Introduction
Out in the Territory

At the end of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and again in his *Logic* lectures, Kant lists his now famous four questions: "1. What can I know? 2. What should I do? 3. What may I hope?" (KrV A805/B833). A fourth question – "What is the human being?" – is constituted by the first three (LJ 9:25). The answers to the first two questions of knowing and doing are given explicitly in their own critical examinations, respectively: the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*. Moreover, both of those texts are decisively oriented by the question they seek to answer. It is not obvious, however, what the orienting question of the third *Critique* is. It is even less obvious that the *Critique of Judgment* may be found to answer to the remaining question of *hope*. One hardly finds the word (*die Hoffnung*) in the text, let alone as a dominant motif. Yet, while "hope" itself is not thematized in the text, the very problem that gives rise to the need for hope is announced in the Introduction as the guiding thread of the inquiry. We find it in Kant's articulation of the "gulf" between freedom and nature that must be bridged (KU 5:175–6). A need for hope is born of our concern for freedom's efficaciousness in the natural order and has as its object a nature that is reconceived in the context of this concern.

Even under the auspice of the announced concern for freedom's efficaciousness in the natural order, the text often remains unclear or underdeveloped with respect to how its arguments may speak to the concern. It is hard, too, to overstate the internal diversity and complexity of the text itself. In some sense, then, it is not hard to see why scholars have not settled on the proper interpretative key for the text as a whole, or, as the case may be, rejected such a possibility entirely. The complexity is apparent even in a brief survey of some of the things the text treats substantively: the power of judgment, reflection, the principle of purposiveness, beauty, art, the sublime, organisms, the system of natural laws, culture, and the existence of God. Organizing how these multiple topics form a coherent

whole in the context of Kant's own intersecting and sometimes oblique concerns is, to say the least, a daunting challenge.

My aim in this book is to provide an account of the third *Critique* as a unified text. Crucial to this endeavor is developing what I take the interpretative master key of the text to be. My thesis is that the interpretative master key to the text is the problem of *hope* – hope forms the horizon for Kant's examination of the multiple and seemingly disparate judgments of reflection human beings make. Hope, for Kant, is about the relation of reason and nature – specifically, conceiving of a nature that accords with the demands of freedom. What one hopes for is that nature, which appears indifferent or hostile to human ends, is, in some way, actually hospitable for human life. We hope that nature is underwritten by a deeper law than what we find in our experience as constituted by the laws of the understanding. We further hope that this deeper law also allows nature's law to be fully intelligible to us. Hope, then, is about the fittingness of nature and the world for human beings; hope seeks some evidence that we have a place in the broader context in which we find ourselves, that nature is not alien to us. The answer to the question of hope provided by the third *Critique* is in its description of a new vision of nature – it suggests a cosmic sense of nature, a larger system of nature to which we *belong* and which is meaningful. I further argue that for Kant, we encounter this nature in what he names the *territory* of judgment – a distinctive sphere of human life that allows for the transition he announces as necessary between freedom and nature.

In arguing that the third *Critique* is meant to answer the question of hope, I argue that we understand the internal unity of the text by way of the role the book plays in Kant's philosophical system. That is, the systematic function of judgments of reflection is the key to understanding the text as a whole. I argue this because Kant clearly takes the task of the third *Critique* to find a bridge across the gulf between freedom and nature – the gulf that gives rise to the need for hope in the first place. The significance of this bridging, however, can only be grasped if we first come to understand the character of this gulf and what drives the need for a bridge in the first place. This is no easy task – the problem captured in Kant's brief articulation of it in the Introduction of his text is nothing less than reason's demands in its relation to nature, which stands as the central axis and motivating tension of his entire critical project. Reason ultimately has an interest in unity – even more than this, in rational unity. Reason desires for everything to be rational, that is, to be determined by and identical to itself; this would be the pinnacle of a world fit for us. However,

this is not how we find the world we inhabit; we then must turn to the next best thing in a *system* that approximates unity. Reason's interest takes shape in numerous ways. Practically, we are concerned about reason's efficacy in the natural order – we need our freedom to be made real and concrete through our actions. In consequence, we thus also need to think nature's susceptibility to the work of freedom. Theoretically, we seek the absolute intelligibility of nature in a system of laws. While the practical dimension may be said to be existential – that is, it pertains to our existence and whether we are making a difference in the world or belong to it at all – there is a further lathe to the existential import of the problem of hope as well. Bridging the gulf between freedom and nature speaks not only to completing the system of philosophy but also, with this, to the system of human faculties. It is a question about the unity – or, rather, systematic and harmonious relations of – the faculties of the human soul. The third *Critique* speaks then to the vocation of the human being to fulfill the demands of freedom in transforming the natural order as well as the possibility of an integrated, holistic human subject.

