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Analogy, technical reason, and living beings: the role of analogy in representing Kant's concept of naturzweck

Terra Polanco, M.C.

Citation

Terra Polanco, M. C. (2019, May 16). *Analogy, technical reason, and living beings: the role of analogy in representing Kant's concept of naturzweck*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/73420>

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Author: Terra Polanco M.C.

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Issue Date: 2019-05-16

Introduction

This dissertation is about the role of analogy in Kant’s “Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment”, especially the role of analogy for the formation of the Kantian concept of natural end (*Naturzweck*)¹. In the second part of the *Kritik der Urteilkraft* (KU), Kant tries to distance himself from a purely mechanistic account of nature’s organization, and he develops a teleological view of living nature through his regulative concept of *Naturzweck*. Briefly, a natural end is a regulative concept of the reflective power of judgment that serves to make sense of the seemingly end-directed and self-organizing character of living beings and to guide our research into nature’s organization.

Kant’s description of the concept of *Naturzweck* appeals to three analogies: namely, the analogy with our own causality in accordance with ends (*unsere Kausalität nach Zwecken*)²; the analogy with an artifact or work of art³; and the analogy with *life*, which is a concept that pertains to practical philosophy in Kant’s view⁴. Nevertheless,

¹ In this dissertation, I focus my attention exclusively on the KU, since it is the main place where Kant systematically develops his natural teleology and the crucial concept of *Naturzweck*, which is key to understanding his teleological commitments about nature. I am aware that there are more texts where Kant addresses the problem of teleology in nature, but they do not systematically or critically develop this issue. There are several references to teleology in his pre-critical writings, but I decided to focus this dissertation on the critical period, since my aim is to philosophically reconstruct an argument that belongs to a particular philosophical system like the Kantian *Critical* philosophy. There are further “critical” Kantian references to natural teleology, however. For instance, in *Über den Gebrauch teleologischer Prinzipien in der Philosophie* (1788), he offers an interesting and novel account of the use of teleological principles for the research into nature, but his ideas were not mature enough yet, as they are in the KU (he barely mentions the term “*Naturzweck*”, let alone develops it further). Other references to teleology can be found in *Recensionen von J. G. Herders «Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit»* (1785) and *Muthmaßlicher Anfang der Menschengeschichte* (1786), mostly in relation to natural history. However, I hold that these texts do not contain further analysis of natural teleology and *Naturzweck* in the light of the Critical system—especially in relation to the reflective power of judgment, which is the real novel Kantian contribution in this regard. In the *Opus Postumum*, he broadens his reflections regarding natural teleology, but this text is problematic by itself, since it was unfinished and it is mainly composed of more or less disconnected fragments. I chose to limit my analysis to the clearest and most systematic treatment of teleology within the Kantian Critical corpus, which is the Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment.

² “The concept of a thing as in itself a natural end is therefore not a constitutive concept of the understanding or of reason, but it can still be a regulative concept for the reflecting power of judgment, for guiding research into objects of this kind and thinking over their highest ground in accordance with a remote analogy with our own causality in accordance with ends [*nach einer entfernten Analogie mit unserer Kausalität nach Zwecken überhaupt*]” (KU, AA V, 375: lines 20-22). In chapter 5, I shall offer a plausible and consistent interpretation of this quote.

³ (KU, AK. V, 374, lines 9-33).

⁴ “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 that soul is already presupposed,

after suggesting these analogies in §65 of the KU, Kant states that the concept of natural end is not analogous with any causality known to us⁵, including that pertaining to human artifacts and life. Even though these analogies shed some light on the concept of *Naturzweck*, they do not fully encompass the irreducible features that a living being seems to possess, namely, self-organization and end-directedness. On the other hand, Kant states that the analogy with our “causality in accordance with ends” is “remote” (*entfernten*)⁶, but he nevertheless insists on the comparison between these concepts.

Kant’s text is inconsistent and problematic: it uses and simultaneously rejects these analogies. Furthermore, he seems to (partially) embrace the analogy with our causality in accordance with ends, but with some reservations that he does not bother to clarify. Why does Kant not fully reject the (remote, according to him) analogy with our causality in accordance with ends when describing the concept of organized being judged as a *Naturzweck*? It is pretty clear that Kant somehow maintains the analogy with our causality in accordance with ends, but the relevant question is: *to what extent* does he maintain this analogy? What is the very role of analogical reflection in general and of this analogy in particular? How should we construe this particular analogy? Does the concept “causality in accordance with ends” encompass all human purposeful activity, including moral actions? Should we construe this analogy as the traditional analogy between artifacts and organisms, or rather in a different sense?

