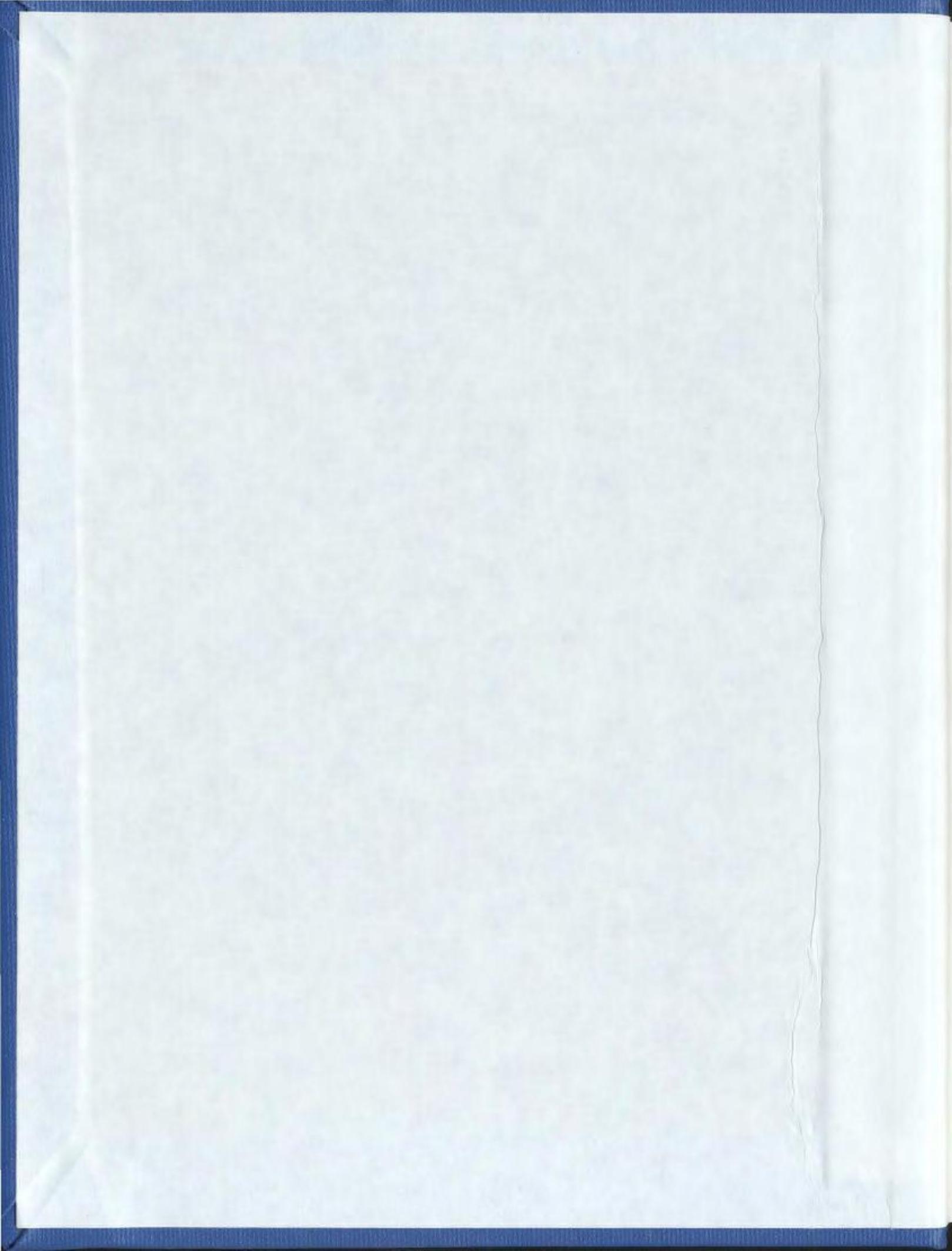


KANT'S METAPHYSICS OF LIFE

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by

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ABSTRACT

The present thesis is an attempt to understand the relation between concepts of *organized being* and *life* in Kant's philosophy and the status of these concepts in his philosophical system. The main theme of this thesis is the mechanical inexplicability of organized beings due to the peculiar purposiveness of their organization and their relation to the principle of life as the immaterial principle of spontaneous action. Kant's early interest in the concepts in question is manifested in pre-*Critical* works mainly as the mind-body problem. The first *Critique* elevates the mind-body problem to the problems of unity of reason and nature, teleology, systematicity and freedom. The third *Critique*, by introducing the reflecting power of judgment and internal purposiveness, offers a solution to the problem of system and freedom by positing the organized/living being as the mediator between metaphysics and physics and establishes a discourse which could be called a metaphysics of life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my Brother

my Parents

and the Caspian Sea

With infinite thanks to Suma Rajiva and Mary McLevey

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List of Abbreviations and Notes on Citation

The abbreviations below are used to cite Kant's works except for his *Lectures on Metaphysics* and the *Inaugural Dissertation* which are not abbreviated in the citations. The *Critique of Pure Reason* is cited by both A and B edition page numbers unless the passage only shows up in one of them. Brackets and square brackets inside the cited passages belong to the original texts unless noted otherwise.

CPJ.....*Critique of the Power of Judgment*

CPR.....*Critique of Pure Reason*

DS..... *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer Elucidated by Dreams of Metaphysics*

FI.....*First Introduction to the Critique of the Power of Judgment*

LF..... *Thoughts on the True Estimation of Living Forces*

MF.....*Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*

MM.....*The Metaphysics of Morals*

NE..... *New Elucidation of the First Principles of Metaphysical Cognition*

OP.....*Opus Postumum*

OPA....*The Only Possible Argument to Support a Demonstration of the Existence of
God*

General Introduction

If Kant's metaphysics of nature is to limit human understanding by liberating it from things in themselves, and his metaphysics of morals is to liberate human reason by limiting its dominion, then, his metaphysics of life is the metaphysics of limitation and liberation, system and freedom, and is none of these.

Transcendental idealism bounds nature to human understanding and thus opens room for the *a priori* and gives rise to the metaphysics of nature. Transcendental idealism is indeed a revolutionary move: the human race had never been in charge of all the necessary laws of nature and the elaborate systematicity of the whole world of appearance. However, the metaphysics of nature turns out to be the metaphysics of understanding: pure speculative reason takes control over nature and dictates to it the *a priori* laws of understanding by means of the categories.

However, the story is different once *action* is on the stage: morality and ethics show up. Kantian ethics is a reminder of the legislation of strict parents for their child. However, there must be no parent, the child must legislate for herself and practice her transcendental freedom. The categorical imperatives are the laws of reason in conformity with the laws of understanding and nature: the child must keep in mind the *a priori* commands of her parents and act as if they belong to herself. The metaphysics of morals is nothing but for one to be in touch with oneself in one's noumenality and to keep oneself in tune with the harmony of other reasons. The autonomy of the moral agency is (supposedly) intact and the moral laws must be the laws of reason itself. Freedom and the moral law necessitate one another and the human being is the playground of both. The metaphysics of morals is in this way an attempt to derive

laws from freedom, and freedom from the laws. However, at the end of the day, the heavy presence of strict parents is undeniable. Moral laws, although securing and being secured by transcendental freedom of the child, almost demolish her individual freedom and bound her to the laws legislated by the parent of reason.

There must be a place for the child. There must be a place for her freely to find herself, joyfully play in the playground and have the chance to fall in love and to practice her freedom. It would be brutal to raise the child in *a priority* and necessity, and then to leave her again to *a priority* and necessity. The *Critique of the Power of Judgment* is an attempt to make a room for the child of joy and vitality in the mansion of reason.

The reflecting power of judgment shows up in the third *Critique* with no claim of bringing about more *a priori* principles. There is no need for more necessity, law, universality, etc; this is the place of *art* and *life*. Metaphysics of life is a way to find a place for creation at the middle of strict lawfulness, and a place for *practicing* freedom in the middle of the prison of *a priority* and necessity. The metaphysics of life departs from both the mechanical and the teleological necessities and connects them to each other. In the organization of an organized/living being, the mechanical and the technical marry, and the material gets to meet the immaterial. A living being is, thus, the host of both necessity and freedom, and the present thesis is an effort to understand what it is for Kant to be such a being.

What motivated me to write on this topic was a passage from §65 of Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment* in which he makes a rather loose distinction between the concepts of *organized being* (organisierten Wesen) and *life* (Leben):

Perhaps one comes closer to this inscrutable property if one calls it an analogue of life: but then one must either endow matter as mere matter with a property (hylozoism) that contradicts its essence, or else associate with it an alien principle standing in communion with it (a soul), in which case, however, if such a product is to be a product of nature, organized matter as an instrument of the soul is already presupposed, and thus makes that product not the least more comprehensible, or else the soul is made into an artificer of this structure, and the product must be withdrawn from (corporeal) nature. Strictly speaking, the organization of nature is therefore not analogous with any causality that we know. (CPJ, 5:374-5)

I will argue in this thesis that such a distinction would have a great significance in Kant's philosophy in general and specifically in understanding his philosophy of life. However, the distinction has usually been underestimated or rejected in the scholarship. Rachel Zuckert (2007, 100) for example, takes the distinction as a strategy to include plants among living beings rather than taking it as a serious distinction which could mean something essential to Kant's philosophy. Functionalist scholars of Kant do not even recognize such a distinction, simply because they fight for mathematical laws of science and mechanics and they interpret even the most explicit metaphysical positions in favor of the exact sciences. Patricia Kitcher (1990) takes Kant's first *Critique* as a transcendental psychology and reduces his metaphysics and epistemology to a naturalistic philosophy of mind. Biologist scholars such as Marcel Quarfood (2004) are even more excited about science than Kant himself was about Newtonian physics and deny the inexplicability of organized beings in spite of the numerous passages in which Kant explicitly confirms this principle.

On the other hand, metaphysics-friendly scholars like Henry E. Allison (1992;1996), although providing some fascinating readings of Kant's metaphysics, teleology and biology, prefer to maintain the distinction minimally and emphasize the role of the faculties of cognition more than the principle of life itself. For example, in Allison's interpretation of Kant's account of freedom, the spontaneity of action is seen

as a capacity of rational beings. I will argue that the spontaneity of action is a characteristic of *life* in general and not only of rational beings. In fact, that is one of the pivotal distinctions between the concept of life and the organized being (deprived of life; hypothetically of course).

Paul Guyer (2005) provides an exciting reading of the inexplicability of organized/living being by insisting on the *immateriality* of the principle of life, but he sadly does not take such a peculiar characteristic seriously enough to give it a worthy position in Kant's system of philosophy. I will show that the immateriality of the principle of life and the inexplicability of organized beings is one of the central issues in Kant's philosophy from its beginning to its end.

My views are closer to the scholars who insist on the metaphysical interests of Kant's philosophy than to the scholars who are more focused on Kant's scientific intentions. Concerning Kant's account of organized being and life, my view is strongly different from the functionalist, naturalist or merely biological views and is much closer to the views of scholars such as Suma Rajiva (2009) and Hannah Ginsborg (1997) who find the purposiveness of organic nature, the inexplicability of organized beings and the principle of life in the organized being fundamentally important to Kant's accounts of ethics, aesthetics, theology and his metaphysics in general.

I believe the loose distinction must be seen as strongly significant to Kant's system of philosophy since it illuminates a type of being which carries within itself two different types of causality: from mechanism, and from freedom. Is the business of the metaphysics of nature and of morals anything but to relate these two types of causality? I do think that neither of the two is able to open a *suitable* room for

freedom, and this is because they deal with ideals only. Neither the teleology of the first *Critique*, nor the transcendental freedom of the second has a sufficient touchstone with the empirical. Laws of understanding and the moral laws of reason are both picking the stars from the sky and are unable to sell them to the kids of the playground. In these fancy mansions of ideality, the organized/living being offers a hand from reality and becomes a manifestation of freedom which could be seen, touched, smelt, sympathized with and loved.

The discussion of the thesis revolves mainly around the topics such as the mind-body problem, different implications of the principle of unity, the mechanical inexplicability of organized beings, the status of the reflecting power of judgment and the principle of purposiveness, the immateriality of the principle of life and its relation to the concept of organized being, and the mediatory role of the organized/living being in Kant's system of philosophy. The first chapter of the thesis provides a brief background to Kant's philosophy of life in the first and the third *Critique* by investigating his critical approach to the concepts of life and organized being in some of his pre-*Critical* works. The pre-*Critical* works from the *Living Forces* of 1746 to the *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer* of 1766 manifest Kant's early interest in those concepts. The problem of life and organized being shows itself as more of a problem of dynamics in *Living Forces* and is situated in Kant's contemporary debates around the concepts of *living*, *active* and *motive* force; and is tightly connected to the mind-body problem. Kant's *New Elucidation* of 1755, while embracing the mind-body problem in its relation to epistemology, and revealing one of the first *Critical* attempts made by Kant in order to limit reason within its boundaries, represents a relatively extensive account of Kant's distinction between the organic and inorganic nature and escalates,

to an extent, the mind-body problem to the question of organization in nature. The last two of Kant's pre-*Critical* works to be discussed in the first chapter, *The Only Possible Argument* (1763) and *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, are mostly focused on the theological aspects of the problem of life and organized beings. Although the organization of nature and the principle of life provide the grounds of appealing to the concept of God as the highest principle of unity, beauty, life and teleology, they are taken to be *inexplicable* within the realm of possible experience.

The *Critique of Pure Reason*, which is the main focus of the second chapter of this thesis, considers most of the themes mentioned above about the organized being and life in the pre-*Critical* works, mainly from the point of view of reason, its limits, and its principles or characteristics such as unity, systematicity, teleology and purposiveness. In the *Preface* to the first *Critique*, the systematic unity of reason is seen as analogous to the organic unity of nature in its organized products. Systematic or organic unity is taken as the unity under a concept; as a result, the principles of teleology and purposiveness reach a higher level of significance in the investigation of the living nature as manifested in the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic* and in the *Doctrine of the Soul* in the *Paralogisms*. As in the pre-*Critical* works, the organized products of nature remain inexplicable by the laws of mechanics: their teleological character takes them beyond the reach of mechanical explanation, and allows them to reveal a principle of freedom in their existence, which is the very principle of life as the capacity to originate action voluntarily. Thus, the organized/living being becomes the battlefield of mechanical necessity versus freedom. The mind-body problem of the pre-*Critical* works is now a battle between system and freedom; blind mechanism and teleology. Yet, there is no end to this battle

in the first *Critique*, mainly because pure reason alone is neither armed with the accurate instrument in order to handle the challenge of purposiveness and freedom, nor has it been prepared to fully welcome them and offer them a precious seat in its settlements.¹

The *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, as we will see in the third chapter of the thesis, is an attempt to settle the battle down by making each side of the conflict take one step closer to the other. The reflecting power of judgment is introduced by Kant as a faculty of cognition which is closer to nature than pure speculative reason, and acts on nature's behalf. Also, the purposiveness of nature is explained as an *internal* principle of purposiveness in the *inner* organization of the organized being. Thus, nature in its organized products opens up a room for the principles of freedom and teleology. In this way, a living/organized being becomes the co-product of both the technique and the mechanics of nature; and thus manifests both freedom and system.

Therefore, the organized/living being in its dual character plays the peculiar role of mediating between metaphysics and physics. From such a perspective we can begin to understand the passage of §65. In the conclusion, I will try to make sense of that paragraph based on the Kantian interpretation of life I present in the three chapters. I conclude that the peculiarity of the inner causality of organized beings and the presence of the immaterial principle of life in their existence puts them beyond the

¹ Although there are fascinating aspects of life manifested in Kant's practical works, the moral perspective of Kant's practical philosophy in relation to the concept of life would take this thesis beyond its scope, which is the concept of life in general and not the moral/rational life of the human being.

metaphysics of nature and beneath the metaphysics of morals. Thus, the living being offers its own metaphysical status with its own limits and liberties.