Judgments of reflection – the proper subject matter of the *Critique of Judgment* – are what allow for freedom and nature to be related to each other as parts of a larger system, and thus ultimately answer to our deepest philosophical and existential concerns. As I will seek to show, Kant argues that judgments of reflection form a third independent sphere of human life that functions as both *transition between* and *ground of* freedom and nature. The introduction of this sphere – the region of reflection is what Kant names a territory – mediates between and allows freedom and nature to come into relation, thus giving rise to a *system*. Judgments of reflection will be seen to serve both as a kind of hidden ground of as well as a transitional or intermediary sphere between the domains of freedom and nature. For Kant, it is constitutive of his transcendental philosophy that freedom and nature remain interminably independent of each other; the unconditioned and the conditioned will always remain mired in dialectic.[1] Yet reason cannot abide the separation of the two spheres of human life. What I will show is that while judgments of reflection do not ultimately supply any kind of *unity* to freedom and nature, they will address reason's interests in part through their *referential relation* to such a unity. Judgments of

[1] I think it is important to note that this is not an oversight on Kant's part, but rather an explicit commitment. It was clearly available to him to find an inner unity to freedom and nature. His commitment to their independence from each other was based squarely on his transcendental methodology; his recognition of and philosophical grappling with the problems this generated for him did not lead him, however, to acquiesce to reason's own need for this unity.

reflection complete the critical system in their independence from both freedom and nature; yet they also *suggest* the possibility of freedom's efficacious in the natural order in virtue of their gesture toward *life* – Kant's name for the inner unity of freedom and nature that is foreclosed by the critical system.

It is the *gesture* toward unity that has troubled, excited, and confused many philosophers and scholars after Kant. It appears troubling because, as Kant himself makes clear, life – or, the inner unity of freedom and nature – is not admissible into the critical system. Kant then, it would seem, opens himself up to charges of inconsistency or even senility. It appears exciting because in *life*, reason's needs do seem finally to be met and there is no longer a remainder or anything outstanding under the purview of reason. Here, it is not only that nature, as independent from freedom, is on its own accord serendipitously amenable to freedom; the suggestion of unity goes much further than this. It confuses scholars writing on the third *Critique* because Kant can seem, on the one hand, to maintain the "as if" character of what we come to judge about nature, and then, on the other hand, to assert a further unity of freedom and nature. At times, he can appear to wish to have it both ways. But this is simply the fate of a judgment that is reflective. I have been using the language of reference, suggestion, remind, gesture, point to, and so forth to describe how judgments of reflection function. This group of terms captures what it is like *for us to have* judgments that we make in reflection. Judgments of reflection are not knowledge claims; they offer, however, a kind of legitimate testimony about how things are.

What will emerge in this study, however, is that the as-if character of reflective judgments of nature only has purchase insofar as it is referentially related to a *further unity* of freedom and nature. This referentiality will function at once to leave reason dissatisfied in realizing its own aims, and at the same time to point to a robust *possibility* of reason getting what it most fully demands. Put another way, it gives us reason to *hope*; in hope, we do not get what we want, but maintain that it is possible to do so. Reason remains dissatisfied because it only gets the *suggestion* that nature will accommodate reason's ends. Yet this very suggestion is given with reference to the further possibility of reason's absolute determination of nature. That is, the unity of freedom and nature *appears as possible* in the third *Critique*; it is the pattern of unity that makes an appearance. This motive tension drives the third *Critique* and is, in part, what makes it so compelling and dynamic as a work. However, while many of the Idealists and Romantics who furthered Kant's transcendental project after him find a

way to justify an inner unity of freedom and nature, the third *Critique* is distinctive in maintaining not only the seriousness of this demand but also, at the same time, the impossibility of fulfilling it.

One of the principal upshots of my reading of the third *Critique* will be to demonstrate how the text offers Kant's readers a markedly different and surprising account of the place of the human being in a larger, even cosmic whole. While the transcendental turn effected in the first and second *Critiques* places the human being at the center of and as source of any ordered whole – of knowing, and as author of the good – the third *Critique* initiates a new context for self-understanding. In the first two *Critiques*, we understand everything in virtue of our own faculties, and measure the good with respect to the good will of the human being; the third *Critique*, by contrast, introduces a kind of exteriority or externality. Hope, after all, refers us to what is outside of us and exceeds us. As Rachel Zuckert defines hope, it is "an attitude of tentative positive expectation . . . that [something] could happen, might happen, if all things go well . . . in ways we cannot ourselves control."[2] That which we cannot control is, broadly speaking, nature. This book will argue that Kant portrays nature in the third *Critique* as both something genuinely exterior to us and at the same time as a new context in which we must come to understand ourselves. While the new context is not the ancient cosmos of the Greeks and the Judeo-Christian heritage, the third *Critique* does take us back outside of the humanistic center of reason. The natural order as it is rethought in the *Critique of Judgment* is a natural order that is much more hospitable to the ends of human freedom than that of the first *Critique*. Accordingly, insofar as it can be said to inquire into the supersensible substratum of nature (KU 5:176), the *Critique of Judgment* may be understood as developing a new answer to the demand reason makes for metaphysics – one that remains bound by the constraints of the critical system. At the very least, we can see how the text addresses the deepest and most perennial questions of metaphysics as Kant himself articulates them.

