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Kant ' s Characterization of Natural Ends

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Abstract

What is it to judge something to be a natural end? And what objects may properly be judged natural ends? These questions pose a challenge, because the predicates " natural " and " end " seemingly can not be instantiated at the same time – at least given some Kantian assumptions. My paper defends the thesis that Kant ' s " Critique of Teleological Judgment " (CTJ), nevertheless, provides a sensible account of judging something a natural end. On the account, a person judges an object O a natural end, if she thinks that the parts of O cause O and if she is committed to approach O in a top-down manner, as if the parts were produced in view of the whole. The account is non-realist, because it involves a commitment. With the account comes a characterization that provides necessary and sufficient conditions on objects that may properly be judged natural ends. My paper reconstructs the argument in CTJ, § § 64-65 where the account and the characterization are derived.

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