’ of Kantian taste, the fact that it is, as he says, a matter of what ‘my tongue’ feels (27, citing 5: 285), and not what other authorities or old books or surveys might say. I agree from the start that Kant likes to talk this way, and there is some point to it, and that one can *stipulate* that by the content of ‘perception’ in general one can mean the immediate particular feeling that one has *as an individual and nothing more*. But I would immediately add that it would be unfortunate to think that this is the only way that the aesthetic import of a Kantian judgement of taste should be construed. For, insofar as such judgements of taste are being taken to be *appropriate*, this is most naturally understood not as a matter of mere private feeling or attitude in one subject but rather as based in a healthy ‘common sense’ (*Gemeinsinn*) attuned to how *normal* human beings in general should be ready to react to the public appearance of a relevant object—and in particular in view of its *perceived harmonious form*,¹⁰ which, as in Kant’s philosophy in general, has a kind of content (here, beautiful rather than not beautiful) that is independent of its particular matter.¹¹ This remains true whatever indescribable ‘phenomenal specificity’ different individuals may have in their sensations (125), and however that object might be ultimately determined in its inner empirical being. As Kant says, ‘the reality of the beauties of nature is open’ to us (5: 291)—and it is only when this reality is understood as at least a *sign* of connection with something general, a positive excess actually given to us, that it can have the special teleological significance that is the underlying point of Kant’s third *Critique* as a whole.

There are passages in Ginsborg’s book where, despite elsewhere emphasizing what she calls the subjectivity of taste, she too says that in reflective judgement ‘I take there to be an irreducible harmony or fit between the object [and by this I take her to mean the normal appearing object of perception that I have been discussing] and the imaginative activity it elicits [in the judgment of taste]’ (89).¹² In the face of the complications that have just been reviewed, it would be interesting to know the reason why, above all, Ginsborg may nonetheless still want to resist allowing some objectivity to basic pure judgements of taste.

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10 See, for example, Kant, 5: 290, ‘judgement in regard to the formal’; cf. Ginsborg, ‘the form of the object is judged, through reflection, to be the ground of the pleasure’ (37, n. 16).

11 At times Ginsborg suggests that when Kant speaks of form, he is denying it all content (51); but in fact Kant’s main contrast is between form and matter, and he reserves (what we would call) significant content for the former while denying it for the latter.

12 Compare with: ‘the pleasure [of taste] can express nothing other than the conformity of the object to the cognitive faculties’ (90), and ‘I am aware of the object as making appropriate that way of perceiving’ (184).

The Topic of the Judgement of Beauty

Richard Moran

A short critical response to Hannah Ginsborg's book, The Normativity of Nature, in which I raise some questions about how to understand the idea that calling something beautiful is a form of praise of that thing.

The back cover of Hannah Ginsborg's book *The Normativity of Nature: Essays on Kant's Critique of Judgement* says:

Most philosophers have taken the importance of Kant's *Critique of Judgement* to lie primarily in its contributions to aesthetics and to the philosophy of biology. Hannah Ginsborg, however, sees the *Critique of Judgement* as representing a central contribution to the understanding of human cognition more generally.

This is certainly a just description of the distinctive ambitions of the book and what is exciting about the sophisticated interpretation Ginsborg gives of Kant's great text, but, as a philosopher with more grounding in aesthetic concerns than in Kant scholarship, I feel this description risks doing scant justice to Ginsborg's contribution to aesthetics itself. The appearance of Ginsborg's book bringing together these essays is particularly gratifying for me in that there is no writer on Kant from whom I have learned more about how Kant's third *Critique* matters to specifically aesthetic concerns. Her writings on this text have always stood out for me for their steadfast concern to be faithful to aesthetic experience and judgement, as well as for the systematic reading of the third *Critique* in the context of Kant's general theory of judgement. The issues I raise here will centre on the nature of the judgement of beauty and whether it is captured in the formulations Kant gives it, plus I raise some questions as to whether what I consider the proper understanding of this form of judgement is consistent with the wider role in the understanding of cognition generally that Kant gives to it on Ginsborg's reading.

For Kant, to call something beautiful [*schön*] as opposed to merely agreeable [*angenehm*] is to claim 'universal agreement' with one's judgement, even though the basis of one's judgement is a subjective feeling of pleasure and does not have the grounding in a concept that would enable one to prove or demonstrate the validity of one's judgement to others. I am in strong agreement with Ginsborg in her understanding this claim to universal agreement to be distinct from a mere prediction of similar responses in others and to express a kind of normative 'requirement' of such agreement. In calling something beautiful I do not only say that it is likely to be a cause of pleasure in others, but that it merits such a response of pleasure from all others (23). For Ginsborg, the judgement of beauty has a self-referential character that is part of the explanation of one of Kant's central claims that, while this judgement is subjective (being based on a feeling of pleasure) and lacks the backing of a concept for a cognitive justification, it may nonetheless claim 'universal validity':

For Kant, my awareness is not simply the awareness that the object merits a certain general kind of pleasure. Rather it is the awareness that the object merits a very specific feeling of pleasure: namely the very feeling of pleasure that I am experiencing now. (31)

For Kant the judgement of beauty is subjective in at least two senses. It is grounded in pleasure and unlike other feelings (perhaps sensations of heat or colour) pleasure ‘does not involve a representation being referred to an object’ (43). And further, the judgement of beauty involves the application of no concept to the object, which would normally be the ground of a judgement’s claim to objectivity and its status as a genuine cognition.

Nonetheless, on Ginsborg’s reading, the faculty of aesthetic judgement reveals to us a ‘primitive normativity’, a self-referring sense of appropriateness of our response that is the ground of its claim to universal validity. While it is aesthetic experience that reveals to us this ‘primitive normativity’, its discovery is not merely of aesthetic significance for it is in fact a necessary presupposition of any cognition whatsoever (115). Here Ginsborg makes good on Kant’s claim that the *Critique of Judgement* in some way completes the critical project itself, and is not simply a contribution to philosophical aesthetics (and teleological judgement). As she puts it in her ‘Introduction’:

Very briefly put, ... if cognition is to be possible, our natural perceptual and imaginative responses to the world must incorporate a primitive claim to their own normativity: a claim which, while legitimate, is not itself cognitive, and so does not admit of cognitive justification. ... The insight I ascribe to Kant is that, in responding as we do to the objects which affect our senses, we take—and are entitled to take—our responses to stand in a normative relation to those objects, and more specifically to be appropriate to them. (4)

In the context of cognition generally (and with particular reference to Wittgenstein on rule-following), it is this primitive normativity that makes for the difference between understanding our basic natural responses as ‘blind impulses’ and seeing them as including a tacit sense of their own ‘rightness’ or ‘appropriateness’:

If my interpretation of Kant’s conception of aesthetic judgement in section II is correct, then judgements of beauty have the same presumption of legitimacy which characterizes the claims implicit in the primitive reactions underlying our cognitive judgements. Because pleasure in an object’s beauty is the consciousness of the appropriateness of our imaginative response to the object, we have the same default entitlement to claim that all others ought to share our response to the object as we do in the case of our response to the pointing hand and the number series. And this is what I take to be the force of Kant’s argument for the possibility of taste. (130)

What the possibility of aesthetic judgement shows is that we can have a ‘default entitlement’ in both kinds of case to our sense of the validity or legitimacy of our response. With respect to the sense of ‘requirement’ or ‘meriting’, the only difference between the judgement of beauty and that of an ordinary empirical judgement ‘is that it is a feeling of pleasure, rather than the application of a concept, which we take to be required of those who perceive the object’ (114).

What this seems to show is that, on the Kantian account presented here, the normativity of the judgement of beauty is restricted to the primitive ‘rightness’ or ‘appropriateness’ of one’s *response* to the object and does not express any praise or admiration of the beautiful object itself. But, when a sunset or a painting is called beautiful, this is surely meant to express praise or admiration for the sunset or the painting itself, finding in *it* a form of excellence that we may lack the words or the concepts for. In saying that my response of pleasure (tenderness, awe, exhilaration) is *merited* by the sunset or the painting, I mean to be appealing to that which is admirable in the sunset or painting itself and saying that what I am responding to in it deserves the pleasure and admiration of anyone. This, in any case, is how I understand the claim to universal validity in the judgement of beauty, insofar as it is distinguished from a predictive claim about the responses of other people.