In what follows, I will argue that the third *Critique* offers an account of our experience of a more expansive and encompassing system to which both freedom and nature belong. It is in virtue of their places in this larger system, of which both are a part, that freedom finds the possibility of efficacy in the natural order. In establishing a third, independent sphere of judgments of reflection, Kant articulates a system to which the human

[2] Rachel Zuckert, "Is Kantian Hope a Feeling?" in *Kant and the Faculty of Feeling*, Kelly Sorenson and Diane Williamson, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 242–259, 247.

being belongs and which is suited for its ends. Thus, the third *Critique* is not a text made up of discrete topics; its topic is not aesthetics or philosophy of science. Rather, its topic, in answer to the problem of hope, is the system of nature – *reconceived* – to which the human being and mechanical nature both belong. Aesthetic and teleological judgments are those judgments in which this expansive system of nature to which we belong appears to us. This *cosmic sense* of nature is what buttresses the hope we must have in reason's efficacy in the world.

With this interpretative key, then, I will offer a comprehensive account of the third *Critique* as an answer to the following question: What may I hope? Unlike the first two *Critiques*, however, the third *Critique* is not strictly progressive. Paul Guyer, in one of the first full-length manuscripts in English on the third *Critique* (or, on the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment), writes, "we can compare the structure of the *Critique of Judgment* to that of another machine ... an electric motor, in which increasing layers of wire are wrapped around a single central core, every new layer of wire making the motor more powerful."[3] This is an apt description of the argumentative structure of the text. That is, it does not exclusively develop one sustained and unfolding argument, but deepens and complicates its main ideas. In part, this fact about the text is what has allowed it to be treated in such a partitioned manner in the secondary literature and evade definitive interpretation. Yet it does consistently address one question. Each matter treated in the text – beauty, the sublime, art, the sensus communis, organisms, God – is comprehended by Kant according to the schema suggested here. Each matter treated answers to the question of hope and refers ultimately to a unity that at once exceeds the possibilities of the critical system and makes the critical system itself possible. This further means that any book on the third *Critique* that treats it in its entirety inevitably runs into this problem: The initial arguments are proved and supported only by way of the whole.

I develop this reading of the text, first, out of Kant's own discussion of the place of the third *Critique* in his philosophical system. Kant's concept of "territory" will thus form the crux of the interpretation I offer throughout this text. An analysis of his treatment of the territory of reflective judgments emphasizes not only their independence but also especially their role as both a transition between and ground of the other two spheres. How the system is completed offers a picture of how to understand the expansive whole Kant is attempting to articulate. My reading,

[3] Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Taste* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), xiii.

second, is further developed by emphasizing points in Kant's text that have been overlooked as central to its interpretation – the Ideal of Beauty, the sensus communis, genius, organicity, and ethicotheology. These moments of the text, rather than be understood as outliers in the overall movement of the argument that perhaps exceed the critical system, are precisely those moments that suggest the pattern of reflective judgments; these moments all embody a movement of referentiality, where the referent is a more fundamental unity of freedom and nature in the context of a larger system. I will not argue that these moments actually yield said unity, only that their pattern refers to it. To follow an ancient idea related to the arts in particular, these judgments mimic or imitate a unity of freedom and nature; this is to say they reflect it. The Ideal of Beauty provides the template for all judgments of taste. The sensus communis is the ultimate ground of judgments of taste, and, too, of all universality. Genius answers the question of how a human being is able to bring about a product whose production and effect exceed its own capacities. The *life* of living beings refers us ultimately to a system of nature given value in and through the existence of the human being. Ethicotheology develops the inextricable relation of the systems of nature and freedom, leading to faith in God. While much of the history of Kant scholarship has regularly treated these moments as strange aberrations or in the context of concerns alien to the text, we can see, on the contrary, that they gather together and help organize the larger trajectory of the project. Transcendentally speaking, these moments shed light on the conditions for the possibility of things appearing as they do out in the territory. These moments, too, most explicitly answer to the problem of hope as laid out in the Introduction to the book. How this is so can be elucidated by way of how this project fits into the longer history of the reception of the third *Critique*.

The reception of and secondary literature on the *Critique of Judgment* evidence not only the difficulty of the text, as Kant presents it, but also the difficulty of the philosophical task it sets for itself. That the third *Critique* is about the problem of the system of philosophy was clear to Kant's contemporaries and immediate successors. Both Fichte and Schelling published works on the very question of a system of transcendental philosophy oriented by the problem of freedom and nature during Kant's lifetime.[4] Hegel, too, published his own work in 1801 comparing

[4] On the importance of the third *Critique* for the development of Fichte's philosophy, see Daniel Breazeale, "'The Summit of Kantian Speculation': Fichte's reception of the Third *Critique*," *Anuario Filosófico* 52:1 (2019), 113–114.

Fichte and Schelling's attempts at establishing a system of transcendental philosophy following Kant, three years before Kant died. Even more than this, however, Schiller and Schelling both take their point of departure from what they find Kant to propose in the third *Critique*, namely that beauty and teleology secure the systematic unity of freedom and nature. For Schiller, beauty is an accomplishment of cultivated individuals and society: It unifies the otherwise opposed aspects of human nature; it is "beauty that can lead him back" to the proper, fully human, path.[5] Schelling, at least in some of his earlier works, argues that art is nothing less than the presentation of the absolute, understood as the primordial unity of freedom and nature, ideal and real. "Art," he writes, "is itself an emanation of the absolute."[6] As such it proves the original, ontological unity of freedom and nature. Hegel follows suit to a point, likewise arguing that beauty in art has a metaphysical significance with respect to the unity of freedom and nature.[7] He also recognizes that the third *Critique* addresses the unity of freedom and nature; he criticizes Kant for subjectivizing this unity, rather than committing himself to it as ontological. That the question of system was a – if not the – central issue for those inheriting Kant's transcendental methodology is evident even in Heine's account of *Religion and Philosophy in Germany*: "This want of a definite system in the philosophy of Kant was the reason why it was sometimes refused the name philosophy. As regards Immanuel Kant himself, there was justice in this; but not as regards the Kantists, who constructed from Kant's propositions quite a sufficient number of definite systems."[8]

