Ginsborg, Hannah. *The Normativity of Nature.* Oxford University Press, 2015, 364 pp., $34.64 Paperback.

There are few works in the history of philosophy that can boast the kind of legacy that Kant's third *Critique* has both for its philosophical import and for the plethora of incongruent and sometimes antithetical interpretations attempting to make sense of it. Because of this, it is no small matter when we are met with an interpretive account that offers a compelling defense of the coherence of the third *Critique* as a whole within the broader context of Kant's philosophy of cognition. Hannah Ginsborg's collection of 14 of her previously published articles (with the exception of essay 5) marks a historic landmark in Kant scholarship.

These articles undergo an important transformation when brought together as they are here to form a single interpretive whole. It will be easy for those already familiar with Ginsborg's articles to miss the significance of this work. By bringing them together, each article gains substantially by setting apart sometimes merely interesting and plausible interpretations as highly compelling because of their connection with the entirety of her interpretive account. That said, essays 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, and 13 are particularly important, and among these 2 and 3 tower since it is in these two that Ginsborg lays the foundations of her interpretive framework.

Essay 1 argues against Karl Ameriks' objectivist interpretation of aesthetic judgments as well as against the slightly more plausible objectivism forwarded by John McDowell and David Wiggins. By contrast, Ginsborg defends the importance of Kant's view that judgments of taste are necessarily both subjective and universally valid.

Essay 2 offers an interpretation of §9 in the third *Critique*, a section that Kant calls key to the *Critique* and "worthy of all attention." Her account opposes Paul Guyer's view of the free play of the imagination and the understanding in terms of a "psychological process of synthesis" in which aesthetic pleasure is the consequent of the free play, and the judgment of the beautiful is a kind of second-layer synthesis of the imagination. Ginsborg makes a compelling case for understanding both Kant's description of the threefold synthesis of the imagination and the relation between the free play to pleasure as a single activity. Accordingly, "the pleasure and the judging are one" (52). A central contribution of this essay is the strong case that she makes for understanding the judgment of the beautiful as a "self-referential act of judging" that serves as its own grounding to the universal validity of the synonymous state of mind. This state of mind is the felt pleasure of the free play. To this end, Ginsborg shows why we should reject accounts of the judgment itself that depend on properties of the object.

One concern worth mentioning is that in the concluding remarks, Ginsborg adds to her argument that the judgment of taste is entirely "without content." It is easy to see why Ginsborg would conclude this given that the judgment of taste does not depend on any object or on determinate concepts. However, this conclusion raises a larger worry about what might have appeared to be an omission due to space, namely, Ginsborg does not give an account for why we should interpret the antinomy of taste, in the way that she seems to do (though she doesn't talk about it directly), where what is indeterminate is the entire judgment of the beautiful. It isn't at all clear that this is a justified interpretation. If, to the contrary, what is indeterminate is the resulting concept (i.e. an aesthetic "idea") then it follows that judgments of taste can have content (even determinate content), but are not unified according to a determinate concept (i.e. do not result in cognition; rather are unified according to indeterminate concepts). This touches on a broader worry that runs through the entire collection of essays. But it is a worry that in no way amounts to a critique, since there are a number of intuitive ways that Ginborg could expand

on the antinomy of taste. Rather, it is precisely because of the richly compelling and comprehensive interpretation to which these essays amount that leaves the reader wishing the book was more expansive in certain places. This is of course a good problem to have and only underlines the worth of what she has addressed.

Ginsborg introduces a crucial interpretive notion in Essay 3, what she calls "primitive normativity," in an effort to explain how it is that the imagination is properly characterized by Kant as being lawful without being determined according to a law. Primitive normativity is the idea that rules are exemplified by an activity, object, or organism, without these being determined by that rule. Ginsborg uses a compelling analogy with speech as exemplifying the rules of the language, in such a way that those rules become normative (i.e. how one *ought* to speak) because of how English actually is spoken. The rule is not somehow prior to the activity but arises as exemplified by that activity. As such, the activity is lawful insofar as it is rule-governed, but not thereby rule-guided. This idea serves not merely as the basis of her answer to how it is that the imagination can be lawful yet simultaneously not determined by a law in the aesthetic free play, but also for understanding a vital quality of cognitive activity (162, 165-8), and finally as a basis for explaining how nature is purposive for cognition.

Essay 4 is one of the least important for understanding Ginsborg's broader argument and the work as a whole. It is quite valuable, however, for those interested in a closer look at how her interpretation of pleasure and judgments in aesthetic experiences differs from Henry Allison and Paul Guyer's accounts of the same. Essay 5 is the one exception to my claim that each chapter forms a necessary part of a compelling whole. Save for the last five pages of this essay (127-131), nothing new is added to what the first four essays have covered. Moreover, even these last five pages might have served better as a short appendix or by being conjoined to Essay 1. Ginsborg's aim in these last few pages is to look to Wittgenstein thought in *Philosophical Investigations* as yielding an interpretive model for Kant's "argument for our entitlement to judgments of beauty" (129). It is an interesting section, but not essential to the whole, since it does not advance her interpretive case.