The ‘primitive normativity’ Ginsborg finds in aesthetic judgement is the same as that which is said to be part of the basis of ordinary empirical judgement, such as the application of the concept ‘dog’ to a particular creature or the continuation of a number series in a particular way (122). These are non-conceptual, natural responses but which carry within them an approval of themselves as appropriate in their circumstances. Once I have a concept of ‘dog’, I will approve of my synthesizing and reproducing activity which accords with the concept ‘dog’ and stands as a rule for how objects of that kind *should* be experienced. (And perhaps this self-approval contributes to the ‘self-maintaining’ of that mental activity with respect to the dog before me.) In the cognition of a dog, however, I am not approving of the dog itself, but only of the accord between my mental activity and how the object should be cognized. Unlike the judgement of beauty, there is no *praise* of the dog in my reflective consciousness of the correctness of my apprehension of it. We can see such responses as reflectively approving of themselves, but such normativity implies nothing in the way of approval or evaluative response with respect to the object of such a response. The same normativity (‘the same “ought”’) applies to ordinary cognitive judgement, anywhere there are standards of correctness for judgement, where there is no implication that the thing being judged is being approved of or found to be appropriate. But praise of the ‘rightness’ of the object itself *is* part of what it is to call something beautiful and I take this to be true even if a philosopher would urge an ‘error theory’ with respect to such judgements. My concern here is not the one she addresses to the effect that it may turn out on this view that anything at all may be judged beautiful (51), but rather that it fails to mark the difference between taking my own response to be ‘as it should be’ and approving of, praising the object I am responding to.

This may be a price that Ginsborg’s Kant is willing to pay, both in the interests of maintaining the wider connection with ‘primitive normativity’ in the understanding of judgement generally and in rigorously adhering to what is the *subjective*, non-cognitive and self-referring Kant’s account of the judgement of beauty:

Pleasure in the beautiful, as we have seen, does not consist for Kant in the awareness of an objective feature. But it does consist in an awareness of another kind. Specifically, it consists in a reflective awareness of its own appropriateness or legitimacy with respect to the object. (29)

But even if we want to deny that the judgement of beauty provides us with a proper *cognition* of the object, it still seems true that we should want the focus of such judgements to be on the *objects* that we find beautiful, to what in them is praiseworthy, to what in them merits the pleasure we feel in contemplating them.

It might also be thought that the specific normativity of aesthetic judgement is maintained by the special role of *pleasure* in distinguishing it from the ‘default entitlement’ we have to take our other responses to be appropriate to their objects. Ordinary concept application is not an expression of pleasure after all and pleasure (of some kind anyway) may be thought of the ground of a kind of approval of what is taken pleasure in. However, the Kantian definition of pleasure in general terms as a tendency of a state to maintain itself in a ‘consciousness of itself as appropriate to the object’ (121) makes such an appeal problematic, for that seems simply identical with the ‘default entitlement’ that lies at the basis of cognition generally, when this involves no approval of the object itself (or pleasure for that matter). And even with respect to something that *is* found beautiful, such as a cloud, one may take one’s response to it to be ‘right’ or ‘appropriate’ in a number of different ways that have nothing to do with its beauty, either with respect to the application of some concept (‘cirrus’) or some non-conceptual sense of rightness. Hence the ‘rightness’ that is relevant to aesthetic judgement would have to appeal to an independently understood sense of ‘appropriate with respect to the *beauty* of the object’ (121). On page 122, Ginsborg appeals to what is ‘irreducibly self-referential’ in the judgement of beauty, the fact that (as contrasted with applying the concept ‘dog’) there is no specific respect in which I claim the agreement of all others, but rather it is ‘this very response’ of mine for which I claim universal validity. I can see how this marks a crucial distinction between the consciousness of appropriateness in the two cases, but I’m not sure I see how this difference accounts for the specific role of pleasure in the case of the self-approval that is irreducibly self-referential and which is not present in the case where a specific *respect* of agreement can be appealed to. And, in any case, it seems that this understanding of pleasure would not provide a way to understand the difference between the approval of one’s own state and the admiration of the beautiful object as meriting one’s response of pleasure. I am still learning from Ginsborg’s work and I look forward to hearing how these qualms of mine are either misunderstandings or are answered in ways I haven’t yet seen and none which diminish my pleasure in, or admiration for, *The Normativity of Nature*.¹

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1 For discussions of Hannah Ginsborg’s book, I am grateful to Rachel Achs, Thomas Pendlebury, Jeremy Fix, Ewa Bigaj and Robbie Kubala.

Between Communicability and Common Sense

Eli Friedlander

In my commentary, I argue that Ginsborg's understanding of the primitive normativity in reflective aesthetic judgement should be broadened to account for further characterizations of the judgement of taste given in Kant's 'Analytic of the Beautiful'. In particular, I stress the distinction between the consideration of universal communicability, on which Ginsborg focuses, and Kant's account of common sense. Understanding how the latter notion has an equiprimordial place in the account of taste may allow us to see that aesthetic judgement is not inconsistent with conceptual articulation, as long as we properly distinguish what it means to have something fall under a concept and what it is to recognize something to exemplify a fitting place in what can become a systematically explicit space of concepts.

In the 'Introduction' to *The Normativity of Nature*, Hannah Ginsborg claims that one of the fundamental motivations of her exploration of Kant's aesthetics is to link it back to Kant's account of cognition. The topics she focuses on, as well as the passages she chooses to interpret, make clear that she is less preoccupied with moments of aesthetic judgement that lead and connect to, say, ideas of community that are of concern to Kant's moral philosophy. The assumption that implicitly underlies her approach is that the relation of judgement to cognition can be explored independently of its relation to morality. As I will try to argue, this aspect colours her understanding of what the demand of universality internal to aesthetic judgement comes to.

Ginsborg isolates a self-consciousness of primitive appropriateness in our imaginative presentation of an object, which is felt in our experience of beauty, and whose normative character is expressed by the demand for universal agreement. This structure is taken to be the essence of the reflective judgement. Pleasure in judgement is internally related to this primitive normativity without a concept, insofar as Kant's view allows establishing the identity between maintaining the state of the subject in relation to a representation and pleasure. Her view offers, as she puts it

a radical simplification of the generally accepted model of aesthetic experience and judgement ... it identifies the free play with the judgement of universal communicability collapsing pleasure, judgement and free play into a single state of mind which is both a feeling caused by, and a judgement about, the beautiful object. (6)

Ginsborg forcefully criticizes the two-stage model of aesthetic judgement that has been mostly advanced in Paul Guyer's influential reading of the third *Critique* (and was to some extent taken up in Henry Allison's, no less central, work). Her essay 2, which focuses on section 9, which Kant calls 'the key to the critique of taste', provides a powerful statement of an alternative reading. There is much force and elegance in the simplicity which

Ginsborg's account brings to the understanding of reflective judgement. Indeed, the sense of conviction it elicits is, in part at least, due to how it echoes with such simple pivotal moments in Kant's writing, as the synthetic unity of apperception or of the very form of law being the essence of moral self-consciousness.

This isolation of a simple core of reflective judgement also explains the focus of a number of essays and arguments in *The Normativity of Nature* on the Second Moment in Kant's 'Analytic of the Beautiful'. There nevertheless remains a question as to how we are to relate this core moment to other dimensions of Kant's analysis. I assume that these are not ordered hierarchically, but are in some sense equiprimordial moments of a complete grammar of taste. Thus notions such as disinterestedness, free play, harmony, or common sense, should all be taken to express aspects of reflective judgement that cohere with the universality of the judgement.

Ginsborg appropriately thickens her account of what is involved in the idea of an imaginative appropriate response, for instance in essay 3, as she relates it to the notion of the free play of the faculties. This further establishes a connection she seeks throughout between aesthetic judgement and Kant's treatment of the problem of the use of empirical concepts in cognition. In attempting to further account for the specific character of imaginative appropriateness, as well as to distinguish it from the correctness of an empirical cognition, Ginsborg turns to an analogy with ordinary or natural language. Importantly, language provides her with an example of a field in which we can speak of the production of judgements which are not determined by pre-existing rules, but are rather the expression of the life of those who partake in that language.