If Kant's contemporaries and heirs in the speculative idealist tradition took the third *Critique* principally to address the question of a system of transcendental philosophy and, with this, the metaphysical unity of freedom and nature, we can nevertheless identify a competing strain of Kant interpretation. Frederick Beiser, in his *The Genesis of Neo-Kantianism*, argues that there were two traditions battling over Kant's legacy from the

[5] Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* (New York: Penguin Books, 2016), 33. See especially the Fourteenth Letter, where Schiller describes the "playful impulse" as that which unites "becoming with absolute being" (51).

[6] F. W. J. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 19. He also argues for the systematic significance of teleology and beauty at the end of his *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800).

[7] This claim is qualified for two reasons. First, Hegel preserves religion and philosophy as superior to art. Second, Schelling's views on this hierarchy of the presentation of the absolute do not seem to be settled over the course of his scholarship.

[8] Henrich Heine, *Religion and Philosophy in Germany* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 122.

very beginning. In addition to the rationalistic, speculative idealist tradition, he points to an "empiricist-psychological tradition," represented by Fries, Herbart, and Beneke. When, in the 1840s, the speculative idealist tradition had diminished in influence, it left an "enormous vacuum in the German intellectual scene."[9] This vacuum was filled by the heirs to the empiricist-psychologists and became what we now call the neo-Kantians. In this way, the anti-metaphysical orientation to Kant won out. "The battle to represent Kant's legacy was won – whether rightly or wrongly – by the thinkers of the empiricist-psychological tradition. They won the battle simply because their arguments were later adopted by a slew of thinkers whom we now happen to call . . . neo-Kantians."[10]

The neo-Kantian tradition of Kant interpretation played a formative role in orienting the Anglophone reception of and scholarship on Kant. As John E. Smith observes in his Foreword to a 1956 translation of Richard Kroner's *Kants Weltanschauung* (from 1914):

> Kantian scholarship of the past century has been so vast and varied that it would be a matter of great surprise if different schools of interpretation had not developed. The so-called Marburg school is the one best known to English readers, and even those unfamiliar with the details have heard of the "back to Kant" movement associated with such commentators as Natorp, Cohen, and Cassirer.[11]

While the neo-Kantian movement was broad and diverse, we can nevertheless discern in it some key features. As Beiser points out, there was a general aversion toward and mistrust of metaphysical speculation.[12] The rise of the empirical sciences further contoured philosophical sentiment; philosophy could "find a definite place within the division of sciences, only as epistemology. The neo-Kantians had in mind a very specific conception of epistemology: the examination of the methods, standards and presuppositions of the empirical sciences."[13] This influence thus gave shape to how scholars approached Kant's texts. Smith argues that the neo-Kantians and their heirs "were inclined to regard post-Kantian speculation as misguided and thoroughly un-Kantian, a view which in turn led them to

[9] Frederick C. Beiser, *The Genesis of Neo-Kantianism, 1796–1880* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 5.
[10] Beiser, *Genesis*, 16.
[11] John E. Smith, "Foreword," to Richard Kroner, *Kant's Weltanschauung: The Ethical and Religious Derivation of Kant's Worldview* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), vii.
[12] See also the Introduction to Rudolf A. Makkreel and Sebastian Luft, eds., *Neo-Kantianism in Contemporary Philosophy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).
[13] Beiser, *Genesis*, 6.

strip Kant of all vestiges of metaphysical thought and thereby reduce him to a thinker concerned only with epistemology."[14] While the speculative idealists were concerned with questions of system, of the unity of freedom and nature, and did not shy away from transcendental metaphysics, the neo-Kantians initiated philosophical questioning that was more narrow in its scope and concerns, at least with respect to their interest in Kant.[15]

The secondary literature on the third *Critique* in the Anglophone context embodies this historical movement. First, the lack of engagement with the third *Critique* in favor of Kant's theoretical works is evident enough. One of the few books written on the third *Critique* in English in the twentieth century laments the neglect. Donald Crawford opens his *Kant's Aesthetic Theory* thus: "Many books could be written about Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. The fact that so few have been written is one of the surprises in the history of philosophy."[16] When, in 1979, Paul Guyer published *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, he noted that Eva Schaper's study was being published that same year, but otherwise only cited a handful of book-length studies on the text, Crawford's being first among them. In addition to the neglect of the third *Critique*, we also find that the weight on the empirical sciences and emphasis on method shows up in our understanding of Kant's moral theory. Even with the proliferation of interest in Kant's practical philosophy following John Rawls' prominence, much of the scholarship on Kant's moral theory was (and still is) concerned with a kind of scientizing of maxim making – finding a rigorous, almost mathematically logical rule by which we may test our maxims for moral worth.