Chapter One:

Pre-Critical works: Mind-Body Problem within the Limits of Reason

Introduction:

Most research on Kant's account of the organized being and life starts with the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and is mainly focused on the second part of the third *Critique*.² Although such an approach towards Kant's philosophy of life is quite legitimate, given that those works are presenting Kant's most extensive and profound discussions about life and the organized being; yet, there is a lot more to be learned from his pre-*Critical* works about those concepts.

The tendency to skip the pre-*Critical* works in Kant scholarship is based on the belief that these works are generally lacking the most significant characteristic of Kant's philosophy, i.e. the *Critical* method. Nonetheless, it seems to me that Kant's critical approach towards Cartesian, Leibnizian and Wolffian metaphysics as well as his constant attempt to modify and revise principles of cognition in his pre-*Critical* works is a good support for claiming that the pre-*Critical* period of Kant's career was not at all pre-critical or dogmatic. By evaluating and adjusting the principles of cognition within the limits of possible experience, he begins the *Critical* project of limiting reason to its boundaries from his first works such as *New Elucidation*, *Only Possible Argument* and *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*.

² See the general Introduction.

This is not the place to investigate in detail the validity of the above claim but it is necessary to mention that it is neither a claim without a background in Kant scholarship, nor an idiosyncratic interpretation of Kant's pre-*Critical* texts which is made up ad hoc or without substance. I find my reading of Kant's pre-*Critical* works to be closer to those of the scholars such as Martin Schönfeld (2006), Graham Bird (2009) and Andrew Carpenter (2001), than to the readings in which pre-*Critical* works are overshadowed by the three *Critiques* and not being taken seriously at all. Thus, the present chapter investigates the characteristics of the concepts of life and organized being in a few of Kant's pre-*Critical* works, namely in *Living Forces*, *New Elucidation*, *Only possible Argument* and *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*.

Starting with the *Living Forces* of 1746 I will show, briefly, one of Kant's first interests in the concept of life as free action and its relation to the systematic order of the world. The main themes of the work could be named as the conflict between the concepts of *living force* and *matter*, and the implications of that conflict in dynamics.

Kant's *New Elucidation* (1755) provides a good entry discussion to the mind-body problem which remains to be one of the main issues in Kant's philosophy of life for the rest of his career. By using the concepts of *antecedently* and *consequentially* determining grounds, Kant tries to explain motion and order in different products of nature by making a distinction between organic and inorganic nature, a distinction which is going to be one of the central points of the present thesis to its end.

Only Possible Argument of 1763 offers a more detailed account of the distinction between organic and inorganic nature by emphasizing the *contingency* of the inner systematicity of organized beings, and also, by stressing the peculiarity of

the *living* principle in the organic products of nature. Other key points to be mentioned in *Only Possible Argument* are the significance of the principle of teleology to the systematic unity of organized beings in their inner reciprocal connections, and the relation of that principle (i.e. of teleology) to the principle of *life* as the principle of *voluntary* action.

And finally, the *immateriality* of the principle of life, as well as Kant's resistance to metaphysical explanations of that principle which go too far in describing living nature by supersensible notions are valuable lessons to be learned about Kant's philosophy of life from his *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer* (1766).³

Thoughts on the True Estimation of Living Forces (LF) of 1746 is where the question of life emerges in Kant's works, although philosophy has not yet fully become Kant's main concern. He begins his philosophical development with research on a concept which is tightly related to the concept of life, i.e. the concept of *living force*. The work is mainly on dynamics and covers the intellectual debates on living forces from Descartes to Leibniz and from Newton to Wolff. The first chapter is devoted to a metaphysical discussion around the concepts of *vis activa*, *vis motrix* and *vis viva*.⁴ The metaphysical thesis of the first chapter, as Carpenter (2001, 148) points

³ Kant's *Inaugural Dissertation* (1770) also contains some relevant points to the topic of this thesis. However, since most of these points are covered in the other works I am looking at in the thesis; I shall refer to them in footnotes on occasion, instead of including an extensive discussion on the *Inaugural Dissertation* in the present chapter.

⁴ Active force, moving force and living force.

out, is to rework the Leibnizian concept of *vis activa*, and also, to offer a solution to the mind-body problem based on the notion of transeunt causation.⁵

Kant, firstly, broadens the affectivity of *vis activa* to external motion and change, while the Leibnizian conception of active force is limited to the change in a substance's inner state. Secondly, Kant rejects the Wolffian limitation of the affectivity of transeunt force to external motion. Thus, Kant finds the Leibnizian view too internally oriented and the Wolffian theory too externally directed. According to Carpenter, what Kant is looking for is more like an Aristotelian notion of *entelechy* which allows him to explain both internal and external motions with a single force. In other words, if *vis activa* is responsible for both internal and external motion of a substance, then, "a single force could cause both motion in bodies and representations in soul" (Carpenter 2001). Therefore, although Kant takes the Leibnizian active force as being prior to extension (matter and space) as granted- as opposed to Wolffian moving force- Kant goes even beyond Leibniz by recognizing external interaction as being caused by the inner motion of the substance (Schönfeld 2006, 36).

Force is, for Kant (LF, 1:23), prior to matter and space because with no force, which is able to act externally, there would be no connection, and without connection there would be no order and as a result, no space. The force of his argument consists in two main factors: first, the concept of living force emerges from free motion in nature (which is most obvious in organized beings), and second, *external* motion of a substance is explicable only with the notion of active force. Yet, although the action is

⁵ As opposed to *immanent causation*, the *transeunt causation* (intersubstantial causation) is the causality of a substance on another. Immanent causation, on the other hand, is when a substance acts on itself. According to Leibniz (Monadology, §7, §11; Discourse on Metaphysics, §14; for more, see: Broad, 1975), no transeunt causation is possible in the created world; which is another way of saying the monads do not have windows.

originated from an inner active force, but its functioning in the world of matter is subject to the laws of physics and dynamics. For instance, a basketball must be shot by a force which originated from the living force of the basketball player, but whether she scores or not is dependent upon the laws of dynamics. What actually is being done here is the replacement of Leibniz's pre-established harmony with a necessary harmony established by laws of dynamics and physics.

Therefore, there is free action on the one hand, and mechanical order, on the other. I take this moment to be one of the first occasions of the emergence of Kant's involvement with the question of life as free action versus the systematic order of nature: a question which never leaves him to the end of his career.

In *New Elucidation of the First Principles of Metaphysical Cognition* of 1755 (NE) Kant shows more interest in the metaphysical side of the debate about living forces and motion in general, and tries to elaborate the principles of cognition instead of providing a scientific investigation. The second section of the book provides a fascinating discussion about the concept of "ground" (which, I believe, reveals one of the roots of Kant's critical project). The concept of a ground, as Kant explains it, is necessary for explaining the connection between a subject and a predicate; further, is ontologically necessary for said connection to take place in actuality, i.e. to be determined. There are two types of determining grounds: those which determine *antecedently* and those which determine *consequentially*. The former is the ground of being and becoming, while the latter is the ground of knowing.⁶ The antecedently

⁶ Kant's peculiar explanation of the difference between the two types of determining ground, also gives us a good hint to understand the genesis of the Kantian distinction between regulative and constitutive principles. A regulative principle, similar to the consequentially determining ground, does not attribute anything to actuality, although it makes knowledge

determining ground is the reason *why*, and determines the actual connection between a subject and a predicate, and thus, is the ground of being and becoming. On the other hand, the consequentially determining ground is only the ground of knowing, and thus, is the reason *that* (NE, 1:392). The peculiarity of such a distinction lies on the fact that the ground of knowing is itself grounded on the ground of being and becoming. Kant's example might make the difference between the two grounds clearer:

I shall take as an example the eclipse of the satellites of Jupiter. I maintain that they furnish *the ground of knowing* that light is propagated successively and with a specifiable velocity. But this ground determines this truth only consequentially. For if Jupiter had no satellites at all, or if no occultation were produced by their successive revolutions, light would, nonetheless, still move in time in exactly the same way, although this might not, perhaps, be known to us. Or, to rely more heavily on the given definition: the phenomena of the satellites of Jupiter, which demonstrate the successive motion of light, presupposes precisely that very property of light, without which these phenomena could not occur in the way in which they do occur. It follows, therefore, that they determine this truth only consequentially. However, the ground of becoming, that is to say, the ground why the motion of light involves a specifiable expenditure of time is to be found (if you adopt the view of Descartes) in the elasticity of the elastic globules of the atmosphere. ... This would be a ground which determines antecedently. In other words, it would be a ground such that, were it not posited, that which was determinate would not occur at all. (NE, 1:392-3)

In other words, the antecedently determining ground *makes* the experience possible while the consequential one *explains* the experience. The former does something in actuality, while the latter relates the actuality to our cognition.

As mentioned before, Kant made two moves in his *LF* to depart from Wolff and Leibniz: to relate external motion to some kind of *inner* active force, and to take

possible. On the other hand, a constitutive principle, like the antecedently determining ground, has the claim of determining things in actuality.

external motion as the necessary result of inner motion. A similar move is manifested here in *NE* which could be now explained using the concepts of antecedently and consequentially determining ground. Kant asserts:

No change can happen to substances except in so far as they are connected with other substances; their reciprocal dependency on each other determines their reciprocal changes of state. (*NE*, 1:410)

On the one hand, motion is possible only in a reciprocal connection between objects, and on the other hand, as we saw earlier, reciprocal connections (like any other phenomenon in actuality) can take place only if they are grounded by antecedently determining ground. Thus, there should be a *ground* upon which change, and so, reciprocal connection is possible: all changes need a ground.

Now that logic is maintained by Kant in explaining the relation between representations and external bodily objects: representations result from a *change* in perception, with the change taking place in the inner state of the soul.⁷ However, such a change cannot possibly occur without actual external existence of external bodies. That is to say, the generation of change in our soul, which shows itself as a representation—which is in turn a change in our perception—needs an antecedently determining ground not only in our soul but also in external reality: according to the passage above, change must be determined in a reciprocal relation, i.e. it is intentional (in the logical sense). The soul being seen as a *simple* substance in isolation and with no connection to something external cannot even *conceive* anything as external or extended. And an antecedently determining ground cannot determine any change solely by an inner force without being connected to other objects, despite what Wolffians claimed. As a result, bodily objects must exist to shape the determining

⁷ See also Kant's *Inaugural Dissertation*, Paragraphs 4 and 5.

ground in accordance with which the consequentially determining ground can make knowledge possible:

...the soul is subject (in virtue of inner state) to inner changes. Since, as we have proved, these changes cannot arise from its nature considered in isolation and as disconnected from other things, it follows that there must be a number of things present outside the soul with which it stands in a reciprocal connection. (NE, 1:411)

The force of Kant's argument lies in two main points: one, the simplicity of the soul in isolation, and two, the very existence of representations (of sensible object) the generation of which cannot be explained merely by the inner motion of a simple substance: "It is likewise apparent from the same considerations that the change of perceptions also takes place in conformity with external motion" (NE, 1:412). That is to say, the consequentially determining ground as the ground of *knowing* must have a reference to an antecedently determining ground as the ground of *being and becoming*. Thus, the connection between the two grounds is the connection between knowledge and actuality, i.e. between mind and body.

How is this related to the topic of life and organized being? Kant himself provides an answer to that question: "some kind of organic body must be attributed to all spirits"(NE, 1:412); and that is a result of the argument explained above. Motion and change already exist in the world as real phenomena (as opposed to the Leibnizian claim manifested in his theory of pre-established harmony) and thus require a determining ground. The ground of change in the sensible world of extension and multiplicity cannot be merely rooted in the simple isolated soul, although it is originated from there. A simple isolated substance already has a ground due to its

inner state which determines it as whatever that substance is; thus, for a change to occur, another ground must be added to that substance so the change, as a new determination, will be possible to occur. Therefore, the ground of the generation of motion is the *soul*, but such a motion can happen only if some kind of organic *body* is attributed to the soul.

But why *organic* body? Kant (NE, 1:413) claims that the co-existence of the substances of the universe does not explain the organic relation between them and so there is a need for a "certain community of origins" which leads to the harmonious dependence of the parts of an organic body.

Organic relation (or even connection of substances in general) already exists between substances and such a relation is possible only if God exists. In other words, since all motions are originated from a single source (God's intelligence), as a result, all motions, changes, and connections are unified under a single concept which makes them harmoniously connected to each other:

Since, therefore, in so far as each individual substance has an existence which is independent of other substances, no reciprocal connection occurs between them; and since it does not fall to finite beings to be the cause of other substances, and since, nonetheless, all things in the universe are found to be reciprocally connected with each other—since all this is the case, it has to be admitted that this relations depends on a communality of cause, namely on God, the universal principle of beings. (NE, 1:413)

It must be said that, it is not clear here in *NE* if Kant uses the idea of God to explain the organic relation between substances, or vice versa. It seems to me that the reason of that vagueness is Kant's unstable explanation of God, and God's position in his philosophy. Sometimes Kant employs theological implications of the concept of

God to provide metaphysical explanations, and at other times he prefers to make use of the metaphysical implications of that concept to prove the theological concept of God. The former almost fades away in his *Critical* philosophy while the latter turns out to be one of the main pillars of his *Critical* project.⁸

What interest me here in *NE* are two characteristics of organic connections mentioned by Kant: first, the *unity* of all organically connected substances under a *concept*, and second, attributing the *generation* of that connection to a *teleological* principle. In this way, the very existence of organic relations in the universe not only shows a systematic relation established in a harmonious way, but also manifests the existence of a teleological active force which is the ultimate ground of the harmonious connection between substances. Unity under a concept is the very meaning of teleology, and is the ground of the existence of the organized being. Unity and teleology are combined in the organic products of nature. This peculiar connection between the concepts of unity and teleology will be discussed in more detail once I get into the second chapter.

The Only Possible Argument to Support a Demonstration of the Existence of God (OPA) of 1763 sheds more light on Kant's conception of organized and living beings by using a similar logic to what we have seen up until now in *LF* and *NE*. The first point to be mentioned here is Kant's emphasis on the role of purposiveness and its necessary connection to understanding; we saw in *LF* that this is by the activity of the active force that connection is possible between substances. Now, by the same token, Kant (OPA, 2:88-93) claims that the very harmonious beautiful order recognized in animals and plants, plus the contingency of such a harmony, lead us to confirm the

⁸ See *Inaugural Dissertation*, Paragraph 22.

existence of an understanding. What is new here is the emphasis on the *contingency* of the reciprocal relation between the parts of organisms.

Order and harmony in organic nature differ from the necessary order of the inorganic one. As Kant asserts:

There is manifest in this case great art and a contingent combination of factors which has been made by free choice in accordance with certain intentions...The structure of plants and of animals displays a constitution of this kind; and it is a constitution which cannot be explained by appeal to the universal and necessary laws of nature. (OPA, 2:114)

It is possible to explain mechanically the order of inorganic nature because it is a result of the necessary laws of nature in their application to actuality (although, according to Kant, the very necessary unity proves the existence of a creator). However, organic nature is beyond the grasp of mechanical explanation because the different parts of an organized body do not suggest any necessary ground for their reciprocal connection other than the purpose they are made to meet. For example, nothing in the mechanical nature alone necessitates the existence of reciprocal relation between *eyes* and *fingers*! Mechanically speaking, they are two independent phenomena with two different grounds and nothing (mechanical) can make them relate to each other in an organic fashion. Such a contingency cannot be seen in the inorganic products of nature. For example, a piece of rock is in no meaningful⁹ (i.e. purposive) reciprocal connection with the ocean. The only reciprocal relation they have is the result of the necessary laws of physics (science): they reciprocally affect one another, but only in the way which is necessitated by their mechanical characteristics. And more than that, the necessary causal relation between a piece of

⁹ Aesthetic meanings excluded.

rock and the ocean is not aimed at any goal which is determined internally by their purposive constitution. The type of interconnection between eyes and fingers is different due to its purposiveness: they are related to each other in order to achieve a goal, which is the survival of the animal of which they are the parts.¹⁰ To use Kant's example, the profound harmony of celestial bodies and the complex order of their connection can be explained by Newtonian law of gravitation, and according to Kant, it could be claimed that it is possible to explain the whole harmony of inorganic nature by investigating the universal laws by which such a harmony and unity is necessarily produced. Nonetheless, such a necessary unity cannot be attained in the case of organic nature. No law of nature necessitates the unity of different organs, because none of the organs necessitates the other unless for the sake of the whole. The unity in this case is *contingent* and is a product of *artifice*.

