

In chapter 9, Borges addresses the question of whether virtue can be a cure for the passions. By linking affects with weakness as the first stage of our propensity to evil and passions with vice as its third stage, she argues that virtue as moral strength can be a cure for affects but not for passions. Indeed, Kant claims that acquired passions are mostly ‘incurable’ and that they do greater damage to freedom because they are based on bad maxims (*Anth*, 7: 266–7). At times, he leaves open whether it is difficult or impossible to free ourselves of passions once we have them (*Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 5: 272, n.; *Anth*, 7: 251, 266). But it is not yet clear to me why moral strength is not needed to prevent us from acquiring passions. Kant’s second requirement of inner freedom seems to oblige us to do our best not to become enslaved by acquired passions (*MM*, 6: 407). If taking care that our natural inclinations do not turn into passions requires us to avoid adopting the maxims characteristic of passions, this opens up the possibility that moral strength is needed to deal with our temptation to base our maxims on the ends of inclination. Having passions might then initially also indicate weakness or a lack of moral strength. However, this need not undermine Borges’s innovative proposal that healing passions also presupposes the establishment of an ethical community.

Despite the concerns expressed above, I found reading this book both enjoyable and rewarding. I also find the book exceptionally clearly written and informative. Borges swiftly moves back and forth between Kant, his predecessors and his contemporary successors. I believe that readers interested in Kant’s ethics, its broader historical framework and contemporary accounts of the role of emotions in morality will take a lot away from her book.

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This new collection on teleology in Kant’s philosophy contains fourteen articles on diverse topics. The book is divided into two parts and six chapters,

with some chapters focusing on interpreting parts of the third *Critique* (those, namely, by Haag, Lerussi, Rivera de Rosales, Schwab) or, in one case, the *Opus Postumum* (Pickhan), and others considering particular issues in Kant's philosophy as a whole without focusing on a specific text. Since it is not possible to talk about every article in a brief review I will discuss only a couple of chapters from each of these two categories.

Anna Pickhan, in her chapter 'Der Körper im *Opus postumum*', considers the concept of the body in the *Opus Postumum* and purports to show the significance of this concept for Kant's account of teleology, as well as for Kant's system more generally. In the process, she points out the ways in which the account of teleology in the *Opus Postumum* goes beyond that of the third *Critique*. In the *Opus Postumum*, unlike in the earlier works, the construction of bodies out of moving forces is directly connected with Kant's discussion of teleology. More specifically, Kant says that the system of moving forces already requires at least the concept of animate matter or organisms understood as final causes (Pickhan somewhat misleadingly uses the term *Endzwecke* or final purposes, but Kant speaks simply about final causes or *Endursachen*; see p. 116), although Kant stresses, as he does in the third *Critique*, that we cannot know *a priori* whether something real does or even can correspond to this concept. Now, what is new at this point in Kant's discussion in the *Opus Postumum* is that he claims that man is conscious of himself as a self-moving machine (as Pickhan points out, in this context 'machine' should not be taken as something *opposed* to the organism; rather, it is precisely the purposive character of machines which makes them *similar* to organisms that is operative here). Kant seems to believe that the fact that we are conscious of ourselves as organisms makes it possible to make an *a priori* division of bodies into organic and inorganic, although the real possibility of the concept of organic body is established only through experience. Multiple questions could be raised at this point. First, how does this consciousness of ourselves as organisms cohere with what Kant says about self-knowledge in his published works? Secondly, how exactly could this kind of consciousness of ourselves ground an *a priori* division of the concept of body? Unfortunately, Pickhan does not consider these issues in her contribution, discussing instead the mediating status of the concept of the body in the transition project, due to which this concept is able to fill the gap between metaphysics and physics and thus finally render Kant's system systematic.

In his chapter 'Darstellung der Zweckmäßigkeit in Kants *Kritik der Urteilskraft*', Johannes Haag focuses on the unity of Kant's treatment of purposiveness in the discussions of aesthetics and teleology and on the role of these discussions in the transition from the theoretical to the practical philosophy in Kant's system. The upshot of his discussion is that the unity of the third *Critique* consists in the fact that the analysis of both aesthetic and

teleological judgement leads us to consider nature as a whole as purposive, respectively, for our cognitive capacities and in itself, although always only in the reflective way. Moreover, Haag points out, ‘the key to understanding of the unity [of the *Critique*] is . . . the theme of the intuitive presentability of subjective and objective purposiveness’ (p. 170). In the end, the view of nature as purposive in the two ways indicated above indicates ‘that the concept of nature can be brought in agreement with the concept of freedom’ (p. 189), and thereby the transition between theoretical and practical philosophy is effected.

Haag starts with a discussion of the transcendental principle of the reflective power of judgement of the introduction to the third *Critique*, which presupposes a systematic unity of particular laws in that it presumes that nature specifies itself for the sake of our cognitive faculties (and is thus subjectively purposive for us). This principle does not specify any particular way in which nature is supposed to accord with our cognitive capacities or the degree of this accord. Now, in the experience of natural beauty we encounter the agreement of nature with our cognitive capacities as a fact, and indeed not to some limited degree but absolutely (which manifests itself in the harmony of our faculties engaged in aesthetic experience) and independently of our cognitive purposes. According to Haag (who follows Eckart Förster here, see Förster 2012), it is attention to this fact that led Kant, by the time of the third *Critique*, to the discovery of the more general transcendental principle of the reflective power of judgement discussed in the introduction. The absolute character of the subjective purposiveness manifested in natural beauty ‘would find a correspondence in a complete systematicity of natural laws, which however can function only as a regulative idea’ (p. 180), in other words, in a *complete* subjective purposiveness of nature. In this way, the representations of natural beauty concretely exhibit the concept of subjective purposiveness of nature, in which exhibition the faculty of imagination, as the faculty responsible for exhibition of concepts, plays the decisive role.