Second, and more importantly for our purposes, engagement with the third *Critique* has likewise been oriented by epistemological concerns. Guyer's work, along with Hannah Ginsborg's, is exemplary in this regard – one of the main lines of his argument is about the structure of reflective judgments. In this, his concern is with the workings of the mind when we

[14] Ibid., vi; vii.

[15] Smith goes much further, asserting that the upshot of the predominance of the Neo-Kantian approach to Kant "lost sight of the main purpose of Kant's thought because we have taken too myopic a view of his philosophy."

[16] Donald Crawford, *Kant's Aesthetic Theory* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), vii. The other early text taking up the third *Critique* that merits mention is J. D. McFarland, *Kant's Concept of Teleology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970). A review of the book notes that it is for "The student who wants to acquaint himself with the 'other' Kant, the Kant not of the 'categories of the understanding' and not of 'practical reason' . . . but that lesser known Kant of the 'ideas of pure reason and of 'teleological judgment.'" L. Funderbunk, "Book Review of *Kant's Concept of Teleology*," *Kant-Studien* 62:1 (1971), 137.

make judgments of taste. This is not, as it were, a criticism of that text or others that pursue a similar line of inquiry. These examinations of Kant provide helpful reconstructions and insights into the text and into the epistemological dimensions of his thought. But it does narrow the scope of what may be significant about these insights when delineated by questions of knowledge or mind.

Even for those inquiries that have not been principally epistemological in orientation, there has largely been neglect of *system* being the context through which the text is explained. In addition to epistemological concerns, scholars have also asked how the third *Critique* speaks to or adjudicates concerns in Kant's practical philosophy. Henry Allison's *Kant's Theory of Taste* was one of the first to take this up. And, when Guyer came to take up the question of system in Kant in a number of important essays beginning in the 1990s, he, too, emphasized the practical import: "[S]uch a conception," Guyer wrote, "of the single system of nature and freedom is held to be valid only from a practical point of view."[17] Again, these are worthwhile inquiries, and add immensely to our comprehension of how Kant understands the relationship between ethics and aesthetics or teleology. They require supplementation, however, with a broader, more contextual account of the book as a whole.

There has only very recently been a proliferation of Anglophone scholarship interested in the question of system. Guyer, as mentioned earlier, initially wrote a series of essays – collected into a book – on the topic, beginning in 1990s. And, even a cursory overview of the most current secondary literature shows that more and more scholars recognize its import for understanding Kant and especially the third *Critique*. This is further evident in the expansion of inquiries into Kant's thinking about transitions, namely how to find an intermediary or transitional sphere between the theoretical and the practical, the ideal and the empirical.[18] The work with respect to this question is still nascent, especially when

[17] Paul Guyer, "The Unity of Nature and Freedom: Kant's Conception of the System of Philosophy," in *The System of Nature and Freedom: Selected Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 280. See also Guyer, "From Nature to Morality: Kant's New Argument in the 'Critique of Teleological Judgment,'" in the same volume. See too, Henry Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste: A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). To the extent he is concerned not only to provide a close reading of Kant's arguments but also their systematic significance, he turns already to either the completion of the epistemic or moral projects.

[18] While the "transition" literature focuses heavily on the *Opus Postumum*, there is literature that treats the problem in the third *Critique* as well. On the *Opus Postumum*, see Oliver Thorndike, *Kant's Transition Project and Late Philosophy: Connecting the* Opus Postumum *and the* Metaphysics of Morals (London: Bloomsbury, 2018). Thorndike argues that it is judgment that can effect the transition Kant is seeking. It is worth noting that Klaus Düsing's essay "Beauty as the Transition

considered in relation to those concerns scholars have been addressing for many decades.

These lacunas dovetail with the dearth of writing that seeks a unified interpretation of the text. This may be the most striking feature of the secondary literature to readers. As Fred Rauscher opens his book review of Zuckert's *Kant on Beauty and Biology*: "The slogan for commentators on Kant's *Critique of Judgment* has often been 'divide and conquer.'"[19] The internal problem of the text is captured in John Zammito's articulation of it at the outset of his own reconstruction of the book: "The hermeneutical problem posed by the third *Critique* is why Kant should have brought his treatments of aesthetics and teleology together with systematic intent."[20] Indeed, Zuckert and Zammito have offered two of the main – if not only – attempts to take on this hermeneutical challenge directly and in its entirety.[21] Even here, though, they each privilege reading the text through either an epistemological or practical lens. Zuckert is concerned principally with Kant's claim that judgments of reflection and their principle of purposiveness speak to the "possibility of empirical knowledge."[22] She finds great success in discerning how the third *Critique* contributes to this end. Zammito, on the other hand, takes the culminating moment of the text to be in Kant's claim that "beauty is the symbol of morality."[23] Much of his account of the third *Critique* speaks directly to how our ethical vocation is furthered.

The difficulty of thinking the coherence of the two parts of the text is evident to any reader. They differ in ways that are not so minor: the subject matter, the employment of the a priori principle constitutive of the faculty. The first part of the text, the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment, takes up the topic of the beautiful. Moreover, it treats a *feeling*, namely a feeling of pleasure we have that grounds our judgment of taste. The second part of the text, the Critique of Teleological Judgment, by contrast, takes up the topic of the proper methodology in science, and then turns to topics suited

from Nature to Freedom in Kant's *Critique of Judgment*" also appears, along with Guyer's work, in 1990. There will be a further discussion of this literature in Chapter 1.

