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The Re-enchantment of the World: McDowell, Scruton and Heidegger

by

George Reynolds

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Abstract

In a recent discussion of disenchantment and re-enchantment Charles Taylor suggests that it is possible to respond to the disenchanted view of the world, in which meaning and value are understood as subjective projections, by articulating a re-enchanted sense of nature or the universe from the perspective of human 'agency-in-the-world', in which meaning and value are objective. The question I address in this thesis is, what could it mean to articulate a re-enchantment from within our 'agency-in-the-world'?

In Chapter One I examine the work of John McDowell in order to explore the possibility that he gives sense to the idea of a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world. I conclude that he provides one way of doing so. However I argue that McDowell's naturalism of second nature can seem limited as it does not address the 'proto-religious' dimension to Taylor's understanding of re-enchantment.

In Chapter Two I turn to the work of Roger Scruton to consider whether he provides a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world that does accommodate this proto-religious dimension. I conclude that he does, but raise concerns about how convincing Scruton's re-enchantment is. I argue that, from a McDowellian point of view, a case can be made that Scruton implicitly accepts as true certain significant elements of the disenchanted view of the world.

In Chapter Three I look to the later Heidegger for an alternative re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world that attempts to accommodate the proto-religious. I focus on two interpretations of the later Heidegger given by Julian Young and Charles Taylor. In response to a worry put forward by Young, I argue that Charles Taylor's interpretation can accommodate a proto-religious dimension.

In my Conclusion I argue that McDowell's naturalism of second nature and the understanding of our agency-in-the-world as presented by Taylor's Heidegger, form interestingly continuous re-enchantments. On this basis I argue that although McDowell himself does not extend his idea of second nature to accommodate the proto-religious, the example of later Heidegger shows that there is nothing inherently limited about the framework of second nature that means it cannot be extended to encompass important proto-religious responses to the world.

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I, ……George Reynolds…….

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…....The Re-enchantment of the World: McDowell, Scruton and Heidegger…….

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Introduction

Max Weber famously claimed that, '[t]he fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the "disenchantment of the world"' (2004: 155). Following Weber, there has been a widespread sense amongst a number of philosophers in the 20th and 21st centuries that modernity can be characterised as a period threatened by disenchantment. In response to this sense, there has been variety of philosophical voices calling for a re-enchanted understanding of the world.

Alasdair MacIntyre (1981) has claimed that our situation in late modernity with respect to moral thought is a 'catastrophe' in which the language of morality is fragmented and without rationale. He recommends a return to an Aristotelian tradition of virtue ethics in order to provide a foundation for a coherent moral outlook. Iris Murdoch has complained that in modernity 'our picture of ourselves has become too grand, we have isolated, and identified ourselves with, an unrealistic conception of will, we have lost the vision of a reality separate from ourselves' (1999: 338). In order to overcome what she sees as a distorted view of ourselves Murdoch argues that we in modernity can still recover the Platonic tradition of thought in which the self is pictured as related to an idea of the Good that is both sovereign and transcendent. In a similar spirit, Wittgenstein complains that

> [p]eople nowadays think, scientists are there to instruct them, poets musicians etc. to entertain them. *That the latter have something to teach them*; that never occurs to them. (2004: 42e)

Wittgenstein's thought, early and late, can be read as involving an implicit rejection of this spirit of scientism in which science and theoretical understanding are elevated as the only legitimate means of understanding human life and the world. This leads Wittgenstein to defend certain religious – or 'proto-religious' – attitudes to the world such as 'wonder' and a sense of 'mystery' and to mount a case that the religious form of life is to be respected even though it cannot be given a rational justification in accordance with the reasons and justifications that belong to the sphere of philosophical proofs or scientific theory.[1]

In this thesis I examine the positions of three philosophers, John McDowell, Roger Scruton and the later Martin Heidegger, all of whom are concerned in different ways to draw attention to problems posed by disenchantment and in response provide a re-enchanted understanding of the world. The reason I have chosen to focus on these three figures will

[1] There are many other examples of philosophers who can plausibly be said to be relevant to the problem of disenchantment and the project of re-enchantment. The early Heidegger (1962), Putnam (2002), Wiggins (1998, 2006) Cottingham (2003, 2005), and Cooper (2007) could all be seen as making a claim for inclusion. Not least of all Charles Taylor (1989, 1991, 2007) whose own distinctive position I became interested in too late to make more of in this thesis.

hopefully emerge during the thesis. They are sufficiently similar that their positions are worthy of comparison but differ in interesting ways that help develop an appreciation of what is at stake in the issues of disenchantment and re-enchantment.

Framing the Problem

In order to present the specific problem I will address in this thesis I will draw upon themes present in an overview of the problems of disenchantment and re-enchantment provided by Charles Taylor (2011).[2] Taylor provides a general framework for thinking about the process of disenchantment by suggesting that a transition from the enchanted to a disenchanted world can be understood in terms of a shift in a sense of self. Taylor's view is that this shift can be thought of as a transition from a 'porous' to a 'buffered' sense of self.[3] In the pre-modern enchanted world the sources of meaning and value in human life are held to derive from outside of the self, from the place of the self in an independently meaningful cosmos. However, with the transition to a disenchanted world there is a shift to the view that meaning and value originate from within the self and are projected onto an independently meaningless cosmos.

Taylor explains his understanding of the sense in which the pre-modern self exists in an enchanted and independently meaningful cosmos by claiming that the pre-modern world is a world of 'magic' (2011: 288). The enchanted world is a world of magic because it is held to be populated by supernatural spirits and moral forces, and importantly because the natural world is understood to be governed by laws that have a moral and spiritual meaning. Taylor maintains that the enchanted world

> placed meaning within the cosmos…The cosmos reflected and manifested a Great Chain of Being. Being itself existed on several levels, and the cosmos manifested this hierarchy, both in its overall structure and in its different partial domains…The whole is bound together by relations of hierarchical complementarity. (2011: 291)

Taylor thinks that, amongst other things, the development of the post-Galilean modern scientific understanding of nature brings with it a loss of belief in the world of 'magic'.[4] In particular it involves a loss of belief in a natural world that is governed by laws that have a moral and spiritual meaning. This is due to the fact that the post-Galilean understanding

[2] What I provide in this section is not meant to be an exhaustive overview of Taylor's views on the topic of disenchantment and re-enchantment. All I want to do here is introduce some themes from his discussion in order to set up the question I will address in this thesis. I have reason in Ch.1 sec. 7 to engage in a more in-depth discussion of some of Taylor's views on these issues.

[3] The idea of a shift from a 'porous' to a 'buffered' sense of self also informs Taylor's thoughts on the emergence of secularism, *see* Taylor 2007.

[4] I say 'amongst other things' because there is the suggestion that the loss of belief in magic and enchantment, at least in some of its forms, is brought about by changes in religious outlook and practice as much as it is by the emergence of the modern scientific view of nature, *see* Taylor (2011: 288). However, my focus is on the role that Taylor ascribes to the modern scientific view of nature in bringing about disenchantment.

attempts to explain the whole of nature in a way that avoids 'teleology or intentionality, purpose or evaluation as causally relevant factors' (2011: 300).

This provides Taylor with a way of highlighting what is potentially troubling about a disenchanted understanding of the world. He claims that those who express concerns with disenchantment 'bridle at the idea that the universe in which we find ourselves is totally devoid of human meaning.' (2011: 292) He thinks that this can be understood in the following terms:

> the complaint which one finds again and again in what I…call loosely the post-"Romantic" period targets a reading of our modern condition in which all human meanings are simply projected. That is, they are seen as arbitrarily conferred by human subjects. None would be valid universally. Universal agreement on these meanings would result from de facto convergence on our projections. (2011: 293)

It is part of Taylor's position that the loss of belief in an enchanted, magic-filled cosmos, is insufficient on its own to explain the process of disenchantment. Instead, Taylor explains the emergence of an understanding of the self as the origin and source of a projected meaning and value by claiming that 'the enchanted world, in contrast to our universe…shows a perplexing absence of certain boundaries which seem to us essential.' (2011: 290) In particular, 'in the enchanted world, the line between personal agency and impersonal force was not at all clearly drawn.' (2011: 290) For Taylor, the significance of the modern drawing of a boundary between the human mind and the world is to be understood in terms of the drawing of a boundary around the proper place of meaning and value in human life. In the enchanted world, meaning and value are thought to belong to the workings of the cosmos independent of the human mind. However the process of disenchantment brings about the belief in a boundary between the 'inner' realm of the human mind as the proper place of meaning and value in contrast with the 'outer' natural world that lacks such meaning. According to this drawing of the boundary, meaning and value come into existence because of the way a meaningless natural world impacts upon subjectivity.[5] Instead of belonging to the objective world, meaning and value are viewed as mere subjective projections onto a meaningless and value-free world.

So, according to Taylor's presentation, the problem of disenchantment is to be understood in terms of the rise of projectivist views of meaning and value. However, Taylor suggests that by separating 1) the loss of 'magic' from 2) the modern drawing of a boundary between personal agency and the world, the possibility of an argument for a re-enchanted understanding of the world opens up. This involves arguing that projectivist views of meaning and value are based on 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2, between the rejection of the magical view of nature and the thought that we must understand our selves, and our responses to meaning and value without reference to a world of objective meaning and value.

[5] By referring to nature as 'meaningless' I mean to echo Taylor's idea of a nature that avoids reference to teleology, intentionality, purpose or values as relevant factors.

Taylor suggests that it is a modern temptation to make this 'illegitimate slippage'.[6] However he believes that such a move can be resisted by arguing along the following lines:

> True, human meanings are no longer seen as residing in the object, even in the absence of human agents. These meanings arise for us as *agents-in-the-world*. But it doesn't follow from this that they are arbitrarily conferred. (2011: 293, my emphasis)

Taylor's suggestion is that with an understanding of subjects as 'agents-in-the-world' it is possible to respond to the 'illegitimate slippage' by accepting that nature independently of the human mind is no longer animated by 'magic' whilst rejecting the modern disenchanted boundary between personal agency and the objective world. On this basis Taylor believes it is possible to reject the view that meaning and value are merely projected. The view that emerges from Taylor's discussion is that in response to the shift in a sense of self that comes about with the process of disenchantment, it is possible to articulate a re-enchanted understanding of the place of the self in the greater whole in which it is set from within our 'agency-in-the-world'.

With this idea in mind Taylor formulates the question that he thinks should animate those that seek re-enchantment through an understanding of our agency-in-the-world:

> when we have left the "enchanted" world of spirits, and no longer believe in the Great Chain, what sense can be made of the notion that nature or the universe which surrounds us is the locus of human meanings which are "objective," in the sense that they are not just arbitrarily projected through choice or contingent desire? (2011: 294)[7]

Taylor concludes his discussion by claiming that just what sort of re-enchantment should be articulated will be contested, that it 'will remain a bone of contention between people of different positions—religious, secular, spiritual, indeed of an almost unlimited variety…there is a virtual infinity of insights here, of which no single view has the monopoly.' (2011: 302)

The question I will explore in this thesis is, given Taylor's way of framing the problem of disenchantment and re-enchantment, what could it mean to re-enchant the world from within our 'agency-in-the-world'? As Taylor intimates, whilst there might be agreement over the grounds for responding to disenchantment, there is no single answer to the question of what a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world should be like. A particular concern in my

[6] Taylor thinks that this modern temptation 'which has frequently accompanied the modern turn to the subject.' (2011: 293) is found in the field of epistemology as it was opened up by Descartes and Locke. According to Taylor's presentation of this tradition, knowledge is to be understood as a matter of a subjective 'world-picture' residing in the mind correctly representing a reality that is external to the mind. Taylor's view is that the 'reflexive turn to examine our experience, carried through more fully, ended up dispelling this illusion. Our grasp of the world is not simply a representation within us. It resides rather in our dealing with reality. We are being in the world (Heidegger's *Inderweltsein*), or being to the world (Merleau-Ponty's *être au monde*).' (2011: 294)

[7] The claim that we should be interested in nature or the universe that *surrounds us* indicates that Taylor is talking about nature or the universe from the perspective of our agency-in-the-world and not nature conceived independently of that agency.

thesis will be whether the re-enchantments considered accommodate what I will refer to as the 'proto-religious' dimension to the problem of re-enchantment. Following Taylor (2011: 296-7), I take examples of proto-religious responses to the world to include that of 'awe', 'wonder', 'respect', 'reverence' and a 'sense of mystery'. I call them 'proto-religious' because I view them as forms of evaluative response to the world that (whilst not unrelated) cannot simply be assimilated to the aesthetic or the moral, and yet it is unclear to what extent they require specific doctrinal claims of the sort that might be thought to be definitive of fully-fledged religious ontologies.

In order to address the issue of what it could mean to offer a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world I will examine the work of John McDowell, Roger Scruton and the later Heidegger. I will explore the possibility that they give sense to this idea of a re-enchantment from within our 'agency-in-the-world' and will assess their different re-enchantments. My principal aims in this thesis are to provide an exposition of their thought that demonstrates the way in which they can be said to offer a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world and on the basis of this to focus on issues that relate to the status of their respective re-enchantments. In particular I will be concerned with the extent to which they can be said to adequately accommodate a proto-religious dimension into their re-enchantments.[8]

[8] There are many interesting questions that McDowell, Scruton and Heidegger's thought gives rise to that I unfortunately will have to overlook in the course of this thesis. Where these issues arise I have attempted to draw attention to them. However, my concern will be with questions that relate directly to the issue of what it could mean to re-enchant the world from within our agency-in-the-world, and in particular with their respective treatments of the proto-religious.

Chapter One – John McDowell and the Re-enchantment of the World

1. Introduction

In this chapter I will explore the extent to which John McDowell's understanding of disenchantment, and the re-enchantment that he offers, can be said to provide a way of giving sense to the idea of a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world. This chapter will be principally expository, but I will at the end of the chapter have reasons to question the extent to which McDowell fulfils that task as it is envisaged by Taylor.

As introduced, Taylor presents the transition from an enchanted to a disenchanted world in terms of a shift from a 'porous' to a 'buffered' sense of self, that is to say from a sense of self as existing in an independently meaningful cosmos, to a sense of self as the origin and source of meaning and value that is projected onto an independently meaningless world. For Taylor the emergence of projectivism involves two ideas, 1) the loss of the 'magical' view of nature and 2) the modern drawing of a boundary between personal agency and the world. Taylor claims that there is a modern temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2 and therefore to think that the loss of the 'magical' view of nature entails projectivism about meaning and value. Taylor's suggestion is that with an adequate understanding of subjects as 'agents-in-the-world' it is possible to respond to the 'illegitimate slippage' by accepting that nature independently of the human mind is no longer animated by 'magic' whilst rejecting the modern disenchanted boundary between personal agency and the objective world, and on this basis reject the view that meaning and value are merely projected.

What I want to show in this chapter is how McDowell gives sense to Taylor's vision of a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world and for the following reasons. Like Taylor, McDowell understands the problem of disenchantment principally in terms of the rise of projectivist views of meaning and value. According to McDowell's approach, the emergence of projectivism involves two key ideas, 1) the rejection of the 'medieval view' of nature in favour of the view of nature as a 'realm of law', and 2) the 'neo-Humean' view of subjectivity and objectivity. McDowell is keen to diagnose a modern temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2 and therefore to think that the shift from the medieval to the modern view of nature entails projectivism about meaning and value.

Whilst McDowell rejects projectivism, he also urges that meaning and value do not 'belong, mysteriously, in a reality that is wholly independent of our subjectivity and set over

and against it.' (1998a: 159) McDowell offers a re-enchantment from within our 'agency-in-the-world' with his argument that, with an adequate understanding of Aristotle's ethics – undistorted by modern neo-Humean prejudices, and in particular with an understanding of the Aristotelian-inspired naturalism of 'second nature' – it is possible to respond to the 'illegitimate slippage' by accepting that nature independently of the human mind can no longer be understood in medieval terms as 'filled with meaning' as 'like a book containing messages and lessons for us' (1998a: 174) whilst nevertheless rejecting the modern neo-Humean drawing of a boundary between subjectivity and objectivity. On this basis it is possible to reject the view of values as mere projections.

2. McDowell on Disenchantment

McDowell is in agreement with Taylor that the problem of disenchantment is to be understood in terms of the rise of projectivist views of meaning and value. Also, McDowell provides a similar understanding of the emergence of projectivism. Instead of the world of magic, McDowell discusses disenchantment in terms of a transition from a medieval to a modern view of nature. As McDowell puts it:

> It is a commonplace that modern science has given us a disenchanted conception of the natural world. A proper appreciation of modern science makes it impossible to retain, except perhaps in some symbolic guise, the common medieval conception of nature as filled with meaning, like a book containing messages and lessons for us. The tendency of the scientific outlook is to purge the world of meaning–the object of reason, in an old sense that is threatened by just this development. (1998a: 174)

What McDowell means by referring to the pre-modern enchanted view of nature as the 'medieval conception' is that it is a view of nature 'filled with meaning' in which there is believed to be an objective foundation for how to live because nature independent of subjectivity is held to be 'like a book containing messages and lessons for us.' (1998a: 174) Like Taylor, McDowell places great significance on the transition to the modern scientific view of nature in making possible the thought that meaning and value are subjective projections. Whilst the medieval conception views nature as operating in accordance with what McDowell calls the 'space of reasons', where the norms of teleology, intentionality, purpose and evaluation *are* understood as causally relevant factors, the understanding of nature made intelligible by modern science reveals nature not to be operating in accordance with those norms, but can be understood in terms of a 'realm of law' (1994: *xv*).[9] As McDowell puts the significance of this point,

> Modern science understands its subject matter in a way that threatens, at least, to leave it disenchanted, as Weber put the point in an image that has become commonplace. The image marks a contrast between two kinds of intelligibility: the kind that is sought by (as we call it) natural science, and the kind we find in something when we place it in relation to other occupants of "the logical space of

[9] McDowell defines the 'realm of law' by contrasting it negatively with what, following Sellars (1956), he calls the 'space of reasons'. As McDowell puts it, 'whatever the relations are that constitute the logical space of nature, they are *different in kind* from the normative relations that constitute the logical space of reasons.' (1994: *xv*) Whilst the space of reasons includes states such as thoughts, beliefs and on McDowell's account, experiences that bear normative relations to each other and the world in terms of justification, warrant and correctness, states that belong in the logical space of nature characterised as the realm of law do not stand in such normative relations to each other but merely in law-like relations.