Ginsborg further takes exemplification to be central to the activity of the imagination in presenting that dimension of what pertains to our use of language, yet is not determined by *pre-existing* rules. In our mother tongue, as she puts it, 'the fact that I can discover a rule by consulting my own usage illustrates a more general reciprocity according to which each of us can in principle serve as an authority for the others' (77). I take it that this feature of exemplification is not just something that emerges in teaching and learning language, but rather pertains to the very character of ordinary language. But then, what is it that competent speakers of language can exemplify to each other? What is, as it were, lacking in our use of concepts that needs exemplification? There must be something revealing in this way of illuminating ordinary language that should match the significance that beauty has for us.

The alignment of the question of exemplifying ordinary language and Kant's account of aesthetic judgement has been an issue since Stanley Cavell's influential essay 'Aesthetic Problems of Moral Philosophy'.¹ Cavell takes the exemplification of our agreement in language as he sees it at play in Wittgenstein and Austin to be analogous to what Kant describes as speaking with a universal voice. But Cavell does not propose such an exemplification to be pointing to a dimension prior to language, but to the naturalness expressed in language. Similarly, for him, aesthetic judgement is most strikingly representative of

1 Stanley Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say: A Book of Essays*, updated edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 68–90.

the universal voice in what we call acts of criticism, rather than in a feeling of appropriateness. The fact that such exemplary judgement is expressed in language is showing that within language itself there is room for recognizing, and communicating to others, what is natural to us or, as Cavell would think of it, what is ordinary.

A similar point can be made about the relation Ginsborg forms in essay 5 between rule following considerations in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and what she conceives of as the primitive normativity of the aesthetic judgement in Kant. Ginsborg takes Wittgenstein to point to the necessity of assuming a primitive ground of non-conceptual response:

One of Wittgenstein's concerns in his *Philosophical Investigations* is to show how the meaningful use of language depends on a certain commonality, at a prelinguistic level, in our responses to the world. (127)

But, would it not be more precise to understand Wittgenstein to be showing that it is the isolation of the problem of rule following from a range of ordinary practices—expressed in language or whose character we recognize in language games—that creates the semblance of a sceptical threat? It is not that we need something like a pre-linguistic natural response, but rather, as Wittgenstein would put it, we need to share a broad field of linguistic practices whose interweaving constitutes the naturalness of a human form of life.

However, is this concept of the ordinary, or something corresponding to it, recognizable in Kant's account as well? To begin suggesting what, I hope, are complementary considerations to Ginsborg's approach, I note that the idea of exemplary necessity, which is so closely tied with the capacity to take one's judgement to speak with a universal voice, is not brought up in the Second Moment, together with the account of the universal communicability of the judgement, but rather in the Fourth Moment, in which Kant presents taste as a *common sense*. Even if we bracket for a moment the connection between the term common sense and the ordinary—which Kant does elaborate in section 40 later in the book—the pairing of exemplary necessity and common sense, by itself, presents something of a puzzle: what is the relation suggested in it between the universal voice and common sense? Are these two equivalent references to one and the same thing?

Ginsborg does not address directly in her book Kant's account of common sense, even though, it might be the place in which he states most directly the connection between aesthetic judgement and cognition with which she is concerned:

since the universal communicability of a feeling presupposes a common sense, the latter must be able to be assumed with good reason, and indeed without appeal to psychological observations, but rather as the necessary condition of the universal communicability of our cognition, which is assumed in every logic and every principle of cognition that is not sceptical. (5: 239)

This passage makes it quite clear that common sense is *presupposed* by the universal communicability of feeling and thus the two notions are not identical. And common sense is also said to be assumed in every principle of cognition. Conceiving common sense along the lines of a natural connectedness of the space of our meaningful use of concepts (as was

suggested in my discussion of Cavell above) points to the direction in which to understand that notion in Kant, namely as pertaining to our sense of systematicity.

Ginsborg considers the question of the relation of reflective judgement to the idea of systematicity of nature in essay 6, 'Reflective Judgement and Taste'. She raises a number of objections against forming too direct a connection between the two. To remain with an indirect link would be for her to recognize how aesthetic judgement is related to the normative presupposition of any *single* empirical cognitive judgement, that is, to the primitive normativity of judgement. By taking the presupposition of common sense precisely to be the aesthetic correlate of systematicity, a closer connection is established to the argument of the 'Introduction' to the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*. I want to suggest, without being able to elaborate the point here, that there is in Kant an aesthetic dimension to systematicity.² In other words, a judgement of taste can exhibit how a range of meanings can be felt as belonging together, or as systematically interrelated without having any rule to account for that connectedness.

This way of conceiving common sense as a dimension of the aesthetic judgement has several distinct advantages. In the first place, one would be less inclined to conceive of what goes into our sense of beauty merely in terms of the imagination's transformation of what is sensuously given. Indeed, it would be possible to see that aesthetic judgement is not inconsistent with conceptual articulation, as long as we properly distinguish what it means to have something fall under a concept and what it is to recognize something to exemplify a fitting place in what can become a systematically explicit space of concepts. Feeling can signal a concentration of a broad space of meaning, which is yet to be made explicit. That feeling gives us a guideline for the kind of articulation that would make explicit that space which it concentrates. This is evident in the case of the beauty of art in what we call acts of criticism (and in that sense the feeling prefigures the unfolding of the space of judgement). In taking one's judgement to be based on a higher, non-vulgar, ordinary or common understanding, one would claim to be representative of the yet to be realized universal voice.

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2 For an elaboration of this idea, see my *Expressions of Judgment: An Essay on Kant's Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 39–45; as well as 'Common Sense: Between Community and the Systematic', in Matthew Altman (ed.), *The Palgrave Kant Handbook* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming).

Normativity and Purposiveness

Angela Breitenbach

First, I raise two objections against Ginsborg's interpretation of natural teleology. I argue that Ginsborg's notion of primitive normativity is too thin to account for Kant's more substantive conception of the organism. Furthermore, I question whether Kant has room for a notion of purposiveness that is entirely divorced from intentional activity. Second, I ask about the implications of Ginsborg's account of the relationship between aesthetic judgement and cognition. I suggest that her reading can easily be extended to allow for aesthetic pleasure in empirical reflection.

What do our appreciation of tonal music and tea roses, our acquisition of the concepts of a triangle and the colour green, and our cognition of birch trees and horseshoe crabs have in common? In *The Normativity of Nature*, Hannah Ginsborg argues that, according to Kant, the uniting element is a primitive normative attitude. It consists in regarding an action as *appropriate*, or an object as *how it ought to be*, not according to an antecedent rule, but according to a standard exemplified by the action, or object, itself. The concept of primitive normativity is Ginsborg's own, not Kant's. But Ginsborg shows in detail how this notion underlies Kant's undertaking in the *Critique of Judgement*. There, Kant's project is to account for the general capacity to judge, which characterizes our human attitude to the world, and the specific forms such judging takes when it is directed at beautiful things and biological organisms.

Ginsborg's interpretation of this project is sophisticated and highly original. Having her papers available in one collection is important not only for the sake of convenience but also because it draws attention to a tight thematic thread running through the diverse and seemingly disunified parts of the third *Critique* on her reading. It thereby draws attention to the deep unity of Ginsborg's own ideas on such *prima facie* disconnected topics such as beauty, concept formation, and biology. Commenting on this impressive feat is a great pleasure, but also a somewhat daunting task. My comments will focus on two specific issues. They concern, first, Ginsborg's interpretation of natural teleology associated with judgements in biology and, second, her account of the relation between aesthetic judgement and cognition.

As Ginsborg notes, Kant distinguishes a paradigmatic conception of purposiveness, associated with the products of intentional design, from a broader notion, which applies to things that only appear as if they were the products of design. Organisms are purposive in the second sense. On Ginsborg's interpretation of Kant, this means that we do not judge organisms as conforming to a concept, or design, in accordance with which it was intentionally produced. Instead, it means simply judging that the organism 'conforms to a concept of how it ought to be' (241). Kant's biological teleology, for Ginsborg, is more fundamental than the normativity associated with reasons. It is a case of 'oughts without intentions' (332).