[19] Fred Rauscher, book review of *Kant on Beauty and Biology: An Interpretation of the Critique of Judgment*. Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews, May 7, 2009.

[20] John Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgment* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992), 2. Little has changed, too, in the almost thirty years since Zammito also observed that "a good deal of Anglo-American interpretation chooses neglect the unity of the work for the sake of a few currently interesting arguments about beauty."

[21] This claim excludes those excellent commentaries on the entirety of the text, such as Nuzzo's.

[22] Rachel Zuckert, *Kant on Beauty and Biology: An Interpretation of the Critique of Judgment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 5.

[23] Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgment*, 3.

to theology. In neither case is there a feeling involved. On the face of it, at least, the two parts of the text seem to have little to nothing to do with each other. Of this difficulty, Allison notes that his initial intent for his *Kant's Theory of Taste* was to "deal explicitly with the thorny question of the unity of the *Critique of Judgment*,"[24] before realizing the book would be inordinately long. Allison is correct about the problem of length – one could not offer a close commentary of the kind his book affords as well as address the issue of the unity of the text in its entirety.

We have thus identified two interrelated themes in the reception of the *Critique of Judgment*. The Anglophone literature, first, has emphasized epistemological over systematic concerns. Second, few have taken on the task of offering an interpretation of the text that treats the whole as a unity. In what follows, I take my point of departure for understanding the text from what I argue is Kant's own: the question of system. In this, I think that the speculative idealist tradition saw something true about Kant, even if they themselves took systematicity in directions he himself patently denied. Systematicity always remained a *problem* for Kant, which marks him off profoundly from his speculative heirs. I take the question of system, then, to orient what I believe constitutes the unity of the text. The problem of systematicity thus forms the horizon for understanding the individual parts of the text on this interpretation. It therefore makes sense that this book treats moments in Kant's text that have been neglected in much of the Anglophone literature. The moments in the text that speak to systematicity are those very same moments that suggest metaphysical leanings the neo-Kantians and the Anglophone tradition would reject.

This book further treats judgments of reflection – and their characteristic principle of purposiveness – principally in their *independence.* That is, judgments of reflection are not examined principally for their epistemological relevance nor under the auspices of practical reason. Reason, as we shall see, is defined by its interests. Reflection, however, is disinterested; this separates the sphere of reflection from both the theoretical and practical domains. Only in its independence and separation, too, will it be able to establish a meditating sphere between those two domains. In this, these judgments also establish a larger, more expansive system of nature to which both the theoretical and practical belong. While the systematicity of freedom and nature speaks to a practical question, this questioning is not, for that, what legitimates or constitutes the system as a system.

[24] Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste*, 6.

The accomplishment of a system is found in Kant's discovery a new faculty and a new a priori principle. It is by now well known that Kant initially set out to write a *Critique of Taste* upon completion of the *Critique of Practical Reason*. This task was the fruition of his early and long-standing interest in aesthetics, revised now under the auspices of the critical system; he had once rejected the possibility of a critique involving aesthetics, but had come to see its possibility after the second *Critique* also established a transcendental ground for a feeling. Angelica Nuzzo describes Kant's turn this way: "For it is the second *Critique* that brought Kant to the radical distinction between the feeling of pleasure and the faculty of desire."[25] Despite his intentions to write only a critique of taste, the trajectory of Kant's research culminates with his correspondence with Karl Leonhard Reinhold, where we find the first use of the title *Kritik der Urteilskraft* on May 12, 1789 (Br 11:39; "judgment" had been the declared object of critique in May 1789, to Herz (Br 11:49)). The shift from *taste* to the *faculty or power of judgment* announces with it a new object of inquiry for the text: It is not merely taste and the feeling of pleasure on which taste is grounded. Already by December of 1787 Kant had recognized that the principal topic of the book was teleology. His now famous letter to Reinhold announces the discovery of a new faculty of the human mind, and, with that, a new transcendental principle belonging to it. "I am now at work on the critique of taste, and I have discovered a new sort of a priori principles, different from those heretofore observed. For there are three faculties of the mind: the faculty of cognition, the faculty of feeling pleasure and displeasure, and the faculty of desire" (Br 10:514). The faculty of feeling and the power of judgment have their own principle: teleology.

The *Critique of Judgment*, then, explicates the judgments that enact the principle of purposiveness. This principle is only ever applied in reflection. Both judgments of taste and judgments of teleology are merely "reflective"; they are not, by contrast, determinative. In some sense, this alone should suffice for us to understand the unity of the text. These are the two cases in which our judgment lacks the determinacy offered under the understanding or of the moral law; we come to invoke the principle of purposiveness in order to make sense of our representations and the objects we find ourselves confronted with. However, that both judgments of taste and judgments of teleology are judgments of reflection that invoke the

[25] Angelica Nuzzo, *Kant and the Unity of Reason* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2005), 72.

principle of purposiveness is, frankly, dissatisfying as an account of the unity of the text. While it is true that both the arts and the sciences as described by Kant fall outside of the domains of cognition and morality, we may still discern a more concrete and determinate relation between them beyond a shared reflective structure and a priori principle.