> reasons"…If we identify nature with what natural science aims to make comprehensible, we threaten, at least, to empty it of meaning. (1994: 70-1)[10]

This transition from the medieval to the modern view of nature represents, in McDowell's thought, a partial but welcome disenchantment.[11]

However, McDowell thinks that the loss of belief in the medieval view of nature and acceptance of nature understood as the realm of law is insufficient on its own to explain the process of disenchantment. McDowell explains the emergence of projectivist views of meaning and value by outlining how the modern scientific understanding of nature gives rise to a view in which a 'boundary' is drawn between personal agency and an impersonal world in terms of a distinctively modern way of drawing the distinction between *subjectivity* and *objectivity.* It is this modern drawing of a boundary between subjectivity and objectivity that makes possible the articulation of projectivist views of value.

The account that McDowell gives of the emergence of projectivist views of meaning and value traces a reaction to the loss of the medieval view of nature from Hume, through Kant, to a neo-Humean view. In McDowell's account it is this neo-Humean view that draws the boundary between subjectivity and objectivity in such a way that provides the framework for projectivist views of meaning and value.

The Emergence of Projectivism

McDowell believes we should begin with Hume in order to understand the particular reaction to the loss of the medieval view of nature that sets in motion the modern drawing of a boundary around personal agency and an impersonal world. McDowell claims that

> Hume is the prophet *par excellence* of this tendency although he is quite unconscious of the historical explanation for it. Reason, Hume insists, does not find meaning or intelligible order in the world; rather, whatever intelligible order there is in our world-picture is a product of the operations of mind, and those operations are themselves just some of what goes on in nature, in itself meaninglessly, as it were. (1998a: 175)

According to McDowell, the Humean way of understanding the loss of the medieval view of nature supposes that nature is disenchanted in the sense of no longer being understood as a

[10] McDowell also puts the point like this, '[t]he natural sciences, as we now conceive them, do not look for an organization for their subject matter in which one item is displayed as, say, justified in the light of another item. (This is one interpretation of the slogan that natural science is value-free.)' (2009: 258)

[11] Welcome because McDowell thinks '[i]t was an achievement of modern thought when this second kind of intelligibility [realm of law] was clearly marked off from the first [space of reasons]' McDowell think it is 'a mark of intellectual progress' that 'educated people' no longer believe in the medieval view of nature 'except perhaps in some symbolic role.' (1994: 71)

meaningful world at all but is an 'ineffable lump, devoid of structure or order.' (1998a: 178)[12] According to this view, meaning belongs merely to the human mind, or our subjective world-picture. Structure or order must be thought of as brought into the world through the subjective representational activity of the mind, which projects rational order onto this 'ineffable lump'. However, McDowell suggests that a problem arises for this view. According to this picture of mind and world, the human mind itself is thought to belong to nature and so the appearance of a meaningfully structured world is itself the product of activity going on in ineffable, structureless, unintelligible nature. This entails that intelligible structure is not only projected, but is threatened by the thought that it itself is ineffable, structureless and unintelligible. As McDowell puts it, subjectivity is itself something that 'goes on in nature, in itself meaninglessly' (1998a: 175).

McDowell presents Kant's transcendental idealism as a response to the threat of the meaningless or 'blind' nature of the intelligibly structured world posed by the Humean picture just discussed. According to McDowell's account, Kant responds by accepting that subjectivity plays a constructive role in constituting the meaningfully ordered world, but attempts to avoid the problematic conclusion that such order is meaningless by arguing that the operations of mind must be understood as going on outside of nature, 'transcendentally'. Whilst at the transcendental level the intelligibly structured world must be understood as 'ideal' - the result of subjectivity's interaction with an ineffable, structureless, unintelligible realm of 'things-in-themselves' - at the 'empirical' level such a structured world is vindicated as real, an objective order that the mind is receptive to.

However, McDowell claims that '[f]rom this standpoint, Kant looks like a desperate reactionary.'(1998a: 175) In McDowell's opinion the Kantian response to Hume seems to be a vindication of the reality of the meaningfully-structured world only on the condition that a metaphysical picture is accepted in which subjectivity plays a constructive role in constituting the meaningfully-ordered world, and that the world-constituting activity of the mind is thought to go on outside of nature 'supernaturally', at the cost of discounting a 'sane naturalism'.[13] He argues that the undesirability of Kantian supernaturalism and the desire for a sane naturalism creates space for a further response to the loss of the medieval view of nature that McDowell thinks of as a 'neo-Humean' understanding of the relationship between mind and world:

[12] As will be discussed, this is in contrast to the *neo*-Humean reaction to the loss of the medieval view which holds that nature is to be understood as that which is disclosed by the sciences.

[13] McDowell puts the point like this, Kant 'insists that intelligible order is found in the world, but he makes this out only by reconstruing the world as partly constituted by mind. This looks like an image of Hume's picture in a distorting medium. It looks inferior, by the lights of what seems a merely sane naturalism, in that it conceives the meaning-yielding operation of mind transcendentally rather than as a part of nature. And it looks unconvincing in its insistence that the order is there to be found; it seems to undermine that by suggesting that we constitute the order ourselves.' (1998a: 175) In his Woodbridge lectures (1998b), McDowell offers a slightly different reading of the Kantian position that makes Kant look much less like a 'desperate reactionary'.

> A familiar response is to retain Hume's picture of the meaning-yielding operations of mind, but to discard his responsiveness to scepticism, which keeps Hume himself from a scientistic realism. According to the sort of outlook I mean, reality is exhausted by the natural world, in the sense of the world as the natural sciences are capable of revealing it to us…Any candidate feature of reality that science cannot capture is downgraded as a projection, a result of mind's interaction with the rest of nature. (1998a: 175)

McDowell presents the neo-Humean understanding of the relationship between mind and world as an understandable naturalistic recoil from the supernatural metaphysics of Kant's transcendental idealism. The neo-Humean position retains the Humean idea that the mind constructs a subjective picture of the world but rejects Humean scepticism about the nature of reality external to the human mind. The neo-Humean picture holds that reality as it is independent of the human mind is not an 'ineffable lump, devoid of structure or order', but is as it is described by the natural sciences. Any feature of our subjective world-picture that cannot be vindicated as forming part of the objective world from the 'dispassionate and dehumanized' (1998a: 175) perspective of the sciences is then regarded as merely a subjective feature of our picture of the world, a subjective quality that is projected onto an objective world that lacks such qualities.

The neo-Humean view of mind and world serves the purpose, in McDowell's thought, of capturing the modern disenchanted drawing of a boundary around personal agency and an impersonal world. According to the neo-Humean view meaning is understood to belong within the human mind, to subjectivity, in contrast with an objective world which is exhaustively described by the sciences in disenchanted naturalistic terms as a realm of law. According to this way of drawing a boundary between subjectivity and objectivity, the meaningful and intelligibly-structured appearance of the world can be explained in terms of objective states of affairs or facts outside of the mind – and so outside of the space of meaning – impacting on the human mind and as giving rise to subjective representations of the world. A significant element of the neo-Humean view, as McDowell presents it, is that features of our subjective representations of the world can be said to genuinely represent mind-independent reality if they can be vindicated as doing so through the concepts made available by the modern scientific disenchanted view of nature. As McDowell puts this point,

> [a]gainst this background, it will seem that a putative operation of the intellect can stand up to reflective scrutiny only if its products can be validated on the basis of the facts of nature, conceived in the disenchanted way that is encouraged by modern science. For if we are to understand what is in question as an operation of the intellect at all, we must make room for objectivity: for there to be a difference between being right and seeming right. And science has presented itself as the very exemplar of access to objective truth. (1998a: 175)

The neo-Humean view of mind and world has the consequence that any feature of our subjective representation of the world that cannot be captured from a 'dispassionate and dehumanized stance' (1998a: 175) of the natural sciences is held to belong merely to the human mind, as a projected quality rather than genuinely belonging to the objective world. So, the neo-Humean understanding of the relationship between subjectivity and objectivity has significant implications for how we understand the place of meaning and value in human life, opening up the possibility of projectivist accounts of value experience. If our values cannot be captured from the dispassionate and dehumanized stance on the world made available by modern science, they will be regarded as a merely subjective feature of our experience that can be explained as such through the concepts of a disenchanted naturalism. Through the neo-Humean drawing of a boundary between subjectivity and objectivity, values can be understood as subjectively projected onto a world that does not genuinely contain them.

So, McDowell presents an understanding of disenchantment by tracing a series of reactions to the loss of the medieval view of nature which culminates in modern subjectivism or the neo-Humean view of mind and world. This view draws the distinction between the subjective and the objective in such a way that takes the stance of science, which discounts, as McDowell says, our human point of view, as normative for a conception of the objective world. This means that if our human historical and cultural perspective on the world cannot be vindicated as converging on an accurate understanding of reality from the depersonalised and dehumanised 'view from nowhere' to which modern natural science aspires,[14]meaning and value must be regarded as mere features of subjective human responses, rather than as genuine responses to the objective world. For McDowell disenchantment follows, not from the shift from a medieval to a modern view of nature, but when it is believed that, in response to the loss of belief in the medieval view, meaning belongs within the human mind, in the form of subjective representations that stand in relation to a world external to the mind - the objective world - which is understood exhaustively in terms of disenchanted nature.

Situating McDowell

Before I go on to examine McDowell's response to projectivist views of value it is first worth noting where he stands with respect to these various reactions to the loss of the medieval view of nature.

McDowell sides with the Kantian view that there is something wrong with the Humean reaction to the loss of the medieval view of nature which attempts to maintain that nature is

[14] The idea of the 'view from nowhere' comes from Nagel (1989)

disenchanted in the sense of no longer being understood as a meaningful world at all but an 'ineffable lump, devoid of structure or order.' (1998a: 178), meaningful order being simply a product of minds, and minds understood as wholly part of nature understood as this ineffable lump. McDowell agrees that this gives rise to the worry that the space of reasons is not only projected, but is threatened by the thought that it itself is 'blind', without content and itself meaningless.

McDowell claims that the notion of 'the world' cannot be understood as an ineffable lump, devoid of structure or order, as he claims that the idea of a world simply is that of an intelligible order: the world must be understood as 'something that breaks up into things that are the case' (1998a: 178). In opposition to the Kantian position, McDowell can be seen, to a certain extent, to side with the neo-Humean position. Against Kant who holds that operations of thought and reason go on transcendentally, outside of nature, McDowell thinks we should try and be 'sane naturalists' with regards to the space of reasons.

However, McDowell's disagreement with the neo-Humean response to the loss of the medieval view of nature can be understood from the following line of thought. Reiterating his agreement with the Kantian response to Hume, McDowell claims that 'an acceptable world-picture consists of articulable, conceptually structured representations' and McDowell maintains that '[t]his acceptability resides in their knowably mirroring the world': 'that is representing it as it is.' (1998a: 178) Where McDowell disagrees with the neo-Humean view is over the nature of this 'mirroring' relation or the relation between subjective representations and the world. McDowell argues against the neo-Humeans that 'mirroring cannot be *both* faithful, so that it adds nothing in the way of intelligible order *and* such that in moving from what is mirrored to what does the mirroring, one moves from what is brutely alien to the space of *logos* to what is internal to it.' (1998a: 179) The neo-Humeans, as McDowell presents them, maintain we have a subjective picture of the world consisting of representations that are structured by the space of reasons. Reality is external to our world picture and so to the space of reasons and can be exhaustively understood in terms of the realm of law. It is only by maintaining that our world-picture, structured by the space of reasons, is answerable to something 'brutely alien' to it in the form of the realm of law that we can make sense of our world picture being genuinely answerable to a world independent of subjectivity.

McDowell argues that 'if we keep the idea of accurate representation' that the world is intelligibly structured and that our representations of it accurately mirror the world, then we 'cannot shirk the consequence, which we might put by saying that the natural world is in the space of *logos*.' (1998a: 179-80) Contrary to the neo-Humeans McDowell does not think it is possible to maintain a rejection of the idea that the world is an ineffable lump, and the claim that our thoughts mirror reality *and* that the relation between our world-picture is a relation between the space of reasons and something that lies outside. By accepting that the world intelligibly

breaks up into things that are the case and that our subjective representations accurately mirror that world then it follows that thought is constrained not by a brutely alien world but that, in moving from what is mirrored to what does the mirroring, one moves *in* the space of reasons.[15]

By situating himself in this way against the neo-Humean reaction to the loss of the medieval view of nature, McDowell can be seen to put pressure on the defining feature of the disenchanted view of the world as Taylor presents it: the drawing of a boundary between personal agency and the world. In McDowell's case this is between the space of reasons and the world. McDowell can be understood as arguing that there is illegitimate slippage between the rejection of the medieval view of nature and the view that meaning exists 'inside' the minds of subjects which are answerable to an external world from which meaning has been displaced. Rather, if we want to maintain that our representations can intelligibly mirror a world then both mind and world must be understood as falling within the space of reasons.

The reason I have discussed this point is because what I want to look at now is the way this opposition to the neo-Humean view is present in McDowell's engagement with specifically neo-Humean views of value. I will show how this idea of 'illegitimate slippage' carries over to the thought that projectivism must follow from the rejection of the medieval worldview. McDowell argues that just because what he calls 'rampant platonist' views of value are untenable, this does not mean that projectivism about value is the only alternative.

[15] The big issue that looms here is whether McDowell can actually make this move whilst realistically avoiding a problematic form of idealism. McDowell argues that he can (*see* 1998a: 180-82, 1994: 28-9). He argues that he can avoid idealism by defining a problematic idealism as one that has no room for rational constraint on thought from outside. McDowell seems happy to make a certain concession to idealism with his view that the relation between thought and reality is not the relation between the space of reason and something brutely alien but both mind and world lie within the logical space of reasons. However, he distinguishes his position from a *problematic* form of idealism with the idea that he can avoid the view that there is no rational constraint on thought from outside by making a distinction between particular *acts* of thinking and the *content* of thought. (*See* 1994: 28) Whilst McDowell thinks that reality lies outside of particular acts of thinking he holds the view that thought and reality share the same content. But he argues that this amounts to a truism, as much a form of common-sense realism as idealism. (*See* 1994: 27) *See* Gaskin (2006) for the view that McDowell ends up committed to a form of idealism that undermines his 'quietism'.

3. McDowell's Response to Neo-Humean Views of Value

The Phenomenology of Value Experience

McDowell draws attention to a fact acknowledged by projectivists regarding the phenomenology of value experience.[16] This is the fact that aesthetic and moral experience

> typically presents itself, at least in part, as a confrontation with value: an awareness of value as something residing in an object and available to be encountered. It thus invites the thought that value is, as J. L Mackie puts it in his *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*, "part of the fabric of the world" (1998a: 112)

Projectivists do not dispute that evaluations 'naturally strike us as correct or incorrect according to whether or not they accurately delineate the values that are found in their subject matter.' (1998a: 151) So in this way projectivists believe that the phenomenology of value experience implies a realist view of value. As McDowell interprets projectivists, he takes them to understand the moral realism implicit in the phenomenology of value experience to be committed to the view that reality 'includes an extra population of distinctively value-involving states of affairs or facts.' (1998a: 153-4) He also understands projectivists as holding that moral realism requires us to be equipped with 'special cognitive faculties by whose exercise we become aware of this special field of knowledgable fact' (1998a: 154). However, although this special faculty is to be vaguely assimilated to the senses, no convincing account can be given of the operation of this mysterious faculty, how we come to be aware of this special realm of evaluative properties. As McDowell puts the projectivist view, '[t]he assimilation to the senses gives this intuitionistic position the superficial appearance of offering an epistemology of our access to evaluative truth, but there is no substance behind this appearance.' (1998a: 154)

McDowell understands projectivists to take the phenomenology of value experience to recommend what he calls a 'rampant platonist' view of value. What McDowell means by rampant platonism is the view that values can be understood as existing out there in the world completely independently of our natural human responses. On the basis of this, the way in which values come into view for us is to be understood as 'independent of anything merely human'. (1994: 92) But rampant platonism suggests a problem, 'the capacity of our minds to resonate to [values] looks occult or magical.' (1994: 92)

In response, whilst projectivists do not dispute the realist character of our value experience, they argue that 'the appearance is illusory: value is not found in the world, but projected into it, a mere reflection of subjective responses.' (1998a: 112) In contrast to the

[16] McDowell's engagement with projectivism is principally with the thought of Mackie (1977), Williams (1978) and Blackburn (1984, 1993).

metaphysics and epistemology of a rampant platonist moral realism, projectivists believe that ordinary moral experience embodies a mistaken judgement about the reality of value and that consequently value experience should be understood in projectivist terms. Rather than value experience being understood as the mind somehow mysteriously resonating with values that exist out there completely independently of our natural human responses, value experience should be understood as originating in and wholly dependent on our subjective human response. Evaluative experience should be understood in terms of the mind 'spreading itself' on to the external and value-free world, as 'the upshot of a projection of what Hume called "sentiments" on to their objects.' (1998a: 152)[17] Projectivists commit themselves to the view that, despite the phenomenology suggesting a rampant platonist moral realism, the alternative way of thinking about value that employs the concept of 'projection' can adequately explain the phenomenology of our evaluative experience.

McDowell On J.L Mackie's Case For Projectivism

As McDowell presents it, the case for a projectivist view of value depends on a particular rampant platonist construal of the phenomenology of value experience. As rampant plantonism is problematic then it is thought the phenomenology is similarly problematic and so cannot be taken at face value. However, McDowell argues that the rampant platonist interpretation of the phenomenology is itself questionable and therefore so are the grounds upon which projectivists argue that we cannot take the phenomenology as presenting value as part of the fabric of the world at face value. This form of argument is evident in McDowell's engagement with J.L Mackie's (1977) case for projectivism.