What exactly do such oughts consist in? A first objection I want to raise is that the notion of primitive normativity is *too* primitive to account for Kant's specific conception of organic purposiveness. On Ginsborg's account, to regard an organism as being as it ought to be is to construe it as conforming to a normative law. This, in turn, is cashed out as regarding

organisms as containing normative principles within themselves, rather than conforming to constraints imposed by an external designer. The idea that the organism conforms to its own standard, however, does not by itself carry any information about the nature of the standard. It is neutral with regard to the particular structure or behaviour that, on Kant's account, is specific to organisms. The worry, more specifically, is that Ginsborg's primitive normative reading does not account for the fact that Kant characterizes organisms in parallel with paradigmatic cases of purposiveness. He describes the apparent purposive organization of parts within the organism as a whole (see, e.g., Kant's bird example at 5: 360) and the apparent goal-directedness of the organism's development and regeneration of damaged parts (see, e.g., Kant's tree example at 5: 371–372). But any minimal characterization of organisms as subject to normative constraints seems too thin to account for these characteristically organic features of purposive organization and goal-directed self-organization.

Similarly, it is unclear how the idea of primitive normativity can compensate 'for the absence of natural necessity' in the way Kant's account requires (240). As Ginsborg points out, for Kant, comprehending an object requires cognizing it 'as, in some sense, necessary' (240). Since we cannot construe organisms as necessitated by the laws of nature, she argues, we must instead understand them as necessitated by normative laws. As I understand Kant, however, the reason why he thinks comprehending something presupposes regarding the thing as necessary is that comprehension requires insight into the laws and principles that condition the structure and working of the thing.¹ Since we cannot explain the internal organization and functioning of the eye as necessitated by mechanical laws, teleological laws come into play. What this means, I think, is that we need to regard the structure of the eye as necessitated by a causality which acts according to such principles as 'to enable seeing, the eye must be equipped with a lens'. That is, we need to regard the eye as necessitated by an end-directed causality. But regarding organisms in this way is to rely on a more contentful conception of natural purposiveness than is afforded by the idea of primitive normativity.

Even if the idea of primitive normativity were able to account for this more substantive conception of organisms, moreover, it is not obvious that Kant has room for a notion of purposiveness that is entirely divorced from the end-setting intellect. In his short piece, 'On the Use of Teleological Principles in Philosophy',² for instance, Kant maintains that purposes 'have a direct relationship to reason' (8: 182, see also 5: 220). When he argues that organisms only appear *as if* they were purposive, it would therefore seem that he is not attributing to organisms a *more fundamental* form of purposiveness, but rather one that is understood *in light* of the paradigmatic notion. On this alternative reading, to regard organisms as purposive, while also denying that they were in fact produced by intentional design, is to assert an analogy. It is to argue that we have to reflect on organisms, as Kant puts it, 'in accordance with a remote analogy with our own causality in accordance with ends' (5: 375).

1 See, for example, Immanuel Kant, *Jäsche Logic* (9: 65), in his *Lectures on Logic*, trans. and ed. by J. M. Young, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 521–641.

2 Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology, History and Education*, ed. by G. Zöllner and R. B. Loudon, transl. by M. Gregor, P. Guyer, R. B. Loudon, H. Wilson, A. W. Wood, G. Zöllner, and A. Zweig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 192–218.

I think Ginsborg construes the analogical reading too restrictively as grounded in an analogy between organisms and artefacts.³ As a result, I believe, she rejects the reading too quickly, arguing that the analogy with artefacts conflicts with viewing organisms as natural (262, 321). As I see it, however, Kant presents the causality of nature in organic processes as analogous to that of intentional activity itself.⁴ By means of the analogy with our ‘causality in accordance with ends’, he argues, we must reflect on nature as having the capacity for self-organization and on organisms as being the products of nature’s own purposive activity. It is this analogical construal, I believe, which provides us with the teleological laws in accordance with which we can reflect on organisms as necessary.

Rather than interpreting natural purposes as oughts without intentions, I wonder what speaks against understanding them as *as if*-oughts, construed by analogy with the oughts of intentional activity. These *as if*-oughts do not occupy a space *between* practical and theoretical reason, as Ginsborg holds (254). Instead, they are construed by analogy with the activities of practical reason, while having a regulative use in the domain of theoretical reason. They are, as a result, more substantive than the oughts of primitive normativity.

On Ginsborg’s reading of Kant, a primitive normative attitude is also what makes cognition as well as aesthetic judgements possible. The attitude of primitive normativity distinguishes the human capacity to grasp a particular under a concept from an animal’s blind and habitual disposition to discriminate one thing from another. The child’s sorting of green triangular blocks from red square ones, for instance, qualifies as a case of concept application only if the child regards her sorting as appropriate to the object. Similarly, only if the biologist regards the as yet unspecified tree she studies as being as it ought to be, can she formulate a determinate rule, or concept, according to which the tree may be assessed. On Ginsborg’s account, the attitude of primitive normativity makes the application and formation of concepts ‘a matter of right as opposed to fact’ (141).

Judgements about beautiful things, Ginsborg furthermore argues, are pure manifestations of the attitude of primitive normativity on Kant’s account. They consist in my taking ‘my imaginative activity in the perception of the object to be as it ought to be’ (88). Aesthetic judgements are crucially self-reflexive. The advantage of this reading, Ginsborg argues, is that it solves a dilemma which arises for Kant. On the one hand, Kant grounds the universality of aesthetic judgements in the fact that they rely on universal cognitive capacities. On the other hand, he denies that all uses of these capacities result in aesthetic pleasure. The dilemma thus consists in linking aesthetic judgement to universal cognitive capacities without, however, making the link too tight. Ginsborg’s solution is that aesthetic pleasure arises only when our primitive normative judging is free from the restriction of any particular norm. No aesthetic pleasure is associated with the determinate judgement that this is a tree, since that judgement cannot be regarded as appropriate *as such*, but only as appropriate to the determinate concept ‘tree’.

3 Ginsborg is not alone in reading the analogy in this way. See, for example, John D. McFarland, *Kant’s Concept of Teleology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970), 111; Peter McLaughlin, *Kants Kritik der teleologischen Urteilskraft* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1989), 39; and Paul Guyer, ‘Organisms and the Unity of Science’, in E. Watkins (ed.), *Kant and the Sciences* (Oxford: OUP, 2001), 259–281.

4 I have developed this reading in more detail in Angela Breitenbach, *Die Analogie von Vernunft und Natur* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 60–108.

Ginsborg's reading makes sense of Kant's suggestion that the idea of subjective purposiveness guides reflective judgement. In cognition, we regard the object as purposive for understanding, or as amenable to being cognized. In aesthetic judgement, we regard the object as subjectively purposive as such, or as fitting the needs of human understanding without being 'bound to the achievement of any particular cognitive purpose' (235). This account of the underlying connection, but also the important difference, between cognition and aesthetic judgement is very appealing. But I would like to get clearer on what exactly this neat distinction entails for the domain of aesthetic judgement. Specifically, I am interested in understanding why, on Ginsborg's account, we might not be able to find aesthetic pleasure in such contexts as empirical reflection. If the attitude of primitive normativity characterizes all cases of reflective judgement, then I see no reason to deny that we could become aware of the primitive appropriateness of such judgements even in the context of empirical reflection. Our search for concepts and laws that determine empirical phenomena is often characterized by reflective judgements that do not, or not immediately, result in determinate cognition. If no determinate concept is available, however, then our reflection—and hence the appropriateness of our judging—cannot be restricted to any particular norm. Why, then, does my reflecting on an unknown tree for the sake of determining its species, or my attempts at understanding how two apparently disunified scientific theories may be related, leave no room for aesthetic pleasure?

A response might be that, in empirical reflective judging, *some* concepts guide our judgements. Even if I have not yet determined the particular species of which this tree is a specimen, I do cognize it under concepts. For instance, I cognize it as a tree with leaves that have a strikingly pointy shape and light colour. One might thus argue that aesthetic pleasure is excluded from empirical enquiry because such enquiry is always bound to *some* empirical norm. According to Ginsborg, however, this reply is unsatisfactory. It does not account for the acquisition of empirical concepts in the first place (70). On her reading, even such cases as my search for the species concept of an unknown tree involve a more primitive form of my regarding my judging as appropriate. But if that is correct, why can I not become aware of, and take pleasure in, the very appropriateness of my judging as such? More generally, why can I not feel aesthetic pleasure in the context of scientific reflection by focusing attention on the very appropriateness of my judging activity, and not on the conceptual norm such judging seeks to discover?