The analogy with our causality in accordance with ends, thus, is far from clear in Kant’s text, but, at the same time, it seems to be indispensable for a proper understanding of *Naturzweck*. Our final causality can refer not only to the domain of morality (our moral actions) but also to the domain of human rational production (technical reason in general). Both activities are rational as well as purposive, and Kant does not make explicit in which of these two senses he is invoking this analogy. Or, rather, he only appeals to human technique in the analogy, but not to the domain of moral action. Accordingly, one of the main philosophical questions that this dissertation will tackle is: how can we construe the concept of our causality in accordance with ends in this analogy? Is Kant invoking here

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.” (V, 374-75). In chapter 4, I shall offer an analysis and interpretation of this analogy.

⁵ “Strictly speaking, the organization of nature is therefore not analogous with any causality that we know” (375).

⁶ (375, line 20).

both technical-practical reason and moral-practical reason? It is indispensable to determine in which sense Kant is taking the concept of causality in accordance with ends in these passages, since this would clarify the very concept of *Naturzweck*, which is based on this peculiar analogy.

Even though Kant does not directly refer to the sphere of moral action when invoking the analogy with our own causality in accordance with ends, several commentators maintain that in this context the concept of human causality (causality in accordance with ends) implies both technical and moral human reason. Zammito, for instance, states that human purposive activity involves a rational causality, even a *noumenal* one (that is, a free causality in the moral sphere) (1992, 221). Along similar lines, Guyer states that: “[t]hough we are driven to raise the question of the purpose of nature by (the limits of) our theoretical comprehension, only practical reason can furnish a candidate for this end, namely, our own existence as moral agents. Thus reflection on nature leads us to the goal of our own morality” (2005, 95-96). Steigerwald is more emphatic in stating that the analogy involves both aspects of human practical reason, as she says: “The concept of purpose [in the Teleological Judgment] included human purposive activity in artistic production as well as moral action.” (2006, 716). Finally, Mensch points out: “Because an organized natural purpose was inconceivable by way of an analogy to a mechanical product, in other words, the analogy had to rely on reason and the kind of demonstration of free causality that it provided in the moral sphere” (2014, 143). Despite this line of interpretation, I follow McLaughlin (1990) and Zuckert (2007), who state that the concept of our causality according to ends that is at stake in the context of the third *Critique* is a technical one, that is, a type of causality in human rational activity in the technical-practical sphere⁷. One of the main objectives of this dissertation is, accordingly, to properly justify this statement.

However, ruling out the moral dimension of the analogy with our causality in accordance with ends does not suffice to clarify this very analogy at all. Thus, I can raise again the question: how can we properly construe the analogy between living beings and our causality in accordance with ends?

⁷ Even though McLaughlin and Zuckert restrict the analogy with our causality in accordance with ends to the technical-practical sphere, they do not investigate further the role of analogy in Kant’s Teleological Judgment, let alone the role this peculiar analogy plays in representing the concept of *Naturzweck*.

Secondary Kantian literature has dominantly—and typically—conflated this analogy with the traditional analogy from design⁸. According to this reading, Kant is drawing an analogy between artifacts and living beings not in order to prove God’s existence, but in order to make sense of the seemingly end-directed character of nature’s organization. In this reading, accordingly, the term “causality in accordance with ends” is construed as “rational design”, and the analogy would be as follows: between a living being (which seems to possess end-directedness) and a designed object (which is designed for a determinate end). This reading is mainly followed by McFarland (1970), Zumbach (1984), McLaughlin (1990), Aquila (1991), Fricke (1990), Ginsborg (2001), Guyer (2001, 2006), Zuckert (2007), Lenoir (1982), Steigerwald (2006), and Van den Berg (2014, 2017), amongst others⁹.