Haag’s discussion of the objective purposiveness of nature is much shorter, but it does establish a parallel structure there. Objective purposiveness of nature, which characterizes the form of a natural object given in experience as being possible (at least as far as our insight is concerned) only through the concept that precedes that object, likewise allows presentation. Such purposiveness is exhibited in natural organisms, and again Haag stresses the role of imagination in the exhibition of the concept, in this case the concept of the objective purposiveness. As he puts it, ‘the synthesis of the representations of such organisms by imagination therefore *forces* the introduction of the concept of natural purpose – and thus the invasion of the teleological explanation into the mechanistic description of nature of the first *Critique*’

(pp. 187–8). Furthermore, once teleological explanation is introduced, Kant argues that we cannot help but think of nature as a whole as a teleological system, this time not in the sense of being purposive with respect to our cognitive powers but, rather, in itself. In these parallel ways Haag shows how the experience of natural beauty and of organisms leads us to consider nature as purposive, and thus ultimately as amenable to our practical purposes, thereby effecting the transition between theoretical and practical philosophy.

In his contribution, Courtney Fugate considers what he calls ‘the fundamental ambiguity of Kant’s teleology of reason’, which, according to him, manifests itself both in the theoretical and in the practical spheres. He suggests that Kant combines two opposed strategies of dealing with teleology generally when accounting for the teleology of reason. The first strategy is best represented in Hobbes and Spinoza and aims at explaining teleology away, that is, at finding non-teleological explanations for what seems to require the use of teleological concepts. In the cases of Hobbes and Spinoza this strategy consists in naturalizing teleology, in particular in finding efficient causes for what apparently requires teleology. The second strategy, which Fugate associates with Plato, consists in accepting genuine teleology, although not necessarily in the naïve forms which common sense embraces.

As far as theoretical reason is concerned, the problem that apparently requires teleological treatment is that of ‘the “fitness” between mind and world, which was traditionally solved by the teleological conception of the mind as created for cognizing the world’ (p. 24). The ‘Hobbesian’ strategy that Kant pursues in dealing with this issue is nothing less than his Copernican turn. It is not that the mind is such that it is especially fit for cognizing the world that already has some determinate structure apart from it; rather, the world that the mind can experience is made possible by its own cognitive structure, and thus the correspondence between them is rendered rather unsurprising.

While this element of Kant’s project does seem to go in the direction of getting rid of a certain kind of teleology, one wonders whether the analogy with Hobbes is helpful here, given that Fugate himself stresses the naturalizing tendency of the latter. Whatever exactly Kant’s Copernican turn was, it does not seem right to call it a move towards naturalism in any standard sense of this term. Fugate suggests, though, that the teleology of reason returns to the Kantian system through the backdoor, so to speak. It does so via the seeming contingency of the fact that such radically heterogeneous faculties as sensibility and understanding nevertheless harmonize so as to allow us to have experience, or ‘that as both forms of intuition and as intuitions themselves, space and time possess the very same unity *sensibly* as the understanding now requires *intellectually*’ (p. 27).

Fugate suggests that a similar ambiguity in the Kantian strategy can be seen in the domain of the practical, although here his discussion is very brief, only gesturing towards issues already much discussed in the literature. He refers to the fact that, on the one hand, Kant's account of morality seems to go in the direction of eradicating all ends from it and accounting for the morality of actions in terms of their conformity to the mere form of the law. Again, Fugate compares this strategy with that of Hobbes, and again one wonders whether this comparison does much to illuminate the issue. Nevertheless, Fugate points out that practical reason does have ends of its own, referring obviously to the doctrine of the highest good in Kant. In the end, Fugate argues that, although these opposed strategies are not strictly speaking incompatible, it seems that Kant wants not just their bare compatibility but their integration. However, such integration might itself depend on the conception of 'reason as itself intrinsically systematic and hence teleological' (p. 35), which we might or might not be ready to accept.

In his chapter 'Kants Teleologie heute', Georg Toepfer considers the actuality of Kant's thoughts about teleology today. He does so by focusing on four topics: those of biological organisms, ecology, anthropology and philosophy of history. He suggests that Kant's teleological understanding of organisms is still relevant insofar as in biology we, on the one hand, still identify and describe parts of organisms in functional terms and, on the other hand, identify the subject matter of biology in the first place only with the help of teleological concepts. The latter is true because organized systems such as organisms can only exist and be identified as self-reproducing, ordered and functionally closed unities. Similar considerations apply to the larger ecological unities which exhibit the interdependencies of their parts not unlike those characteristic of the organisms. In this context, Toepfer points to some of the less discussed reflections of Kant in the *Opus Postumum* on the relations between different species on Earth.

Toepfer also very briefly discusses the fact that, for Kant, man is the only creature capable of setting aims for itself (also a topic of the contribution by Fernando Moledo) and relates this to some of the later philosophy of culture, such as that of Georg Simmel. Finally, Toepfer identifies the role of purposiveness in the *writing* of history. He points out that, for Kant, the purpose in history (in his case that of the cosmopolitan condition) does not provide explanations but, rather, functions as the organizing focus for *describing* historical events. He does not ask, however, whether it is possible to write history without such a teleological organizing focus, or what contemporary historians think about this.

As is typical for collections of this kind, the impact and significance of the contributions varies. Nevertheless, this volume contains a number of interesting and valuable contributions and I hope to have given the reader a sense of the range of the collection.<sup>1</sup>

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**Note**

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**Reference**

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