Although Ginsborg does not endorse this more expansive view of aesthetic pleasure, extending her account in this way would follow quite naturally from her reading of Kant. It would be in line with the thought that anything, in principle, could become the object of aesthetic appreciation. And it would defend Kant against the objection that his aesthetics leaves no room for the beauty we may associate with cognitive enquiry.⁵ In my view, this would highlight a great advantage of Ginsborg's reading.

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5 This objection is raised, e.g., in Alexander Rueger, 'Kant and the Aesthetics of Nature', *BJA* 47 (1997), 138–155. See also Helmut Christian Wenzel, 'Beauty, Genius, and Mathematics: Why Did Kant Change His Mind?', *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 18 (2001), 415–432. I have suggested an alternative reading in Angela Breitenbach, 'Aesthetics in Science: A Kantian Proposal', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 113 (2013), 83–100.

Replies to My Critics

Hannah Ginsborg

I am grateful to the commentators for their sympathetic and thoughtful attention to my work. The questions and objections they raise go to the heart of my project, and, while it has been rewarding to work through them, it has not been easy to respond to them. For reasons of space, I have not been able to address every point raised, but I have tried to respond to those which I find most challenging.

One distinctive feature of my interpretation of Kant's aesthetics is its insistence on the subjective character of the judgement of beauty for Kant. It is important for my understanding of the role such judgements play in revealing the 'subjective condition' of objective judgement that they cannot themselves be reduced to a species of objective judgement; both Karl Ameriks and Richard Moran, in different ways, put pressure on this feature of my view. In his own important work on the *Critique of Judgement*,¹ Ameriks has argued that beauty should be construed as objective in something like the sense in which secondary qualities are objective, suggesting that the reasons which Kant gives for denying the objectivity of beauty are no less applicable in the case of the status of qualities like colour and fragrance.² In his contribution here, Ameriks does not explicitly defend the objectivity of beauty for Kant, but he does suggest that judgements of beauty should be assimilated to a range of judgements about how things appear to us in perception—for example, that dry ice appears hot to the touch—which, because of their stability across different human individuals, might well be called objective. And he grounds this suggestion in Kant's own writings by pointing out that such judgements already appear in Kant under the name of judgements of perception. Why can't I allow that judgements of beauty are subjective merely in the sense that, unlike judgements of experience, they do not characterize 'the lawlike determinable nature of things'? Ameriks suggests that this is because I am committed to endorsing Kant's claim for the 'autonomy' of taste: in order to judge something to be beautiful, I must feel pleasure in it myself. But, he says, given that part of what I am claiming is that my judgement is appropriate to the object, it seems most natural to suppose that I am making a claim about how 'normal' human beings, human beings with a 'healthy' common sense, should react to the object. And that, he suggests, puts my judgement on a par with (objective) judgements about the perceptual appearances of things.

I think there is a lot to be said in favour of the idea that we can identify a domain of what might be called 'objective looks', and I find promising Ameriks' suggestion that we understand Kant's judgements of perception as being about that domain. In spite of Kant's

1 All quotations from and references to Kant's texts are followed by a citation to the *Critique of Judgement*, as published in Vol. 5 of Immanuel Kant, *Kants Werke* (Berlin: Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1902).

2 See especially part III of Karl Ameriks, *Interpreting Kant's Critiques* (Oxford: OUP, 2003).

denial that such judgements make a claim to universal agreement, the examples he gives, if taken at face value, do make such a claim, and the suggestion that they are about the looks of things offers the prospect of accommodating the idea of their inter-subjective validity while still allowing us to recognize their divergence from what Kant calls judgements of experience. But I continue to resist Ameriks' proposal that judgements of beauty be assimilated to the class of judgement to which he draws attention. My main source of resistance is not the autonomy of taste as such, but rather a more fundamental feature which I ascribe to judgements of beauty for Kant, namely their self-referential character. To feel pleasure in the beautiful, or to make a judgement of beauty (on my view, these two come to the same), is to respond to an object in such a way as to perceive that very response as appropriate to the object: it is, in responding, to experience one's response itself as an example of how anyone should respond to the object. In the 'objective looks' judgements which Ameriks describes, I also take it that everyone should respond to the object as I do—for example, that the dry ice should look hot to everyone else just as it does to me—but I take it, in so doing, that they should perceive it in some determinately specifiable way (that they should perceive it *as hot* or that it should *look hot* to them). By contrast, pleasure in the beautiful is a feeling, not of the universal appropriateness of some specific way of responding to the object, but rather, irreducibly, of *this* way of perceiving it (47–48; 89–90). It is this ineliminable reference to my own response to the object, at the moment of perceiving it, which, on my view, prevents us from assimilating the judgement of beauty to any kind of objective judgement. I am in a sense making a claim about how 'normal' human beings should react. But the fact that I am claiming that they should react not in some determinately specifiable way, but just *this* way, prevents us from rephrasing that claim in terms of predicates like 'looking hot' or 'looking red' and so rules the claim out as conceptual or objective. This puts a lot of weight on the ineliminably self-referential character of the judgement of beauty—the idea that I cannot say how it is that the object should be perceived except, in effect, by saying 'like this'—and I do not want to deny that there are difficulties making this idea intuitively satisfying. To mention just one, it precludes a straightforward account of aesthetic disagreement, something which an objectivist interpretation like Ameriks' can easily provide.³ But it does offer a way of explaining—something which Ameriks' interpretation does not—why Kant thought of judgements of beauty as *sui generis* and in particular why he himself did not assimilate them to judgements of perception.

Regarding the broader themes of my book, Ameriks offers a 'guess' as to my overall reaction to the third *Critique*, suggesting that it is something like Strawson's reaction, in 'Freedom and Resentment', to the second: 'even without recourse to any orthodox transcendental or theistic metaphysics ... we can and will always remain properly confident in our primitive normative reflective responses'.⁴ I think he guesses right, and I am happy to accept the comparison with Strawson on this point. But Ameriks raises a worry about the stability of this view: 'after Darwin, Nietzsche, Quine, and others, many philosophers might wonder if here we are not just struggling schizophrenically to prop up comfortable illusions

3 I try to address this in my 'Kant's "Young Poet" and the Subjectivity of Aesthetic Judgment', *Proceedings of the Twelfth International Kant Congress*, forthcoming.

4 Karl Ameriks, 'Ginsborg, Nature, and Normativity', *BJA* 56 (2016), 389–395, at 392.

that will disappear as our conception of “mind and its place in nature” advances’.⁵ As I see it, the most serious challenge here is from Darwin, who undermined long-standing assumptions about the need for teleology in explaining the origin of organisms and, more specifically, of the human mind. But I think that the Darwinian challenge can be addressed if we recognize—and this will also come up in my reply to Angela Breitenbach—that our need for, and entitlement to, a normative attitude to organisms neither depends on, nor commits us to, any particular account of how they originate. We can accept that organisms came to be without the operation of any kind of teleology, natural or divine, and still recognize the indispensability of regarding them in normative terms in order to make sense of their structure and behaviour. Something similar holds for our normative attitudes towards our own minds in relation to the objects we perceive. That we can and must think of our own psychological responses to objects as conforming to normative constraints is independent of any hypothesis about how our minds came to be the way that they are.

Towards the end of his comments, Ameriks asks whether, if I abandon the objectivity of taste, I can understand the beauty of nature as having the teleological significance which Kant ascribes to it. I think that I can, for reasons that will emerge at the end of my reply to Moran’s comments. Moran, like Ameriks, takes issue with the subjectivism of the view I ascribe to Kant, pointing out that we ‘should want the focus of [judgements of beauty] to be on the *objects* we find beautiful’ and suggesting, at least by implication, that my interpretation wrongly shifts the focus of such judgements to the reaction of the subject.⁶ More specifically, he points out that judging an object to be beautiful is a way of praising or approving of it, suggesting that a judgement of beauty ascribes a certain kind of value to the object. (On this more specific point, I think he diverges from Ameriks, who is more inclined to assimilate judgements of beauty to objective judgements of a non-evaluative kind.) There is, as he points out, approbation in my account as well, but it seems to be directed not towards the object, but towards my own state of mind in the object, which I regard as appropriate with respect to the object.