I claim, however, that this is a misreading. Kant is very emphatic in stating that the analogy between artifacts and organic beings is more properly a disanalogy, and he finally rules out the analogy with intelligent design¹⁰. The analogy between artifacts and living beings is useful for understanding the apparent purposive character that living beings exhibit, but it does not account for the self-organizing character of living beings (which is the key point in Kant’s account of living beings judged as *Naturzweck*). Furthermore, and this is the key point for rejecting this dominant reading, Kant invokes the analogy with our causality in accordance with ends just after dismissing the analogies with life and artifacts. Therefore, it is highly improbable that Kant is referring here to the traditional (although slightly modified) analogy between nature and design.

⁸ The traditional analogy from design is one of the main arguments—together with the ontological and cosmological proofs—for proving the existence of God. This traditional analogy is composed of the following elements: an artifact (the dominant example is a watch) and its designer (in this particular example, a watchmaker), and a living being and its creator (God). The key point of this analogy is that living beings seem to exhibit a design-like character, just like any artifact designed by an artisan. That is to say, the common characteristic these products (artifacts and organic beings) seem to share is end-directedness, that is, the idea that these products were produced for the sake of accomplishing some determined end.

⁹ McFarland, for instance, states: “It is evident that Kant saw clearly that natural organisms are quite different from machines in so far as they produce themselves, repair their own deficiencies, and so forth. But, at the same time, he was unable to free himself from the watchmaker-watch analogy completely enough to be able to ask whether organisms can be understood in any other way than as if they had been designed” (1970, 139).

¹⁰ “One says far too little about nature and its capacity in organized products if one calls this an analogue of art: for in that case one conceives of the artist (a rational being) outside of it. Rather, it organizes itself, and in every species of its organized products, of course in accordance with some example in the whole, but also with appropriate deviations, which are required in the circumstances for self-preservation” (V, 374). Recently, Angela Breitenbach has pointed out the shortcomings of this dominant interpretation as well (2009b, 2014a).

In this dissertation, I propose that the best way for construing this analogy is not by identifying it with the old argument from design, but rather with our own reason in its “technical use”¹¹. That is to say, the analogy with our causality in accordance with ends does not establish a relation of identity between organisms and artifacts—as the secondary literature has dominantly stated—but between organisms and our own technical-practical reason. In other words, this analogy is not between organisms and the products of a rational designer, but rather between organisms and the technical reason of such rational designer—or the technical reason of any rational being. Angela Breitenbach also dismisses the analogy with design to be the analogy with our causality in accordance with ends in §65, and she claims that the analogy between organisms and our causality in accordance with ends is an analogy between organisms and “practical reason itself”¹². However, this would imply encompassing practical reason also in its moral sphere, which is something that would be probably rejected by Kant. Breitenbach is not very clear on whether by “practical reason itself” she is also including the moral sphere or not. In line with Breitenbach, I do emphatically reject the dominant reading of linking this analogy with the argument from design.¹³ Unlike Breitenbach, however, I do think it is indispensable to be emphatic in rejecting the moral dimension of this analogy, because what is at stake in our teleological judgments on nature is an analogy “with our own causality in the *technical use* of reason” (KU, AA V, 383, my emphasis).¹⁴ Therefore, it is essential to specify in which sense of practical reason Kant is using the term “causality in accordance with ends”, since this would clarify not only the very concept of *Naturzweck*, but also the way in which we can make sense of the organization of nature.

¹¹ “Hence in teleology, [...], we speak quite rightly of the wisdom, the economy, the forethought, and the beneficence of nature [...] such talk is only meant to designate a kind of causality in nature, in accordance with an analogy with our own causality in the technical use of reason” (V, 383).

¹² See, for instance: “On a different and, I believe, more plausible interpretation, however, we can read Kant as drawing an analogy not with the products of human activity but with the very capacity for that activity, namely, the capacity of practical reason itself” (2014a, 137); “In this way, *the analogy with human reason* can account for both the unified organisation and the purposive self-organisation of living beings” (2014b, 23 my emphasis); and „Die systematische Organisiertheit und die Fähigkeit des Organismus zur Selbstorganisation kann nun nach der Analogie mit der Systematizität und Zweckgerichtetheit des gesamten Vernunftvermögens begriffen werden. Die Kausalität nach Zwecken, das *praktische Vernunftvermögen* in uns, welches in der Analogie die Organisation von lebendiger Natur erhellen soll, kann verstanden werden als die allgemeine Fähigkeit der Vernunft, sich auf einen selbstgesetzten Zweck zu richten: den Zweck ihrer eigenen, selbstbestimmten Einheit“ (2009b, 101 my emphasis).