According to McDowell, Mackie holds that the phenomenology of value experience presents values as genuine features of the 'fabric of the world'. McDowell thinks that the significance of this is that 'Mackie treats the thesis that value is in the world as interchangeable with the thesis that value is objective', this results in Mackie's commitment to the view that, in presenting value as a feature of the world, the phenomenology of value experience presents values as objective. McDowell's critique of Mackie's projectivism begins with the claim that, in Mackie's thought, the identification of 'the world' with what is objective 'is not an innocuous variation of terminology': rather 'it insinuates, into Mackie's account of the content of value experience, a specific and disputable philosophical conception of the world (or the real, or the factual).' (1998a: 113)

[17] A classic statement of this view is provided by Ayer (1946).

In order to justify this claim McDowell argues that Mackie, in neo-Humean fashion, defines objectivity by contrasting it with subjectivity, so that, '[w]hat is objective, in the relevant sense, is what is not subjective.' (1998a:113-4) McDowell defines a subjective property in the following way:

> A subjective property, in the relevant sense, is one such that no adequate conception of what it is for a thing to possess it is available except in terms of how the thing would, in suitable circumstances, affect a subject a sentient being. (1998a: 113)

This implies that the fabric of the world, or the realm of objectivity in being defined in contrast with subjectivity, is exhaustively intelligible 'in terms of properties that can be understood without essential reference to their effects on sentient beings.' (1998a: 114) McDowell suggests that projectivists think the phenomenology of value experience presents our experience of values as a visual experience, so that vision provides a model for our knowledge of values. As Mackie thinks that the phenomenology presents value experience as an awareness of genuine features of the fabric of the world, as awareness of objective properties, then our perception of values, according to Mackie's account of objectivity, is to be understood as a perception of properties that are intelligible without essential reference to their effects on sentient beings. This amounts to the view that the phenomenology presents our perception of values as a perception of primary as opposed to secondary qualities. McDowell defines a secondary quality in the following way:

> A secondary quality is a property the ascription of which to an object is not adequately understood except as true, if it is true, in virtue of the object's disposition to present a certain sort of perceptual appearance characterisable by using a word for the property itself to say how the object perceptually appears. (1998a: 133)

A primary quality is just the opposite of a secondary quality. A primary quality is a quality the ascription of which to an object is adequately understood as true independently of the object's disposition to present a certain sort of perceptual appearance to a subject. McDowell's view is that Mackie takes the phenomenology of value experience to present value as a genuine feature of the world, and for Mackie this means that the phenomenology presents values as objective. Given Mackie's neo-Humean contrast of objectivity with subjectivity, the view of values as objective implies our sensitivity to values is a sensitivity to primary qualities, a sensitivity to properties that are intelligible independently of their disposition to perceptually appear to a subject. But Mackie argues in opposition to what McDowell calls rampant platonism, that

values are not such properties. Though they may appear this way, values are not intelligible independently of their disposition to evoke attitudes or states of will. This means that the phenomenology of value experience is in error. It involves the error of presenting what actually are secondary and merely subjective properties as if they are primary and thoroughly objective properties. Therefore evaluative experience cannot be taken at face value. Values must be understood as properties subjectively projected onto a world that does not contain them, rather than forming a genuine part of the fabric of the world.

McDowell's Response to Mackie's Case for Projectivism

McDowell claims that given the view of the phenomenology of value experience understood as the experience of primary qualities it is easy to see why Mackie would convict the phenomenology of error. The reason for this, McDowell suggests, is that

> it seems impossible—at least on reflection—to take seriously the idea of something that is like a primary quality in being simply there, independently of human sensibility, but is nevertheless intrinsically (not conditionally on contingencies about human sensibility) such as to elicit some "attitude" or state of will from someone who becomes aware of it. Moreover, the primary quality model turns the epistemology of value into mere mystification. (1998a: 132)

The primary quality understanding of the phenomenology of value experience rests on an understanding of the phenomenology as suggesting a rampant platonism with regards to the metaphysics and epistemology of value, which McDowell agrees is untenable for the metaphysical and epistemological reasons that projectivists like Mackie cite. McDowell thinks it would be 'queer' – to use Mackie's term – if there were properties such as secondary qualities and values that possessed the phenomenal character that they do as secondary subjective properties but belonged to the fabric of the world understood completely independently of their relation to subjectivity and our natural human responses. McDowell admits that

> There would indeed be something weird (to put it mildly) about the idea of a property that, while retaining the "phenomenal" character of experienced value was conceived to be part of the world as objectively characterized. (1998a: 115)

And he gives the following analogy to illustrate why he thinks this:

> It would be as if we tried to construct a conception of amusingness that was fully intelligible otherwise than in terms of the characteristic human responses to what is amusing, but nevertheless contrived somehow to retain the "phenomenal" aspect of amusingness as we experience it in those responses. (1998a: 115)

It is at this point that McDowell raises an issue with Mackie's view. Mackie thinks that the idea of values figuring in experience as intelligibly there in the world independently of how they affect a sentient being whilst resembling the phenomenal character of experienced value, is a coherent content of experience. It is just that it turns out, given what we (apparently) know about the objective world, to be empirically false: there are no such properties. However, McDowell objects to this construal of the 'queerness' involved in the thought that Mackie wants us to entertain. McDowell objects that the idea of a property that is intelligibly there in the world independently of how it affects a sentient being, whilst resembling the phenomenal character of experienced value, is not empirically false but actually involves the ascription of an incoherent content to experience. The reason McDowell objects to Mackie's interpretation on these grounds is that the properties to which Mackie's projectivism applies, such as values, are essentially subjective properties; they are as McDowell puts it, properties that cannot be adequately understood independently of what it would be for such properties to relate to the subjectivity of a sentient being. But this means that what Mackie's projectivist interpretation of the phenomenology ascribes to the content of value experience is the experience of properties that essentially relate to the subjectivity of a sentient being, whilst at the same time being presented as properties that are objective, that is properties that are intelligible independently of what it would be for such properties to relate to the subjectivity of a sentient being. McDowell claims that this is not simply empirically false but ascribes a contradictory and so incoherent content to the experience of value.

McDowell's Suggestion For An Alternative Interpretation of the Phenomenology of Value

McDowell supposes that if Mackie's perspective generates an incoherent understanding of value experience then perhaps it is not how we should interpret the way in which value experience presents values as genuine features of the world. There may be another way of construing the phenomenology that preserves its intelligibility so that there is no reason - or at least not the reason Mackie presents - to not take such experience at face value.

McDowell's argument is that Mackie's view of secondary qualities is mistaken and that contrary to Mackie it is possible to understand the phenomenology of value experience in secondary quality terms, whilst staying true to the phenomenology of value as presenting value as an objective feature of the world. McDowell (1998a: 133) thinks that the ascription of a secondary quality is understood as true, in virtue of an object's disposition to present a certain sort of perceptual experience and also that secondary quality experience presents itself as an experience of properties genuinely possessed by objects. McDowell argues, contrary to Mackie,

that there is no reason why we cannot take this experience at face value. McDowell claims about secondary qualities that

> Secondary-quality experience presents itself as perceptual awareness of properties genuinely possessed by the objects that confront one…An object's being such as to look red is independent of its actually looking red to anyone on any particular occasion; so, notwithstanding the conceptual connection between being red and being experienced as red, an experience of something as red can count as a case of being presented with a property that is there anyway—there independently of the experience itself. (1998a: 134)

For Mackie, to take the phenomenology of secondary quality experience at face value is to ascribe a property to objects that is thoroughly objective, a property that can be understood as there independently of its disposition to appear a certain way to subjects, whilst resembling the quality as it figures in experience. McDowell's claim is that there is a sense in which secondary quality experience can be understood as irreducibly subjective, which does not entail that the experience is not a response to properties that are there anyway, forming part of the fabric of the world. McDowell thinks that secondary qualities are subjective in the sense that '[s]econdary qualities are not adequately conceivable except in terms of certain subjective states', and McDowell thinks that, in a natural contrast, 'a primary quality would be objective in the sense that what it is for something to have it can be adequately understood otherwise than in terms of dispositions to give rise to subjective states.' (1998a: 136) What McDowell argues should be resisted is the thought that this definition of subjective and objective corresponds to a distinction between illusory and veridical experience. As McDowell puts it, the contrast between a subjective and objective quality:

> is easily confused with a different contrast, in which to call a putative object of awareness "objective" is to say that it is there to be experienced, as opposed to being a mere figment of the subjective state that purports to be an experience of it…What is acceptable, though, is only that secondary qualities are subjective in the first sense, and it would be simply wrong to suppose this gives any support to the idea that they are subjective in the second. (1998a: 136)

So, McDowell is suggesting that a property can be subjective in the sense of not being adequately understood except in terms of its disposition to look a certain way to a being with a certain sensibility, whilst still constituting an experience of a property that is there anyway, there independently of the experience itself. McDowell thinks that interpreting the phenomenology of value along secondary quality lines understood in the way he outlines can retain the sense in which values appear as genuinely part of the fabric of the world, whilst avoiding a problematically 'queer' rampant platonist construal of the properties in question. According to the secondary quality model,

> Values are not brutely there—not there independently of our sensibility—any more than colours are: though, as with colours, this does not prevent us from supposing that they are there independently of any particular apparent experience of them. (1998a: 146)[18]

What I want to do now is show how McDowell's position develops through his disagreement with Blackburn. In particular, having looked at a projectivist 'rampant platonist' construal of value properties, McDowell turns his attention to how projectivists construe our subjective response to values.

McDowell's Alternative To Projectivism

In contrast to a rampant platonist moral realism, projectivists, like Simon Blackburn, urge that 'we profit…by realizing that a training of the feelings rather than a cultivation of a mysterious ability to spot the immutable fitnesses of things is the foundation of how to live' (Blackburn, 1981: 186) But McDowell poses the question of whether the projectivism that is taken to follow from this rejection of rampant platonist moral realism actually makes sense. McDowell poses the question whether, once we give up a platonist construal of evaluative concepts, we are entitled to assume that human responses or sentiments enjoy the kind of explanatory priority to which projectivism is committed:

> The point of the image of projection is to explain certain seeming features of reality as reflections of our subjective responses to a world that really contains no such features. Now this explanatory direction seems to require a corresponding priority, in the order of understanding, between the projected response and the apparent feature: we ought to be able to focus our thought on the response without needing to exploit the concept of the apparent feature that is supposed to result from projecting that response. (1998a: 157)

In order to explain why he thinks we are not entitled to assume that human responses or sentiments enjoy an explanatory priority, McDowell refers to the example of the comic or funny. As McDowell has argued, in agreement with Mackie, a platonist construal of the comic or the funny would be 'queer'. McDowell and the projectivists are in agreement over this. But McDowell poses the question of projectivist analysis, 'what exactly is it that we are to conceive as projected on to the world so as to give rise to our idea that things are funny?' (1998a: 158) For projectivism to meet the explanatory priority of the human response or sentiment over the idea of a sensitivity to an objective property it must cash out what is projected in terms of a non-

[18] For the view that McDowell's comparison between colour and value experience is problematic *see* Dancy (1993).

world involving state of mind. But McDowell claims that something that meets this criterion, such as 'an inclination to laugh' is not a satisfactory analysis of the phenomenology of the comic or the funny. The reason McDowell gives is that 'projecting an inclination to laugh would not necessarily yield an apparent instance of the comic, since laughter can signal, for instance, embarrassment just as well as amusement.' (1998a: 158) The purely subjective state identified falls short of fully capturing the content of finding something genuinely funny since it is consistent with a range of other responses. So McDowell suggests that

> [p]erhaps the right response cannot be identified except as amusement; and perhaps amusement cannot be understood except as finding something comic…if [this] is correct, there is a serious question whether we can really explain the idea of something's being comic as a projection of that response. The suggestion is that there is no self-contained prior fact of our subjective lives that could enter into a projective account of the relevant way of thinking; in the only relevant response, the conceptual apparatus that figures in the relevant way of thinking is already in play. (1998a: 158)

As I discussed, McDowell's view is that projectivists such as Blackburn take moral realism to be committed to a rampant platonism that is problematic at the metaphysical and epistemological level. Instead Blackburn argues that it is by focusing on the way that a training of the feelings rather than cultivating a mysterious capacity to intuit the nature of moral reality that we can understand the true basis of how to live. Blackburn takes this to entail a form of projectivism. The experience of value is to be explained in terms of the projection of a property that originates in and is wholly dependent upon subjective human responses. But McDowell argues that this line of thought assumes that there are only two options: rampant platonism or projectivism. McDowell thinks that this betrays a blindness to a third option. Projectivists hold that as values are not understood in complete independence from human response, human responses must be given priority in the analysis of value experience. However, McDowell thinks that his objection to this giving of priority to human response opens up the possibility that whilst value might not be understood by giving priority to the world - as in rampant platonism - it does not follow that it is possible to give priority to subjective experience. Rather there is the possibility of holding a 'no-priority' view of value experience that does not give priority either to the 'object' or the 'subject side' in the determination of our evaluative experience. As McDowell says, '[t]here are two possible ways of not being an intuitionistic realist [rampant platonist], and the image of projection really fits only one of them.' (1998a: 160)

According to the kind of view McDowell is recommending, whilst colour experience, the experience of the funny and the experience of aesthetic and moral values might not be able to be explained in rampant platonist terms, the no-priority view allows that the idea of what it is to be

coloured, funny or valuable need not be explained in terms of an independently established conception of what it is for the world to possess these properties, but that the human response to secondary qualities, humour or evaluative experience, may only be intelligible by drawing upon 'world-involving' concepts, concepts that involve things being understood as blue, hilarious, or courageous.

In conciliatory spirit McDowell writes that '[t]here is surely something right about the Humean idea of a "new creation"—the idea of a range of seeming states of affairs that would not be as they are if it were not for the distinctive affective colouration of our subjectivity.' (1998a: 166) However, the crux of McDowell's disagreement with neo-Humean views of value emerges when he claims that

> What does not follow is that the seeming states of affairs can be understood as creatures of independently intelligible operations of our affective nature. These seeming objectivities need not be a shadow or reflection of a self-contained subjectivity: understanding the genesis of the "new creation" may be understanding an interlocking complex of subjective and objective, of response and feature responded to. And in that case it is a mistake to think we can illuminate the metaphysics of these matters by appealing to the image of projection. (1998a: 166)

So, it is suggested by the projectivist line of thought that with respect to value, either a rampant platonism, or subjectivism must be adopted. McDowell argues that these are not the only options. There is a way of rejecting rampant platonism that does not involve adopting projectivism. It involves rejecting rampant platonism by agreeing that our evaluative experience cannot be understood as a sensitivity to features of the world that are intelligible independently of natural human responses. But it also involves the view that we can make sense of such human responses only by employing world-involving concepts, concepts that invoke features of the world. Making sense of the phenomenology of value experience requires us to invoke concepts that whilst not intelligible independently of our human response make reference to how things anyway are in the world. Neither the subject nor the object side can be said to be solely responsible for our experience of value. Therefore McDowell suggests it is possible to reject rampant platonism whilst adopting a non-projectivist view of our evaluative experience. McDowell agrees with the projectivists that a rampant platonist understanding of values as existing in complete independence of our human response that leaves our awareness of values looking occult or mysterious is to be rejected. However, McDowell questions whether the phenomenology of value experience, by recommending the thought that value experience is an experience of genuine features of the world, is thereby recommending a rampant platonist moral realism.

'Illegitimate Slippage' Again

Following from the way in which McDowell situates himself in relation to the various responses to the loss of belief in the medieval view of nature, McDowell's reinterpretation of the phenomenology poses a challenge to the defining feature of the neo-Humean view of mind and world. By claiming that there are subjective properties, properties that are intelligible only in relation to subjectivity, that can nevertheless be taken to be genuinely part of the fabric of the world, and in that sense be objective, entails that subjectivity and objectivity are no longer being understood in opposition to each other. Through his engagement with neo-Humeans such as Mackie and Blackburn, McDowell can be seen to build on his general opposition to the neo-Humean view of mind and world by arguing that it is possible to think that there are genuine features of the objective world that only come into view from the perspective of our subjective engagement with the world. According to this view, the objective world is no longer defined as a realm that is exhaustively intelligible from a depersonlised and dehumanised view, but can be understood as containing secondary qualities and values.

McDowell believes that a significant influence on projectivist views of value is the thought that objectivity *must* be understood in terms of the depersonalised and dehumanised view from nowhere of modern science, and so no reconciliation of subjectivity and objectivity of the sort he envisages seems possible. As part of his engagement with neo-Humean views of value, McDowell addresses what he considers to be the best case for thinking that objectivity must be understood in this way, Bernard Williams's (1978) argument for the 'absolute conception of reality'.

McDowell claims that something like Williams's 'absolute conception' underpins the appeal of projectivism:

> I conjecture…that what seems to justify Mackie's assumption that what is real, or part of the fabric of the world, is objective—or perhaps what accounts for his not seeing that thesis as something for which a justification may be demanded—is something like the absolute conception of reality.' (1998a: 122)

By critically engaging with Williams's absolute conception of reality, McDowell addresses what he takes to be the guiding conception of reality that prevents the reconciliation of subjectivity and the objectivity that he recommends.

The Absolute Conception of Reality

Williams's absolute conception is an attempt to explain the possibility of knowledge of the objective world, knowledge of "what is there anyway" independent of any local, parochial or subjective point of view. Williams presents the 'absolute conception of reality' as 'the object of any representation which is knowledge', a representation which count as such because it captures 'reality which is there "anyway"'. (Williams, 1978: 65) According to McDowell, Williams invokes the absolute conception in order to deal with a worry that arises when trying to accommodate the distinction between the idea of 'mere appearance' and 'reality'. According to this line of thought, there must be a way – some method – of distinguishing the way the world appears to a subject occupying a local or parochial point view and the way the world really is.