Moran is quite right to point out that judging something to be beautiful is a way of approving of it, and Kant himself describes judgements of beauty in this way: the demand for agreement implicit in the judgement of beauty amounts to the demand that everyone ‘give the object at hand his approval [*dem vorliegenden Gegenstande Beifall geben*] (19: 237). Is this something that my view can accommodate? I believe it is, although my book says very little about how, and Moran’s criticism has prompted me to think about how I can improve on what little I do say there.⁷ Put very sketchily, the central thought behind my

5 Ameriks, ‘Ginsborg, Nature, and Normativity’, 392.

6 Richard Moran, ‘The Topic of the Judgement of Beauty’, *BJA* 56 (2016), 397–400, at 400. For other versions of this worry, see Rachel Zuckert, *Kant on Beauty and Biology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); and Kristi Sweet, ‘Reflection: Its Structure and Meaning in Kant’s Judgments of Taste’, *Kantian Review* 14 (2009), 53–80, at 69–70.

7 The passage in my book which comes closest to addressing Moran’s criticism is the passage which Ameriks cites, in the last paragraph of his comment, as pointing in a more objectivist direction. I say there that aesthetic experience can be characterized as ‘the experience of *something* about the object, namely the object’s appropriateness or suitability to the imaginative activity through which it is perceived’ and that this amounts to my taking there to be ‘an irreducible harmony or fit between the object and the imaginative activity it elicits’ (90). But this leaves unclear not only why we perceive the object as appropriate to our imaginative activity (as opposed to merely perceiving our imaginative activity as appropriate to the object), but also what it even means for an object to be ‘appropriate to’ the subject’s mental activity.

proposed answer to Moran is that, in taking my response to be appropriate to the object, I am also taking the object to be appropriate to my response, and that this taking-to-be-appropriate counts as a form of approbation. I am taking the object to harmonize with my response to it, to be as it should be in order to elicit or facilitate that response, and because I also take the response to be appropriate with respect to the object, this means that I take the object to contribute to the satisfaction of a certain kind of normative demand: I take it to give rise to just that response which I *should* be having to it. The approbation, then, is a matter of my seeing the object as making possible the satisfaction of a demand which is imposed on me—albeit a demand which is imposed on me by the object itself.

In trying to show how the judgement of beauty can have the object as its focus, I am also offering an account of Kant's talk of the subjective purposiveness which we perceive when we find something beautiful: a purposiveness which he seems willing to describe both as belonging to the activity of our faculties in their response to the object, and as belonging to the object itself in its relation to our faculties. He says, for example, that the pleasure is a 'consciousness of merely formal purposiveness in the play of the cognitive powers' (§12, 222) and he speaks of the 'purposive form in the determination of the powers of representation engaged with the object' (§15, 228), but he also refers repeatedly to the purposiveness as being perceived in the object, although it is typically qualified as purposiveness 'for' our cognitive faculties or as purposiveness 'for judgement' (for references, see 236). On my reading, the perception of purposiveness in the activity of the cognitive faculties is the perception of them as functioning as they should function in their response to the object, but this is at the same time a perception of the object as suited for—as being just the way it ought to be in order to make possible—that very activity of the faculties. Kant's characterizations of the object as purposive for our cognitive faculties are typically seen as implying a special suitability of the object for eliciting the mental activities required for empirical cognition, manifested in its giving rise to the 'free play of the faculties' in which imagination and understanding engage with the object in an especially lively and harmonious way. So the object's purposiveness for our cognitive faculties is seen as a matter of its ability to produce a certain type of mental activity, one which can be characterized from a third-person perspective. But—and this is of a piece with my disagreement with Ameriks—I understand the idea of an object's purposiveness for 'our' cognitive faculties as involving an ineliminably first-personal element. In perceiving the object as beautiful, I perceive it as suitable for producing just this response—the response I am now having—and this response in turn as suitable to the object. So while I am indeed perceiving something in the object, what I perceive in it is not an objective property—not even where 'objective' is construed broadly enough to include the property of being such as to produce a certain kind of response in human beings—but rather, as Kant puts it, 'that property [*Beschaffenheit*] in it by which it conforms [*sich richten*] to our way of apprehending [*aufnehmen*] it' (§32, 282).

The attitude which I have described us as taking to the beautiful object might seem too weak to amount to the approval or admiration of the object which Moran rightly sees as involved in our intuitive conception of aesthetic judgement. I might appreciate that the object, so to speak, favours me by producing in me just that response which I perceive to be appropriate to it. But does this amount to my ascribing some kind of objective value

to it? Here I am inclined to say that, at least if we are to do justice to the basic assumptions structuring Kant's account of aesthetic judgement, it had better not. For we have to respect Kant's insistence on distinguishing judgements of beauty from judgements of the good. Even though Kant is explicit that, in finding the object beautiful, I approve of it, it cannot be that my approval amounts to finding it objectively meritorious. We are faced then, with a delicate balancing act, but it is a balancing act which the present proposal might help us carry off. I approve of the object because, in so far as I see it as helping me satisfy a normative constraint to which I am subject, I see it as meeting a need which I have. To this extent, I approve of it in the way I might approve of a sharp and sturdy knife which enables me to cut things effectively. But in contrast to my approval of the knife, which amounts to a judgement as to its goodness, my approval of the beautiful object does not depend on my recognition that it satisfies some antecedently specifiable need. In the case of the beautiful object, the constraint which the object enables me to satisfy is imposed not externally, but by the object itself, and I can specify what it calls for only by reference to the state of mind which the object actually brings about in me. I perceive the object's aptness for giving rise to the response which I should have to the object, but I can say what that response is only by saying that it is *this* response.

While this might seem far-fetched, it corresponds to an intuitively appealing way of thinking about the phenomenology of at least certain kinds of aesthetic experience. It often seems to us, in the experience of a work of art, that each element is exactly right, with nothing jarring or out of place. Each element of the work seems perfectly apt for contributing to the effect of the whole. But when we ask what exactly the elements of the work of art are right *for*, or what the effect is to which they seem apt for contributing, it can seem impossible to give an adequate answer. We might say of a certain chord that it is just right for making the music sound poignant, or that the grey wash of paint is apt for creating a melancholy effect, but, notoriously, such characterizations are nowhere near fine-grained enough to capture what the chord or the wash of colour, in their respective contexts, achieve. We will typically be able to think of any number of other ways in which a poignant or melancholy feel could have been produced, none of which would have produced just the effect of that chord or that application of paint.⁸ A better answer would seem to be that the elements are right for bringing about just that response to the work of art which we are 'meant to have', a response which we are typically able to identify only because we actually have it and can recognize it as the right response. We can see this by considering cases where a work falls short of the ideal case in which every element seems right. When a work of art disappoints us in some respect, it is often because, while it succeeds partially in bringing about a response which we perceive as the appropriate response, and so gives us a sense of how it is that we should be responding to it, we also perceive elements of the work as interfering with our ability to respond as we should.