Therefore, organic nature is distinguished from inorganic nature: the unity under which the inorganic nature is ordered is a matter of natural necessity, but the unity in the case of organic nature cannot be necessitated by nature alone; there has to be a *will* to necessitate the contingent. And that is the meaning of purposive or teleological relation.¹¹

Kant does not say it explicitly but I believe he would find it accurate to say that different organs of an organism are unified under different grounds, while in the case of inorganic nature a single ground suffices for the explanation of its unity, i.e. God's will. That is to say, *as if* the unity and harmony in an organized product of

¹⁰ See also *Inaugural Dissertation*, Paragraphs 1 and 2.

¹¹ It would be fruitful to our later discussions if we notice that Kant (OPA, 2:121-124) asserts what leads us towards the contingent unity of organic nature is the *impossibility* of explaining it mechanically and not just because a mechanical explanation is too difficult to attain.

nature is the unity of, and harmony between, different *grounds*, not of, and between, different objects under a single ground which results the necessary laws of nature. Each organ has its own reason *why*, and an organic being as a whole is a combination of those reasons under a single one which is the purpose of that organized being. For example, the reason *why* of an eye is to see, and the reason *why* of an ear is to hear, and yet they are reciprocally connected to each other under a more general ground which is the animal for whom eyes and ears are different organs.

Such a distinction between organic and inorganic nature elevates the unity of organized nature beyond the harmony of an inorganic one: unity of different grounds is possible only as a product of choice and artifice, and not as a product of natural necessity.¹² The immediate ground of the unity of different grounds, as I understand it, is the life of the organized being, and the ground of the existence of such amazing unity, according to Kant, is God's will:

Take the example of the structure of an animal. Its organs of sense perception are connected with organs of voluntary movement and life, and connected in such an ingenious fashion that once one's attention has been drawn to it, one would have to be of ill-natured disposition (for no one could be so unreasonable) not to recognize the existence of a Wise Author, who had so excellently ordered the matter of which the animal was constituted. (OPA, 2:125)

The connection between sense perception and voluntary action is also a contingent connection, meaning that, necessary laws of nature do not presuppose or necessitate such a harmonious connection between minds and bodies. Mechanical laws are the

¹² In a general sense, both organic and inorganic natures are products of God's choice; the point is, in the case of organic beings, there must be a specific purpose and intention within the organized being itself to gather all the different organs under a specific unity under which the organized being as a whole becomes possible. This view of purposiveness is what develops in the third *Critique* as "internal (objective) purposiveness".

necessary laws of motion in matter and do not allow any contingency due to which the principle of life as the capacity to act voluntarily could result. Now that such a principle is found in corporeal nature, it cannot be explained mechanically: teleology is needed in order to explain such a mysterious community of matter and life. Yet, all teleology can do, is to point to a higher intention (idea, concept) which could serve as the ground of the possibility of such a community. Yet, even teleology cannot explain the *quality* and the *characteristics* of such a community since no empirical experience provides us with any data about those characteristics.

Dreams of a Spirit-Seer Elucidated by Dreams of Metaphysics (DS) of 1766 is a work dedicated to emphasize that inexplicability. The "spirit-seer" Kant refers to in the title was a theological mystic figure named Swedenborg (1688-1772) claimed to be in touch with "spirits" and being able to communicate with "ghosts". Kant's work was written mainly to refute the validity of the claims of "metaphysicians" to be in touch with supersensible entities. The first part of the book, the "dogmatic" part, contains a few points about Kant's position on the concept of *life* which are quite fruitful to our discussion. The purpose of the book, as mentioned above, is to refute all claims about spirit-beings and it shows Kant's attempt to save nature from ad hoc explanations based on spirituality, and inclinations of "lazy reason" to put the burden of explanation on the shoulders of some alien supernatural entity. His arguments against such explanations do not seem to offer anything new from what had been already mentioned in the history of philosophy; namely, arguments based on impenetrability of matter, simplicity of the soul and its shapelessness, incommunicability of a supposed "spirit-world", and difficulties of explaining a causal relation between matter and spirit.

What is new in his arguments is his *Critical* approach towards this matter, namely, to investigate the possibility and validity of such claims based on the limits of our reason:

...if this enquiry should turn into philosophy... and if it should have knowledge not only of the objects themselves but also of their relation to the human understanding, its frontiers will contract in size and its boundary-stones will be securely fixed. (DS, 2:369)

Kant, then, defines metaphysics as "a science of the *limits of human reason*" (DS, 2:368) and finds supernatural explanations beyond those limits. In this way, although the existence of an immaterial principle as the ground of life in nature is considered as undeniable, nothing can be said about the *community* of such a principle with matter and its conditions. Therefore, claims about the spirit-world and anything related to it are beyond the limits of human reason which is situated here on the earth and is bound to the clandestine life.

It is important to see what Kant refutes, and what he finds beyond refutation in claims about spiritual and immaterial principles and beings. What he finds beyond the limits of reason and thus nonsensical is any *positive* claim about the existence of spirits and ghosts as independent creatures from the material world, and the possibility of communicating with those creatures in the way that someone like Swedenberg maintains. Those claims have no reference to the empirical world and thus cannot be trusted. Such claims should not be taken seriously and even are likely to be the signs of madness or charlatantry, Kant asserts in *DS*.

However, there are at least two phenomena which do not allow Kant to refute the existence of immaterial principles in the material world altogether: the phenomenon of life, and that of moral faith. Kant explicitly makes it clear that by

refutation of spirit-beings he is not rejecting the mysterious principle of life: "I must confess that I am very much inclined to assert the existence of immaterial nature in the world, and to place my own soul in the class of these beings"(DS, 2:327). And he explains the reason of that inclination in an extensive footnote:

It is a reason which applies at the same time to the sentient being of animals. The principle of *life* is to be found in something in the world which seems to be of an immaterial nature. For all *life* is based upon the inner capacity to determine itself *voluntarily*. (DS, 2:327)

As Kant explains his standpoint, the main characteristic of matter is that it fills the space (i.e. it is extended) "in virtue of a necessary force" and is limited by external forces. In other words, matter is bound to the law of inertia and its motion is necessitated by external forces and by its relation with other material substances. Therefore, the material is "dependent" and "constrained". On the other hand, the principle of life as the principle of spontaneity of action implies a kind of determination which is not externally necessitated (in its generation), but is possible only from an inner capacity. Thus, the living principle "can scarcely be of material nature" (DS, 2:327).

Although the existence of the immaterial principle of life is not denied, its community with body cannot be explained, because it demands data to be attained from beyond the realm of possible experience. The community of the principle of life and body remains an insoluble mystery. Hylozoism and materialism cannot explain that community because of their inappropriate reductionism. Hylozoism attributes the principle of *life* to *matter* while materialism has no room for such a principle. The claim of the former is contradictory because it attributes the principle of spontaneous motion to a substance which is by definition determined by the law of inertia, and the

latter simply "deprives everything of life" (DS, 2:330) and does not offer a solution to the problem of the community between the principle of life and matter.¹³

Therefore, organic nature manifests both the signs of the material and the immaterial, but does not offer any ground for the possible experience to investigate the community of the two. Moreover, even the term "community" (Gemeinschaft) is being used only problematically, because it says too much about that which we cannot possibly know. Therefore, *life*, due to its immateriality, goes beyond the limits of reason and cannot be known.

To sum up, organized being manifests a contingent systematicity. The contingency of its organization leads to teleology and purposiveness, and is a result of the living principle in its existence as the capacity of originating action voluntarily. Thus, the organized being contains in itself a lawfulness and necessity hand in hand with freedom and contingency. Such a communion of antinomies cannot be understood within the limits of reason, because life is not what matter can handle; freedom is not something the scientific reason can understand.

Conclusion:

Kant was engaged with the problem of life in the form of the mind-body problem from the beginning of his philosophical career. From his *Living Forces* of 1746 to *Dreams of a Spirit-seer* of 1766, the concept of *life* and the systematic

¹³ As we will see in next chapters, Kant's opposing approach towards hylozoism, materialism and spiritualism is also manifest in the first and the third *Critique*.

organization of the living nature remained a mystery to him. The contingent systematic organization of the organic nature on the one hand, and the capacity of living beings to act voluntarily manifest the signs of two apparently incompatible ways of existence: material and immaterial. The difficulty in conjoining the two poles escalates in his later works to more fundamental problems such as the problem of freedom, teleology, theology and even of the accuracy of scientific explanation of living beings. Kant, on the one hand, is not inclined to refuse the *immateriality* of the principle of life and the necessity of a concept of purposiveness to the systematic order of organized beings, and on the other, cannot allow a supernatural explanation for the problem of community of the material and the immaterial which goes beyond the limits of reason. In this way, the *Critique of Pure Reason* investigates the problem within the realm of *reason*, and the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* elaborates the purposiveness and liveliness of the living nature in Kant's system of philosophy.

Chapter Two:

Critique of Pure Reason: Organized or Living? System or Freedom? All or Nothing?

Introduction:

As shown in chapter one, Kant's engagement with the question of life in his pre-*Critical* works is mainly manifested as the question of soul and its community with body. Due to the immateriality of the principle of life, any explanation of such a community goes beyond the limits of reason, and thus, the question of life stays somehow unanswered and insoluble. Three central concepts were involved in his investigation about organized/living beings in his pre-*Critical* works: soul (or mind), body, and reason.

However, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the two first concepts above become more or less overshadowed by the concept of pure reason. The kingdom of pure reason arises with a fully-equipped army and dominates almost everything with the alibi of limiting its territory: everything must be kept within the limits of pure reason and anything beyond those limits is either unrecognized, or unknowable.

Wise emperors do not leave their empires to the hands of chaos and choice: everything must be taken under control and be kept in its specific place in their kingdom. A system, an organization, an order must be elaborated with scrutiny in order to accomplish that goal. The third *Critique* is usually seen as the book of system; I think, perhaps, the *Critique of Pure Reason* is more worthy of such a name. From its

Preface to its *Doctrine of Method*, the book is dedicated to elaborate a system of reason, and to make sense of nature systematically.

As expected, the question of organized being and life is sunk into the question of *system* in the first *Critique*. The mind-body problem of the pre-*Critical* Kant escalates to the problem of unity and multiplicity: the king of pure reason and its unity on the one side, and the territory of empirical multiplicity on the other.

Nevertheless, it turns out that among the servants of the king, there is a class which is not subordinate to him and has the claim of having a system for itself: a system which offers in itself a place for freedom. That class, the organized nature, manifests a system even more wisely elaborated than the one built by the king, i.e. by understanding (or pure reason in general). Organized being is an organization of freedom and that is what makes it alive: it is the commonwealth of opposing states.

With that peculiar characteristic, where can we situate the organized being in Kant's system of reason and nature? Kant does not provide a detailed or an extensive answer to that question in the first *Critique*, and thus leaves his readers and scholars in numerous difficulties in answering that question. Most of the scholars who try to provide an answer to that question, like Paul Guyer (2005) in his *Kant's system of Nature and Freedom*, and John H. Zammito (1992) in his commentary on Kant's third *Critique* do not find a better way to find the answer than by looking for it in Kant's practical philosophy and in his third *Critique*. And that is because the organization of organized being, in its explanation, calls for the concepts which are not *fully* elaborated in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, namely, the concepts of judgment, purposiveness of nature, freedom etc.

However, as far as we are concerned with the first *Critique*, the concept of organized and living being is mainly discussed with its relation to the concepts of systematic unity, mechanical causality of nature, and only weakly to the concepts of freedom and teleology. Yet, I believe that even in these types of discussions, there is still room for the organized being and the concept of life as manifesting freedom and purposiveness.

To support this point, I will start with the *Preface* to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in order to describe Kant's approach to the concept of organized being from the point of view of the systematic unity of reason. Then, by investigating the different implications and meanings of the concept of unity in the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*, I will try to find a place for the concept of "inexplicability of organized beings" by mechanical laws. I will also investigate Kant's account of life in the *Doctrine of the Soul* in the *Paralogisms*. As Guyer (2005) suggests, Kant's discussion of the unity of nature is in conflict with the inexplicability of organized beings. I will try to situate and challenge Guyer's notion of conflict, in Kant's discussions about unity, causality, soul and teleology in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The inexplicability of organized being, as I understand it, is never denied in the first *Critique*. Such inexplicability, accompanied by the unity of nature as a whole, and the spontaneity of the principle of animality (which could also be seen in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*), says at least two things about Kant's philosophy of life: first, the living being, due to the principle of life as the faculty of spontaneity, while being a part of the system of nature, does not belong solely to the mechanical causality of nature; and second, if there is a system of nature, it must save room for freedom if it is also to include living beings. In this way, *life* might be seen

as a breaking point for the systematicity of nature and reason as explained in the first *Critique*: a breaking point the system tries to embrace. Thus, although the first *Critique* shows a tendency to build that room for life and freedom, it is only in the third *Critique* that the whole system is adjusted in order to accomplish that construction. Perhaps, this is why the third *Critique* is known as the book of system: it attempts to elaborate a system of freedom.

In the *Preface* to the second edition of *Critique of Pure Reason* (CPR) Kant compares the system of science, i.e. of metaphysics with an organized body; an analogy which could also be recognized in the *Cannon* and the *Architectonic of Pure reason*:

...pure speculative reason is, in respect of principles of cognition, a unity entirely separate and subsisting for itself, in which, as in an organized body, every part exists for the sake of all the others as all the others exist for its sake, and no principle can be taken with certainty in one relation unless it has at the same time been investigated in its thoroughgoing relation to the entire use of pure reason.¹⁴ (CPR, Bxxiii)

Unity is mentioned as the first characteristic of an organized body; a unity which stands for itself in independence. The possibility of such a unity demands a systematic

¹⁴ As Zammito (1992, 174) reads the passage above, "What is so significant about this connection with organic form is the nature of causality that applies in such forms: immanent, holistic, and simultaneous", and he takes it as "the key to the idea of the "unity of reason"." Although Zammito's point about the peculiarity of the inner causality of organized being is a legitimate point regarding Kant's discussion about organized beings in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, the significance of the organic *unity of reason* is more vital in Kant's discussion in the first *Critique*. There are metaphysical points asserted in *CPR* about the organic unity of reason which should not be missed or underestimated.

interconnection between multiplicities, and whenever such a systematic unity is found in nature, it would be a great source of amazement due to its distinguished peculiarity among the products of nature. How must such a unity be understood, and what are the difficulties in explaining that unity in nature? Is it possible at all to explain the very possibility of such a unity in nature? What does this unity say about the products of nature which manifest that unity? How is it possible for an organized body to perform a subsisting, independent unity which also could be found in pure reason if unity in nature, organic or inorganic, must take place in accordance with the laws of understanding and pure reason?

The interconnection of different parts of an organic whole immediately shows a causal relation between them. Also the connection of the totality of an organic whole with its parts must become possible through a kind of causal relation. How do these causal relations work and are they different types of causalities? And again, what do causal relations in organic nature tell us about organized beings as living beings in general and their characteristics, given that the systematic unity within living beings due to its contingency calls for a type of causality different from the necessary causality we see in dead nature?