Given that we occupy a point of view on the world, a point of view from which it appears the way it does because of our distinctively human perspective, Williams thinks this poses a problem concerning how we are to establish whether the world *is* the way it appears to us to be. McDowell expresses the problem in the following way:

> [i]t is natural to wonder whether the idea of transcending special points of view really makes sense. Surely any conception of reality we could achieve would still be *our* conception of reality, from a point of view we occupied. (1998a: 118)

Williams thinks we can avoid this problem because he believes that science provides a method of enquiry which transcends our distinctively human point of view, giving us access to the world as it is 'in-itself'. So although we occupy local points of view, Williams maintains we can transcend them through scientific enquiry. Williams's absolute conception not only attempts to explain reality as it is in itself, '"the absolute conception of reality" is something arrived at by extending the conception of the world as it is in itself so as to encompass and be able to explain the various appearances.' (1998a: 119) The need for something to play the role of absolute conception is required to avoid the horns of a problematic dilemma:

> 1) If the absolute conception lacks determinate substance then it would be deceptive to think we have anything against which to measure and explain the appearances.

If 1 is the case then, Williams worries, 'the conception of an independent reality slips out of the picture', leaving us only with a number of appearances.

> 2) If the absolute conception is a determinate conception of the way reality is then it is vulnerable to the worry that this conception is merely one more point of view, another appearance.

However, Williams believes we can avoid this dilemma because we are equipped with a determinate and absolute conception of reality that is not another local perspective on the world but transcends our merely human point of view. This is provided by the methods of the natural sciences.

The way this relates to McDowell's concerns is that the consequence of taking the natural sciences to reveal the nature of reality from an absolute point of view is that concepts that figure in a subjective point of view but do not figure in a scientific conception of the world are thought to be able to be *explained away* using the terms of the natural sciences. In this way science progressively provides an absolute conception of reality. As Tim Thornton explains in his commentary on McDowell's work, one way of understanding the significance attributed to the sciences in the absolute conception is

> to conclude that some of the features that human beings have previously taken to form part of the world - in the narrower sense - turn out to have been instead merely local features of our *perspective* on the world. Thus while it was once assumed that the world really was coloured, we now "realize" that colour is an artefact of the way in which humans and some other animals perceive the world. We can thus now entertain the thought that a combination of, perhaps, physics, neurophysiology and psychology will, in the future, describe not just how light and bodies interact but also how we see in colour, how we once projected this experience onto the world and how we later realized that this was wrong and came to develop the account of the world and ourselves that we are now contemplating. (2004: 75-6)

Such a thought would seem to apply not just to secondary qualities but to values as well. Whilst the phenomenology of value experience presents values as genuinely belonging to the fabric of the world, science will progress in such a way that enables our experience of value to be explained, not as the result of responding to properties that genuinely belong to the objective world, but exclusively through the terms of say, anthropology, evolutionary biology and neuroscience, that make no reference to the objective existence of value.

McDowell's Response To Williams's Absolute Conception of Reality

The significance of the absolute conception for McDowell's concerns is that it is put forward to answer a particular problem. We are aware of the world because it appears to us from a particular parochial point of view; but if we are to have genuine knowledge of the way

that reality anyway is, independent of our point of view, then there must be some method of representing reality that serves to provide us with access to the way that reality anyway is and at the same time serves to distinguish between those features of our subjective point of view that genuinely represent the way that reality anyway is and those features that do not represent reality but belong merely to our point of view. The method of representing reality as it anyway is that Williams supposes gives us access to reality are the methods of the natural sciences. The sciences serve as a method that has the working potential to converge on an absolute conception of the world, a conception that explains how reality anyway is and the place of the subjective points of view within such reality and whether they accurately represent that reality or not.

McDowell sees the consequence of Williams's absolute conception to be that the demands of knowledge, that there be a method for representing reality as it anyway is, to entail that secondary qualities and values do not form genuine features of the fabric of the world. Therefore the demands of knowledge imply that, contrary to McDowell's suggestion, we cannot take the phenomenology of secondary quality and value experience at face value. We must regard those properties as projected onto the world by our subjectivities. The demands of knowledge entails a version of the neo-Humean view of subjectivity and objectivity. Or at least McDowell thinks that the absolute conception of reality is implicit in the understanding of the world as it figures in the thinking of projectivists such as Mackie and Blackburn.

In response McDowell raises two worries. The first draws out a demand that Williams's absolute conception must meet if it is to succeed in its aims of overcoming mere appearances. It requires that the absolute conception is able to explain how the local points of view, understood as projected, relate to the world as it is in itself, *from an objective point of view*. As McDowell explains,

> To achieve the overarching objective account, one needs to transcend the point of view from which a given range of subjective concepts appears to be required to describe how things are, while nevertheless retaining as objectively factual the use of those concepts, or something close enough to them to serve as a basis for the supposed projection, in describing the content of the experiences characteristic of that point of view. This would work if the occurrence of the relevant predicates in describing the content of the experiences were intelligible independently of understanding their use to say how (as one take it) things are. (1998a: 123-4)

McDowell argues that if the absolute conception is to achieve its aims, it must explain how certain features of our local points of view relate to the world from an objective point of view. So it must be possible to achieve an objective point of view on the local perspective and the world for this to take place. McDowell claims that this would be possible if the contents of the local point of view were intelligible from the objective point of view, so independently of how things appear from the local point of view. However, McDowell claims that this aspiration is incoherent. Colour concepts, for example, in being irreducibly subjective, are not intelligible

independently of the way they look from a particular point of view. McDowell maintains that the only way to explain the 'projections', or how things appear from the local point of view, is to employ the concepts, in this case colour concepts, which themselves are features of our local point of view.

McDowell argues that, if the absolute conception is meant to allow us to assess the status of 'redness' from an objective point of view, then it cannot do so by employing the concept of the colour as that involves retaining the point of view from which the colour concepts are employed. It is the purpose of the absolute conception to assess claims to knowledge from a perspective which transcends such parochial points of view. The incoherence in the absolute conception arises for McDowell in attempting to conceive of irreducibly subjective concepts in objective terms, which results in failing to get a grip on what it is that is meant to be explained, a feature of our point of view. McDowell point is that given that the absolute conception aspires to be a measure of reality, if it fails to get the prospective features of subjectivity in view, then it appears to fail as a candidate measure of their reality.

McDowell's second worry about Williams's absolute conception concerns the idea of scientific enquiry as a transparent mode of access to reality in-itself. McDowell claims that, '[w]ithout falling into scepticism about the general reliability of science, one may well suspect that the idea of science can yield a conception of an "Archimedean point", from which a comparison could be set up between particular representations of the world and the world itself.' (1998a: 126) McDowell's claim is that contrary to what Williams suggests, science cannot be considered as a method of access to the real that transcends any and every 'point of view'. The reasons McDowell gives for this are that any 'substantive view of what the world is like…cannot escape being the product of a particular location in the history of science.' (1998a:126) Any statement of the perspective that science offers us that does not make reference to ideas and theories that have their location in the history of science, risk being so abstract as to fail to provide us with a perspective with sufficient determinate substance to act as a measure for our knowledge claims of how things anyway are. But, McDowell supposes, if instead we make our conception of scientific method substantive enough then it will inevitably make reference to ideas and theories that have their location in the history of science, which gives rise to Williams's worry that science is just another point of view. The point is that, rather than science representing a method of enquiry that has within itself the capacity and tendency to develop towards an end point where no more arguments are to be had and everything is explained, science is part of an ongoing discussion, a method of enquiry that goes on in time with a history.

McDowell thinks it is possible to diffuse this worry – and Williams's dilemma – by rejecting the thought that the only way to avoid relativism is an Archimedean point of view on our beliefs and claims to knowledge. McDowell's view is that Williams's dilemma is not really

a problem, as the second horn – the view that our beliefs and judgements are formed from our point if view – is unproblematic

> The right response to the claim that all our assessments of truth are made from the standpoint of a "conceptual system" that is inescapably our own is not to despair of our grip on reality but to say, with Hilary Putnam, "Well? We should use someone else's conceptual system?" It is pointless to chafe at the fact that what we believe is what we believe. We can justify beliefs we hold about how things are (for instance, combat offered alternatives) only by appealing to what are in fact further beliefs we hold about how things are; but it would be a mistake to let this tend to undermine our confidence in the beliefs, or in their possession of a subject-matter largely independent of themselves—our confidence that we have reality more or less within our cognitive grasp. Occupation of the second horn of Williams's dilemma, unblunted by the idea of a somehow impersonal and ahistorical mode of access to reality, ought not to seem to threaten anything we should want to mean by Williams's thesis "knowledge of what is there anyway" (1998a: 128)

The thought that we must justify our beliefs from a point of view within an ongoing discussion, rather than making special appeal to a method of enquiry that is guaranteed to converge on a theory of everything, does not mean that we cannot ever take our perspective – the perspective of ongoing reasoning about what we believe – as providing us with knowledge of reality. McDowell's view is that without the idea of an Archimedean point of view, the tendency for science to be seen as informing what we mean by objectivity, the world, the factual or the real, shows up as a superficial form of scientism. McDowell thinks we can give up the idea that any of our 'conceptual systems' provide us with an Archimedean point of view without giving up on our grasp of ideas like 'objectivity', 'the world', 'the factual' and 'the real'. These notions have the sense they do from within our practice of reasoning about the truth of things that takes place from within our conceptual systems, and science provides one example of this. There is no reason to give up on notions of objectivity, the world, the factual or the real just because there is no scheme of concepts that plays the role of an Archimedean point of view.

So, the absolute conception of reality is apparently needed to avoid a dilemma. However, McDowell believes that science, put forward as a solution, would in fact appear to be impaled on the second horn. This would seem to call into question our ability to have knowledge of how things anyway are. But McDowell claims it does so only if we wrongly assume we need to identify objective reality with an Archimedean viewpoint. In response, McDowell raises the possibility that any sense of objective reality we have comes into view only from within a 'conceptual system' and the means of reasoning that are internal to it. If so, it is possible to accept the second horn Williams's 'dilemma' without worrying that we have lost grip on the thought that we can arrive at knowledge of objective reality.

McDowell doesn't think that this criticism of Williams's absolute conception justifies the claim that value is objective but, 'if we can disconnect the notion of the world (or its fabric or furniture) from that notion of objectivity, then we make it possible to consider different interpretations of the claim that value is part of the world, a claim that the phenomenology of value experience has made attractive to philosophers and ordinary people.' (1998a: 129) McDowell thinks that the main motivation for defining subjectivity and objectivity in opposition to each other, Williams's absolute conception, in fact rests on the desire to avoid an incoherent demand of an Archimedean point of view on subjectivity and objectivity to secure the idea of knowledge of how things anyway are.

Summary So Far

As I have presented McDowell's thought so far, he understands the phenomenon of disenchantment in terms of the transition from the medieval to the modern view of nature. This makes possible the neo-Humean view of subjectivity and objectivity and projectivist views of value. McDowell situates himself against the neo-Humean picture of the relation between mind and world, arguing that it involves a form of illegitimate slippage: just because modern science has made possible a distinction between the space of reasons and the realm of law, this does not entail that the space of reasons must be understood as located within minds in contrast with a brutely alien world understood as exhausted by the realm of law. This is evident in McDowell's critical engagement with specifically neo-Humean projectivist views of value. McDowell argues that whilst value should not be understood in rampant platonist fashion, as out there in the world completely independent from our natural human responses, that does not mean we have to embrace projectivism – that line of thought being a particular manifestation of the illegitimate slippage in which what was previously thought to be external to the mind is now relocated purely within it. Instead, McDowell argues there is a third position, one which maintains that our experience of value, though essentially bound up with our responses to the world, need not be understood as 'a shadow or reflection of a self-contained subjectivity', but rather arises out of our agency-in-the-world in the sense that it involves an 'interlocking complex of subjective and objective, of response and feature responded to'. The point is that, even though McDowell accepts the transition from the medieval to the modern view of nature, he maintains that the Humean idea of subjective 'projection' is unhelpful when describing the phenomenology of value experience.

What I want to look at now is the way McDowell attempts to make sense of what he calls a 'partially' re-enchanted view of nature through the Aristotelian-inspired idea of 'second

nature', though, as McDowell maintains, we must be wary of how neo-Humean assumptions may distort our understanding of Aristotle too.

4. Reading Aristotle's Ethics

The Neo-Humean Objective Grounding of Ethics

McDowell argues that in the modern period, as 'rampant platonist' accounts of meaning and value are held to be untenable, the only naturalist position that can seem available which supposes value is objective is a neo-Humean naturalism that explains the objectivity of value in a dispassionate and dehumanized understanding of human nature viewed from the absolute point of view. According to this kind of naturalism, value is objective but this objectivity is to be explained in terms of concepts taken from the natural sciences: the objectivity of value is to be explained in biological terms, in terms of what it is for the life of the human species to go well.

As McDowell puts it, '[n]ature, on the neo-Humean conception, can be pictured as the content of the 'view from nowhere' and, as he explains, '[t]his conception can find goodness in nature, provided it is not goodness visible only to a human subject.' (1998a: 193) The neo-Humean picture views nature as what can be understood without appeal to concepts that belong to our distinctively human point of view on the world, and so seeks to explain human fulfilment and goodness from that dehumanised perspective. For example, McDowell suggests that

> [w]hat doing well is for a tree, and what doing well is for a wolf, are topics that a neo-Humean naturalism can embrace; they are not erased from nature by discounting the effects of a specifically human perspective, because the relevant assessment of good and bad is not relative to human projects and interests. (1998a: 193)

Similarly, a neo-Humean naturalism, whilst acknowledging that there are distinctive facts that belong to being human, adopt the view that the life that is good for human beings can be accounted for in the same way as what is good for a tree or a wolf. As McDowell puts it, 'the metaphysical rules do not change', this is because the neo-Humean naturalism proceeds on the basis that

> in forming a suitable conception of what doing well is for a human being, one must discount any valuations and aspirations that are special to one's historical or cultural situation: anything one cannot regard as characteristic of human beings as such. (1998a: 193)

That is, one must disregard anything that cannot be made intelligible from the view from nowhere or as McDowell also puts it from 'God's point of view' (1998a: 193)

So, according to this neo-Humean view, meaning and value are thought to be objective, but as the natural sciences are thought to have a monopoly on objectivity, the meaning and value of human life, what it is to live the good human life, is to be specified, not in terms of meanings that belong to our human point of view, but from a view which discounts any valuations that belong to or are special to a historical and cultural perspective on the world. Instead this neo-Humean naturalism attempts to make sense of the objectivity of value dispassionately in a dehumanised nature viewed from nowhere.

The Neo-Humean Reading of Aristotle

McDowell maintains that this naturalistic view can be found in neo-Humean interpretations of Aristotle's ethics. McDowell believes certain contemporary philosophers tend to ascribe to Aristotle a naturalism which entails that, when Aristotle relates the virtues to nature, he is proposing that there is a rational foundation for ethics in nature viewed 'from nowhere', in a conception of nature which serves to provide objective grounding to certain virtues by discounting 'any valuations and aspirations that are special to one's historical or cultural situation: anything one cannot regard as characteristic of human beings as such.' (1998a: 193)

McDowell refers to Williams (1985) as an example of someone 'who thinks Aristotle had a conception of nature, no longer available to us, in which it could serve as an Archimeadean point for justifying ethics.' (1998a: 174)[19] This can be seen in Williams claim that 'Aristotle saw a certain kind of ethical, cultural, and indeed political life as a harmonious culmination of human potentialities, recoverable from an absolute understanding of nature.' (1985: 139) McDowell argues that this sort of neo-Humean reading of Aristotle tends to shape how we understand our modern predicament when it comes to thinking about the nature of meaning and value: '[a]ccording to Williams, modernity has lost a foundation for ethics that Aristotle was still able to believe in.' (1998a: 195) According to this view, in the pre-modern enchanted world nature viewed from nowhere was understood as capable of grounding a conception of the good human life. Modern science disenchants nature so that nature can no longer play this role; therefore we, in modernity, cannot help ourselves to a conception of the good in the way that Aristotle did.

This view then comes to shape what it would mean to re-enchant the world. If we are to help ourselves to an Aristotelian understanding of virtue then this would depend on providing a re-enchanted ontology of nature that displaces the disenchanted view of nature as revealed by

[19] McDowell is referring specifically to chap. 3 of Williams (1985)

the modern natural sciences. Given that nature after the rise of modern science is disenchanted, 'if we want to recognize practical reason, we must construct the requisite idea of getting things right out of the facts of disenchanted nature.' (1998a: 183) We are not able to do this, therefore we are not entitled to help ourselves to an Aristotelian understanding of virtue and the good.

But McDowell claims that the neo-Humean reading of Aristotle he finds in Williams is a 'historical monstrosity' (1998a: 195). McDowell thinks that we fail to understand Aristotle's ethics by reading him as offering an objective grounding for value in a conception of nature understood from the view from nowhere. McDowell acknowledges that Aristotle's ethics is, 'obviously naturalistic in some sense' (1998a: 166) but believes that given the point in the history of thought that we occupy and which separates us from Aristotle it is difficult for us to 'take the measure of Greek naturalism' (1998a: 174).

McDowell's Reading of Aristotle

As McDowell explains the neo-Humean reading of Aristotle, 'it attributes to Aristotle a felt need for foundations, and a conception of nature as where the foundations must be, that makes sense only as a product of modern philosophy, and then represents him as trying to satisfy the need with an archaic picture of nature.' (1998a: 195) In opposition to Williams's reading, McDowell argues that 'what has happened to modernity is rather that it has fallen into a temptation, which we can escape, to wish for a foundation for ethics of a sort that it never occurred to Aristotle to supply it with.' (1998a: 195) According to this reading, in the pre-modern enchanted world (of Aristotle at least) whilst nature might have been understood as imbued with teleology and purpose, this did not serve as a ground or foundation for an objective conception of the good human life.