¹³ Zammito also states something similar in his “Teleology then and now: The question of Kant’s relevance for contemporary controversies over function in biology”: “To what is the analogy really being made? It is not the work of art, but the artist (human agency)” (2006, 760). However, this statement is not further developed (or justified) by Zammito.

¹⁴ I shall offer good reasons for this Kantian rejection and why it is better to identify this analogy with reason only in its technical use in 5.2 and 5.3 of this dissertation.

Therefore, the main thesis of this dissertation is that Kant’s analogy between organisms and our causality in accordance with ends is better understood if it is read as an analogy between technical reason and living beings judged as *Naturzwecke*. Our technical reason is not only responsible for our capacity of creating artifacts, but also it is the responsible for our capacity to represent ourselves ends in general¹⁵ and to find a way—that is, creating a rule or precept—for accomplishing them. This technical-rational capacity in us is, therefore, the source from which emerges the analogical concept of *Naturzweck*. This technical-rational capacity in us has end-directedness and self-determination, and we judge living beings as *Naturzwecke* because we seem to recognize in them some features that are similar to our technical reason, namely, purposiveness and self-organization.

This interpretation, furthermore, reveals another thesis that is at stake in my dissertation, which is related to the question about the very role of analogy in the “Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment”. Kant, once again, is not very clear about the scope he aims to ascribe to analogy in general and to the analogy with our technical reason in particular. Yet, the usage of analogical reflection throughout the KU is much more persistent than Kant himself would dare to admit. In this dissertation, I propose that our teleological judgments about nature are based on this analogy with our technical reason. And as a consequence, the role of analogy is absolutely necessary, since it enables us to indirectly exhibit the analogical-reflective concept of *Naturzweck* (that is, it allows us to indirectly present this concept in intuition for its subsequent intelligibility)¹⁶. This is because it allows us to conceptualize something as organized and self-organizing¹⁷, which is how we make sense of living beings qua “living”.

However, one element is still missing here: the concept of analogy itself. “Analogy” is a technical concept in Kant, and, as such, we have to clarify it (because it appears in different contexts, with different uses and meanings). How does Kant understand the notion of analogy throughout his works and, particularly, in the third *Critique*? Kant’s general definition of ‘analogy’ can be found in the *Prolegomena*: “[a cognition by analogy is] a perfect similarity between two relations in wholly dissimilar

¹⁵ Or, properly speaking, technical reason is the responsible for representing those ends pertaining to “art and skill in general, as well as those of prudence, as a skill in influencing human beings and their will” (KU, AA V, 172).

¹⁶ Breitenbach (2014a) and Nassar (2016) also hold a similar argument. For further details of this topic, see section 3.5 of this dissertation.

¹⁷ See, for instance, KU, AA V, 398.

things” (Prol. AA IV, 357-8). We have to bear in mind that Kant distinguishes three particular uses of analogy in philosophy, namely, the analogy (or analogies) of experience (necessary analogies for enabling possible experience, such as: substance and accident, cause and effect, and community or reciprocal action)¹⁸; symbolic analogy (with objects that do not pertain to possible experience, and which ground symbolic representations)¹⁹, which is introduced in §59 (“Beauty as a symbol of morality”) of the KU, in the “Critique of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment”; and analogy in its ‘logical’ application as a mode of inference of the reflective power of judgment. In his lectures on *Logic*, Kant states that analogy is one of the “two kinds of inference of the [reflective] power of judgment” (*Logik*, AA IX 132, 21-2). Together with induction, analogy is a function of the reflective power of judgment and, as Breitenbach clearly explains, since analogical function operates “[b]y comparing two things that share certain properties we can thus infer by analogy that certain other properties, known to hold for only one of the two objects, also hold for the other. In this way, we can arrive at general concepts that subsume different phenomena” (Breitenbach 2014a, 140). Moreover, these kind of inferences (analogy and induction) are useful for extending our cognition through experience, although we “must use them with caution and care” (*Logik*, AA IX, 133, 26-27).