After the *Prefaces* and the *Introduction* Kant explains his Transcendental Idealism by elaborating the thesis of *a priori* as the necessary and universal concepts of understanding. In the *Transcendental Aesthetic* he investigates space and time as the pure forms of intuition and the conditions of possible experience: all experience is spatio-temporal. He introduces the categories as the *a priori* principles of understanding-in the *Transcendental Analytic*- through which experience and knowledge become possible. The relation of the categories to metaphysics and also

their application in empiricity through schematism is also explained in *Transcendental Deduction* and *Analytic of Principles*.

I will focus on the *Transcendental Dialectic* for the next little while, where Kant tries to keep pure reason within its limits in its different uses. *Paralogisms of Pure Reason* and the *Appendix* to the *Transcendental Dialectic* are the sections I am going to spend the most time on, because they also have a focus on the limitations of the application of pure reason concerning the concept of the soul. We will also have a look at Kant's accounts of causality as explained in the resolution of the *Antinomies of Pure Reason* in order to get an insight into the differences between the causality as manifested by the necessary laws of mechanics, and the causality from freedom which is related to the principle of life as the capacity to originate action from an inner principle.

As Kant asserts in the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic* of *CPR*,

...the law of reason to seek unity is necessary, since without it we would have no reason, and without that, no coherent use of understanding, and, lacking that, no sufficient mark of empirical truth; thus in regard to the latter we simply have to presuppose the systematic unity of nature as objectively valid and necessary. (*CPR*, A651/B679)

The very existence and function of reason imply a meaningful interconnection between its concepts in conformity with understanding's cognitions. Moreover, the unity of reason must be transcendental and objective, while being regulative. It is regulative because it is a transcendental law of reason which is not related directly to an external object; rather, it is a "projected" principle which unifies the understanding and makes it possible for such a thing as pure reason to exist. Therefore, the organic unity of reason is not just about its purposive causality, but more than that, is the

ground of the possibility of its existence. There is manifoldness on one side as experience, and unity as idea on the other. And whenever such a dichotomy exists, a systematic unity is necessarily needed in order to relate them to one another. It is only through an organic systematicity among the manifolds that they can be unified. Otherwise, nature would be nothing but mere aggregate of substances; and in the lack of systematic unity, no knowledge of nature is possible, and nature itself as the sum total of all objects of experience can never exist as a whole. In other words, systematic unity is nothing but the systematic interconnection of its parts and their connection to the whole as the unifying concept under which they can exist as a self-subsisting whole.

The principle of unity is a regulative principle of reason which consists of ideas which are being applied in the empirical use of reason, and as a result, this principle does not say anything about the objective reality in its noumenality. Therefore, such a principle is hypothetical and projective, meaning that, it is a law of reason upon which understanding works in a way *as if* such a unity actually exists in nature in order to make nature understandable. As a result, all pure reason and understanding can do is approximate that unity in nature, and not grasp it in its totality. The principle of unity is necessary for the use of reason, and not for the constitution of nature in itself as noumenon (CPR, A647/B675-A650/B678).

One way to look at this matter is to result from the regulative character of the principle of unity a purely skeptical approach, and to deny its validity altogether. Nonetheless, there are more fascinating points (in my opinion) which could result from the regulativity of the principle of unity. If the principle upon which science is to become possible is a regulative principle, then, the practical conformity between the

principles of pure reason and nature leads us towards the conclusion that, therefore, there is yet a higher unity under which reason and nature could be unified. In this way, such a principle can make a profound connection between mind (manifesting freedom), body (manifesting mechanical necessity), and nature as a whole (at large), which includes both minds and bodies. There must be a greater harmony taking place between the laws of reason and that of nature in a wider perspective. Thus, there are different types of unities in different levels and different meanings.

There are different types of unity and different ways to explain and understand them. Logical unity is one of those types. Reason's *logical* principle of unity unifies the multiplicities under a principle as long as experience allows. By doing so, understanding (in general) becomes possible, while otherwise our knowledge would be nothing but aggregates of perceptions. The logical principle of unity is only a projective and hypothetical unity which works for the benefit of reason, and does not ascribe that unity to be found in nature in actuality (CPR, A648/B676).

There is yet another type of unity and activity of unification by reason which is more fundamental than the logical unity, and is the ground of it. This fundamental principle is reason's *transcendental* principle of unity which "would be a transcendental principle of reason, which would make systematic unity not merely something subjectively and logically necessary, as method, but objectively necessary" (CPR, A648/B676). According to that principle, reason seeks for systematic unity in nature based on an *a priori* concept which is in conformity with the laws of nature, and reason's empirical use. Thus, the logical unity would have no ground for its validity if it is not supported by the transcendental principle of unity, because there

would be no justification at all for reason in its logical use to prefer systematic unity of nature over taking it as mere aggregate of manifoldness (CPR, A651/B679).

Kant provides an example of different applications of reason in unifying multiplicities: "Among the different kinds of unity according to concepts of the understanding belongs the causality of a substance, which is called "power"" (CPR, A648/B676). There is a diversity of different powers in different substances, as there is a diversity of their effects. For example, there is a variety of powers of the human mind: "the power to distinguish, pleasure, desire, etc." (CPR, A649/B677). The logical principle of unity, by means of comparison, finds the similarities and "hidden identities" between the multiplicities of powers and unifies them under certain general powers which are called "fundamental powers". Then, the fundamental powers could be compared to one another and be collected under a yet more general power: "the absolutely fundamental power". The logical principle of unity seeks for commonalities between different substances in the empirical, and unifies the identical ones under a more general concept or category.

Yet, the logical principle of unity does not explain the very tendency reason has towards unification in its logical use:

For by what warrant can reason in its logical use claim to treat the manifoldness of the powers which nature gives to our cognition as merely a concealed unity, and to derive them as far as it is able from some fundamental power, when reason is free to admit that it is just as possible that all powers are different in kind, and that its derivation of them from a systematic unity is not in conformity with nature? (CPR, A651/B679)

Thus, there should be a transcendental concept of unity as an *a priori* principle which necessitates reason in its logical use to seek for unity in nature. It is only on the ground

of the transcendental principle of unity that reason's logical principle of unity can exist. And more importantly, it is only because of the transcendental principle that the systematic unity of nature could be seen as *objective*¹⁵ (CPR, A651/B679).

Guyer (2005, 87) takes the systematic unity of reason and of nature explained here as implying that there is a single fundamental cause (the fundamental power) by referring to which we can approximate a single type of *explanation* for the multiplicity of the properties of nature, and he takes that universal unity as being in conflict with inexplicability of organized beings by mechanical laws of nature. According to Guyer (2005), if the unity of all properties of nature under a single fundamental concept of causality exists, then it must be possible to explain organized beings based on the very universal laws by which we explain the rest of nature. Therefore, he claims that Kant changed his mind about the principle of unity from the first to the third *Critique*, because it is in the third *Critique* that Kant emphasizes the inexplicability of organized beings.

Guyer explains this issue and the apparent conflict by going through *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (CPJ) and *Opus Postumum* (OP). I would like instead, to offer a possible solution to Guyer's puzzle based on the *CPR*. I believe, although inexplicability of organisms and their strange case is explained in more detail in *CPJ* and *OP*, there are at least some textual supports in *CPR* to claim that organized beings have been already taken as mechanically inexplicable in the first *Critique*.¹⁶ Kant's discussion in the *Appendix* to the *Transcendental Dialectic* leaves room for this

¹⁵ In the Kantian use of the term, of course.

¹⁶ In fact, as I showed in the first chapter, inexplicability of organized beings can be tracked down to Kant's pre-*Critical* works.

inexplicability and the earlier discussion of the *Paralogisms* locates this inexplicability in the organized being's community of body and soul.

The first point to mention is the *type* of unity and process of unification Kant explains in the *Appendix* to the *Transcendental Dialectic* of *CPR*. There are at least two types of unity (as I distinguish them, although they are not explicitly differentiated by Kant), one of them is the unity under laws or rules, and the other one is unity under a concept or an idea as a ground. Based on the former, multiplicities could be unified because of their following the same law, and according to the latter, the unifying element is an idea which is at the same time the (consequentially determining) ground of the possibility of the very multiplicities and their laws. According to Kant (*CPR*, A113), a law is "the representation of a universal condition" according to which a certain manifold must be posited. In this way, laws are only representations of universals and not the universals themselves. There must be an *a priori* principle based on which the law could be applied to nature, and that is indeed the very meaning of transcendentalism. Therefore, the unity explained by the unifying power of the law is not yet a fundamental unity since it itself resulted from an *a priori* principle: a principle which leads to a rule and is itself a concept. Now, if the unity of reason and of nature imply the identity of their laws, then Guyer would be totally right in assuming that organized beings must be explicable by mechanical laws. However, the unity of reason is a type of unity which stands beyond the mechanical unity of nature. Mechanical causality shapes a systematic unity of nature in *accordance* with the laws of reason, and the mechanical law is not the highest law of reason itself. The laws of reason and of nature are themselves subject to a yet higher unity which is the highest idea possible. I would like to go even further and claim that, if Guyer is right

and the laws of reason and of nature as a whole are identical, then even the supersensible should be explicable by laws of mechanics. The fact that the multiplicities of fundamental powers are reducible to an absolutely fundamental power (CPR, A650/B678) does not make them identical nor does it annihilate the distinctions between multiplicities. On the contrary, as we will see, difference, distinction, and multiplicity are essential components of systematic unity.

As we see in the *Appendix*, there are three principles by which reason provides unity for the understanding (and they can be taken as the conditions of unity in general): sameness of kind or homogeneity, variety or specification, and affinity or continuity. There is a dialectical relation between these three principles of reason: the first is responsible for unifying the manifoldness of kinds under higher genera, the second makes manifoldness possible under lower species, and the third is the unity of the first and the second:

...the last arises by uniting the first two, according as one has completed the systematic connection in the idea by ascending to higher genera, as well as descending to lower species; for then all manifolds are akin one to another, because they are all collectively descended, through every degree of extended determination from a single highest genus. (CPR, A658/B686)

Thus, according to Kant, the principle of homogeneity guards against the manifoldness of original genera under which the manifold of species are interconnected to each other following the law of specification. The second law is also a principle of *unity*: a principle which makes *multiplicities* possible. If there is no multiplicity or difference, there will be no connection and interconnection between parts in a system, because the parts would not exist as parts if they are not unified

under a concept, and thus, are not parts of a *whole*.¹⁷ And with no parts, there would be no connection, and with no connection, no systematicity. In other words, the concept of "part" is intentional, meaning that, a part is always a part "of" a whole and is in connection with other parts which are also parts of the same whole. As mentioned in the first chapter, a ground is what determines a subject (being the unity) in its relation to a predicate (being the multiplicity), meaning that, both subject and predicate are necessary to the concept of a ground. Following the same logic, systematic unity, as the ground of the existence of the laws of nature in accordance with the laws of understanding, is the unity of *multiplicities* under a general concept. And that is because, for a systematic unity to make sense and take place, there must be both a manifold of parts, and also a concept of a whole under which those parts are unified.¹⁸

The concept of systematic unity can unify *multiplicities* under a general concept which embraces the different mechanisms, laws, concepts, and sub-systems in itself. Therefore, the inner law of the interconnection of the parts of organized beings does not have to be identical to the law of natural causality merely because both of them are generalized under a single concept. As a matter of fact, this is one of the most important peculiarities of organized beings. To say that all of nature, organic and inorganic, must be subject to the laws of mechanics does not follow at all from the transcendental or logical principles of unity. Organic and inorganic nature can be seen as two different genera with commonalities and distinctions. The fact that the two genera are unified under the concept of nature (in general) as a whole, implies both their commonalities and distinctions. It seems that Guyer recognizes the first law of

¹⁷ See chapter one.

¹⁸ And this is also the meaning of synthesis for Kant.

unity, i.e. of homogeneity, as granted, but underestimates the second law that is the law of specification.

Furthermore, the third law as mentioned above is the law of continuity and provides a higher unity which is the unity of the two principles. The type of unity suggested by the mechanical laws of nature is (by analogy) of the first one, namely the unity of all the species of the same kind under a single homogenous genus, and not a unity of the third type. The law of continuity in turn demands a transcendental law as its transcendental ground and thus stands before *all* the manifoldness. This unity is not a result of manifoldness; rather, the manifoldness is grounded in such a transcendental unity. Therefore, the first two principles of systematic unity mentioned above can be seen as laws only in so far as they are united under the *idea* of a highest unity.¹⁹

As opposed to unity under law, there is unity under a concept or idea. This type of unity is the ground of the possibility of multiplicities: it is the assumption of an *a priori* concept upon which the laws are grounded. In other words, this unity works as *nexus finalis* as opposed to, and above, the unity under the law which is based on *nexus effectivus* (CPR, A687/B715). For example, the unity of nature under the laws of mechanics is a unity based on the causal relation between multiplicities; but the unity of the different parts of an organism is a unity based on a concept which is at the same time the purpose of its existence. According to Kant, the highest unity based on the principle of purposiveness "opens up for our reason, as applied to the field of experience, entirely new prospects for connecting up things in the world in accordance with teleological laws, and thereby attaining to the greatest systematic unity among them"(CPR, A687/B715). Therefore, the laws of reason and the laws of nature are

¹⁹ This is also in conformity with Kant's objection to Leibniz' pre-established harmony.

possible only if there is a teleological law *above* them, which is in turn made possible by the highest idea. Furthermore, if there is a law under which the unity of nature and of reason is grounded, that law would not be the law of mechanics since the law of mechanics is itself grounded in the teleological law.

I need to mention two points regarding the concept of highest unity as the ground of the laws of nature in order to avoid being misunderstood.²⁰ First, the mechanical laws, as the *necessary* laws of nature, do not owe the *necessity* of their inner causality to anything external to nature itself. In other words, the teleological concept of unity, i.e. the idea of the highest unity, is only a regulative principle of reason and should not be taken as constitutive: "it is nothing but a regulative principle" (CPR, A688/B716). To take that principle as constitutive annihilates the necessity of natural laws and makes science impossible. However, it is important to notice that the regulative principle of the highest unity is also necessary for the possibility of nature as a whole: "This highest formal unity...makes it necessary to regard every ordinance in the world as if it had sprouted from the intention of a highest reason" (CPR, A686/B714). Therefore, on the one hand, nature in its mechanical products is bound to the necessary laws of mechanics, and on the other hand, the whole of nature is only possible if it is unified under an *idea* as its highest purpose. That remark supports my distinction between unity under a law and unity under an idea: the highest unity is a mere idea which works as a ground and does not interfere in the necessary laws of nature. As Kant puts it: "The regulative principle [of the highest unity]²¹ demands that systematic unity be presupposed absolutely as a

²⁰ Since the relation between mechanical and teleological laws in *CPR* is a controversial issue among Kant scholars.

²¹ Added by me.

unity of nature that is recognized not only empirically but also *a priori*, though still indeterminately, and hence as following from the essence of things" and, it "is only in the idea as a ground for the harmonious use of reason" (CPR, A693/B721). Therefore, the necessity of natural laws is intact as *natural* necessity, but it is at the same time grounded in the *regulative* idea of the highest unity. In other words, the highest idea is only a consequentially determining ground, as opposed to being antecedently: "if I antecedently make a highest ordering being the ground, then the unity of nature will in fact be done away with" (CPR, A693/B721). As shown in chapter one, an antecedently determining ground is the ground of being and becoming of the one which is grounded. Here, Kant says that the highest idea of teleological unity should not be taken as the ground of the determinacy of the laws of nature in empiricity, because the highest idea (being God's will) annihilates the necessity of those laws and makes them contingent upon God's will. Yet, the idea of highest unity is the ground of the possibility of the unity of nature as a whole, *consequentially*. This means that, the necessary harmonious causality of natural²² laws necessitates *reason* to presuppose an idea as the ground of a highest unity.