Perhaps the most sustained effort to forward a thesis that comprehends the third *Critique* as a unity is Zuckert's *Kant on Beauty and Biology*. Zuckert takes the Critique of Teleological Judgment to lead in importance. Her thesis is that the principle of purposiveness "is a necessary, transcendental principle of judging . . . because it makes our comprehension of order among natural diversity possible, for it is the form of the 'unity of the diverse' as such, or 'the lawfulness of the contingent.'" She goes on to argue that the subjective character of the judging discloses something key, too, insofar as "the subject must be understood as . . . engaged in a future-directed anticipation of an indeterminate, non-conceptually ordered whole."[26] Zuckert is of course correct that the third *Critique* is occupied principally with the possibility of an ordered whole. Teleology, for Kant (as for all thinkers of teleology), is explicitly about an ordered, unified whole. As a causality in accord with ends, teleology names the coming into being of something in just such an ordered, unified way. It is in virtue of its end or purpose that a thing is organized into a coherent whole. While Zuckert's argument and analysis are compelling, it ultimately remains partial in its understanding of the text. As I attempt to show, the whole of a system of laws is only one aspect of what the third *Critique* concerns itself with.

I argue then that we can grasp the difference between the two sections of the book by way of their role in establishing a larger system of freedom and nature, by way of offering accounts of a reconceived nature to which we belong. In this, the difference between the two sections of the book lies in the *scope* of nature being judged. The Critique of Aesthetic Judgment reflectively judges there to be a larger whole to which the human being belongs; this part of the text offers something more akin to ancient cosmologies in seeking to comprehend an order of which human beings are a part. Here, we come to situate ourselves as part of a larger, unified whole that encompasses the domains of freedom, nature, and the human being itself. Thinking of this ordered whole cosmically fits not only with Kant's concerns, but should not surprise us, given the legacy of thinking these issues in the history of Western philosophy. The association of a universe that is beautiful in virtue of its ordering can be traced back even to

[26] Zuckert, *Kant on Beauty and Biology*, 5.

the Pre-Socratics. Indeed, the word *kósmos* itself means not only universe but also *ornament* and is the root of our own category of words having to do with things that are aesthetically pleasing (i.e., the cosmetic). In the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment's cosmic sense of nature, we find that we belong already to a meaningful order of things; as a "territory," this meaningful order often remains hidden or covered over when taken up into the spheres of freedom and nature. By contrast, the Critique of Teleological Judgment reflectively judges that the order of nature – as a system of laws and interrelation – can be comprehended as a unified whole by human beings. In the former, the ordered whole is suggested to be an order of rational nature that *exceeds and includes* the human being and in which we are able to find a home. In the latter, by contrast, we find that there is a natural order that is subject fully to the ends of human life. There, we give context and order to nature. Yet it still forms only one part of the human experience – it is the sphere of nature already included within the larger order suggested in the first part of the text. The possibility of nature in this sense – namely, as a determinate sphere, being fully subject to our faculties of cognition – is conditioned by the larger, harmonious system to which we both belong. Both, in being ordered in the ways they are, answer to the question of hope by suggesting that freedom and nature are not in opposition but, rather, are intimately related in ways we cannot comprehend, but we can feel or judge. Even more, in the first part of the text, we find that it is nature itself as it appears to us – in beautiful natural objects and in art through the genius – that suggests we belong to it. In teleology, however, the life of living beings gives us faith in a God who created an order of nature whose highest purpose is moral.

The scope of nature being judged is bound up with the relation this nature has to human beings. Beauty bears an inner relation to human beings; it exemplifies an intimacy of belonging. We are only externally related to nature conceived as a teleological whole – that is, what is essentially human stands outside of nature conceived systematically. While Kant does not explicitly couch the difference between and, ultimately, the relation of the two parts of this way, we find elements of this distinction in the Introduction. Kant writes,

> On this is grounded the division of the critique of the power of judgment into that of the aesthetic and teleological power of judgment; by the former is meant the faculty for judging formal purposiveness (also called subjective) through the feeling of pleasure or displeasure, by the latter the faculty for judging the real purposiveness (objective) of nature through understanding and reason. (KU 5:193)

He repeatedly marks the distinction between the two sections with what it is that grounds the purposiveness of the object – the human subject or the object of our judgment. It is the subjective correspondence of subject and object in judgments of taste, moreover, that Kant names as "essential" to a critique of the power of judgment, as it "alone contains a principle that the power of judgment lays at the basis of its reflection on nature entirely a priori" (KU 5:193). As aesthetic judgments of reflection engage the principle of purposiveness without any purpose, they represent the pure form of the judgment, which is then made more determinate or particular by way of a concept of nature in teleological judgments. That aesthetic judgments of reflection ground purposiveness in the *subject*, too, suggests that these judgments are about an *inner relation* of the human being to something exterior. Teleological judgments, by contrast, are *strictly about what is exterior*. We are thus related only externally to nature in teleology. As a consequence, aesthetic judgments of reflection constitute the "propaedeutic of all philosophy," whereas teleological judgments belong properly only the theoretical part of philosophy, that is, the domain of nature (KU 5:194).