The core of my response to Moran could be summarized in terms of the idea of 'direction of fit'. On the account I have just offered of the normativity involved in a judgement

⁸ The point is suggested in Felix Mendelssohn's often-cited observation that music is more precise than words: 'what is expressed to me by music that I love ... [is] ... not too *indefinite* to be put into words, but on the contrary too *definite*' (letter to Marc-André Souchay, 15 October 1842, cited from *Briefe aus den Jahren 1830 bis 1847* (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1878), 221).

of beauty, the direction of the normative fit between object and response is no less world-to-mind than it is mind-to-world, so that the judgement of beauty is as much focussed on the object's appropriateness to my state of mind in perceiving it as it is on the appropriateness of my state of mind with respect to the object. But how is that compatible with my claim that the relevant normativity is, in Moran's words, 'part of the basis of ordinary empirical judgement'⁹? As Moran points out, when I judge that this creature is a dog, or that this cloud is cirrus, I might approve of my judgement—in the sense of recognizing its appropriateness to the circumstances in which I make it—but this does not entail that, conversely, I approve of the object about which I am judging. In the normativity involved in ordinary empirical judgement, that is, the direction of fit goes just one way: I see my judgement as suitable to how the object is, but I do not see the object, reciprocally, as suitable to my judgement. How then, can the normativity involved in aesthetic judgement be the same normativity as that required for the possibility of empirical judgement? Here I want to emphasize a distinction, which might not have come across clearly enough in my book,¹⁰ between two kinds of normativity involved in empirical judgement. The first is the familiar normativity associated with truth or warrant, which we ascribe to our responses to objects only in so far as we conceive of these responses as judgements with conceptual content. The second, more controversial, is what I call 'primitive normativity', and the possibility of our ascribing it to our responses is a condition, not of the application of concepts which we already possess, but of the possession of concepts in the first place. Moran's examples of the dog and the cirrus cloud illustrate the first kind of normativity. When I reflectively apprehend that I have judged correctly that the animal is a dog or that the cloud is cirrus, I apprehend that I have made a judgement with a certain conceptual content—that this is a dog, or that this is cirrus—and that this conceptual content matches how things objectively are. I take myself, then, to be responding to the object as I ought in the sense that I take myself to be judging it veridically. But there is, on the view I defend, a different kind of normativity which applies to those pre-conceptual responses without which the possession of concepts would not be possible. The responses I have in mind are of a kind illustrated by children's pre-conceptual sorting behaviour (165–166, 188–192, 340–341) and by Wittgenstein's examples of 'going on' (127–129), and I take these to involve the recognition of an appropriateness which cannot be cashed out in terms of truth or warrant. In order to come to grasp the concept 'cirrus', I have to find appropriate certain ways of 'sorting' different kinds of clouds rather than others, or of 'going on' from the examples I am given of uses of words like 'cirrus' and 'cumulus'. For example, if I am asked to sort pictures of clouds into piles, it has to seem right to me to sort the ones with wispy-looking clouds separately from the ones with fluffy-looking clouds, even if that means sorting into one pile pictures where the clouds are of different sizes, or differently illuminated, or seen against a background of a different shade of blue. But the recognition of rightness or appropriateness involved in my putting a given picture on a given pile is not a matter of my recognizing that I have made a veridical judgement

⁹ Moran, 'The Topic of the Judgement of Beauty', 399.

¹⁰ It is stated explicitly at 185, but remains only implicit elsewhere, and it does not figure at all in my discussion of taste's relation to empirical judgement in essay 6, the earliest of the essays to be written.

about what kind of cloud is in the picture. Rather, I recognize my response to be appropriate in a way which does not depend on my understanding it as a judgement with determinate conceptual content. It is because of this that the recognition of appropriateness can play a role in allowing me to grasp the concept 'cirrus' rather than being something which has to depend on that grasp.

In the case of this kind of normativity, in contrast to the normativity associated with truth or warrant, the direction of fit does not just go one way. This is because the recognition of the appropriateness of the kinds of responses I have described—I will call these 'sorting responses'—requires us to assume what Kant calls nature's purposiveness for our cognitive faculties or nature's purposiveness for judgement. Very roughly, in order to regard myself as sorting the cloud appropriately when I 'go on' from previous uses of the word 'cirrus' to apply it to this new cloud, or when I put a picture of the cloud in this pile rather than that pile, I have to regard nature as a whole as lending itself to this kind of sorting activity. Even though I recognize that in principle the objects around me could be sorted in any number of different ways, and that there are no objective reasons for sorting them as I do rather than in any of the infinitely possible ways that it would never normally occur to me to sort them (this cloud with the dogs I have previously encountered, together with the moon and yesterday's cold cup of coffee, say), I have to think of them as *meant* to be sorted in the ways I do sort them. I have to think of what strikes me as salient about the clouds not merely as reflecting my own psychological make-up, or even human psychological make-up generally, but as answering to a constraint imposed by the clouds and, more generally, by nature as a whole. But that means I have to think of nature as, so to speak, not indifferent to my sorting activity. This amounts to thinking both that there *are* ways in which natural things ought to be sorted by me—that nature cannot be treated by me as an undifferentiated mass to which any classificatory scheme is equally suitable—and that these ways at least approximate to the ways in which I do sort them, that is to say, to the sorting responses which natural things in fact elicit in me. So I have to think of nature as, in fact, eliciting or facilitating the very responses which I should have to it. This removes the obstacle to identifying the normativity which figures in the judgement of beauty with the normativity whose recognition is required for the possibility of empirical concepts. In both the aesthetic and the cognitive case, the normative attitude to one's own response to an object is inseparable from a corresponding normative attitude towards the object, although in the cognitive case the object is not an individual thing but nature as a whole.

Eli Friedlander's comments reveal a deep and, I think, interesting divergence between us on just the points which I have been raising in reply to Moran. Friedlander rejects the idea that, for either Kant or Wittgenstein, we need to appeal to pre-conceptual or pre-linguistic responses to make sense of the possibility of cognition or language, at least for subjects who are already conceptually and linguistically competent. For Friedlander, the moral of Wittgenstein's rule-following considerations is not, as on my view, that we need to invoke normativity at a pre-conceptual or pre-linguistic level in order to make sense of our capacity for language and our grasp of rules, but rather that we can defuse scepticism about meaning and rule-following through attention to our shared linguistic practices. Relatedly, for Friedlander, the 'common sense' which, for Kant, must be assumed as a

condition of cognition is not a capacity or entitlement to claim the appropriateness of our pre-conceptual responses to the objects which give rise to them, but rather a capacity which operates at a level which is already conceptual: roughly, a capacity to perceive systematic connections among conceptual contents. The idea of systematicity is, correspondingly, central also to Friedlander's approach to aesthetic judgement, which he describes as exhibiting 'how a range of meaning can be felt as belonging together, or as systematically interrelated, without having any rule to account for that connectedness'.¹¹

Regarding the interpretation of Wittgenstein, I recognize the emphasis which Wittgenstein lays on attention to our shared practices as a way of freeing ourselves from puzzlement about how meaning and rule-following are possible. But it seems to me that his interest, not only in the practices of competent language-users, but also in the practices through which children come to learn language, and the practices we might ascribe to communities with languages more primitive than our own, reveal his commitment to the importance of pre-linguistic responses and activities for understanding language and cognition. I have especially in mind here examples he gives of 'rule-following' behaviour which do not depend on grasp of language: one person (presumably a small child) clapping his or her hands in imitation of another,¹² a cave-dweller drawing a regular pattern on the wall of his cave,¹³ a pupil learning to copy the numerals from 0 to 9.¹⁴ What is significant about these activities is that, rather than being themselves linguistic, they represent ways in which we are initiated into linguistic practices. Instead of requiring grasp of meaning and rules, mastery of the activities constitutes 'a substratum for the meaning of ... rules'.¹⁵ And the possibility of the activities playing this initiating role seems to depend on their subjects' finding what they are doing appropriate. The pupil's learning to copy the single-digit numerals could not provide a basis for his going on to write further numerals and in turn to grasp the system of decimal notation if, in writing each numeral, he moved his hand reflexively or mechanically, without being in a position to appreciate that, at each point, he was doing what he should be doing. So I think there are at least grounds for supposing that Wittgenstein allows, or at least might allow, a kind of normativity at the level of pre-linguistic activities whose recognition can help us understand how initiation into language, and thereby language itself, are possible.

At the end of my reply to Moran, I drew a parallel between the purposiveness ascribed to an object in a judgement of beauty, and the purposiveness we must ascribe to nature as a whole as a condition of being able to bring it under empirical concepts. Here I was in part trying to do justice to the connection Kant makes between aesthetic judgement and the purposiveness of nature, for example when he says that the principle of aesthetic judgement [*Urteils kraft*] is the principle of 'a formal purposiveness of nature ... for our cognitive faculties, without which understanding could not find itself at home in nature'

11 Eli Friedlander, 'Between Communicability and Common Sense', *BJA* 56 (2016) 401–404, at 404.

12 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 3rd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), VI §17, 320.

13 *Ibid.*, VI §41, 344.

14 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953), §143, 56–57.

15 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967), §300, 54.