The second point is that Kant does not take the universal systematic unity of nature to be the unity under mechanical laws; rather, he takes it as the unity in relation to the idea of a highest intelligence:

These disadvantageous consequences come to view even more clearly in the case of the dogmatism of our idea of a highest intelligence and the teleological system of nature...that is falsely grounded on it.²³...This mistake can be avoided if we do not consider from the viewpoint of ends merely a few parts of nature, e.g., the distribution of dry land, its structure

²² Used transcendently and not dogmatically.

²³ Meaning, as antecedently.

and the constitution and situation of mountains, or even only the organization of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, but if we rather make the systematic unity of nature entirely universal in relation to the idea of a highest intelligence. (CPR, A691/B719)

The passage above confirms, firstly, that there is yet a greater unity which stands beyond the unity under the universal laws of nature in its mechanical application, and that higher unity is the *unity in relation to the idea of a highest intelligence*. Therefore, mechanical unity is not the most universal unity we can find in nature. Secondly, plants, animals, and even some other products of nature which carry with themselves a strong sense of purposiveness are not routinely taken as being unified under the mechanical laws of nature when teleology is not included. The structure and the organization of organized beings call for a higher concept of unity which stands beyond the unity under the mechanical laws of nature. If we are to take organic nature as a member of the systematic unity of nature, we ought to open a room for the concept of purposiveness and teleology. And that is also one of the reasons of the inexplicability of organized beings which will be discussed next.

I believe, contra Guyer, the inexplicability of organisms is in no way a new thing that shows up in the third *Critique*. We have seen in the first chapter that the same claim is made by Kant in his *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer and Only Possible Argument*; and I think it is also manifested here in the first *Critique*.

Here, the organized being in question is the human being²⁴ and it is explained in Kant's observation on the *Doctrine of the Soul* in the *Paralogisms*. Kant (CPR, A381) compares the doctrine of soul with the doctrine of bodies; the former being the physiology of inner sense, the latter the physiology of the object of outer sense.

²⁴ I will explain the difference between human being and other living beings later in this chapter.

According to Kant (CPR, A381), as far as we are concerned with the inner sense that has only *time* as the form of its intuition, nothing can be found abiding in it empirically and, therefore, it stands beyond the realm of possible experience. Yet the existence of the soul as our thinking self is far beyond refutation.²⁵ He explains his standpoint on the soul by investigating three questions about: 1) the possibility of the community of the soul with an organic body 2) about the beginning of this community and 3) as to the end of the community. Concerning the first question, Kant takes the community of soul and body as "the animality" of human being which is at the same time "the state of the soul in the life of human being" (CPR, A384). And then he takes the community of thinking and extended beings as "life" (CPR, A393). That is not a new definition at all in the history of philosophy and it was pretty common in Kant's time too among philosophers, but the way he talks about such a community is original.

Kant mentions three theories about the community of soul and body, and refutes all of them in part or in their entirety. These theories—or "usual systems" as he refers to them—are that of physical influence, pre-established harmony, and of supernatural assistance. The system of physical influence, a Cartesian theory being held by Wolff in *Rational Psychology* (1734), implies that mind and body are in a causal relation and can influence each other by their natural powers (CPR, A383; Guyer and Wood, CPR, 740). The system of pre-established harmony is the Leibnizian solution to the mind-body problem and indicates that although mind and body are subject to their own distinct laws, but they are harmonized by God's choice in the most perfect, possible way. And finally, the system of supernatural assistance is

²⁵ The main intention of confirming the existence of the soul is to secure "our thinking Self from the danger of materialism"(CPR, A383).

a theory introduced by *Malebranche* in his *On the Search for Truth* (1675). This theory denies that mind and body have any natural power, and takes God's causality as a mediatory element through which mind and body can influence one another (Guyer and Wood, CPR, 740).

Kant (CPR, A390) takes the last two systems as being grounded on objections to the system of physical influence. Said objections are aimed at the heterogeneity of matter and its representations: matter as physical object cannot be the cause of representations in our mind because matter and representations are two entirely different species. Only the material can be caused by matter; a claim based on the logical principle of the homogeneity of cause and effect.

According to Kant, the systems of pre-established harmony and supernatural assistance are dogmatic solutions to a dogmatic objection, to the system of physical influence; an objection which is not legitimate. The objection as mentioned above takes matter as an independent, in-itself substance which is the *external* object of representation, and thus finds it problematic for matter to be the cause of representations. Kant rejects such a presupposition since it makes a claim beyond the realm of possible experience, namely, that matter is more than just appearance. Once matter is taken as the external object of representations and not just as an appearance, then, no synthetic proposition *a priori* can be made about it because matter taken as noumenon is beyond the reach of possible experience.

If we take matter as mere *appearance* of whatever substance we *do not know*, then it would not be problematic to see it in a causal relation with representations. The

system of physical influence does not necessarily make a dogmatic claim about mind-body connection, thus no dogmatic objection can be made against it:

...for if the opponent assumes that matter and its motion are mere appearances and thus themselves only representations, then he can place the difficulty only in the fact that the unknown object of our sensibility could not be the cause of representations in us; a claim, however, for which he has not the least justification. (CPR, A392)

However, it does not indicate at all that Kant agrees with his teacher, Knutzen and Wolff on their version of the system of physical influence.²⁶ According to Kant (CPR, A392), although no dogmatic objection can be made against the theory of physical influence, "a well-grounded critical objection" is still valid against it. This critical objection is no different from Kant's objection against the other two systems of mind-body relation as explained above. The same wrong presupposition is held by the theory of physical influence, namely to take material (extended) substances as things subsisting for themselves as opposed to being "mere representations of the thinking subject" (CPR, A392). Thus, all three theories of mind-body relation are suffering from a presupposition which says too much about matter. All of them take matter as noumenal and independent from representation, and therefore, face the problem of connecting them together in a causal relation. Such a claim about matter is a dogmatic claim, and thus, cannot lead to any legitimate conclusion.

In order to avoid that mistake which is grounded on "crude dualism" (CPR, A392), Kant (CPR, A393) revises the mind-body problem in the following form: "how is outer intuition--namely, that of space (the filling of it by shape and motion)--possible at all in thinking subject?" It is quite fascinating that such a revision is not

²⁶ See also *Inaugural Dissertation*, Section IV.

being made at all for the sake of offering a better solution to the problem. Quite the opposite; it makes the problem insoluble: "it is not possible for any human being to find an answer to this question" (CPR, A393). All that may be done is to ascribe outer appearances to a transcendental object as the cause of representations. However, that cause itself is in its noumenality beyond the reach of our knowledge. No valid synthetic proposition *a priori* can be made about the thinking being, because, the subject in its subjectivity belongs to the realm of noumena. Also, no experience will be possible of the quality of existence of the thinking self, because the subject is separated from extension (space) by definition (CPR, B410): the realm of experience requires both time and space.

By the same token, the other two questions mentioned above concerning the state of the soul before and after its community with extended substance, i.e. before and after life, cannot be answered by pure speculative reason. Because once the soul is divorced from corporeal nature, even its existence cannot be posited with a legitimate ground. By eliminating corporeality, experience becomes annihilated, and thus, no judgment can be made in the form of synthetic proposition *a priori* by pure speculative reason.

Inexplicability of organized beings other than human beings can be explained by the same logic: if an organized being as living being manifests the community²⁷ of soul and body, and if any investigation of the soul demands ascending from possible experience, then it would be impossible to explain organized beings in their entirety. If that claim is true, then Guyer's conflict²⁸ is at least problematic, because even in

²⁷ Everywhere used only problematically.

²⁸ See page 36.

CPR organized beings-so far as they have bodies and souls- are not taken as explicable, in so far as pure speculative reason is concerned.

According to Kant's definition of animality it could be shown with some certainty that although any living being other than the human being does not have a thinking self, it does have a soul (*anima*). Soul as *anima* is the principle of life in matter and the ground of animality (*CPR*, A345/B403). That principle in the case of human beings is the thinking substance. However, according to Kant, animality in general is nothing but the community of soul and body, i.e. life. The main difference between animal and human soul lies in the concept of rationality. Both animal and human souls provide the power of choice, with the difference that, the animal's power of choice is determined by sensible impulses, while the human soul, because of its intelligible character, makes it possible for her to be free from pathological determinations. Yet both animals and human beings have the *capacity* to originate action from an inner principle.

In his discussion about causality in the *Resolutions of Antinomies* of *CPR*, Kant distinguishes between two types of causality: according to nature, and from freedom. Causality according to nature refers to "the connection of a state with a preceding one in the world of sense upon which that state follows according to a rule" (*CPR*, A532/B560). This is the type of causality science and pure speculative reason are mainly concerned with: a mechanical causality in the physical world.

In opposition to natural causality, there is the causality from freedom which is the capacity of a substance to begin a state "from itself". According to Kant, freedom in this sense is an *a priori* idea of reason which is arisen from the concept of causality

itself: if whatever happens needs a cause, then the causality of the cause in general must have a cause too. In order to solve this difficulty it is necessary for reason to "create the idea of spontaneity, which could start to act from itself" (CPR, A533/B561). Freedom in this sense is called the transcendental idea of freedom. Under the transcendental idea of freedom is grounded the practical idea of freedom which is "the independence of the power of choice from necessitation by impulses of sensibility" (CPR, A534/B562). Transcendental freedom is the capacity of a substance to originate action from its noumenal existence, and is the ground of the possibility of practical freedom.

The following passage supports my interpretation of the status of soul in human being and animals and shows its relation to the concept of freedom as explained above:

...a power of choice is sensible insofar as it is pathologically affected (through moving causes of sensibility); it is called an animal power of choice (*arbitrium brutum*) if it can be pathologically necessitated. The human power of choice is indeed an *arbitrium sensitivum*, yet not *brutum*, but *libertum*, but in the human being there is a faculty of determining oneself from oneself, independently of necessitation by sensible impulses. (CPR, A534/B562)

Therefore, animal soul only provides a power of choice which is not practically free. The same point is also explained in *The Metaphysics of Morals* (MM): "that choice which can be determined by *pure reason* is called free choice. That which can be determined only by inclination (sensible impulse, *stimulus*) would be animal choice (*arbitrium brutum*)" (MM, 6:214). Human choice, although it can be affected by the sensible impulses, is not necessarily determined by them, i.e. it is a free choice. Therefore, both human beings and animals as living beings are involved

(problematically) with a soul, which is the capacity to act on an inner state, namely, to have the power of choice. And they differ from each other because of the fact that the human being's power of choice is not necessitated by pathological inclinations, while the animal's is.

The difference between the life of human being and of animals is indicated by the concepts of transcendental and practical freedom, but what is the difference between animal life and lifeless nature if both are subject to the necessary laws of nature? The problem is, if living beings other than human beings are not free, and are thus subject to the laws of nature, then what makes them any different from dead nature? In other words, what is the principle of life which is common in human beings and other living beings?

An early answer to that question can be found in *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (MF). In the section, *Metaphysical Foundations of Mechanics*, Kant (MM, 544) defines *life* as follows: "Life means the capacity of a substance to determine itself to act from an internal principle." This internal principle in a substance to change is called "desire". A similar definition is also made in the *CPR* of life and its connection to the faculty of desire:

The causality of representations of a being in respect of the objects of them is life. The determinability of the power of representation to this causality is the faculty of desire. This power of representation, if it is reason, hence is the determinability of its causality in respect of objects, i.e., its faculty of desire [is] will. If pure reason has causality, then the will is a pure will, and its causality is called freedom. (CPR, A538/B566)

Therefore, the difference between a living being in general and lifeless matter is its capacity to act on desire. If we apply this understanding of life in what we have seen

before in *CPR* and *MM* about the difference between human and animal life we can arrive at a very interesting conclusion. There is, on the one hand, the animal power of choice which can only be determined by desire, and on the other hand, there is the human power of choice which goes beyond desire and can be determined by pure reason and by the means of the power of will. There is a state of natural necessity which belongs to the lifeless matter, and there is a realm of practical freedom that is the state of human moral life, and in the middle, there is the animal (life) that although acting on an internal principle, is necessitated by the outer world influencing that internal principle.

The fact that the animal's action is necessitated by sensible impulses through the faculty of desire, must not mislead us to claim that therefore, they are mechanically explicable. On the contrary, it makes their mechanical inexplicability even more profound. As Kant asserts in *MF*, the cause of any change of matter in life, must be sought in a substance *outside* matter! Therefore, although the animal power of choice is not free from external inclinations, and is even determined by them, it is still free from matter, i.e. is outside of it, and is yet inside the organization of the animal as organized/living being. In other words, sensible impulses are able to determine a change in animals only by the mediation of the faculty of desire. And the internal principle of desire is ultimately the cause of the action and not the external impulse. If that internal principle must be sought outside matter, then it is immaterial and therefore does not necessarily obey the laws of mechanics in its internal causality., although its action is subject to those laws once it happens in the realm of appearance. Therefore, a living being remains inexplicable by the laws of mechanics because it

consists of a principle the causality of which stands beyond the reach of possible experience due to its immateriality.

Guyer's conflict of the incompatibility of the unity of nature with the inexplicability of organized beings can be challenged by emphasizing the two following points: one, the concept of unity, and two, the inexplicability of living beings. Regarding the former, the mechanical unity of nature is not the ultimate universal unity that could be found in nature; yet a more universal unity is recognizable which includes both the technique and the mechanism of nature. In this way, the laws of the technique and the mechanism of nature are unified under the idea of the highest intelligence. Therefore, the universal unity of nature does not necessitate a mechanical reduction of all the products of nature, especially the ones that manifest a purposive causality, i.e. organized beings.

In respect to the second point, the inexplicability of organized beings is also explained based on their living character, which is the capacity to initiate action from an inner principle. In this way, the principle of life calls for a kind of causality that allows for freedom and contingency. Such a contingent concept of causality (carefully used) is not reducible to the necessary mechanical laws of nature, and requires a concept of teleology in its explanation.

So, I believe it is possible to find room for organized/living beings in the first *Critique* as inexplicable products of nature which go beyond mechanical explanations due to the contingency of their inner causality and the presence of the immaterial principle of life in their existence. This is not to say that the project of *CPR* is to

elaborate such a peculiarity in the system, or to posit it in a precious place within it: this task is yet to be started in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*.

Conclusion:

With focus on *CPR*, *MF*, and *MM*, three aspects of the concepts of organized being and life are mainly being explained in this chapter: the meaning of systematic unity under a concept and its implications, inexplicability of organized beings by mechanical laws, and the meaning of life. Organized beings insofar as they are material bodies, are subject to the laws of nature, but as soon as we take them as living beings, they include (problematically used) in their existence the immaterial principle of life, and so, go beyond the limits of possible experience. However, no synthetic proposition *a priori* can be made about the *community* of the two. Thus, *life* remains to be an undeniable, yet impenetrable, mystery.

In the case of human life, the principle of life is related to pure reason and the power of will, which provides the human being with transcendental freedom. However, in the case of living beings other than human beings, the principle of life is the capacity to act on desire, whereas the faculty of desire itself is *practically* determined by sensible impulses.

The mind-body problem of the pre-*Critical* works has developed into the problem of unity-multiplicity and system-freedom in the first *Critique*. However, in our discussion about *CPR*, we saw only a small manifestation of these problems in

Kant's philosophy. He shows in the *CPR* a tendency to get away with the side of freedom by emphasizing on unity and systematicity, although, as I showed, he never entirely does that. As we move on to the next chapter, which focuses mainly on the third *Critique*, we will see that freedom, purposiveness, and the technique of nature play more important roles in Kant's philosophy than they are given in his *CPR*. As a result, the principle of life, as the faculty of spontaneity and freedom, becomes more and more significant and central to his philosophy.

Chapter three:

Critique of the Power of Judgment: Organized and Living, System and Freedom, All and Nothing!