Essay 6 argues for a unified view of reflective judgments that relates its capacity to bring objects under an empirical concept for the sake of cognition, and its capacity to make the formal judgment by which we experience objects as beautiful without a resulting cognition. Given the importance of this thesis and some striking interpretive moves, it is disappointing that Ginsborg does not flesh out this argument so as to make it more compelling. For example, she argues that a central feature of both capacities of reflective judgments have in common the felt *pleasure* in the awareness that one's mental state is universally valid. While this seems right to a degree, it is not at all obvious that the felt pleasure in aesthetic judgments can be abstracted from the fact that what is universally communicable is a state of mind in which the imagination is *freely active* (though lawful). The imagination is not so active in reflective empirical judgments, and so it isn't obvious that we can equate the felt "pleasure" between the two judgments. In fact, intuitively the pleasure in aesthetic judgments seems crucially to depend on the fact that the *free activity* of the imagination is nevertheless lawful, i.e. universally communicable. This is (arguably) pleasurable, because the cause is subjective and not objective. This isn't necessarily a problem for Ginsborg, but is an example of a way in which this particular essay is less compelling than one might wish. Nevertheless, the thesis itself is a helpful and important part of her broader argument and fits nicely into the whole.

Essay 7 argues that universality in judgments is twofold. The first kind of universality is such *qua* the validity of a concept for a *plurality of objects*. This first universality is dependent

on the second. The second kind of universality pertains to the validity of the judgment for all *subjects* of judgments. The second, Ginsborg argues, is the more fundamental of the two and is Kant's "normative twist" to a Humean account of perception (160). Essay 8 contributes to the whole by further fleshing out the second kind of normativity found in the right to universal assent among subjects judging reflectively in empirical cognition and in aesthetic experiences (173). More particularly, aesthetic judgments turn out to draw attention to the same "perceptual normativity" that is less obvious but equally present in judgments of empirical cognition (199). Here Ginsborg turns her attention away from Kant's text and instead takes up these issues in the context of contemporary debate through engagement with the philosophy of Christopher Peacocke.

Essay 9 makes the compelling case that a necessary identity of the "I think" of apperception with the empirical thinking self is made possible by recognizing the activity of the reflective judgment as the corollary of transcendental spontaneity. Such that "On this way of thinking, the spontaneity of the I just is the faculty of judgment, viewed from the transcendental rather than the empirical perspective" (216). The identity of the two "I"s is not merely made possible by reflective judgment, but is necessitated by it because the reflective judgment just is the recognition of the transcendental normativity of an empirical object of one's judgment (221). Reflective judgment is spontaneity in its empirical activity (224).

Once one is convinced by Ginsborg's argument in Essay 3 regarding the nature of normativity in reflective judgments, her move in Essay 10 to defend a unitary account of the third *Critique* is highly intuitive (and arguably) necessarily entailed by such a view of normativity. She proceeds by giving a unified account of purposiveness as the normative lawfulness characteristic of objective and subjective judgments (e.g. of biology and aesthetics)(245-9), and further differentiates such normativity from the "ought" of practical rationality (251). Essay 11 adds to 10 by giving particular attention to what it means for an organism to be purposive (i.e. the "subject of normative laws") without thereby being designed (275,7).

Essay 12 identifies two aspects of Kant's account of the "mechanical inexplicability" of nature. The first pertains to the origin of organisms in a teleological sense *qua* purposes; the second pertains to the function of organisms as products of nature–where the *regularity* of the organism's activity cannot be fully explained in mechanical terms (301-2). Ginsborg argues that despite Kant's view of teleology in nature as a regulative principle, his view of organisms is importantly similar to Aristotle's. Here Ginsborg draws on Aristotle's account in the *Physics* and *Generation of Animals* (though, surprisingly, not on *De Anima*). This essay quite convincingly narrows the gap between Aristotle and Kant on teleology, before giving a brief account (perhaps too brief) of possibilities for Kant's view in contemporary biological theory. Essay 13 gives a strong account of how we can make normative judgments regarding nature, with careful attention to the final end as a regulative (not constitutive) principle as well as its grounding in the "representational character of mind." Ginsborg argues that the resolution to the antinomy between mechanism and teleology is resolvable when we understand the final end in nature in light of the notion of purpose as non-designed (this draws on her earlier arguments in Essays 3 & 10). In essence, organisms are rule-governed (i.e. exemplify rules) without thereby being rule-guided (326-9). Such judgments regarding the normativity of nature are justified because of the same normative grounding of the imagination in aesthetic judgments (as in reflective judgments in general). Ginsborg thus returns full circle to defend a view of Kant's teleology that fits within and is entailed by his broader idealism. Following nicely from the collection of essays as a

whole, Essay 14 offers a succinct account of judgments regarding the normativity of nature (such that a natural "ought" drawn from natural regularities does not imply "design or intention"),in light of the power of reflective judgment, which bears normative lawfulness via the activity of the imagination (342).

While each essay was originally meant to stand alone, they form a far more compelling interpretation as a whole, which will be missed when an individual essay is considered alone. Together these essays constitute a powerful vision of the interpretive mind of someone who not only sees Kant's third critique as a unified whole, but has made accessible such an understanding through this work. Ginsborg's book will undoubtedly serve as a definitive critical benchmark for scholarship on the third *Critique* and Kant's Idealism as a whole for decades to come.

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