McDowell thinks that we inhabit a point in the history of thought that has a tendency to identify notions of 'objectivity' and 'the world' with modes of inquiry that are depersonalised and dehumanised, and see that Aristotle had an objective account of ethics, we make the mistake of reading his ethics as being grounded in a foundation, a conception of nature viewed from nowhere, that is no longer available to us, and so think that the possibilities for understanding ethics as objective are limited. What has happened in modernity is a falling for a 'temptation', a temptation to construe objectivity and the world in accordance with modern science - a mode of inquiry that is depersonalised and dehumanised - so that what it would be to understand an objective ethics would be to construe it from a depersonalised and dehumanised point of view, the paradigm of which is modern science. McDowell suggests that

> We find it difficult not to want a foundation, but that is because of a location in the history of thought that separates us from Aristotle. To understand his naturalism correctly, we need to achieve a willed immunity to some of the influence of our intellectual inheritance, an influence of which Aristotle himself was simply innocent. That way, we can stop supposing the rationality of virtue needs a foundation outside the formed evaluative outlook of a virtuous person. (1998a: 174)

McDowell argues that the neo-Humean reading fails to appreciate the *point of view* from which Aristotle thought the rationality of virtue comes into view. This is from a particular cultural perspective on the world, from the point of view of a 'formed evaluative outlook', and not from a view of human nature that discounts that cultural point of view and only includes facts that can be disclosed as part of the realm of law. McDowell thinks that, in contrast to neo-Humean attempts to ground virtue in disenchanted nature,

> [o]n a better understanding of Aristotle's picture, the only standpoint at which she can address the question whether those reasons are genuine is one that she occupies precisely because she has a specific ethical outlook. That is a standpoint from which those seeming requirements are in view as such, not a foundational standpoint at which she might try to reconstruct the demandingness of those requirements from scratch, out of materials from an independent description of nature. (1994: 80)[20]

On this alternative reading of Aristotle, we cannot and should not try to reconstruct the idea of genuine ethical demands from materials that are naturalistic where nature is understood as the realm of law.

As I have indicated, the idea that there are two 'points of view' from which the rationality of virtue can come into view can be understood by bearing in mind McDowell's distinction between 'the space of reasons' and 'the realm of law'. McDowell understands the neo-Humean reading of Aristotle to hold that certain virtues are objective because they are validated by facts about human nature that are located in the realm of law. The view that ethical thinking can be grounded in the realm of law is a version of what McDowell calls 'bald naturalism'. Bald naturalism 'aims to domesticate conceptual capacities within nature conceived as a realm of law.' (1994: 73) That is, bald naturalistic approaches to value attempt to explain the objectivity of ethical concepts in terms of the role that those concepts play in our lives considered as animals whose nature can be exhaustively explained by the disenchanted concepts of modern science.

However, the view that McDowell finds in Aristotle is that certain virtues are objective because they are grounded in aspects of human nature as that nature comes to manifest itself

[20] McDowell's use of 'she' here just refers to any practical agent.

through appropriate upbringing and initiation into culture, that is, aspects of our nature as it is shaped by the space of reasons. As McDowell puts this point,

> [t]he idea of getting things right in one's ethical thinking has a certain autonomy; we need not conceive it as pointing outside the sphere of ethical thinking itself. (1994: 81)

The idea that ethical thinking has a certain 'autonomy' McDowell also puts by claiming that ethical thinking is *sui generis* with respect to nature understood as disclosed as the realm of law. That 'autonomous' ethical concepts 'stubbornly resist being appropriated within a naturalism that conceives nature as a realm of law' (1994: 73) is a lesson McDowell believes we should learn from a proper appreciation of Aristotle's ethics.

McDowell's Distinctive Move

In order to appreciate the distinctively non-neo-Humean but 'Greek' naturalism Aristotle recommends, McDowell explores and challenges the idea that if Aristotle holds that a formed evaluative outlook is 'autonomous' with respect to nature understood as the realm of law, it must be because Aristotle was committed to a form of rampant platonism. McDowell suggests that, according to a rampant platonism,

> we must be picturing the space of reasons as an autonomous structure—autonomous in that it is constituted independently of anything specifically human, since what is specifically human is surely natural (the idea of the human is the idea of what pertains to a certain species of animals), and we are refusing to naturalize the requirements of reason. But human minds must be able to latch on to this inhuman structure. So it looks as if we are picturing the human as partly in nature and partly outside it. (1994: 77)

He goes on to bring out the problem attached to this kind of view of reason

> In rampant platonism, the structure of the space of reasons, the structure in which we place things when we find meaning in them, is simply extra-natural. Our capacity to resonate to that structure has to be mysterious; it is as if we had a foothold outside the animal kingdom, in a splendidly non-human realm of ideality. (1994: 88)

The problem with rampant platonism, views that refuse to naturalise reason and seemingly picture human beings as partly in and partly outside of nature, is that they leave it mysterious how we, understood as natural beings, could 'resonate' or have our minds engage with reason understood as such a 'splendidly non-human realm of ideality'.

It is in this context that McDowell identifies what he considers to be the most significant component of the 'illegitimate slippage' that underpins the modern sense that the transition from a medieval to a modern view of nature entails a version of the neo-Humean view of value. McDowell's view is that '[w]e get th[e] threat of supernaturalism if we interpret the claim that the space of reasons is *sui generis* as a refusal to naturalize the requirements of reason.' (1994: 78) However, McDowell believes that the idea that the space of reasons is *sui generis* with respect to the realm of law need not entail a refusal to naturalise the requirements of reason. It seems like the refusal to naturalise only if nature is understood as identical with the realm of law.

In order to reject this identification McDowell offers a distinctive view of what is entailed by the transition from a medieval to the modern view of nature provided by the sciences. McDowell claims that 'what became available at the time of the modern scientific revolution is a clear-cut understanding of the realm of law' (1994: 78). McDowell accepts this and recognises that it involves a partial disenchantment of the world. However what McDowell insists is open to question is the thought that the transition from the premodern to the modern scientific understanding of the world represents 'a new clarity *about nature*.' (1994: 77, McDowell's emphasis) Crucially for McDowell what is open to question is the *identification* of 'nature' with the 'realm of law'. He claims that '[i]t would be a cheat, a mere verbal manoeuvre, to object that naturalism about nature cannot be open to question.' (1994: 77)

McDowell thinks that what it would be to propose an alternative view of nature to the disenchanted neo-Humean form is that, '[i]f we can rethink our conception of nature so as to make room for [reason], even though we deny that [reason] is capturable by the resources of bald naturalism, we shall by the same token be rethinking our conception of what it takes for a position to be called "naturalism".' (1994: 77) That is, it becomes possible to rethink a re-enchanted naturalism by showing how it is possible to think that '[reason] is *sui generis*, in comparison with the realm of law, without falling into the supernaturalism of rampant platonism.' (1994: 78) In other words, to show that reason is *sui generis* in comparison with the realm of law, without holding that reason is *sui generis* in with respect to *nature*.

For McDowell it is by properly appreciating Aristotle's naturalistic understanding of ethics that we can make sense of this possibility. The crucial concept that McDowell takes from Aristotle's ethics for articulating his partially re-enchanted understanding of nature is that of 'second nature'. McDowell claims that the concept of second nature is 'all but explicit' (1994: 85) in Aristotle's understanding of the acquisition of virtue of character. McDowell thinks that, in the modern period '[w]e tend to be forgetful of the very idea of second nature'; but he claims that 'if we can recapture that idea we can keep nature as it were partially enchanted, but without lapsing into pre-scientific superstition or a rampant platonism'. (1994: 85)

5. Second Nature

McDowell maintains that for Aristotle virtue of character involves a shaping of a subject's rationality, their practical *logos*; it involves their coming to possess '*phronesis*' or 'practical wisdom'. McDowell thinks that, for Aristotle, '[w]hat it is for the practical intellect to be as it ought to be, and so equipped to get things right in its proper sphere, is a matter of its having a certain determinate non-formal shape' (1998a: 184-5). It is not a matter of gaining knowledge of concepts or moral rules that are intelligible independently of the shaping of an agents character. Rather, the idea of a shaping of the practical intellect involves the 'the moulding of motivational and evaluative propensities' (1998a: 185). This means that for Aristotle that ethical education involves a 'process that takes place in nature', and McDowell's reading suggests that Aristotle holds that

> [t]he practical intellect does not dictate to one's formed character—one's nature as it has become—form outside. One's formed practical intellect—which is operative in one's character revealing behaviour—just is an aspect of one's nature as it has become. (1998a: 185)

On this view this process of moral education, as envisaged in the Aristotelian way, cannot be understood simply as coming to be rationally aware of the desires one already has prior to the moulding of character that comes through experience and upbringing. McDowell thinks that, in the process of ethical upbringing

> [i]n imparting logos, moral education enables one to step back from any motivational impulse one finds oneself subject to, and question its rational credentials. Thus it effects a kind of distancing of the agent from the practical tendencies that are part of what we might call his first nature. (1998a: 189)

McDowell summarises this view in the following way:

> In acquiring one's second nature—that is, in acquiring logos—one learned to take a distinctive pleasure in acting in certain ways, and one acquired conceptual equipment suited to characterize a distinctive worthwhileness one learned to see for acting in those ways…The dictates of virtue have acquired an authority that replaces the authority abdicated by first nature with the onset of reason. (It cannot be the same authority, because everything is now open to reflective questioning.) It is not that the dictates of virtue fill what would otherwise be a void; they are in position already, before any threat of anarchy can materialize. The alteration in one's make-up that opened the authority of nature to question is precisely the alteration that has put the dictates of virtue in place as authoritative. Any second nature of the relevant kind, not just virtue, will seem to its possessor to open his eyes to reasons for acting. What is distinctive about virtue, in the Aristotelian view,

> is that the reasons a virtuous person takes himself to discern really are reasons; a virtuous person gets this kind of thing right. (1998a: 188-9)

The significance of this reading of Aristotle for McDowell is that Aristotle holds that acquiring the virtues involves the acquisition of *phronesis*, acquiring reasons for acting. But these reasons are autonomous, in that they are not able to be understood by reconstructing these demands out of concepts taken from an understanding of human nature prior to moral education. According to McDowell's reading, ethical reasons are autonomous with respect to the realm of law: *phronesis* operates in its own sphere. But this does not mean that Aristotle is recommending a form of rampant platonism. This is because *phronesis* cannot be understood as the acquisition of concepts and rules whose rationality can be understood independently of a particular shaping of the character of an agent. *Phronesis* cannot be understood except in terms of the moulding of evaluative and motivational propensities, a process that goes on in nature. But which nature? This process cannot be understood as going on in nature exhaustively understood in terms of the realm of law, because the distinctive pleasure, or distinctive sense of worthwhileness and reason for acting that one acquires has a *sui generis* authority; it replaces any motivational propensities that we have prior to that upbringing, and so only comes into view from the point of view of a formed evaluative outlook.[21]

In this way McDowell takes Aristotle to show how it is possible to resist bald naturalism whilst at the same time avoiding rampant platonism. It is possible to reject the thought that practical reason can be understood as operating in the realm of law, without rejecting the thought that practical reason can be understood as going on in nature. By doing this McDowell believes that Aristotle provides a framework for understanding a partially re-enchanted naturalism which rejects the identification of nature with the realm of law. As well as the realm of law, nature also includes those features that belong to what McDowell, inspired by Aristotle's view of moral education, calls our 'second nature'.[22]

As McDowell presents this re-enchanted naturalism, second nature stands in contrast to a way of thinking about the relationship between subjectivity and objectivity that he understands as the neo-Humean view of mind and world. According to the neo-Humean view, meaning is understood to belong within the human mind, to subjectivity, in contrast with an objective world which is exhaustively described by the sciences in disenchanted naturalistic terms. According to

[21] Just what it means for reason to *replace* the motivations that we have prior to ethical upbringing is a difficult question to answer. I will not pursue it here.

[22] McDowell also expresses this outlook in terms of a "spontaneity" distinctive of we rational animals,

> To reassure ourselves that our responsiveness to reasons is not supernatural, we should dwell on the thought that it is our lives that are shaped by spontaneity…Exercises of spontaneity belong to our mode of living. And our mode of living is our way of actualizing ourselves as animals. So we can rephrase the thought by saying: exercises of spontaneity belong to our way of actualizing ourselves as animals. This removes any need to try to see ourselves as peculiarly bifurcated, with a foothold in the animal kingdom and a mysterious separate involvement in an extra-natural world of rational connections. (1994: 78)

this drawing of a boundary between subjectivity and objectivity, the meaningful and intelligibly-structured appearance of the world can be explained in terms of objective states of affairs or facts outside of the mind, and so outside of the space of meaning, impacting on the human mind and giving rise to subjective representations of the world. A significant element of the neo-Humean view, as McDowell presents it, is that features of our subjective representations of the world can be said to genuinely represent mind-independent reality if they can be vindicated as doing so through the concepts made available by modern scientific disenchanted view of nature. So that if our ethical concepts can be said to be objective then this is because we can give an account of the role that they play in an understanding of our lives understood from a view from nowhere in disenchanted naturalistic terms.

In contrast, McDowell presents the idea of second nature as making available a naturalism which involves the view that human beings are born as animals possessed with the potential to grow into 'thinkers and intentional agents in the course of coming to maturity' (1994: 125) However, the space of reasons is autonomous with respect to the realm of law, though this does not mean that the space of reasons is supernatural. It is through initiation into language and culture that '[h]uman beings mature into being at home in the space of reasons, or what comes to the same thing, living their lives in the world'. (1994: 125) But whilst natural, our lives understood through our belonging to language and culture cannot be explained in terms of the realm of law. This is because the world made intelligible through language and culture is a realm of meaning and reason for acting that has a *sui generis* authority that replaces that of any motivational propensities that we have prior to initiation into language and culture.

But the nature that this view 're-enchants' is not only that of the human animal alone. As McDowell stresses, 'it is not just our comprehension of language, and in our making sense of one another in other ways that…conceptual capacities are operative…capacities for the kind of understanding whose correlate is the kind of intelligibility that is proper to meaning, are operative also in our perception of the world apart from human beings.' (1994: 72) As McDowell goes on to say about his Aristotelian-inspired position, contrary to the neo-Humean view,

> second nature acts in a world in which it finds more than what is open to view from the dehumanized stance that the natural sciences, rightly for their purposes, adopt. And there is nothing against bringing this richer reality under the rubric of nature too. The natural sciences do not have exclusive rights in that notion; and the added richness comes into view, not through the operations of some mysteriously extra-natural power, but because human beings come to possess second nature. (1998a: 192)

In this sense, it can be claimed that to the creature of second nature the world of nature involves features that also show up in relation to second nature. In this way, through initiation into

language and culture creatures of second nature have their eyes open to a world of features such as aesthetic and moral values.

6. Initial Conclusion

In the introduction I drew upon themes present in Charles Taylor's (2011) discussion of disenchantment and re-enchantment. According to Taylor, the transition from an enchanted to a disenchanted world is to be understood in terms of a shift from a 'porous' to a 'buffered' sense of self, that is to say, from a sense of self as existing in an independently meaningful cosmos, to a sense of self as the origin and source of meaning and value that is projected onto an independently meaningless world. The emergence of projectivism involves two ideas, 1) the loss of the 'magical' view of nature and 2) the modern drawing of a boundary between personal agency and the world. Taylor claims that there is a modern temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2 and therefore to think that the loss of the 'magical' view of nature *entails* projectivism about meaning and value. Taylor's suggestion is that, with an adequate understanding of subjects as 'agents-in-the-world', it is possible to respond to the 'illegitimate slippage' by accepting that nature independently of the human mind is no longer animated by 'magic' whilst rejecting the modern disenchanted boundary between personal agency and the objective world, and on this basis reject the view that meaning and value are merely projected.

In this chapter I have outlined the way that I think McDowell gives sense to the idea of a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world. McDowell understands the problem of disenchantment principally in terms of the rise of projectivist views of meaning and value; and according to McDowell's approach, the emergence of projectivism is composed of two key ideas: 1) the rejection of the medieval view of nature in favour of the view of nature as a realm of law, and 2) the neo-Humean view of subjectivity and objectivity. McDowell is keen to diagnose a modern temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2 and therefore to think that the shift from the medieval to the modern view of nature *entails* projectivism about meaning and value. McDowell's suggestion is that, with an adequate understanding of Aristotle's ethics undistorted by modern neo-Humean prejudices, and informed by the Aristotelian-inspired naturalism of 'second nature', it is possible to respond to the 'illegitimate slippage' by showing that it is possible to accept that nature independently of the human mind can no longer be understood in medieval terms as 'filled with meaning' as 'like a book containing messages and lessons for us.' (1998a: 174) whilst nevertheless rejecting the modern neo-Humean drawing of a boundary between subjectivity and objectivity. On this basis, it is possible to reject the view that meaning and value are merely projected.

This re-enchantment can be understood as a re-enchantment from within our 'agency-in-the-world'. In contrast to the neo-Humean view, McDowell maintains that it is possible to accept the loss of the medieval view of nature whilst holding that the relationship between mind and world is not a relation between the space of reasons and something brutely alien; rather the

relation between mind and world is a relation within the space of reasons. The space of reasons for McDowell is not something that is able to be reductively explained in an account of human nature prior to initiation into that space, prior to initiation into language and culture. So the world as it is disclosed through our historical and cultural perspective is not something intelligible from an absolute point of view but only from the perspective of our practical agency, our second nature, or our agency-in-the-world.

For McDowell, although the space of reasons is not explicable in terms of an understanding of human life prior to our initiation into language and culture, and in this sense the space of reasons is autonomous from the realm of law, because of the way our lives, our ways of actualizing ourselves as animals, are shaped by language and culture, the space of reasons is part of a partially re-enchanted nature. This is a nature in which there is more than what is open to view from the dehumanized stance of the natural sciences. Nature understood from the perspective of second nature, the perspective of our agency-in-the-world, includes values.

7. The Possible Limitations of McDowell's Re-enchantment

Revisiting Taylor's Understanding of Disenchantment and Re-enchantment

There are many questions that one might pose of McDowell's re-enchantment, particularly regarding his idea of 'second nature', but here I want to focus on one issue.[23] Whilst McDowell gives sense to the idea of a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world what I want to propose is that Taylor's (2011) understanding of the problem of disenchantment and re-enchantment suggests that something more can be achieved than appears to be addressed by McDowell's re-enchantment. A further consideration of what Taylor thinks re-enchantment involves casts doubt on the extent to which McDowell can be said to fulfil what Taylor means by a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world.