Introduction:

In the previous chapter, by analyzing the concept of unity in its different applications in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (CPR), we investigated some of the characteristics of the systematic unity of organized beings and their mechanical inexplicability due to their immaterial living character. Here, in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (CPJ), another aspect of such a unity is emphasized which is the *internal* purposiveness of the systematic unity of organized beings. Purposiveness was taken in *CPR* mainly as a highest external teleological concept that is the ground of the existence of the systematic unity of reason and nature. However, the principle of purposiveness is introduced and developed differently in the third *Critique*. As we see in the *First Introduction* (FI) to *CPJ*, the main difference between the accounts of purposiveness in *CPR* and in *CPJ* is the rise of the principle of purposiveness from the reflecting power of judgment, and not from pure reason.

I would like to have a further look at Kant's account of purposiveness in the first *Critique*, focusing on its relation to teleology and the unity of reason in order to show how it results in a gap between teleology and mechanism, and also between pure reason and nature. Then, I will explain Kant's solution in *CPJ* to the problem of the said gaps by providing an overview of his main accounts in *CPJ* and by comparing the principle of purposiveness of the first *Critique* with the one manifested in the third

Critique. After, I shall have a look at the concept of *inexplicability* of organized beings, and its different implications. In the end, I will link the inexplicability of organized beings and their peculiar internal purposiveness with the concept of life as it is manifested in *CPJ*, and very briefly, as it shows up in Kant's other works such as the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (MF) and the *Opus Postumum* (OP).

I will argue that the inexplicability of organized beings is a result of the presence of the principle of *life* in their existence as an *immaterial* element. Furthermore, I will show that the internal purposiveness of organized beings combined with their immaterial living character, allows them to be a product of both the mechanism and the technique of nature. Thus, living beings play a mediatory role between mechanism and teleology, system and freedom, and shape their own metaphysical status.

In the *Paralogism of Pure Reason*, while explaining the human being as end in itself, Kant makes the following analogy between living beings and the human being:

By analogy with the nature of living beings in this world, regarding which reason must assume as a necessary principle that no organ, no faculty, nothing superfluous, or disproportionate to its use, hence nothing purposeless is to be met with, but rather that everything is to be judged as precisely suitable to its function in life, the human being, who alone can contain within himself the ultimate final end of all this, would have to be the only creature excepted from it. (CPR, B425)

Two different types of purposiveness are *implicitly* mentioned in this passage: *internal* and *external* purposiveness. The former refers to the inner purposive interconnection

of the different organs of an organized being, and the latter is the fruitfulness of some properties of nature to some other ones. As we see in the analogy above, the two types of purposiveness are not distinguished from each other, although one type depends on the other. In the external application of the principle of purposiveness, the human being as end in itself is explained. According to the external concept of purposiveness, every species exists for the sake of another, except for the human being who has its end in its own existence. For example, plants exist for the animals to survive, and animals exist to nourish human beings. However, the human being is not a means like plants and animals for other species in nature; it is, rather, the end of its own existence. The external purposiveness is rooted in the internal one; but this dependence is not explained in detail in *CPR*, as it is in the third *Critique*.

The principle of external purposiveness is also explained in *CPR* through the idea of God as a supreme reason which is the source and origin of all things in their systematic connection:

This highest formal unity, which rests solely on concepts of reason, is the purposive unity of things. The speculative interest of reason makes it necessary to regard all order in the world as if it had originated in the purpose of a supreme reason. (*CPR*, A686/B714)

In this way, purposive unity as the highest unity is understood as *formal* and originating from a supreme reason, and is a result of the *speculative* interest of reason. Moreover, the purpose of nature and of the world as a whole is situated in a being *outside* of nature. Although based on the analogy with organized being, purpose has to be inside the entirety of the organized being itself; this distinction is not something that is elaborated upon in *CPR*.

A merely formal or transcendental unity, although providing a good support for the idea of God, cannot provide a satisfactory ground for the idea of purposiveness of nature in its organic products: the organic nature manifests the purpose in its own organization (though its purposiveness is not limited to its mechanism). Thus, the purposiveness derived from formal unity of reason cannot explain the internal purposiveness of the living nature because it puts the purpose outside of it. There is a gap between what the speculative reason takes as the *telos*, and what the organic nature manifests as its internal purposiveness. This is to say, there is gap between reason and nature in its organized products: an *unexpected* gap between the unity of reason and of nature. The problem of the gap is specifically crucial once the organized products of nature are taken under consideration.

The separation of purpose from the organized being leaves us with two problems: on the one hand, positing the purpose within the *mechanism* of nature implies a totally mechanistic interpretation of organic nature which is precisely what Kant does not want to confirm for various reasons; and on the other hand, locating the purpose *outside* the system of nature does not explain the inner contingent systematicity and reciprocal relation of the organization of organized beings, and deepens the gap between the technique and the mechanics of nature. The purpose cannot be explained by merely mechanical laws because it belongs to teleology, i.e. to causality from freedom. The purpose cannot be totally taken away from the living nature, because it is supposed to explain its organic systematicity and to secure the contingency of its specific laws.

To avoid the said problem Kant gives the following account of teleology in the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*:

Such a principle [purposiveness]²⁹ opens out to our reason, as applied in the field of experience, altogether new views as to how the things of the world may be connected according to teleological laws, and so enables it to arrive at their greatest systematic unity. The assumption of a supreme intelligence...can therefore always benefit reason and can never injure it. Thus, if in studying the shape of mountains...etc., we assume it to be the outcome of wise purpose on the part of an Author..., we are enabled to make in this way a number of discoveries. ...even error cannot do us any serious harm. For the worst that can happen would be that where we expected a teleological connection (*nexus finalis*), we find only a mechanical or physical connection (*nexus effectivus*). In such a case, we merely fail to find the additional unity... (CPR, A687/ B715)

As stated in the passage above, it is by a teleological connection that nature as mechanism is supposed to be related to its end, i.e. to its purpose, which is still external to it. However, here, the teleological side of the purpose has only a *secondary* importance and plays no significant role in the *empirical* explanation of nature: it is just an additional unity which could be given to the system or not. For example, when a basketball player throws the ball to score; her intention to score is the telos behind the ball's motion towards the basket, but that intention should not be considered by a scientist who is studying the aerodynamics of the ball's motion towards the basket. Therefore, what Kant suggests here is for science to study nature *as if* it works towards a purpose and not be worried about the purpose itself. In this way, the regulativity of the principle of purposiveness is being seen as convincing enough to shrink from solving the problem of the gap between teleology and mechanism.

However, apparently the above solution is not convincing because the scientist can never explain the *generation* of the ball's motion towards the basket merely by the laws of aerodynamics: there would be no motion at all if there was not an *intention* to score. Moreover, if the scientist searches in the basketball player's body and its

²⁹ Added by me.

mechanical motions for the explanation of the generation of the motion of the ball, he will have no chance to succeed, because no law of mechanics determines the player's body to throw the ball: the intention cannot be eliminated anymore. That is to say, there is a gap between the laws of mechanics (manifesting necessity, lawfulness and systematicity) and teleology (manifesting freedom, contingency and purposiveness) that prevents the scientist from reaching a satisfactory explanation. One way to explain nature is to reduce all of its contents to necessary laws of mechanism, and another way is to reduce everything to the contingency of the laws and ends of God. There is a battle between a mechanistic and a teleological point of view, and neither by itself will satisfy Kant. Explanations based solely on teleology do not satisfy him because they demolish the necessity of empirical laws of nature. Mechanical explanations do not satisfy him because they reduce all contingencies to mechanical necessity and so leave no room for freedom, i.e. for purposiveness.

The gap between the technique and the mechanics of nature cannot be filled by pure reason itself; actually, the main issue underlying the problem of the gap is the central role of pure reason. On the one hand, it is *pure reason*³⁰ which provides the universal laws of nature, and it is again the pure reason that makes for itself the *a priori* principles of purposiveness and teleology. On the other hand, nature, specifically in its organized products, manifests a contingency that cannot be explained by those *a priori* laws. The mechanical laws of nature do not allow such contingencies, and the teleological laws, since they put the telos outside the system of nature, do not explain the contingency of the inner causality of its organized products. Thus, there is a gap not only between teleology and mechanism, but also between pure

³⁰ As understanding.

reason and nature in empiricity. This problem is partly a result of the fact that Kant's concern here is not the systematicity of *empirical* knowledge in its empiricity, but the systematicity of *reason* which is granted to be the unity of nature: "The unity of reason is the unity of system..." (CPR, A680/B708). Although Kant tries to expand this systematic unity to the realm of the empirical, this expansion takes place only from, and through, the systematic unity of pure reason itself. The problem becomes more crucial when lack of empiricity begins to threaten the validity of the rational systematicity of nature, and thus, questions the usefulness of the principle of purposiveness even for the use of *explanation*. Excluding empirical laws of nature from the systematic unity leaves the rational purposiveness of nature without any objective (i.e. empirical) support whatsoever.

Kant himself provides a version of the gap problem in *CPJ*:

We have seen in the critique of pure reason that the whole of nature as the totality of all objects of experience constitutes a system in accordance with transcendental laws, namely those that the understanding itself gives *a priori*... . For that very reason, experience, in accordance with general as well as particular laws, insofar as it is considered objectively to be possible in general, must also constitute (in the idea) a system of possible *empirical* cognitions. (FI, 20:209)

The systematic unity of reason also needs to be applied in empiricity. In Kant's account of the unity in *CPR*, although purposiveness is considered as a transcendental element necessary to the systematic unity, it is as yet taken as a principle of pure reason, and as external to nature's organization.

However, in *CPJ*, Kant revises his account of purposiveness, and also of cognition in order to offer a solution to the problem(s) of the gap(s). One of the first moves he makes in order to fill that gap is to introduce the faculty of judgment as the

mediator between universal laws of nature given by understanding, and the multiplicity of the particular-empirical systems of nature. In this way, the power of judgment provides the minor premise through which a particular empirical proposition can be resulted by the act of subsumption under a universal (FI, 20: 214-15). I will briefly give an overview of *CPJ* before I explain Kant's solution to the gap problem.

In his introductions to *CPJ*, Kant distinguishes, as he also does in the first *Critique*, between three faculties of the human mind, namely, those of cognition, feeling of pleasure and displeasure, and desire. Understanding, as shown in the first *Critique*, provides *a priori* principles for the faculty of cognition; (pure practical) reason, as shown in the second *Critique*, gives *a priori* concepts to the faculty of desire in the form of moral laws; and now, in the third *Critique*, the faculty of judgment is (hypothetically) taken as responsible for providing (not producing) the faculty of pleasure and displeasure with *a priori* concepts.

The next important move taken in the introductions is to introduce the *reflecting* power of judgment as opposed to the *determining* one. The "power of judgment in general is the faculty for thinking of the particular as contained under the universal" (*CPJ*, 5:179). The determining power of judgment "is an underlying concept through a given empirical representation" (FI, 20:211). In other words, the determining power of judgment does not produce any universal concepts or laws; rather, it only subsumes the particular under a given universal. The reflecting power of judgment, on the other hand, is "a mere faculty for reflecting on a representation, in accordance with a certain principle, for the sake of a concept that is thereby made possible" (FI, 20:211); meaning that, the only thing given is the particular, and the reflecting power of judgment is responsible for finding a universal under which the

particular could be subsumed. The particulars Kant is speaking of here are mainly of two types: objects of aesthetic judgment, and organized products of nature. In the case of organized beings, the universal concept the reflecting power of judgment is looking for is the internal purposiveness of the organized products of nature, while in the case of aesthetic judgment, the universal is only a matter of "agreement" or a kind of intersubjective concurrence (CPJ, 5:194).

The aesthetic judgment is divided by Kant into two categories: judgment on the *beautiful*, and judgment on the *sublime*, and they are discussed in the book under the two divisions of the first part. Likewise, the second part of the book, *Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment*, which considers the organized products of nature from the perspective of their purposiveness, is divided into two main divisions of *Analytic* and *Dialectic*, followed by a *Methodology* as the appendix. The aesthetic power of judgment is "the faculty for judging formal purposiveness (also called subjective) through the feeling of pleasure and displeasure", and the teleological one is "the faculty for judging the real purposiveness (objective) of nature through understanding and reason" (CPJ, 5:193). Since the focus of the present chapter of the thesis is on the *Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment*, I shall briefly explain the first part of *CPJ* on aesthetic judgment, and then move on to the second part.

As mentioned, the *Critique of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment* consists of an *Analytic* and a *Dialectic* section as well as a mediating discussion on the *Deduction of Pure Aesthetic Judgment* and an appendix on *Methodology of Taste*. The analytic section itself consists of two books: *Analytic of the Beautiful* and of the *Sublime*. The *Analytic of the Beautiful* is shaped under four "moments" of quality, quantity, relation and modality (similar to the forms of judgment in the *Transcendental Analytic* of

CPR). The disinterestedness of the aesthetic judgment is explained under the first moment. The subjective universality of the judgments of taste and the free play of imagination and understanding as the source of pleasure in beauty, are the main themes of the moment of quantity. The moment of relation discusses the formal purposiveness of the beautiful as well as the distinction between free beauty (beauty without a concept of purpose) and adherent beauty (beauty from the coherence of form of an object with its purpose). The mentioned relation also introduces human morality as the ideal of beauty. Modality, the last moment of the *Analytic of Beautiful*, emphasizes again the universal validity of the judgments of taste, and also introduces the concept of inspiration as opposed to imitation.

In the *Analytic of the Sublime*, the moments of quantity and quality are explained under division of the *mathematical* sublime; the moments of relation and modality are described under the *dynamical* concept of the sublime. The former takes place when the vastness and greatness of a phenomenon (due to its formlessness, as opposed to the beautiful) ascends our ability to take it as a single whole and gives rise to feelings of frustration and then of pleasure: frustration of our inability to grasp its totality, and pleasure in realizing that the fact that we try to *imagine* the sublime as a whole is in harmony with the unifying tendency of our *reason*. The dynamical sublime is again a vast and great phenomenon that, this time, makes us realize our *physical* inability and weakness towards it. However, the human morality is our asset and remains safe from the greatness of the dynamical sublime. Thus, again, there is a feeling of pleasure as well as a feeling of displeasure, both mixed together. Both the mathematical and the dynamical sublime are related to morality, teleology and theology.

The *Deduction of Pure Aesthetic Judgments*—besides arguing for the universal validity of the judgment of taste, and relating it to morality and theology— contains Kant's discussion about the fine arts. He distinguishes between nature, handicraft, natural science and fine arts. The latter is a product of genius and produces a free play between imagination, understanding and reason.

The antinomy between the universality and individuality of the judgment of taste as well as its resolution is the main theme of the *Dialectic* section. In this way, Kant maintains a supersensible substratum which contains both the human being and nature (in general), and which makes universality and harmony between them possible. The relation between the free play in aesthetic and moral freedom is also discussed, both here and in the *Methodology of Taste*, but in two different ways. Here, in the *Dialectic* Kant goes from aesthetics to morality, but in the *Methodology* he begins with morality and makes a move to aesthetics.

The *Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment*, as mentioned above, consists of an *Analytic*, a *Dialectic* and a *Methodology*. The analytic part is focused on the concept of purposiveness in organized beings. There are two concepts of purposiveness: external (relative) and internal. The external concept of purposiveness refers to the subjective purposiveness based on the fruitfulness of an organized being for other ones. The internal purposiveness of organized beings, on the other hand, refers to the inner *reciprocal* interconnection between the organs of an organized being (i.e. the fact that the parts are at the same time causes and effects of one another) and their relation to the organized being as a whole. The internal (objective) purposiveness is the one which is important in our discussion.

According to Kant, the inner reciprocal causality of the organized being in turn makes us presuppose a more general concept of teleology, *as if* such an internal harmony and purposiveness would not be possible without having a designer who made that harmony possible. Then, Kant returns to the concept of relative purposiveness and tries to justify the validity of it by using the concept of internal purposiveness and the concept of a designer (God). If there is a designer, then there must be a purpose for his design; and it is due to this purposeful design that the relative purposiveness is meaningful (CPJ, §67).