(Introduction VIII, 193). As I see it, the connection consists in the fact that in both cases we take what we are responding to—whether an individual thing or nature as a whole—to stand in a relation of normative fit or harmony to our way of responding to it. Friedlander’s emphasis on the idea of systematicity in accounting for aesthetic judgement leads me to suspect that he would be inclined to draw this connection in a different way, one which equates nature’s purposiveness for our cognitive faculties with its suitability for being grasped by us under a systematic hierarchy of empirical concepts and laws. Although he does not say this explicitly, his account of common sense in terms of systematicity suggests that he might have in mind something like the following parallel: aesthetic judgement allows us to see the possibility of systematic interrelations among a range of meanings in something like the way in which, in empirical scientific inquiry, the principle of reflective judgement allows us to assume systematic interrelations among the various concepts under which natural phenomena are subsumed. I will just mention two reasons why I think my approach, which privileges purposiveness over systematicity, is preferable. First, there is a problem about what entitles Kant to claim that we must presuppose the systematicity of nature, and, as I have argued elsewhere, we can solve that problem if we see the assumption of nature’s systematicity as a consequence of the more fundamental assumption of nature’s purposiveness for our cognitive faculties.¹⁶ Second, the idea of aesthetic judgement as involving the perception of systematic interrelations among diverse meanings might fit cases where the object of aesthetic judgement is a complex work of art, but fails to account for the phenomenology of many other experiences of beauty, in particular the beauty of nature. As I see it, conceiving the purposiveness of the beautiful object as simply a matter of normative fit or harmony between object and response allows for its application to a much broader range of aesthetic experiences.

I turn now to Breitenbach’s comments regarding my use of the notion of primitive normativity to interpret Kant’s views about organisms. Breitenbach thinks that the notion of primitive normativity is too thin to account for the ‘characteristically organic’ (3) features of organisms, such as the ‘apparent purposive organisation of parts within the organism as a whole’ (2), as in Kant’s example of the construction of a bird, with bones, wings and tail suited for flight (§61, 360) and the ‘apparent goal-directedness self-organisation of the organism’s development and regeneration of damaged parts’ (2), as in Kant’s example of the tree which maintains, reproduces and repairs itself (§64, 371). She also thinks that it cannot play the explanatory role which, on her view, Kant assigns to the notion of purposiveness. As she understands the role of that notion in Kant’s account of organisms, we need to invoke it to explain why organisms have the features that they do, and this requires regarding the structure of, say, the eye as ‘necessitated by a causality which acts according to such principles as “to enable seeing, the eye must be equipped with a lens”’ (3), that is, by an end-directed causality. But, she says, this relies on ‘a more contentful conception of natural purposiveness than is afforded by the idea of primitive normativity’ (3).

I agree with Breitenbach that the idea of primitive normativity does not do the work she describes, but I disagree that this is work which it must do in order to yield a satisfactory

16 Hannah Ginsborg, ‘Why Must We Presuppose the Systematicity of Nature?’, in Michela Massimi and Angela Breitenbach (eds), *Kant and the Laws of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

account of the notion of purpose as it figures in Kant's account of organisms. Regarding the first point, I do not think that the notion of purpose on its own is supposed to account for the 'characteristically organic' features of organisms, at least not the capacity for self-organization illustrated in the example of the tree. It *is* supposed to allow us to make sense of the feature illustrated by the bird example—that its parts are, as Kant puts it, 'for the sake of one another and of the whole' (§65, 373)—but that is not a characteristically organic feature, because it is shared by complex artefacts (one could say just the same about a mechanical bird as Kant says about the real bird). The features which are distinctive of organisms as opposed to artefacts—the capacities for self-organization which allow us to say that the organism's parts are not only for the sake of one another and of the whole, but also causes of one another and of the whole—indicate, not that we need to think of organisms as purposes, but that we need to think of them as *natural* purposes, as products of nature rather than of an intelligent agent. The notion of primitive normativity is invoked in my account to try to address the puzzle of how we can reconcile the demand to think of organisms as purposes, a demand arising from the features which they appear to have in common with artefacts, with the equally important demand to think of them as natural. The challenge is to make sense of the idea that the bones are hollow in order to facilitate flight, or that the lens is there to enable seeing, without invoking that of an agent who intended that the bird fly or that the eye see. On my view, we meet this challenge by interpreting our teleological talk about the parts of organisms in normative terms: to say that the lens is there to enable seeing is to say that the lens does enable seeing and that, in so doing, it is doing what it ought to do. This is indeed a very thin interpretation, but it is supposed to be, because its point is to allow us to avoid an overly rich commitment to the idea of an actual causality operating in accordance with intentions, which threatens to be incompatible with the idea of organisms as products of nature rather than artefacts.

Breitenbach's second point, about the explanatory role of the notion of purposiveness, seems to me to misidentify the role that teleology is supposed to play in Kant's account of organisms. Her claim that we need to regard the internal organization of the eye as 'necessitated' by an end-directed causality suggests that we need to think of the eye as having been formed through the operation of such a causality, so that teleology figures as part of a causal story about the origin of the eye. But—and this point is of a piece with my reply to Ameriks about the Darwinian threat to our primitive normative responses—I think that Kant sees the notion of purpose as necessary, not for constructing hypotheses about how organisms came to be, but rather for describing and understanding them as they now are (for textual evidence, see 259). We come to understand the structure and workings of organisms by identifying, intuitively, what the various parts are for, or what they are supposed to do: in modern terms, we identify the functions of the parts. Breitenbach is right that the idea of primitive normativity, of oughts without intentions, cannot be invoked as part of a story about what processes gave rise to those parts, but, as I argue in essay 14, it seems to me to be well-suited for offering a minimally demanding interpretation of what we are committed to in using the language of purpose and function in our talk about organisms.

As an alternative to the approach I have suggested, Breitenbach mentions her own interesting and novel conception of organisms as analogous to intentional agents. The activity

of the organism in its self-organization, she suggests, is like the end-setting capacities we exercise in practical reason. This conception offers an alternative to traditional ‘analogical’ readings of Kant on which we are to understand organisms by analogy to artefacts. It improves on such readings by taking into account the status of organisms as not just organized, but actively self-organizing. While I can see the advantages of this alternative, I have misgivings about any interpretation of Kant’s view on which the understanding of organisms relies fundamentally on analogy. At least on the face of it, in order to think of one thing as analogous to another, we need to be able to say in what respect the two things are analogous. The *prima facie* problem in treating organisms as analogous either to artefacts or to human end-setters is that, given that we must also treat them as natural products, we cannot regard them either as having been produced in accordance with intentions, or as themselves having intentions. I am willing to accept that we should treat organisms as analogous to artefacts or to artificers, but only if we can answer the question concerning what it is about organisms which licenses this analogical thinking. My very minimal idea of an organism as something which conforms to normative constraints would be a way of answering that question.

I will end with a brief remark about Breitenbach’s proposal that we extend the scope of Kantian aesthetic pleasure to include the kind of pleasure we feel in empirical reflection, for example in determining the species of a tree, or in attempting to discern a relation between two scientific theories. She suggests that this is of a piece with my account of Kant’s aesthetics, in that the subject’s engagement in this kind of empirical reflection might well involve a pleasurable feeling of the appropriateness of that very reflection. I think that a Kantian view does allow pleasure of the kind Breitenbach describes. In fact, when Kant speaks of a ‘very noticeable pleasure’ grounded in ‘the discovered unifiability of two or more empirically heterogeneous laws of nature under a principle comprehending them both’ (Introduction VI, 187), we might think of the pleasure as being of just the kind which Breitenbach describes, especially if we allow that the feeling of the appropriateness of my reflection to its object is, conversely, a feeling of the appropriateness of the object to my reflection. But should this pleasure be identified with pleasure in the beautiful? While I can see the appeal of making this identification, there also seems to be a point in marking a difference. When, in replying to Moran, I compared my normative attitude in the case of a judgement of beauty to the normative attitude I have to one of the sorting responses required for empirical conceptualization, I said that in the aesthetic case my normative attitude is directed to a particular object, whereas in the conceptualization case it is directed to nature as a whole. That difference is relevant to this case too. My pleasure in being able to sort the tree with other, distinct trees, or to connect the two distinct theories, is a pleasure not in my relation to some particular individual, but in my relation to nature as a whole, which both requires and makes possible the sorting or unifying activity in which I am engaging. Whether this disqualifies it from counting as aesthetic pleasure is a question I will not pursue here.

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