In his discussion, Taylor draws a distinction between what he calls 'weak' and 'strong' evaluations. He claims:

> The attribution of human meaning to (things in) the universe as a strong evaluation straddles the gap between the moral and the aesthetic. It concerns perhaps the ethical in the broad sense, where we make judgements about what a really good or properly human life consists in (2011: 295)

These are quite different from what Taylor calls weak evaluations. A weak evaluation, Taylor explains, is one that 'depends on choices that we may not make, or our espousing ends which we may not accept.' (2011: 294) This means that when it comes to weak evaluations, the claim they make on us can be defeated by simply rejecting the ends on which those evaluations depend. But, as Taylor puts it, '[i]n the case of strong evaluations, we cannot so release ourselves, and our attempt to do so reflects negatively on us.' (2011: 294) So the difference between 'weak' and 'strong' evaluations is that weak evaluations depend on preferences, choices or ends that people may simply not share, so that a lack of agreement in this area can reflect an understandable difference in preferences, choices or ends. However, when it comes to strong evaluations, these are based on ends that we understand everyone should have an interest in. A lack of agreement in this area cannot be dismissed as simply a difference of preference, choice or repudiating the ends in question. A strong evaluation involves the sense that others should share it because it reflects something objectively right and that if someone does not share the evaluation they are missing something important about the aspect of reality in question. It makes sense, when it comes to a disagreement over strong evaluations to expect these to be the

[23] For critical discussion of McDowell's idea of second nature *see* Haldane (1996), Bernstein (2002), Bubner (2002) and Macdonald (2006).

subject of rational argument. Questions can be asked about the attitudes involved, 'is that object really worthy of respect, or of wonder? That object may inspire love in you, but does it merit love?' (2011: 297) In contrast to brute responses

> underlying strong evaluations there is supposed to be a truth of the matter. And this can't be separated from facts about how our reactions are to be explained. Put simply, our moral reactions suppose that they are responses to some reality, and can be criticized for misapprehension of this reality (2011: 297)

Therefore a feature of strong evaluative responses is that they are understood not just as subjective preferences but purport to be a rational response to an objective reality, a reality that serves to justify and explain the judgements in question. Taylor summarises the implied ontology that he believes underpins strong evaluations in the following way:

> A response which we understand as a strong evaluation supposes the following ontology: (1) This response genuinely motivates us, it is not simply a cover, or a rationalization, or a screen for some other drive; (2) it can fail to occur on some occasions or in some people, but this betokens some limitation, blindness, or insensitivity on their part; (3) in other words, there is something objectively right about this response; (4) we can and ought to challenge ourselves to cultivate this response, to refine or improve our perception of its proper objects. This four-point feature represents a package, reflecting our sense that this evaluation is founded. In Bernard Williams's terms, our moral and other strong evaluations claim to be "world-guided." (2011: 300)

With the idea of second nature, McDowell provides a framework in which he attempts to make sense of strong aesthetic and moral evaluations as objective. However, with his discussion of disenchantment and re-enchantment Taylor seems to demand something more specific. In his discussion Taylor suggests that a similar treatment can be given to what can be understood as 'proto-religious' responses to the world.[24] More specifically, Taylor says that

> [w]hen we talk of our sense of wonder at the greatness and complexity of the universe, or of the love of the world that it inspires in us, these are what I [call]…strong evaluations. They carry the sense that wonder is what one should feel, that someone who fails to sense this is missing something, is somehow insensitive to an object which really commands admiration. (2011: 297)

When Taylor discusses strong evaluations the kind that he focuses on are 'wonder' (2011: 297), 'awe' (2011: 296), 'love of the world' (2011: 297) and 'a sense of mystery' (2011: 296) These cannot be regarded as simply aesthetic or moral responses. They are related to the aesthetic and the ethical but go beyond that and can be understood as proto-religious.

[24] As discussed earlier, I call these 'proto-religious' because they constitute a form of evaluative response to the world that – whilst not unrelated – cannot simply be assimilated to the aesthetic or the moral, and yet it is unclear to what extent they require specific doctrinal claims of the sort that might be thought to be definitive of fully-fledged religious ontologies.

This can be seen in a number of places where Taylor discusses the problems of disenchantment and re-enchantment, and the thought that 'the universe in which we find ourselves is totally devoid of human meaning.' (2011: 292) The 'human meanings' in question involve a proto-religious dimension. For example, Taylor often cites Schiller's explicitly religious reaction to disenchantment, recorded in his poem *The Gods of Greece* as a representative expression of post-Romantic disillusion with a disenchanted world:

> When poetry's magic cloak
> Still with delight enfolded truth
> Life's fullness flowed through creation
> And there felt what never more will feel.
> Man acknowledged a higher nobility in Nature
> To press her to love's breast;
> Everything to the initiate's eye
> Showed the trace of a God.

However, Taylor suggests that after the process of disenchantment 'this communion has been destroyed' and that we now face a 'God-shorn nature' (2011: 293):

> Unconscious of the joys she dispenses
> Never enraptured by her own magnificence
> Never aware of the spirit which guides her
> Never more blessed through my blessedness
> Insensible of her maker's glory
> Like the dead stroke of the pendulum
> She slavishly obeys the law of gravity.
> A Nature shorn of the divine.

On this approach to the problem, whilst disenchantment affects how we understand aesthetic and ethical values, it can also be viewed as involving a religious or proto-religious dimension. After disenchantment we face not only a nature shorn of aesthetic and ethical values, but 'a nature shorn of the divine'.

Implied in Taylor's discussion is the thought that a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world can extend not only to a concern with aesthetic and ethical values but to a concern with certain proto-religious responses to the world such as 'wonder', 'awe', 'love of the world' and 'a sense of mystery'. As well as this Taylor also thinks 'a call for retrieval is often made in connection with the term "sacred"' (2011b: 113) Indeed it is distinctive of the kind of re-enchantment Taylor envisages, and his invocation of our 'agency-in-the-world' that 'a strong, anchored-in-reality-beyond-us sacred can be denied, while another, arising in the interface, can be affirmed.' (2011b: 118)

So, Taylor thinks that we face the question whether 'the dissipation of the enchanted world…the widespread rejection of Western theism, have not voided the universe of any human

meaning' (2011: 302) where the issue about human meaning is whether 'there is no further basis for a sense of awe and wonder at the universe, which in turn can inspire in human beings love and even gratitude toward the greater whole in which they are set.' (2011: 302) Taylor thinks that 'the question remains open whether other forms [of proto-religious responses], based on our experience of being in the world, can be recovered.' (2011: 302) Taylor's suggestion is that a re-enchantment from within our agency in the world can extend to encompass this proto-religious dimension.

Further Thoughts Regarding McDowell's Re-enchantment

McDowell does not extend his re-enchantment to encompass what I am calling the proto-religious dimension. But it is interesting to note that the later Wittgenstein, one of the major influences on nearly every area of McDowell's thought – and along with Aristotle influences McDowell's idea of second nature – was open to and thought about the proto-religious. Maybe this is just an idiosyncratic concern of Wittgenstein's but one suggestion might be that Wittgenstein's concern with proto-religious responses to the world is a natural extension of his non-reductive view of human life that is a significant influence on McDowell's conception of re-enchantment. If this is so then it might be natural to wonder about the status of the proto-religious from the point of view of McDowell's naturalism of second nature.

As briefly discussed in my introduction, Wittgenstein's thought involves a rejection of scientism in which science and theoretical understanding are elevated as the only legitimate means of understanding human life and the world. Wittgenstein defends certain religious – or 'proto-religious' – attitudes to the world such as 'wonder' and a sense of 'mystery', and mounts a case that the religious form of life is to be respected even though it cannot be given a rational justification in accordance with the reasons and justifications that belong to the sphere of philosophical proofs or scientific theory.

Wittgenstein presents a way of looking at religious commitment that distinguishes it sharply from abstract and metaphysical speculation. For Wittgenstein, to understand religion as an acceptance on philosophical grounds of the truth of abstract metaphysical claims about the nature of reality, stems from a confused way of looking at religion, a confusion that stems principally from a tendency to conflate religious beliefs with empirical and scientific claims.

Instead one strong suggestion that Wittgenstein repeatedly makes is that religion is not a set of metaphysical beliefs but is bound up with the kind of *life* an individual leads, giving rise to the idea that Wittgenstein regards religion as a 'form of life':

> It appears to me as though religious belief could only be (something like) passionately committing oneself to a system of reference. Hence although it's belief, it is really a way of living, or a way of judging life. Passionately taking up *this* interpretation. (1998: 73e)

Wittgenstein wants to locate the significance of religious belief in a passionate commitment to living in a way that manifests a particular assessment of life. Part of this stress on the form of life lead by committing to religion is to suggest that living a certain way is given priority over the apparently speculative dimensions of religious belief such as theory and doctrine. Wittgenstein makes remarks that suggest disapproval with regarding religion, for example Christianity, as a body of doctrine in favour of seeing it as a matter of changing the way you live. He claims, '[a]mongst other things Christianity says, I believe, that sound doctrines are all useless'; instead Wittgenstein locates the core of Christianity in the view '[t]hat you have to change your *life.*' (1998: 61e)

This view of religion, that it is not principally a matter of committing to metaphysical beliefs, but to a form of life forms the background to a number of interesting things Wittgenstein says about religious language and religion more generally. By arguing that religion is not a speculative metaphysical endeavour but a form of life and wanting to distinguish the religious form of life from primitive or mistaken scientific beliefs, Wittgenstein can be seen as suggesting that there is an emotional or affective dimension to religious belief that is more significant than its speculative intellectual appeal. Hence, for example, he says 'religious belief could only be (something like) passionately committing oneself to a system of reference.' (1993: 73e) This stress on emotional commitment over disengaged reasoning to the truth of metaphysical doctrines has led some, such as John Hyman (2001) to read Wittgenstein as offering an 'emotivist' understanding of religious belief, in which religious beliefs are distinguished from empirical claims as 'non-cognitive'. The significance of regarding religious language as non-cognitive is that first, religious beliefs are not rational in the sense that they are not justifiable by reasons, and secondly, they are not the kind of belief that can be true or false in relation to reality independent of human subjectivity. Rather, their significance lies in them expressing the subjective emotions of the religious believer, which, whilst they might appear to involve response to an independent metaphysical reality actually involve the projection of sentiments.

However, in the light of McDowell's Aristotelian – but also Wittgensteinian – inspired naturalism of second nature, perhaps a more natural way of reading Wittgenstein's concern with the religious is not as articulating a non-cognitivism. Perhaps, like McDowell with his engagement with neo-Humean views of value, Wittgenstein's view of religious belief involves offering a critique of scientism, the view that for any exercise of conceptual capacities to be

understood as a cognitive response to the world then those concepts must be able to be validated from the disengaged and dehumanised 'view from nowhere' of the sciences.

According to Wittgenstein's 'grammatical investigations' into the meaning of religious belief, religious language stubbornly resists being explained from that point of view. Part of Wittgenstein's attempt to show the confusion involved in attempting to understand religious belief as in some way equivalent to putting forward scientific claims is to point out the emotional or affective dimension of religious belief. This may not be in order to distinguish religious belief as non-cognitive but perhaps to show that the meaning – the *cognitive* content – of religious belief is not to be construed in what McDowell calls 'rampant platonist' terms, a view that is mistakenly encouraged by viewing religious claims from the disengaged perspective represented by science.

This could perhaps give sense to the thought that attempts to make religion intelligible on a level with empirical claims presents religion as 'pieces of stupidity' (1993: 119). This is equivalent to the thought that a rampant platonist construal of evaluative experience makes the ontology and epistemology of value experience 'queer'. Similarly, the reason a rampant platonist construal of religious experience makes it look like 'pieces of stupidity' is that assent to the belief that reality out there independently of our subjectivity is populated with entities, such as gods or God – a distinctively value-involving entity – and equips us with 'special cognitive faculties by whose exercise we become aware of this special field of knowledgable fact' (1998a: 154) in the form of religious experiences, renders religion looking akin to pieces of stupidity due to issues concerning how reality can be understood to include such 'queer' value-involving religious entities, and how we can, in a non-mysterious way, come to know about them.

In contrast Wittgenstein's view is that 'it will never be plausible to say that mankind does that out of sheer stupidity.' (1993: 119) An approach to religious belief that construes it on the same terms as empirical claims and results in a rampant platonist construal, misreads the phenomenology or 'grammar' of religious experience and language according to Wittgenstein's approach. To echo McDowell, religious language does not refer to features of reality that are out there completely independent of our natural human response, leaving it 'mysterious' how we can ever ground or validate them, and appearing as superstitions.[25] Maybe instead Wittgenstein is suggesting first, that we should not attempt to reductively explain religious language in accordance with the grammar of claims viewed as made from nowhere - the paradigm of which is scientific hypothesis - and second, that we should dwell on the thought that it is our *lives* that are shaped by religious language, and so the use of religious language belongs with our way of actualising our human nature. Not our nature as it is understood prior to and independent of

[25] This is the view that the comparison with science forces on us.

initiation into the religious life or 'system of reference', but from the point of view of our lives as the kind of animals we are as that life comes to be seen from the religious point of view.[26]

This can perhaps be seen in Wittgenstein's (1993) concern to criticise Frazer's general attempt to explain various social practices as primitive scientific forms of understanding and urge on us, through his examples, the practice of 'perspicuous representation' (1993: 133), an alternative approach to understanding the practices and ourselves as the creatures who engage in them. The aim of this 'perspicuous presentation' is an attempt to present religious practice not as an isolated aberration in human life but as continuous with and a natural development of, practices in human life that we would not regard as based on mistaken judgements, theories or pieces of stupidity; and to urge on us the same attitude towards the religious dimension of human life.

So, perhaps Wittgenstein's point is that if we give up scientism and a certain reductive account of human life, we can come to see certain practices involving proto-religious responses to the world as natural. McDowell does not extend his re-enchantment in this direction and I will not discuss Wittgenstein's view further here. However, in the light of the influence of Wittgenstein on McDowell's idea of second nature it might not be strange or unreasonable, but in a way natural, to question why McDowell does not extend his re-enchantment in the direction of religious or pro-religious responses to the world.

[26] 'Life can educate you to "believing in God". And *experiences* too are what do this but not visions, or other sense experiences, which show us the "existence of this being", but e.g. sufferings of various sorts. And they do not show us God as a sense experience does an object, nor do they give rise to *conjectures* about him. Experiences, thoughts, - life can force this concept on us.' (Wittgenstein 1998: 97e)

8. Conclusion

Whilst McDowell can be said to offer a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world, I have raised questions about the extent to which McDowell's position fulfils that task as it is envisaged by Taylor. The idea behind Taylor's claim that it is possible to offer a re-enchantment is that, in response to the transition from a 'porous' to a 'buffered' sense of self, it is possible to reject projectivism about meaning and value by articulating a positive understanding of the place of the self in the greater whole in which it is set and to do this by articulating an understanding of how 'nature or the universe which surrounds us as agents-in-the-world is the locus of human meanings which are "objective," in the sense that they are not just arbitrarily projected through choice or contingent desire' (2011: 294). Whilst Taylor's understanding of disenchantment concerns aesthetic and ethical values, he also thinks that the problem of disenchantment extends to our understanding of responses to the world such as 'wonder', 'awe', 'love of the world', 'a sense of mystery'; for Taylor, re-enchantment extends to the proto-religious.

So, from the point of view of Taylor's understanding of the problem, McDowell does not provide what he thinks is possible with a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world. McDowell does not provide a re-enchantment that extends to making sense of proto-religious responses to the world. As a point of comparison I suggested that there are influences on McDowell's thought that highlight the potential for extending re-enchantments of the sort that McDowell offers to encompass the proto-religious dimension. In the chapters that follow I will explore attempts to produce such an extended re-enchantment, beginning in the next chapter with an exploration of the thought of Roger Scruton.

Chapter Two – Roger Scruton and the Re-enchantment of the World

1. Introduction

In this chapter I will look at the work of Roger Scruton in order to explore the possibility that he provides a re-enchantment which does make sense of the world that surrounds us as agents as warranting certain proto-religious responses. Scruton's contribution to philosophy was initially in the area of aesthetics, with particular focus on music and architecture.[27] In contrast to those, such as Dutton (2009), who seek to give naturalist explanations of aesthetics experience, Scruton maintains that aesthetic experience cannot be properly understood through concepts taken from a naturalistic worldview.[28] According to Scruton, aesthetic experience is something enjoyed by distinctively *rational* animals and cannot be properly understood without understanding the place of human beings, understood as persons, as belonging to a world as it appears to our personal agency, the world of culture.[29] Moreover, Scruton defends the view that 'the beautiful and *the sacred* are adjacent in our experience, and that our feelings for the one are constantly spilling over into the territory claimed by the other.' (2009a: 78, my emphasis) This appeal to 'the sacred' when it comes to explaining our identity as persons characterises Scruton's philosophical thought more generally. Not only does he defend the view that a reductively naturalistic view of human beings cannot adequately understand our nature as persons but also the view that the lives of persons cannot properly be understood without appeal to 'the sacred'. For Scruton the lives of persons cannot be understood merely as the pursuit of freely chosen ends but must be understood as conditioned by the existence of unchosen obligations of 'piety', a posture directed towards what is 'sacred'. In more recent work, Scruton has attempted to defend the position he holds with respect to persons, the sacred and indeed the existence of God.[30] Scruton's position amounts to a distinctive perspective on the problems posed by a disenchanted view of the world and results in a unique understanding of the prospects for re-enchantment.

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[27] For his general works on aesthetics *see* Scruton (1974), (1983) and (2009a). For his work specifically on music *see* Scruton (1999), (2009b) and on Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* see (2004). For his thought on architecture *see* Scruton (1979).
[28] For example, in (2009a) Scruton addresses the evolutionary approach to explaining aesthetic experience which holds that 'we can best understand our states of mind if we identify their evolutionary origins, and the contribution that they (or some earlier version of them) might have made to the reproductive strategies of our genes.' (2009a: 34)
[29] Scruton defends a distinctive view of culture in (2007a).
[30] *See* in particular Scruton (2012a) and (2014).