The *Dialectic* is built upon an antinomy between two positions: "all generation of material things" is explainable by mechanical laws, versus the proposition that asserts some generations are inexplicable by mechanical laws. In order to find a solution to this antinomy, Kant uses a distinction between the regulative and constitutive principles of the reflecting judgment. Regulative principles do not make claims to actuality; the constitutive principles do. Kant claims that if we take the two positions above only as regulative maxims, then there will be no contradiction between them, because we can blame the inexplicability of organized beings on the limitedness of our reason in its mechanical explanations, and not to the organized beings in their actuality as natural beings in their noumenality.³¹ Moreover, since the cause of the limitedness of mechanical explanations cannot be derived from nature itself (because if nature is mechanical in actuality, it must allow mechanical explanations), it is taken as a result of the mechanism of nature being subordinated to

³¹ This overview in general, and this paragraph specifically, gives only a standard Guyer-based reading of the text. Some of this reading will eventually be challenged in this chapter.

teleology, and being only a means through which the ends of God are actualized. Therefore, organized beings represent two ranks of laws: mechanical and teleological.

The appendix to the second part of the book, i.e. the *Methodology* is an account of the implications and limitations of teleology in its uses for explaining nature and (through the concept of morality) for theology. Natural purposiveness of organized beings, as well as the inexplicability of the generation of *life* in those beings, point to a designer as the highest intelligence beyond nature (as a universal whole). From that remark, combined with the moral capacity of human beings, Kant concludes that the human being is the end of nature. The rest of the *Methodology* is devoted to deriving from this the "kingdom of ends", the concept of happiness, and eventually the concept of highest good which shapes a moral argument in favor of the existence of God.

As we saw in the overview, at least two different types of purposiveness are recognized in *CPJ*³²: determinate (external), and indeterminate (internal). When something is product of a design, i.e. is a product of art,³³ the purposiveness attributed to its causality is subjective, determinate and intentional. In this way purpose is chosen and presented intentionally by an artificer. On the other hand, the internal purposiveness of nature is objective and is related to the purposiveness brought up by the reflecting power of judgment in order to unify the contingent multiplicity of

³² As Hannah Ginsborg (1997, 330) suggests, those two types could be united under a more general conceptualization of the concept of purposiveness, so the concept of God does not need to be rejected as the highest unity and the highest principle of teleology.

³³ "Art" is used here to refer to any product that has its purpose external to it (e.g. as it is used by Kant in §65 of *CPJ*) and not as it is employed in the *Aesthetic Judgment*.

organic nature.³⁴ Internal purposiveness is a result of considering the peculiar inner causality in the organization of organized beings.³⁵

We need a concept of purposiveness that fulfills three functions: to unify the manifold under a concept, to provide a final causality, and to preserve the organized being as a product of *nature*. In order to achieve the first, the purpose needs to be an

³⁴ Here, nothing intentional or determining could be attributed to organized being as the product of nature because this type of purposiveness is only regulative; although as Allison (1990, 36) truly suggests, it is still a transcendental principle of the reflecting power of judgment.

³⁵ The external purposiveness is dependent upon the internal one: as Kant states, without supposing a final cause within the constitution of organized being we are not able to grasp any unity from the manifoldness of organic nature. Without such purposiveness, nature would be extremely contingent in its causality according to its organic products:

in order for us to be able at least to conceive of the possibility of such an agreement of the things of nature with the power of judgment (which we represent as contingent, hence as possible only through an end aimed at it), we must at the same time conceive of another understanding, in relation to which, and indeed prior to any end attributed to it, we can represent that agreement of natural laws with our power of judgment, which for our understanding is conceivable only through ends as the means of connection, as necessary. (CPJ, 5:407)

Here again, as we saw in the *New Elucidation*, it is not even for the sake of explanation that we need to presuppose teleology; before that, the very possibility of even *conceiving* such a unity within the contingency of organic nature demands it. In this way, the elaborate harmony and the purposiveness of the inner causality of organized nature necessitates that we presuppose a higher concept of teleology which makes them possible. This is, moreover, an argument to support the holistic character of organized being: without a purpose which stands before and behind the multiplicity of the parts and is present in its inner interactions, an organized being would not be *conceived* as a systematic unity; it would rather be conceived as a mere aggregate of matter. For example, a piece of rock and the ocean do not shape a systematic unity objectively: they are piles of matter in no reciprocal relation to each other and affect one another only under the necessary laws of nature. They do not form an organic unity because they are not in reciprocal connection and do not meet any purpose. And each of the two could be seen separately from the other and taken independently. On the other hand, eyes and fingers of an animal, for example, are both serving one purpose that is the being and the totality of the animal itself. They are different *parts* of a whole: they are unified due to a single purpose, and their systematic unity is in turn a result of the whole. Fingers and eyes separated from the animal are only piles of dead matter. Without the purpose they are serving, and without the whole they are in reciprocal connection under, they are only aggregates of matter, i.e. are dead! We saw before, and we will see later, that matter is by definition lifeless. To be an aggregate of matter is equivalent of being a pile of lifeless extended substance.

idea or a concept in a reciprocal connection with its parts so it can form a whole out of the contingent multiplicity. To meet the second requirement, the principle of purposiveness needs to be *a priori*, and thus, to be necessary and universal. And to grasp the third, purposiveness as a principle of reflecting power of judgment must be objective (though being regulative) (CPJ, 5:376).

In the *Analytic of the Teleological Power of Judgment* as opposed to *CPR*, purposiveness comes from the power of judgment instead of pure reason, and thus, gets one step closer to empirical reality. And although purposiveness is still defined as unity under a concept, it is being defined from the point of view of the purposive being itself (as object of experience in the Kantian sense) and not solely from the transcendental perspective of pure reason (CPJ, 5:373). To say (regulatively) that (internal) purposiveness is a way of being of a natural entity is different from purifying purposiveness from anything related to the purposive being itself, that is to say, to define it based on a priori principles of pure speculative reason. For example, a blade of grass is itself an organic whole under the concept of which its different parts are unified; and is not just a mere aggregate of matter which has no internal purpose and is only unified under an external principle of teleology. The purposiveness brought up solely by pure reason is subjective and does not explain the internal purposiveness of organic nature: pure reason is too departed from objectivity to produce an objective internal purposiveness.

We have seen in the last chapter that a logical and a transcendental sense is mentioned in *CPR* for systematic unity, and now another aspect of such a purposive unity is revealed. As John D. McFarland (1970, 40) puts it, there is a *biological* as well as a logical character to the concept of purposiveness of nature. There is a logical

system which provides the "idea" or the "concept" under which the manifold of the empirical could be unified. However, now, the idea is not alone in explaining the systematicity of nature in its organic products: the internal purposiveness is added to it. Purpose is not an idea of pure reason alone that makes nature logically comprehensible; it is, rather, a co-product of nature and the reflecting power of judgment. As Michael Friedman (1992, 186-7) explains, reflecting judgment is required to secure the systematicity of *particular* laws of nature. Purposiveness must show itself in nature too, and cannot be taken only as a principle of pure reason. In order to fill the gap between reason and nature, nature must get one step closer to our cognition. As Kant (FI, 20:216) puts it: "The special principle of the power of judgment is thus: Nature specifies its general laws into empirical ones, in accordance with the form of a logical system, in behalf of the power of judgment." Therefore, the power of judgment cannot justify the systematic unity of nature in its particular laws by itself, it needs a hand from nature!

This is how an attempt is being made to fill the gap between teleology and mechanism: there is the idea on the one side and the mechanical systematicity on the other, and a special kind of natural product in the middle which can host both at the same time. The mediator cannot be a mere idea or an entirely material object, it needs to contain both of them at the same time. Such a mediator can only be an organized being, an organism, a living being. And this is what makes organized beings extraordinary and peculiar: they welcome system and freedom, concept and nature, immaterial and material all at the same time.

Hannah Ginsborg (2001, 250) explains this peculiar purposiveness of nature under the concept of normativity. That is to say, the internal purposiveness of nature

regulatively refers to an "ought to be" factor in the constitution of organized being; rather than being just an explanatory concept. This interpretation takes Kantian purposiveness closer to Aristotelian teleology with the crucial difference that in the former the purposive principle is only a regulative one, while in the latter it is constitutive and determining.³⁶ A result of Ginsborg's interpretation, other than explaining the possibility of such a principle, is to refute a functionalist interpretation which takes the purposiveness of nature as a blind teleology of a blind mechanism. To be a purpose, as Ginsborg explains, is not just to have an end, but moreover to apply standards and norms based on which an organic product of nature is functioning according to a design. In this way, organized beings are mechanically inexplicable with respect to their origin and their end. While dead nature, i.e. the mechanism of nature, is strictly bound to the universal laws of matter and motion, and highly determined by the laws given by reason *a priori*, organic nature is highly contingent by its internal purposiveness and cannot be explained by mere mechanical laws. The contingency of organized beings is due to the multiplicity of nature in its specifications. Thus, unlike inorganic nature, living nature is not limited to mere mechanical laws of matter, but there is a *formative* character dwelling in it: organisms are self-organizing and they produce their forms by themselves (CPJ, 5:374). The formative character opens up a room for a systematic unity which can be shaped within the organized being itself (although the very capacity to originate forms is not possible in physical nature alone, and needs to be originated from a higher principle).

³⁶ Dr. John Scott perfectly explained the similarity of Kantian account of purposiveness of nature with Aristotelian teleology in a Jockey Club session. I would like, if I may, to mention the difference between the two accounts while confirming Dr. Scott's point about their similarities.

The laws to which organized beings are bound, and the ways through which those laws could be applied to physical nature, are highly diverse and multiplied. The formative character is inherent in them and so is not graspable for our cognitive faculties. Even after considering organized beings as purposeful and united under a concept, they cannot yet be explained mechanically since the type of causality natural purposiveness operates within is not of an efficient one and thus not limited to the mechanism of nature.³⁷

McFarland (1970, 37-40) relates this mechanical inexplicability to the unifying character of the principle of purposiveness: if the highest unity is the purposive one, then nature cannot be explained mechanically, simply because the unifying element which is both the origin and the end of organized being is already put outside of the *mechanism* of nature. Ginsborg (2001, 242) points to a similar reason for this matter; she believes that the inexplicability comes from the inaccessibility of *origins* to mechanical explanations. These interpretations are based on the conceptual and ideal character of the unifying element in the principle of purposiveness which takes the organized being further than being a product of the mere mechanism of nature. So, mechanical explanation is by definition accurate to explain the mechanical products of nature, while organisms are products of the technique (and the mechanism) of nature.

³⁷ It is true that such a principle of purposiveness is only heuristic and regulative, but it does not imply that the organism in question is purposeless. Rather, such a purposiveness is the ground of the possibility of the existence of organized being as such. If there is such a thing as living being, it cannot be a mere aggregate of matter (see the example of eyes and fingers above); and life, in turn, is the capacity to *originate* action from an *inner* principle. Furthermore, since to originate action is not possible without intentionality and purposiveness, a living being is not even imaginable without presupposing a concept of internal purposiveness in its organization. That is to say, as explained before, without the internal principle of purposiveness, an organic unity is not even conceivable. In the Kantian world, this is as objective as a principle can get.

The laws of mechanics are not concerned with any kind of causality which is not an efficient one. Therefore, as we saw in the last chapter, causality from freedom, which is the type of causality that operates by the technique of nature, is beyond the realm of mechanical explanation. Generation and the inner causality of the organized being are the result of the technique (and of the mechanic) of nature and so manifest causality from freedom. In other words, *nexus finalis*, as opposed to *nexus effectivus*, is only possible through causality from freedom, and thus, is not mechanically explicable.

Under the principle of internal purposiveness of nature, it is possible for organized being to be experienced empirically, and at the same time transcends scientific explanations in respect to its origin and its inner reciprocal causality. As Kant famously asserts:

...one could investigate all the thus far known and yet to be discovered laws of mechanical generation in a thing that we must judge as an end of nature, and even hope to make good progress in this, without the appeal to a quite distinct generating ground for the possibility of such a product, ... and absolutely no human reason (or even any finite reason that is similar to ours in quality, no matter how much it exceeds it in degree) can ever hope to understand the generation of even a little blade of grass from merely mechanical cause. (CPJ, 5:409)

Therefore, inexplicability of the organized being is not a matter of lacking accurate empirical data about it, but is a result of the *fundamental* insufficiency and limitedness of our powers and faculties of cognition. No limited reason can fully grasp this, because organized beings belong-in terms of their generation and their peculiar inner causality- to an unknowable realm. Thus, there will not be a Newton of a blade of grass who can explain its generation and inner causality by mere mechanical laws of nature (CPJ, 5:410).

In spite of the strong position that Kant expresses explicitly in respect to mechanical inexplicability of organized beings, Marcel Quarfood (2004, 156) suggests that molecular biology might be able to do the task of the Newton of the blade of grass. The force of his argument to support that claim is a passage from *CPJ* where Kant says:

...for us to judge in turn that even if we could penetrate to the principle of nature in the specification of its universal laws known to us there could lie hidden no ground sufficient for the possibility of organized beings without the assumption of an intention underlying their generation would be presumptuous: for how could we know that? (*CPJ*, 5:400)

Based on this passage, Quarfood makes the conclusion that Kant's position on the question of generation is silence, or is a neutral one, and therefore, it is possible for science to offer a mechanical explanation as it develops in its investigations. Quarfood argues that it is problematic to claim that it is not possible to mechanically explain organized beings while it is possible for them to have a mechanical origin. Moreover, he believes that the amazing developments in biology have provided a broader sense for the concept of mechanism itself. Thus, Quarfood suggests that such an explanation might be possible in future, as science develops in understanding the origin of organic nature.

First of all, I believe that Quarfood gives an at least problematic (if not wrong)³⁸ reading of the passage in question. In the section Quarfood refers to (§75), based on the distinction between determining and reflecting principles, Kant emphasizes that the principle of purposiveness of nature is a principle of the *reflecting*

³⁸ I say wrong because a result of Quarfood's interpretation is to demolish all of Kant's ethics, politics, and theology. By subjecting the principle of life to mechanical laws there will remain no room for freedom, and without freedom, morality makes no sense whatsoever in a Kantian system.

power of judgment and thus is not *determining*. And by that he means, by the principle of purposiveness we do not ascribe anything to nature in its noumenality. The way in which our limited faculty of cognition and of reflecting power of judgment works makes it necessary for us to presuppose an intention as the ground of the possibility of organized nature,³⁹ but it does not imply that there is an intelligent intending principle or being in organized nature in its noumenality. Therefore, he says, we cannot make this claim that even if we could penetrate into organized nature in its noumenality it would be impossible not to find a teleological or purposive principle; because how can we know by our limited reason what can be discovered in nature as noumenon? Thus, I believe, contra Quarfood, penetrating "to the principle of nature in the specification of its universal laws" is to penetrate to nature in its noumenality, and is beyond the reach of our knowledge, and so is never possible. Therefore, molecular biology could penetrate to every single cell and molecule existing in the universe, but it cannot penetrate nature's noumenality, and thus, cannot explain the generation of even a blade of grass. That passage is a conditional proposition the condition of which is impossible to be met by human or by any other limited reason.⁴⁰

³⁹ "this maxim of the reflecting power of judgment is essential for those products of nature which must be judged only as intentionally formed thus and not otherwise, in order to obtain even an experiential cognition of their internal constitution; because even the thought of them as organized things is impossible without associating the thought of a generation with an intention" (CPJ, 5:398).