This brief account of Kant’s concept of analogy brings us to another relevant philosophical question: What is the type of analogy that is at stake in Kant’s “Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment”? Why is it so necessary to clarify the kind of analogical procedure operating within the KU? Answering these two questions will allow us to arrive at a well-formed idea of how analogical reflection is key for understanding the procedure of the reflective power of judgment in general, and of our teleological judgments about nature’s organization in particular. There is a lack of a thorough study not only of the analogy between technical reason and the organism, but also of the role of analogy within the Teleological Judgment in general. When investigating analogy in the KU, Kantian literature has focused its attention mainly on the role of symbolic representation (which is a type of analogy) introduced in the Aesthetic Judgment²⁰, but an exhaustive analysis of the type of analogy and its relevance for the very formation of our teleological judgments about nature remains scarce²¹. Analogy is almost seen as a

¹⁸See KrV B 218 ss., where Kant develops in more detail the Analogies of Experience.

¹⁹See KU §59, AA V, 353 ss., and *Prol* AA IV, 357.

²⁰ See, for instance, Düsing (1990), Vossenkuhl (1992), Guyer (1997), and Bielefeldt (2003).

²¹ As always, there are a few exceptions. There are illuminating and interesting attempts at stressing the role of analogy in Kant’s Teleological Judgment in Breitenbach (2009b, 2014a), Nassar (2015, 2016), and

Kantian rhetorical device, like a mere metaphor. But this is not the case. In fact, Kant is emphatic in stressing the heuristic role of analogy for our empirical research. But I propose that analogy goes beyond this mere heuristic role, since it enables us to indirectly present the very concept of *Naturzweck*²² (and making it intelligible to us). That is to say, analogy is not only a heuristic device for investigating nature, but also the very condition for the possibility of the reflective concept of *Naturzweck*—in the sense that it helps us to conceptualize or conceive a *Naturzweck*, from which our teleological judgments of nature derive. We can gain intelligibility about the seemingly purposive and self-organizing character of living beings only by virtue of an analogy with our technical reason, which operates in a purposive and self-organized manner as well.

In order to tackle the philosophical Kantian problems just outlined, this dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first two chapters are mainly introductory, since they present the problems, arguments, and main philosophical concepts introduced by Kant in the KU and in the “Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment”, respectively. Chapter 1 provides a general overview of the KU. Although it is an overview, this first chapter contains a reading proposal for a better understanding of the main Kantian problems introduced in the third *Critique*. This chapter is crucial for situating the main problem of this dissertation within the overarching project of the KU and critical philosophy in general, viewed as a system. Thus, this chapter introduces the philosophical concepts that are at stake in this Kantian text and it offers a plausible reconstruction of the main arguments Kant elaborates in the two Introductions of the KU—which contain in a condensed (and at times obscure) way the whole content of the book.

Chapter 2 contains, in turn, an overview of the entire “Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment”. In this chapter I describe, explain and analyze Kant's Teleological Judgment and all those aspects that are necessary for reconstructing the main argument of this second section of the third *Critique*. Furthermore, this chapter offers a first reconstruction of the key concept of *Naturzweck*. However, this reconstruction is a “provisional” one, since it puts on hold the clarification of this concept through the analogies invoked by Kant. Accordingly, this reconstruction of the concept of *Naturzweck*

van den Berg (2017). Angelica Nuzzo (2005), in turn, highlights the role of analogy in Kant's KU, especially for the reflective power of judgment in general. However, she does not thematize the role of analogy for the concept of *Naturzweck* or for our teleological judgments on nature.

²² Breitenbach (2014a) and Nassar (2016) also state that analogy has more than a heuristic role in Kant's Teleological Judgment (see section 3.5 of the dissertation for further analysis of this reading).

functions, in this second chapter, more as a first approximation than an exhaustive and systematic analysis of it. The latter will take place in Chapter 4 and mostly in Chapter 5. As I have already mentioned, this chapter (together with the first one) is mainly an introduction to the main philosophical concepts that are at stake in the “Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment”, which are fundamental for understanding the argument of this dissertation and the development of the following chapters as well.