The reason that I will look specifically at Scruton's work is that his thought shares quite a lot in common with McDowell's.[31] Scruton rejects a form of scientism which supposes that the world can be exhaustively understood through the natural sciences and is similarly concerned to argue that the world understood from the perspective of our agency, our human historical and cultural perspective on the world, constitutes an *irreducible* part of the world as it shows up to human beings. However, Scruton goes further than McDowell's concern with simply making room for aesthetic and moral values in his re-enchanted understanding of the world. Scruton's concern with scientism and the disenchanted view of the world is not only that it presents us with a world shorn of aesthetic and moral values but that, as discussed by Taylor, it presents us with a nature or universe that surrounds us in which it is difficult to make sense of our 'proto-religious' responses to the world. Scruton's concern with scientism and disenchantment is also that we are presented with a 'God-shorn nature'.

Scruton's perspective on the problem of re-enchantment is also relevant to our discussion above in that it can be seen to have a similar structure to Taylor's and McDowell's understanding of the problem. Scruton is concerned to respond to the thought that 1) the emergence of the modern natural scientific understanding of nature, entails 2) the unintelligibility of the sacred and God. Scruton argues that there is a temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2, to think that the emergence of the modern view of nature *entails* the unintelligibility of the sacred and God. Scruton's suggestion is that with an adequate understanding of subjects as persons or 'agents-in-the-world' it is possible to respond to the 'illegitimate slippage' by accepting that nature independently of the human mind is rightly no longer understood as animated by meaning, whilst rejecting the thought that the modern view of nature *entails* the unintelligibility of the sacred and God. In contrast Scruton makes the case for a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world which proposes that as agents or 'persons' in the world we are related to the sacred, and this provides Scruton with a way of making sense of the idea of God. So, following Taylor's presentation of re-enchantment,

[31] In a recent work Scruton acknowledges this similarity, suggesting that McDowell and he share a concern, following Sellars, to stress the distinction between, and incommensurability of, the 'manifest image' and the 'scientific image' of the world. Scruton writes that '[t]hese ideas have been taken up and elaborated…by John McDowell and Robert Brandom, and I suspect that much that I have to say will find an echo in their writings.' (2014: 34) (The writings Scruton has in mind are McDowell (1994) and Brandom (2009).) Interestingly Scruton believes that there is a difference of emphasis in the interest that the Sellarsians such as McDowell and Brandom have in the 'manifest image' and Scruton's interest. Scruton believes that 'the distinction made by Sellars does not get to the heart of our predicament as subjects' (2014: 34). The reason he gives for this is that 'there is underlying his account of the "manifest image," an insufficient theory of the first-person case and its role in interpersonal dialogue.' (2014: 34) For this reason Scruton prefers to draw a distinction, following Husserl, between the *Lebenswelt* and the world described by science. Scruton adopts this framing of the distinction because he believes it highlights that the difference between the 'world of science' and 'the world in which we live', is 'as much a matter of practical reason as perception.' (2014: 34) Whilst I do not want to pursue this thought here, it is interesting to note that the similarity might be greater than Scruton supposes. For McDowell at least, who prefers to draw a distinction between 'the space of reasons' and 'the realm of law', what it is to belong to the space of reasons is understood by drawing upon Aristotle's ethics and the idea of *phronesis,* or practical wisdom. This means that the space of reasons, which we come to inhabit through our acquisition of second nature, is not just a sphere of perception but the world that we belong to as practical agents. Nevertheless, it may be that an objection similar to Scruton's could be levelled at McDowell, that underlying his use of 'the space of reasons' idea is an 'insufficient theory of the first-person case and its role in interpersonal dialogue'.

Scruton unlike McDowell, can be seen as arguing for a view of nature or the universe that surrounds us as agents-in-the-world as warranting certain proto-religious responses as that world is understood as suggestive of ‘the sacred’ and ‘the face of God’.

2. Scruton on Disenchantment

In order to present Scruton's re-enchanted understanding of the world, I will focus mainly on his argument as it features in his recent Gifford Lectures, *The Face of God*, drawing upon his other works where necessary. Scruton's concern in *The Face of God* is with responding to the thought that the modern natural scientific view of nature exhausts reality and that, as a consequence, this entails the view that we cannot reasonably respect religious responses to the world or reasonably believe in the existence of God.[32] As he discusses it, Scruton is concerned with the thought that modern science entails what he calls the 'atheist worldview'.

Scruton's characterisation of this worldview begins with a sketch of our place in the universe as it is understood by modern science. Scruton writes that biology tells us that '[w]e are by-products of a process that is entirely indifferent to our wellbeing, machines developed by our genetic material and adapted by natural selection to the task of propagation.' (2012a: 2) As to the place of genes in the larger cosmic context, '[g]enes themselves are complex molecules, put together in accordance with the laws of chemistry, from material made available in the primeval soup that once boiled on the surface of our planet.' (2012a: 3) Broadening the picture further, '[t]he existence of the earth is part of a great unfolding process, set in motion by a Big Bang, which contains many mysteries that physicists explore with ever increasing astonishment.' (2012a: 2-3) This provides us with a particular vision of our place in the cosmos. There is a 'mystery that confronts us as we gaze upwards at the Milky Way, knowing that the stars crystallized in that smear of light are merely stars of a single galaxy, the galaxy that contains us, and that beyond its boundaries a myriad other galaxies turn in space, some dying, some emerging, all forever inaccessible to us and all receding at unimaginable speed' (2012a: 3).

The significance of this view of nature for Scruton is that, as Taylor puts it in his discussion of modern scientific view of nature, it is a view of our place in the universe that avoids 'teleology or intentionality, purpose or evaluation as causally relevant factors' (2011: 300) What Scruton presents as 'the atheist worldview' involves taking the modern view of nature to entail that

> We know that the universe is without a plan and without a goal – not because we have looked for those things and failed to find them, but because nothing discoverable to science could count as a plan or a goal for the universe in its

[32] Scruton refers to 'the culture that prevails today' in which he suggests 'the belief in God is widely rejected as a sign of emotional and intellectual immaturity.' (2012a: 1) Whether it can really be understood as culturally prevalent or not, Scruton has in mind a brand of humanism or 'new atheism' represented by Dawkins (2007), Dennett (2007), Grayling (2009), Harris (2006) and Hitchens (2007).

> entirety. Plans and goals are biological features of individual organisms, which are systems within the ongoing stream of physical events, just like everything else. (2012a: 5)

Hence, Scruton understands 'the atheist worldview' to be committed to the thought that the modern scientific view of nature – in which teleology or intentionality, purpose or evaluation are rejected as causally relevant factors – entails the view that it is unreasonable to believe that the world warrants proto-religious responses or involves a religious dimension because to believe in God is to superstitiously attempt to ascribe intelligence, meaning, purpose and value to that which is merely a realm of blind efficient causation, an 'ongoing stream of physical events'.

Overview of Scruton on Re-Enchantment

Scruton clearly states that '[o]nly ignorance would cause us to deny the general picture painted by modern science' (2012a: 3). His re-enchantment involves defending the thought that we can accept the modern scientific view of nature while at the same time rejecting the thought that to believe in God is to call into question the scientific worldview by illegitimately re-enchanting nature with meanings that we now know it does not possess.

In order to defend this line of thought, Scruton claims that the atheist worldview takes two metaphysical conclusions to follow from the modern scientific view of nature. The first is that everything that exists is governed by the laws of nature, the second is that everything that exists is contingent. Among the implications of the first commitment is that this extends to human beings: 'everything in the natural world, human thought and action included, happens in accordance with scientific laws, so that the same laws govern events in the atom and events in the galaxy, events in the ocean and events in the mind.' (2012a: 4) Scruton's re-enchantment focuses on calling into question that part of the atheist worldview which supposes that, though human thought and action might manifest itself in terms of teleology, intentionality, purpose and evaluation, the appearance of meaning and value in human life can be adequately explained in terms of processes that occur in the ongoing stream of physical events, that is in the 'the realm of law'.[33]

In response to this view, Scruton argues that, considered as practical agents, human beings must be understood as 'persons'. Scruton maintains that persons are the bearers of thoughts and are responsible for actions that cannot be reductively understood, but such thoughts and actions must be understood as operating in their own sphere, in the inter-personal

[33] Scruton (2014: 33-4) employs the McDowellian inspired distinction between the 'space of reasons' and the 'realm of law'.

realm of meaning, or as Scruton discusses it, the '*Lebenswelt'.* As such, persons do not live their lives in nature or the universe as it is understood by modern natural science but in a world disclosed through concepts that reflect personal agency, a world of personal teleology, intentionality, purpose and evaluation. Scruton's re-enchantment extends to the proto-religious because he argues that not only is the *Lebenswelt* the source of concepts and classifications that cannot be understood in purely naturalistic terms but that the lives of persons, must be understood as conditioned by the existence of unchosen obligations of 'piety', a posture directed towards what is sacred. Scruton maintains that a proper appreciation of the *Lebenswelt* requires reference to an order of meaning and value that invokes a proto-religious dimension: ideas of piety, the sacred, the transcendent and ultimately God.[34] According to Scruton's re-enchantment nature or the universe that surrounds us from within this distinctively 'personal' agency-in-the-world warrants certain proto-religious responses owing to the way in which this world is suggestive of the sacred and the presence of what Scruton understands as the 'face of God'.

Rather than illegitimately re-enchanting nature or the universe by attempting to go back to a premodern understanding of nature, Scruton's re-enchantment can be seen to fall into that post-Romantic tradition of thought identified by Taylor which claims that there is illegitimate slippage between accepting the modern scientific view of nature and the thought that this entails the unintelligibility of the sacred and of God. Also, in line with Taylor's discussion, Scruton's case for re-enchantment is from within our agency-in-the-world. His view is that, as agents or 'persons' in the world, we are related to a nature or universe that involves the sacred and which provides Scruton with a way of making sense of the idea of God.

[34] Some might question why I am talking about the *proto*-religious in relation to Scruton's thought rather than the *religious*. After all he commits himself to a form of theism and is a Christian, both of which inform his philosophical views. Despite this, I think it is right to note how cautious Scruton is when presenting the status of his *arguments* in this area. For example Scruton writes, 'I regard my argument as making room, in some measure, for the religious worldview, while stopping well short of vindicating the doctrine or practice of any particular faith.' (2014: *vii*) I think this justifies referring to his re-enchantment as proto-religious.

3. Persons

The foundation of Scruton's re-enchantment is his belief that it is possible to accept the modern scientific view of nature whilst rejecting the view that what it is to be a person is explicable in purely naturalistic terms. Scruton does accept the view that when it comes to understanding what it is to be a *human being*, a particular species of animal, it must be accepted that human beings are as the natural sciences describe them, as he admits: '[w]whatever philosophers have to say, their theories must fit in to the basic truth, which is that we are organisms, distinguished from other species by our cerebral capacity, which has permitted adaptations of an order that no other species has been able to match.' (2012a: 23) However, Scruton defends the view that what it is to be a *person* cannot be made intelligible through the concepts and theories of the modern natural sciences. The Kantian-inspired view that Scruton defends depends on highlighting that human beings, whilst objects in the natural world, are also 'subjects'

> [H]uman beings stand in a peculiar metaphysical predicament - one not shared by any other entity in the natural world. We see ourselves…in two contrasting ways - both as objects, bound by natural laws; and as subjects who can lay down laws for themselves. The human object is an organism like any other; the human subject is in some way "transcendental", observing the world from a point of view on its perimeter (2004: 123)

Scruton's argument for the view that human beings can be regarded in these two ways – both as objects *and* subjects – begins from the thought that language 'enables us to understand the world as no dumb animal could possibly understand it.' (2012a: 30) Examples of classification that are available to human beings but not to non-linguistic animals are 'the distinctions between truth and falsehood, between past, present and future, between possible, actual and necessary' (2012a: 30); and Scruton maintains that it is the possession of language that makes possible moral thoughts. Moral emotions possessed by linguistic beings such as love, pride, and shame are predicated on important distinctions that are made possible for the being that possess language. Scruton believes that '[i]t is fair to say that [persons] live in another world from non-linguistic creatures' (2012a: 30).[35]

For Scruton, the most important feature of language possession is that it furnishes human beings with the ability to refer to themselves, and so to understand themselves, as 'I'. The possession of language brings with it the capacity for self-conscious reference, and Scruton maintains that a reason to think that a naturalistic understating of ourselves cannot be given is

[35] There is obviously a huge question here about whether such a sharp distinction can be drawn between human experience of a world and animal experience and crucially McDowell and Heidegger face similar questions. Needless to say I do not have space to pursue that issue here.

suggested by the contrast between the scientific 'view from nowhere' and the perspective of the self-conscious being that, through language, can refer to itself as 'I'.

Inspired by Nagel (1989), Scruton suggests that it is possible to 'imagine a complete description of the world, according to the true theory (whatever it turns out to be) of physics.' (2012a: 31) Such a description of the world would include 'the disposition of all the particles, forces and fields that compose reality, and giv[e] spatio-temporal coordinates for everything that is.' (2012a: 31) Scruton's view is that this description of the world is comprehensive: it leaves nothing – no object – out. However he believes that whilst this is true, such a view on the world fails to describe that thing that 'I' am or refers to; or at least it raises a series of questions:

> which of the things mentioned in the description am I? Where in the world of objects am I? And what exactly is implied in the statement that *this* thing is *me*? (2012a: 31)

The position that Scruton takes on these issues is, whatever the answers given to these questions, the natural sciences necessarily cannot comprehend and explain what 'I' refers to. The reason for this, Scruton argues, is that the sciences investigate the world of objects from a view from nowhere, and the reason why the 'I' is not available to be understood through the natural sciences is because it does not refer to an object but a subject, defined as a view from somewhere.

So Scruton argues that even though physics can in principle give an exhaustive account of objects, the reason why such a perspective does not identity that which is referred to as 'I' is because '[t]he self is not a thing but a perspective', and as Scruton wants to present the significance of this distinction, 'perspectives are not in the world but on the world' (2012a: 32). Another way that Scruton frames this thought is to claim that 'it leads naturally to a distinction between the subject and the object of consciousness' and, as Scruton puts it, to the 'peculiar metaphysical status of the subject.' (2012a: 32) It is peculiar because, the subject 'is not part of the empirical world': 'It lies on the edge of things, like a horizon' (2012a: 32). It is peculiar also because

> I know myself as subject, not as object. I stand at the edge of things, and while I can say of myself that I am this, here, now, those words contain no information about *what* I am in the world of space and time. (2012a: 33)

Scruton's view then is that 'the subject is in principle unobservable to science, not because it exists in another realm but because it is not part of the empirical world.' (2012a: 32) [36]

[36] For a related view of the nature of subjectivity *see* Valberg (2007)

However, Scruton argues that though the nature of the subjective point of view possessed by human beings cannot be understood from the view from nowhere of the sciences, there are certain general truths about subjectivity that can be deduced from the perspective of subjectivity itself. In particular Scruton claims that the subjective point of view on the world of the being that is able to identify itself as 'I' and distinguish itself from a world of objects is defined by two truths. The first is that such a perspective is unified:

> I know without observation that my present mental states – this thought, this sensation, this desire, and this intention – belong to one thing: and I know that this thing endures through time, and is subject to change. (2012a: 33-4)

The second truth is that as self-conscious, subjects are defined also as being able to give and receive reasons for their actions, judgements and beliefs. A way that Scruton captures this thought is to suggest that subjects are answerable to the question 'why?' of reason and so not simply able to be understood as objects governed by laws of causation.

These two facts, that human beings have a unified point of view on the world of objects which enables them to be answerable to the question 'why?', mean for Scruton that subjects are to be distinguished from the surrounding world. Scruton expresses this point about the human distinction from the rest of the world of objects by saying that it is only other subjects that we can address 'I-You', that is, call to account for what they think, feel and do by asking the question 'why?' (2012a: 35)

The significance of this account is that it provides Scruton with an account of what it is to be a person. This is because being able to 'account for yourself' in this way is what is distinctive and constitutive of being a person for Scruton:

> It is by addressing each other as 'you' that we bind ourselves in the web of inter-personal relations, and it is by virtue of our place in the web that we are persons. Personhood is a relational condition, and I am a person insofar as I can enter into personal relations with others like me. (2012a: 35)

Scruton holds that interpersonal use of the question 'why'? has to be distinguished from the use in scientific understanding. We are accounting for ourselves by giving reasons not causes. The perspective of reason is a stance that we take to other people but also a stance that we take to ourselves when we reflect on our actions and emotions. Scruton reflects on the consequence of this 'why?' question that calls us to account:

> human beings are rational agents: we act for reasons, and are open to criticism when our reasons seem inadequate or flawed. The question 'why?' lifts our actions out of the realm of cause and effect and places them squarely in the realm of reasons and goals. (2012a: 38)

From these considerations Scruton arrives at his understanding of the irreducible nature of persons. For Scruton, human beings are animals, distinguished by our cerebral capacity and understood as objects, governed by the same laws as all other objects. However, the 'cerebral capacities' possessed by human beings are constituted by language. The possession of language brings with it ways of classifying the world that lie outside the realm of science. In particular, the possession of language brings with it the capacity for self-reference, of understanding one's self as a self, as 'I'. This is crucial for Scruton. What is referred to by the 'I', the self, cannot be understood as one of the things that make up the world of objects studied by the sciences, not because the self is an otherworldly *object* but because the self is not any kind of object. The reason that the self lies outside the bounds of scientific understanding is that to be a self is to be defined by a unique perspective on the world, a view from somewhere that is not found in the world viewed from nowhere. Nevertheless, to be a self able to understand yourself as 'I' is to have a unified point of view on the world and to be accountable for your thoughts and actions, to be responsive to the 'why?' of reason. Being able to 'account for yourself' in this way is what is distinctive and constitutive of being a *person* for Scruton, and it means that persons exist in the world in a completely different way from non-linguistic animals: not just in an environment but in a world understood as a 'web of inter-personal relations'. (2012a: 35)

A consequence of this view is that whilst human beings, understood as animals distinguished by our cerebral capacity, can be understood as objects, governed by the same laws that make no reference to teleology, intentionality, purpose or evaluation as causally relevant factors, human beings understood through the possession of language are understood as persons in a world of interpersonal dialogue, a world which makes essential reference to personal teleology, intentionality, purpose or evaluation as relevant factors. Through the personal point of view on the world and the manner in which we act in it we 'face the world' in a stance of 'accountability'; that is, we are required to justify our thoughts and our conduct and because of this we live our lives under the perspective of judgement. The perspective of judgement comes from ourselves and 'the community that stands as though on a balcony above our projects, expecting us to play our part' (2012a: 38).