The two parts thus suggest two different possibilities for a transition between the domains of freedom and nature, two occasions for having hope. In pointing us toward a larger, unified whole to which freedom, nature, and human beings belong, aesthetic judgments of reflection suggest a territory that somehow includes freedom and nature already. In this, nature is conceived of much more expansively; it is suggested that it already is contained within a free, rational whole that reveals itself at key junctures in the natural order and our experience of it. Teleological judgments, insofar as they yield the possibility of a completed system of nature, provide the ground that Kant has in mind for the domain of nature and our understanding of it. And, too, nature as a system of laws and of purposes allows us to think of the ends of human reason as the highest purpose of said nature, thus providing something like a more determinate picture of the possibility of freedom making its ends real in the natural order. This is not a nature we belong to, however, as in the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment, but, rather, is a nature that, in the end, belongs to us.

While this schema may not be a complete account of the relation between the two parts of the text, I do think it provides helpful markers for thinking about the expansion of the concept of nature we find in the text as an answer to the problem of hope. Nevertheless, the following chapters will seek to provide an interpretation of the text that supports this basic division and relation.

Chapter Summaries

In Chapter 1, I lay out the basic interpretative key of the text through an examination of hope and of territory. I develop reason's demand for the unconditioned along with the requirement for its self-consistency as the driving force behind the need for hope. I then briefly consider what hope itself is. I move next to how hope is met in Kant's philosophy by way of judgments that we make out in the territory. The territory, I argue, completes Kant's system insofar as it functions both as a transitional and mediating sphere between freedom and nature, and the ground of these two spheres as well. Lastly, I consider how the system that Kant envisions here, along with our encounters out in the territory, may work to recast Kant's Copernican turn and the subsequent centrality of the human subject.

In Chapter 2 I examine the significance of the two principal features of the faculty of judgment: its characteristic activity of *reflection* and its constitutive principle of *purposiveness*. Chapter 2 directly takes up the metaphysical resonances of Kant's account, and the sense beautiful things give us that we belong to a more expansive, even cosmic, order. This chapter will highlight the emphasis on *possibility* out in the territory, and argue that what appears, appears in its possibility. I further argue that what appears to us is the very ground of appearance itself as an orderedness in appearance. Lastly, I suggest that our relation to this orderedness is interpretative, thus opening a future for metaphysical inquiry that is rooted not in speculation, but reflection.

In Chapter 3, I examine Kant's account of the Ideal of Beauty. Contrary to most interpreters, I take Kant at his word that the Ideal forms the measure of the judgment of taste in providing the original pattern that all other beautiful things follow. I further argue that the content of what Kant describes in the Ideal is nothing other than *life*. Life, for Kant, is the unthinkable causal union between force and matter, freedom and nature. All judgments of taste, then, refer us to such a unity, and thus to an outside of the critical system. Nevertheless, in suggesting the possibility of such a union, the beautiful is able to serve as a transition between and likely ground of the two domains of freedom and nature.

Chapter 4 argues that the sensus communis forms the keystone of Kant's critical system. Kant develops his idea of the sensus communis as a response to the *quid juris* of the judgment of taste – by what right may I claim that this is beautiful? As a judgment made out in the territory, without a law, a judgment of taste is always in question. Kant's

development of the sensus communis is shown to rely on two senses of its historical usage, both of which address skepticism. Kant's own use of the term, which refers to a sense that we can communicate with all other human beings, discloses to us that all human beings share a way of having the world, and, too, that we share a world in common. It thus grounds the universal character of both cognition and moral life.

Chapter 5 examines Kant's notion of genius and aesthetic ideas. Here, I argue that his discussion of genius forms a kind of Deduction for the possibility of producing objects that exceed our own capabilities. In this, I focus on Kant's descriptions of spirit as what nature gives both to the genius and thereby also to the work of art as what allows it to enliven our minds. Here, as earlier in the text, we find that human beings belong to a nature that is much more expansive than that of the first *Critique*; nature here is spiritualized. The chapter concludes by highlighting Kant's repeated observations that nature is *expressing* itself through genius, and I link this, then, to the communicability that underlies the judgment of taste more generally.

Chapter 6 turns to the Critique of Teleological Judgment. Here, I trace Kant's remarkable line of argumentation from our encounters with living beings (organisms) to culture. Our encounters with living beings justify the use of teleology as a principle to organize our mechanistic inquiries into science. It further allows for us to judge nature, as a whole, as a system. Nature as a system, as we come to see, is oriented not only by human life but also specifically by the work it can do to discharge human beings from its order. If beautiful things remind us we belong in the world, there is a dialectical reversal here suggesting that we do not belong to the natural order. This comes out in Kant's discussions of *culture* and of the *sublime*, which are ways nature appears to discharge us from its influence. Nature thus supports our moral vocation by releasing us from its influence over us.

Chapter 7 focuses on Kant's introduction of a new conception of the relation of the systems of freedom and nature as *reciprocal*. Here, under the auspices of what he calls an "ethicotheology," he describes these two systems as sharing an identical final end, and therefore also being conjoined by that very end. Such a description of this relation is only possible if we view the relation of the two systems from out in the territory. This reflective position further judges freedom as a fact in nature, and opens up the possibility of us being convinced of the existence of God as the author of a nature that now, ineluctably, appears to us as meaningful. In this, nature comes to belong to us.