Chapter 3 offers a reconstruction of Kant’s concept of analogy, especially in the critical period. Even though Kant remains somewhat ambivalent toward the notion of analogy, and even seems quite critical at times regarding its use for scientific inquiry, he uses and invokes this notion regularly throughout his works. Furthermore, and as already mentioned, analogy is a technical term in Kant’s philosophy, with different meanings and uses. This chapter offers, first, a distinction between mathematical and philosophical analogies, which is the Kantian starting point for any reflection regarding the use of analogy in philosophy. Next, I provide further distinctions within philosophical analogies: namely, analogies of experience, analogy as a mode of inference in its logical function, and symbolic representation. Finally, the chapter concludes with an interpretation of the kind of analogical procedure operating in our teleological judgments about nature. This chapter, accordingly, offers a systematization of Kant’s different conceptions of analogy in order to clarify what kind of analogical procedure is at stake in the “Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment”. This final aim of the chapter is crucial, since it offers a plausible reading of the kind of analogical procedure operating in Kant’s Teleological Judgment, especially for enabling us to indirectly present and making sense of the reflective concept of *Naturzweck*—which is something that is far from clear in the Kantian text.

Once the type of analogical procedure that is at stake in the Teleological Judgment is defined and described, the analogies invoked by Kant for describing, elucidating and making sense of the concept of *Naturzweck* can be addressed. Chapter 4, therefore, provides an analysis and interpretation of the role of two analogies used by Kant when he describes living beings judged as *Naturzwecke*: the disanalogy with artifacts and the partial analogy with life. In this chapter, I offer a detailed analysis of these two analogies, highlighting their respective contributions and limitations for understanding Kant’s concept of natural end. Analogical procedure is essential throughout the KU—and especially in the Teleological Judgment—so a thorough study of the analogies—and

disanalogies—used by Kant are crucial as well, insofar as they demarcate the limits under which a *Naturzweck* can be conceived, in relation to what kinds of concepts it can be akin to, and so forth.

Thus, in order to understand the aforementioned reflective concept, even the analyses of the analogies dismissed by Kant are necessary, not only because they reveal how the reflective judgment eminently operates by means of analogy, but also because they disclose some of Kant's novel contributions regarding natural teleology²³. In view of this, this chapter provides, first, an historical account of the argument from design in order to establish how Kant distances himself from this history and elaborates, instead, a critical evaluation of the (dis)analogy between organisms and artifacts. In this part of the chapter, I conduct an overview and discussion of how Kantian literature has construed this analogy with intelligent design (which has been dominantly—and wrongly—equated with the analogy with our causality in accordance with ends). Second, this chapter offers a reconstruction of Kant's conception of life, in order to show how the analogy between life and organisms sheds some light on *Naturzweck's* concept. However, this analogy is nevertheless shown to be insufficient for accounting it.

Finally, chapter 5 deals directly with the main thesis of this dissertation: namely, the claim that reflective power of judgment is essentially analogical in its procedure, and our teleological judgments about nature are, in fact, grounded on an original analogy with our causality in accordance with ends, which I construe as an analogy with our own technical reason. In order to address and justify this assertion, 5.1 analyses the crucial role of analogy in the KU. While this role is often overlooked by Kantian literature—and, at times, by Kant himself—it is indispensable for forming two main concepts of the KU, namely, the reflective principle of *Zweckmäßigkeit der Natur* (purposiveness of nature) and *Naturzweck*. This first section of the chapter tackles, accordingly, the place and role of analogy for our reflective power of judgment in general. 5.2 and 5.3 focus on two fundamental question: How can we properly construe the concept of our causality in accordance with ends (*unserer Kausalität nach Zwecken*)? Is this analogy as “remote” (*entfernten*) as Kant states, and what is the indispensable role of this analogy for our teleological judgments? These sections are fundamental, since they offer a plausible

²³ Especially his critical view regarding the old argument from design and the persistent comparison between organisms and artifacts. In chapter 4 I shall offer further details of this critical view.

interpretation of what is the best way for understanding this obscure analogy between organized beings and our technical-practical reason.

Once the role this particular analogy plays in representing the concept of *Naturzweck*—and, hence, of our teleological judgments about nature in general—is addressed and analyzed in detail, it will be possible to explore (in 5.4) the role this analogy plays for biology. If we consider our technical-reason as the source from which we can analogically conceptualize a *Naturzweck*, we can also determine the boundaries of biological knowledge itself. For Kant, *Naturzweck* is the reflective concept that allows us to make sense of living beings as if they had end-directedness and self-organization. And this unavoidable teleological standpoint for judging living beings posits a serious dilemma to biology in its aspiration to be deemed as a proper science, according to Kant. This section tackles this dilemma and highlights the reception of Kant’s theory of living beings for subsequent biological thinkers. At the end of this chapter, I offer a brief reflection concerning the role of this analogy for the understanding of our own reason.