⁴⁰ It is obvious that, according to Kant, nothing can be known in its noumenality, and so, one might claim that the inexplicability of organized being as explained above, is nothing more than inexplicability of noumena. However, that is not the case here: the point is not that we cannot know organized beings as objects in their noumenality; it is rather the fact that organized beings cannot be known in terms of their generation and their inner causality *unless* their connection to a noumenal element is understood; and since that is impossible to know, therefore they remain inexplicable. In the case of dead products of nature, we do not face any difficulty in explaining their causal relations by mechanical laws because their efficient causality does not presuppose any purposive connection to their noumenality; their relation to each other is explainable based on their phenomenal characteristics. However, in the case of

There is no doubt that Kant's position, as he explicitly asserts, is neither affirmative nor negative; but the crucial point is: why does he take that position? Kant's neutral position is a result of the inexplicability of organized beings, and is not a sign of its possibility to be explained. Kant's point is, since such a peculiar causality goes beyond the realm of possible experience, we cannot make any legitimate judgment about them, affirmative or negative. This is the standard standpoint of *Critical* philosophy about anything with that characteristic, i.e. about any dogmatic claim.

DNA could be an example of what Quarfood is suggesting as the Newton of blade of grass. Is it possible to claim that DNA is what makes systematic unity possible in a living being? And is this a legitimate claim to say that DNA, or any biological element like DNA, explains the generation of living beings? I believe the answer to these questions, for Kant, is no, since the principle of life involved in organized beings is an *immaterial* element which cannot be generated from matter.⁴¹ In this way, mechanism and life belong to two different realms fundamentally. The former belongs to matter and the lawfulness of the interactions imposed on it, while the latter belongs to purposiveness of nature and to the realm of freedom. Purposiveness means to be unified under a concept (whether the concept is ready at hand or not) and life is the possibility to act on desire, or on an internal principle:

organized beings, we recognize a contingency in their inner causality which is a sign of "causality from freedom", i.e. a sign of purposiveness. And causality from freedom, as explained in the previous chapter, manifests an essential connection to noumenal realm. Therefore, to know the inner *causality* of an organized being is nothing but to know it in its noumenality, and thus is an impossible task to accomplish by our limited reason.

⁴¹ Guyer (2005) also explains the inexplicability of organized beings due to the lifelessness of matter as opposed to the living character of organized beings.

Yet from the comparison of the similar mode of operation in the animals (the ground of which we cannot immediately perceive) to that of humans (of which we are immediately aware) we can quite properly infer in accordance with the analogy that the animals also act in accordance with representations (and are not, as Descartes would have it, machines), and that in spite of their specific difference, they are still of the same genus as human beings (as living beings). (CPJ 5:464)

As we see here, even animals act on representation and so they have the "living" element which takes them beyond mere mechanical laws of motion. There is a principle of spontaneity intermingled (problematically used) with organized beings that is the capacity to act on an inner principle. Therefore, organized beings are not mere machines; and Kant is actually quite explicit in asserting that:

An organized being is thus not a mere machine, for that has only a motive power, while the organized being possesses in itself a formative power..., which cannot be explained through the capacity for movement alone (that is mechanism). (CPJ, 5:374)

As mentioned before, the formative power refers to the capacity of organized being to form the matter by itself. In other words, organized beings can act and change based on their inner capacity. It means that they have a principle of spontaneity within themselves (CPJ, 5:410).

Therefore, on the one hand, organized beings are self-organizing, i.e. they have the formative power; and on the other hand--and connected to the former-- they have the capacity to act on an inner principle. These two along with their inscrutable inner causality, bring living beings beyond the reach of mechanical explanation. It is true that Kant makes a great attempt to make possible scientific understanding of organisms as objects of the outer senses, but at the same time, and more importantly, according to Guyer (2005, 314-42) and Kant himself, even a greater attempt has been

made to relate the organic nature to an immaterial supersensible element. Organized beings must have one foot in mechanical world and the other in the supersensible.⁴²

The principle of life in organized beings cannot be reduced to any physical causality we know of, and is essentially beyond the reach of our understanding. Guyer (2005, 355) provides a deeper explanation of this inexplicability by quoting *CPJ*, 5: 394, where Kant refutes hylozoism based on the contradictory claim it is bound to: "However, the possibility of a living matter (the concept of which contains a contradiction, because lifelessness, inertia, constitutes its essential characteristic), cannot even be conceived". Therefore, matter is by definition lifeless and any hope to explain a living being based on material laws is impossible. Mechanical laws of nature, as the laws of matter and its motion, are by definition unable to explain an organized being as a living being.

A quick look at the passage below from the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* can support that remark:

The mechanical law must alone be called the law of inertia...The inertia of matter is, and means, nothing else than its lifelessness, as matter in itself. Life is the faculty of a substance to determine itself to act from an internal principle, of a finite substance to change, and of a material substance [to determine itself] to motion or rest, as change of its state... Hence all matter, as such, is lifeless. (MF, 544)

The claim of hylozoism is to posit the living element inside matter itself as a material element. Since the essential characteristic of matter is inertia or lifelessness, the

⁴² Although such a dual character about the organized being is similar to the dual character of the human being in the *Groundwork III*, they are not the same. The moral agent of the *Groundwork* has a sensible and an intelligible character; the latter referring to the rational aspect of the human being. In the case of organized being in general, as I understand it, the intelligible character is replaced with the mere spontaneity of action, i.e. life. The rationality is missing, but the immateriality is maintained in the supersensible character of the organized/living being as the principle of life.

hylozoist notion of "living matter" cannot be meaningful and so cannot give us an explanation of the generation or inner causality of organized beings. As stated before, given that the mechanism of nature is nothing other than the laws of the motion of matter, a living being is by definition beyond the grasp of such lawfulness.

Thus, the living being is a product of matter and the immaterial. The principle of life in an organized being is the principle of immateriality in matter. Kant's *Opus Postumum* sheds more light on this matter:

An organic natural body may be thought of as a natural machine (that is to say, as a system of externally moving forces, inwardly united into a whole, founded upon an idea) in the following way: the organic body is thought of as a solid body ...and rigid. The moving forces of matter in such a body are either merely vegetative or else vital forces. For the generation of the latter, an *immaterial* principle, possessing an indivisible unity in its power of representation, is necessarily required. For the manifold, whose combination into unity depends on an idea of a purposively (artificially) acting subject, cannot emerge from moving forces of matter (which lack the unity of the principle). (OP 22:547)

All Organic beings (not mere matter, but bodies) are beings in which there is life (immaterial principle, inner final cause). (OP 22:99)

These are only two passages, among so many, in which Kant confirms the immateriality of the principle of life.⁴³ In this way, living beings can be (regulatively yet transcendently) seen from two perspectives: of their matter, and of their living character. An organized matter being considered (hypothetically) by itself and without a vital force is nothing but a machine; and it is only when it is combined (problematically used) with the principle of *life* that it ascends to the level of a living being. About the quality of such a community⁴⁴, Kant is again silent, simply because to *explain* a community that has an immaterial principle on the one side, is beyond the

⁴³ See for example: OP, 22:418; 22:481; 22:504; 22:507; 21:210 etc.

⁴⁴ Everywhere used problematically.

realm of possible experience. I believe this is the true meaning of the inexplicability of organized beings: organized beings do not entirely belong to mechanical nature. Now, it is wrong to think that DNA can go beyond the whole of material nature and explain the immaterial principle of life. The concepts of life and machine are fundamentally different, and if they are to be united, it must be done by a unifying element which is higher than both of them and can put them together (problematically).⁴⁵ If DNA provides a deep mechanical explanation of the genesis of the organized being, that explanation, no matter how deep or profound it sounds, cannot explain the capacity to originate action from an inner principle; because such a capacity requires freedom and purposiveness, both of which coming from, and leading to, contingency.⁴⁶ Thus, explanations based on the necessary laws of mechanics do not provide the tiniest clue even of the meaning of the *question* of life and freedom (in their metaphysical sense), let alone provide an *answer* to that question.

Therefore, two realms of mechanics and technique of nature are vividly distinguished from one another although being mutually connected. As we have seen in previous chapters, without a body, the principle of life (freedom, technicality, soul, etc.) cannot originate any motion, because it is only in space and among extended substances that motion can take place. And with no living force, no motion can be originated, since effective causality of the material world does not explain the origination of motion and causal relation.

⁴⁵ This is not at all to suggest the theory of "Divine Assistance" as explained in the previous chapter.

⁴⁶ Kant explains that matter clearly in CPJ, 5:411-13.

This is the reason of the peculiarity and inscrutability of organized beings for Kant. As Guyer (2005, 342) asserts, Kant's focus on organisms is related to his claim that among the proofs to the existence of God "the argument from design must always be treated with a kind of respect...because it is the clearest and the most appropriate to common human reason." In this way, "the experience of organisms would play an indispensable role in introducing the teleological perspective to normal human agents" (Guyer 2005, 342).

We, ourselves, are organized beings and (as Kant applies this analogy) we can understand the argument by making analogy between the life of organisms and our own experience of life. It is by that analogy that Kant moves from the regulative principle of purposiveness concerning animals and plants to the immediate purposiveness we can find in ourselves as human beings. Then, there is a second move from purposiveness, to freedom, morality and from there to God manifested in CPJ from §85 to §89. This second move, i.e. to ascend from the organization of organized beings to the organization of nature as a whole,⁴⁷ and also the move to the practical realm of human freedom and then to the supersensible highest unity (God), must not be neglected.

What makes such a move possible is *life* that is the ground of purposiveness and self-organization of organized beings as an immaterial principle the very essence of which goes beyond the realm of mechanism:

⁴⁷ Kant goes even further and takes the whole world as a living organized being: "Life is "[t]he productive force in this unity", and "this vital principle can be applied *a priori*, from consideration of their mutual needs, to plants, to animals, to their relation to one another taken as a whole, and finally, to the totality of our world" (OP 21:211).

All matter is lifeless and thus contains no ground of life in it. Life must depend upon an immaterial, thinking principle; this principle cannot be material, for by the principle of life we always imagine something which determines itself from inner grounds. (Lectures on Metaphysics, 28:765)

Conclusion:

We investigated, from different perspectives, the differences between the accounts of purposiveness and teleology as stated in the first and the second *Critique*. Internal purposiveness of the organization of organized beings derived from nature and the reflecting power of judgment emphasizes the mediatory function between the two sides of the gap between experience and reason, freedom and system, teleology and mechanism.

Also, the mechanical inexplicability of organized beings is being described due to the formative character of their organization and their community with the immaterial principle of life. Living beings are inexplicable because they have the capacity to originate action. If it were possible to explain living beings by mechanical laws, then they would be nothing but mere machines, bound to the efficient causality of nature.

From the peculiar purposiveness of organized beings and their living character we were able to see them as the products of both the mechanism and the technique of nature. A living being is at the same time bound to mechanical laws and free from them. A living being is a mediator between the material and immaterial, system and freedom, supersensible and sensible. The life of living beings is that which manifests

the immaterial and free character of them; and their organization manifests their lawfulness and systematicity. This is not at all to say that the living being is actually divisible into a material and an immaterial part, but it is to say that, a living being is a co-product of both. Thus, living beings stand between the sky and the earth, between metaphysics and physics. They do not belong solely to either the metaphysics of nature, or the metaphysics of morals. Living beings, in this way, belong to a category which I would like to call it the metaphysics of life.

General Conclusion

Kant's engagement with the question of life emerges at the very beginning of his philosophical career in the *Living Forces* as the question of motion in matter. Kant's *New Elucidation* as well as his *Only Possible Argument* shows his close concern with that question in the form of the mind-body problem and the possibility of communion between the two. The immateriality of the principle of life is taken beyond refutation as the principle of spontaneous motion, but as we see—the most extensively—in the *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, the communion of such a principle with a material body allows no explanation within the boundaries of reason.

Critique of Pure Reason elevates the mind-body problem both psychologically and metaphysically. Regarding the former, the mind-body problem manifests itself as the problem of the possibility of extended substance in a thinking subject, and thus, escalates to an epistemological problem. The problem becomes even more complicated once the metaphysical aspect of the mind-body problem develops into the problem of the compatibility of systematicity and freedom. If *life* is the communion of the *principle* of life as the capacity to act on an inner principle, and the *organized body* of a living being shows the most inscrutable systematicity that can be found in nature, then, how is it at all possible to explain a living being which manifests the both sides of the dichotomy of freedom and system?! The answer to that question is similar in the first *Critique* to the one provided in *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*: there is no answer. Rather, it is not possible for our limited reason to answer the question.

Critique of the Power of Judgment is Kant's most extensive attempt to find an at least satisfactory solution to the mystery of the organized/living being. He revises

his epistemology and teleology fundamentally in order to find a place for the organized/living being in his system of philosophy. He makes a great improvement by confirming the position of the living being as the mediator between the two sides of the dichotomy above: the reflecting power of judgment on the one hand, and the peculiar account of natural purposiveness on the other, are the main shaping elements of that improvement.

Does that improvement and revision make the organized/living being any less mysterious? Does it provide a final answer to the question of life? Do we know what the community of material and immaterial means, or how is/not such a community possible? Kant's answer is:

Perhaps one comes closer to this inscrutable property if one calls it an analogue of life: but then one must either endow matter as mere matter with a property (hylozoism) that contradicts its essence, or else associate with it an alien principle standing in communion with it (a soul), in which case, however, if such a product is to be a product of nature, organized matter as an instrument of the soul is already presupposed, and thus makes that product not the least more comprehensible, or else the soul is made into an artificer of this structure, and the product must be withdrawn from (corporeal) nature. Strictly speaking, the organization of nature is therefore not analogous with any causality that we know. (CPJ, 5:374-5)

First of all, the distinction between the principle of life and the organization of the organized being must not be neglected, because if there is no distinction, then there is either no immaterial principle of life, or there is no matter. We have seen in the thesis that neither the former nor the latter is possible: matter is by definition lifeless, and thus no motion can be originated by matter itself; and with no matter, no motion is possible since the soul as *anima*, taken in isolation as a simple substance, is deprived of extension; and with no extension there is no space or connection, thus, motion would be meaningless in the lack of matter.

Second, although the immaterial principle of life is undeniable in living nature, nothing more can be said to explain the quality or the possibility of the community between nature as mechanical/material and the immaterial principle of life. Even the term *community* (*Gemeinschaft*) says too much about what we cannot possibly know of, and is being used only problematically. Thus, we have to suffice to get only *closer* to understanding the living being by calling it an *analogue of life*, because none of the explanations of life as the community of soul and body, i.e. of the immaterial principle of life and the organic body, are legitimate. The claim of hylozoism is contradictory, and spiritual explanations are all beyond the limits of reason.

I tried in this thesis to show how Kant, perhaps, gets closer to understanding the organized being by not losing hope in the immaterial principle of life as the ground of freedom. It is only by the immateriality of the principle of life that morality and theology are possible: without that principle, the world as a whole would turn into a product of a blind mechanism and would lack any principle, entity, or character which is not explicable by merely necessary laws of mechanics. Such a view immediately eliminates the possibility of freedom and thus annihilates morality and theology.

Thus, the organized/living being is bound to matter and is free from it at the same time. It must be a product of *nature* and so be bound to the necessary laws of mechanics; and at the same time, the contingency of its inner causality manifests the presence of a capacity to act on freedom that is only possible if it originated from an *immaterial* principle. In this way, the organized being is the product of both the technique and the mechanics of nature. According to the former, it is related to the principles of teleology, freedom and art; and concerning the latter, it is bound to the necessary laws of matter and motion. This dual character makes the organized/living

being a unique candidate to play the mediating role between the supersensible and the sensible, metaphysics and physics.

To the end of Kant's career, the mystery of life remains a mystery, but it finds itself a meritorious position in his system of philosophy: the bridge between metaphysics and physics. In this way, if the metaphysics of nature is the metaphysics of "I think" and the metaphysics of morals is the metaphysics of "I act"; the metaphysics of life is the metaphysics of "I live". It is neither about what *is* nor about what *ought to be*; it happens when what *is* determines what *ought to be*. It is neither a metaphysics of truth, nor of duty, but of creation and creativity!

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