Hence, Scruton's view is that reductive naturalistic explanations of human beings 'leave out of consideration the radically different *intentionality* of the human response.' (2012a: 28) That is to say, when reductive naturalistic explanations treat persons like one more object in the world of objects, they miss the radically different intentionality of personal thought and action because the point of view of persons is necessarily inaccessible through scientific explanation from the objective point of view, but operates in its own sphere, the *sui generis* realm of inter-personal accountability.

4. The *Lebenswelt*

In order to capture this radically different intentionality, following Husserl, Scruton refers to the 'surrounding world' (1986: 8), the *sui generis* realm of inter-personal accountability to which persons belong, as the '*Lebenswelt*'. As Scruton understands it, '[t]he *Lebenswelt* is not a world separate from the world of natural science, but a world differently described – described with the concepts that designate the intentional objects of human experience.' (1986: 8) The *Lebenswelt* is the world disclosed through concepts that 'place me', understood not merely as human being but a person, 'in relation to it', so 'these classifications attempt to divide the world' not as it is conceived from the view from nowhere but 'according to the requirements of everyday theoretical and practical reason.' (1986: 8) The 'intentional understanding' of the world 'fills the world with the meanings implicit in our aims and emotions.' (1986: 11) This understanding 'is concerned not to explain the world so much as to be "at home" in it, recognising the occasions for action, the objects of sympathy and the places of rest.' (1986: 11)

Scruton's view is that, for this reason, concepts that constitute the *Lebenswelt* appear to 'dissolve under the impact of scientific explanation', not because they make claims about the world that conflict with science but rather because 'they have no staying power against the standpoint of the curious observer, who looks, not to the interests of people, but to the underlying structure of reality.' (1986: 8) The position that Scruton maintains is that, though 'scientific penetration into the depth of things may render the surface unintelligible', science cannot reductively explain or reconstruct the intentionality of human thought, experience and action because this requires referring to concepts that presuppose our existence as persons, at home in the surrounding world of the *Lebenswelt*. Scruton outlines this position as follows:

> As agents we belong to the surface of the world, and enter into immediate relation with it. The concepts through which we represent it form a vital link with reality, and without this link appropriate action and appropriate response could not emerge with the rapidity and competence that alone can ensure our happiness and survival. We cannot replace our most basic everyday concepts with anything better than themselves, for they have evolved precisely under the pressure of human circumstance and in answer to the needs of generations. Any "rational reconstruction" – however obedient it may be to the underlying truth of things and to the requirements of scientific objectivity – runs the risk of severing the vital connection which links our response to the world, and the world to our response, in a chain of spontaneous human competence. (1986: 9)

This is not an instrumental justification of the concepts that make up the *Lebenswelt,* to the effect that we should not dismiss them because they are useful for some purpose external to themselves. This can seem to be implied by Scruton's claim that these concepts alone can

'ensure our happiness and survival'. Rather, I take Scruton to be advancing the view that our practical agency cannot be understood and explained without employing concepts that belong to the *Lebenswelt.*

This attitude to persons and to the autonomy of the *Lebenswelt* shapes Scruton's understanding of the role of philosophy in the re-enchantment of the world. Scruton believes that the perspective on the world adopted by modern science has the capacity to 'estrange us from the world, by causing us to mistrust the concepts through which we respond to it' as persons (1986: 10). His approach is that philosophy needs to sustain and validate such concepts and the distinctive perspective that persons have on the world. Elaborating on this idea Scruton writes, '[w]e need to show in detail that our spontaneous descriptions of the *Lebenswelt* – descriptions which make human agency into the most important feature of the surrounding world – are not displaced by the truths of science, that they have their own truth which, because it does not compete with the enterprise of ultimate explanation, is not rendered the less secure by the explanations which seem at first glance to conflict with it.' (1986: 9) Philosophy, for Scruton, 'may…provide true illumination of the human condition, precisely through [an] "analysis of concepts"' (1986: 13). Scruton's view is that

> Nothing can serve to illuminate the intentionality of our natural human responses, save the analysis of concepts which are involved in it. This attempt to deepen our intentional understanding is an attempt to explore the "given", but not that of the subjectively given. We are concerned, not with first-person knowledge of experience, but with the shared practices whereby a public language is attached both to the world and to the life of those that describe it. This is the idea captured in Wittgenstein's slogan, that "what is given is forms of life" (1986: 13).

Summary So Far

Scruton presents disenchantment in terms of a transition to a modern view of nature in which teleology, intentionality, purpose ad evaluation are not causally relevant. This of itself does not amount to disenchantment. According to Scruton disenchantment comes about when the modern view of nature is thought to entail what he calls the 'atheist worldview': the thought that teleology, intentionality, purpose ad evaluation belong to the minds to 'biological features of individual organisms' which can be reductively explained as part of a wider whole, a nature or universe that makes no reference to the existence of meaning and value, and in particular no reference to the sacred or God.

Scruton argues that the step from accepting the modern view of nature, to the atheist worldview is illegitimate: it does not necessarily follow. The way Scruton resists this step is to argue that when it comes to understanding ourselves we can take two points of view. We can understand ourselves as objects in the 'realm of law' or persons in the 'space of reasons'.

Although teleology, intentionality, purpose and evaluation, are not relevant to understanding our place in the world understood as objects, in order to understand ourselves as persons we must see ourselves as existing in a surrounding world of meaning and evaluation that Scruton understands as the *Lebenswelt*.

This frames Scruton's re-enchanted understanding of nature and the universe that surrounds us as a re-enchantment, as Taylor puts it, from within our 'agency-in-the-world'. Though nature may be disenchanted, in order to understand ourselves we must place ourselves as persons in the wider surrounding world of re-enchanted personal meaning and value. Although this world is not intelligible from a view from nowhere of the sciences but only from the subjective or personal view from somewhere, this surrounding world of personal meaning is not merely subjective, but the inter-personal given.

What I want to look at now is how Scruton fills out this 'given', this surrounding world of our personal agency, and to explore how Scruton attempts to incorporate the proto-religious dimension in the *Lebenswelt*, the way he argues there is a place for the sacred and God.

5. The Face

A central feature of the *Lebenswelt* as Scruton understands it is the 'most elementary of human relations', the fact that '[t]he individual people I encounter are members of a natural kind – the kind "human being" – and behave according to laws of that kind' yet this does not capture the way in which we relate to others as part of the *Lebenswelt* 'I subsume people and their actions under concepts that will not figure in the formulation of those laws.' (1986: 11) Instead, and based on his understanding of persons, Scruton provides a distinctive phenomenology of what it is to relate to persons through the idea of 'the face'.

Scruton's phenomenology of the face is distinctive because of the way it suggests a conception of persons and morality that is suggestive of proto-religious concepts, such as 'revelation', 'transcendence' and 'the sacred'. Scruton's view is captured in the following passage:

> When I encounter another person, I am granted a strange experience - though so familiar that its strangeness is lost to all but the philosopher. The encounter with the other is like a revelation. And the meaning of the revelation is expressed in action, not in thought. The other is sacred for me. He is not to be treated as things are treated: he is not a means to my purposes, but an end in himself. The calculation of my own advantage, which runs riot through the world of objects, ceases abruptly at the threshold of the other, awaiting his consent. In this way the world of nature is filled with meaning. Everywhere I encounter value, not as an abstract idea, but as a host of incarnate individuals, each of whom is unique and irreplaceable. (1998: 166)

The way in which Scruton arrives at this position, in which the encounter with the other is understood as a revelation in nature of the sacred, is by arguing that a thoroughly objective view of human relations leaves out what Scruton calls the 'radically different intentionality' of human relations, that it is a relation between subjects not objects. Scruton thinks that the difference between human relations understood as a relation between objects and understood as a relation between subjects shows up by focusing on the nature of 'the face'. Scruton's interest in the idea of the face is guided by the thought that it is one of the central concepts and phenomena that give shape to the 'human world' or the *Lebenswelt,* the world as it shows up to persons. For this reason, the face eludes the scientific point of view on the world.

Scruton acknowledges that science, of course, can recognise and give an account of the face as an object amongst the world of objects. Such an approach groups the human face with the face of non-human animals and maintains that the facial expression of emotions in humans resembles its expression in other animals. The human face, on this approach, might be distinguished by its features and mobility but is thought to play the same role in social

communication as animal expression. But Scruton objects to this way of understanding the human face. Based on his view of persons, Scruton argues that whereas animals respond to the physical features of other animal's 'faces', for persons, '[t]he face…is an instrument of meaning, and mediates between self and other in ways that are special to itself' (2012a: 75). For Scruton this is evident in the way that faces have an important inter-personal role. According to Scruton the sciences cannot 'acknowledge the thing that makes faces so important to us – namely, that they are the outward form and image of the soul, the lamp lit in our world by the subject behind.' (2012a: 72) As we saw above, Scruton argues that human behaviour cannot be explained in the same terms as animal behaviour because human actions have a distinct 'intentionality'. Their relationship to the world and so the ways they act in it are mediated by concepts that belong to the intersubjective space of accountability and reason. This space has its grounds in the fact that whilst human beings are objects in the world as the natural sciences describe them, they are also subjects who see themselves as 'I', with a point of view onto the world of objects able to relate to other subjective points of view onto the world, as 'you', and able to pose and be answerable to the question 'why?', not the why of causation but of reason and meaning. This means, for Scruton, that when persons relate to each other face to face, they are not responding as an object to another object but as a subject responding to another subject 'I-You' with all that this implies:

> When I confront another person face to face I am not confronting a physical part of him, as I am when, for example, I look at his shoulder or his knee. I am confronting him, the individual centre of consciousness, the free being who reveals himself in the face as another like me…When I read a face I am in some way acquainting myself with the way things seem to another person. And the expression on a face is already an offering in the world of mutual responsibilities: it is a projection in the space of inter-personal relations of a particular person's 'being there'. To put it in another way: the face is the subject, revealing itself in the world of objects. (2012a: 80)

According to this view, because persons see each other 'I-You' they see the face - through smiles, laughs and blushes - not as physical objects or events but as an expression, or as Scruton prefers, a 'revelation' of the subject. Whilst a person's face is, like an animal's in being a collection of physical parts, it is also an instrument of meaning, and so more than a collection of physical parts. In order to capture the sense in which the human face is more than merely physical Scruton invokes a thought expressed by Emmanuel Levinas, that the face is '"in and of itself visitation and transcendence"' (2012a: 74) Scruton interprets this way of understanding the face to confirm his broadly Kantian view of persons. Persons are objects but also subjects and the face is the 'site' in which the subject is revealed in the world of objects. Because the subject cannot be reduced to the world of objects the subject is present in their face as

transcendent. The face comes into our shared world from a place beyond it whilst also remaining beyond (2012a: 74).

It might be thought that this move in Scruton's thought is questionable. It might be conceded that the idea of the face, and the face-to-face encounter, is something distinctive of personal relations and that such inter-personal relations cannot be understood in purely naturalistic terms. However, it might be objected that this, on its own, does not require invoking the idea of 'transcendence' so let us consider why it might. As Scruton understands it inter-personal relations involve an encounter with another person, 'the individual centre of consciousness'. As was discussed earlier, Scruton understands the idea of the individual centre of consciousness or subject not as a thing but a perspective. For this reason, Scruton holds that the subject has a peculiar metaphysical status because the subject for Scruton is not to be regarded as part of the empirical world but lies 'on the edge of the world of objects', and the 'I' does not refer to any object in the world of space and time. For this reason, Scruton thinks that encountering the other, 'acquainting myself with the way things seem to another person', is to acquaint myself not with an object but a subject, a perspective on the world of objects that lies on the edge of the world of objects located in space and time. This is why Scruton thinks that the face to face encounter involves as, Levinas puts it, both visitation and transcendence.

Scruton argues that the way in which persons are 'revealed' as beyond the world of objects shows up principally in the way that persons are not to be treated as objects but as subjects, as ends in themselves, as Scruton puts it, unique and irreplaceable. For this reason Scruton's view is that our understanding of persons is suggestive of 'the sacred', and this is supported by the thought that there is a kind of desecration that can be committed against the face of the person. Again he turns to Levinas:

> Levinas writes of the face as the absolute obstacle to murder, the sight of which causes the assassin's hand to drop. Would that Levinas's remark were true. But there is a truth contained in it. Through the face the subject appears in our world, and it appears there haloed by prohibitions. It is untouchable, inviolable, consecrated. It is not to be treated as an object, or to be thrown into the great computer and calculated away. (2012a: 109-10)

So, for Scruton persons are beings that see themselves as 'I', can see others as 'you' and can encounter each other 'face to face' in a posture of accountability of asking 'why?'. Subjects are revealed in the world of objects through their faces. This is understood as a revelation by Scruton, as persons are a presence of the unique and irreplaceable, of that which is to be treated as an end in itself and not a means, in the world of objects. However, whilst persons can be encountered in their faces, because they are not reducible to or identical with them, they must be

understood as lying 'behind' their faces.[37] In this sense, for Scruton, it is the idea of 'the face' which embodies a primary experience of both 'visitation and transcendence', what he also calls the 'real presence' of the subject. But the fact that the face is both subject and object, visitation and transcendence, means that the face can be subject to desecration, when it is treated merely as an object and not as the real presence of the subject, so that for Scruton the face is also suggestive of 'the sacred'.

[37] Scruton qualifies this talk of subjects lying 'behind' their faces as figurative, '[o]bviously he is not identical with his face; but that does not imply that he is wholly *other* than his face, still less that he is a clandestine soul, hidden behind the flesh like a clown behind his grease-paint' (2012a: 80)

6. Beyond Liberalism: Piety and The Sacred

The disenchanted view excludes values as objective features of the world. But Scruton argues that when we understand ourselves as persons, as part of the *Lebenswelt,* relating to the face of the other, 'nature is filled with meaning' and everywhere value is encountered 'not as an abstract idea, but as a host of incarnate individuals, each of whom is unique and irreplaceable.' (1998: 166) Scruton argues that this view of the *Lebenswelt* is suggestive of proto-religious ideas, ideas of 'revelation', 'transcendence' and 'the sacred'.

Scruton approach develops this proto-religious conception of moral relations between persons by raising certain worries about what he presents as 'the standard liberal view' of what it is to be a person belonging in community with others. Scruton claims that 'we find near-universal agreement among American moral philosophers that individual autonomy and respect for rights are the root conception of moral order, with the state conceived either as instrument for safeguarding autonomy or – if given a larger role – as an instrument for rectifying disadvantage in the name of "social justice".' (2011: 112) The liberal view that Scruton has in mind accommodates a number of features that Scruton himself argues are definitive of what it is to be a person. These ideas are contained in Scruton's description of the 'modern liberal' view; personhood is understood as central to morality and

> personhood is a relational idea: you are a person to the extent that you can participate in a network of inter-personal relationships. (2012a: 157-8)

Also this view grants that persons must treat each other not as objects but respect each other as ends in themselves. Scruton puts this view of personal morality by claiming that persons 'should grant to each other a sphere of sovereignty' (2012a: 157-8). He explains this view of morality in the following way:

> Within your sphere of sovereignty what is done, and what happens to you, in so far as it depends on human choices, depends on choices of yours. This can be guaranteed only if people are shielded from each other by a wall of rights. Without rights individuals are not sovereigns but subjects; and these rights are "natural" in that they are inherent in the condition of personhood, and not derived from any convention or agreement. (2012a: 157-8)

Scruton recognises that this is a broad depiction of the liberal framework but it serves the purposes of bringing into view his contrasting vision of the place of persons in

community.[38]Scruton believes that there are positives to the liberal position: the respect for individual freedom and rights 'seem[s] to justify both a public morality and a shared political order in ways that allow for the peaceful coexistence of people with different faiths, different commitments and deep metaphysical disagreements' (2011: 112). Nevertheless, Scruton thinks that there are problems with this view. The liberal framework for thinking about the moral and political order involves a cost: '[a]reas of moral thinking that have been, and still are, of enormous importance to ordinary people get dropped off the agenda.' (2011: 112) For this reason, Scruton thinks that '[t]he abstract liberal concept of the person', 'delivers at best only part of moral thinking' (2012a: 158).

In contrast to this view Scruton believes that '[t]he abstract chooser, bearer of rights and duties, who is the subject of moral and political order on the liberal view, must see the world in ways that are not fully recorded in the language of rights and duties if he or she is to have a full conception of her predicament [as a person].' (2011: 120) Scruton argues that the idea of personhood is suggestive of regions of moral thought that can only be understood through concepts that lie outside of the liberal view's respect for individual free choice and furthermore that these concepts are suggestive of a religious dimension to the condition of personhood. As Scruton puts it the 'moral situation of a free being'

> cannot be fully specified without describing the forbidden ways of pollution and sacrilege, the fulfilling ways of piety and sacrament, and the sense of a higher order in things, which can be entered through creating substantial and sacramental ties. Only if individuals see themselves in this way…is their own happiness and the future of society in any way secured. (2011: 120)

Scruton's case for this depends on the idea that persons can be harmed in ways that cannot merely be understood as limiting their freedom, as 'a violation of rights.' (2012a: 158) As Scruton understands it, such harms subject us to 'desecration'. Scruton believes that sexual morality is an obvious example of an area of moral thinking where such harms are possible and that gets misconstrued by the liberal moral framework.

Scruton claims that from the liberal point of view sexual morality is viewed in terms of 'the autonomy of the individual' and that '[t]he crucial matter is that of consent – informed consent between the partners being regarded as the necessary (and for many thinkers the sufficient) condition for legitimate sexual relations.' (2011: 113) But Scruton raises the question,

> [w]hy is rape so much worse a crime than spitting on someone? In what does the harm consist? (2011: 113)

[38] Scruton cites Rawls (1971), Nozick (1974), Dworkin (1977), Raz (1986), Scanlon (1998), Gauthier (1986), Lomasky (1987) and Darwall (2006) as examples of moral and political philosophers that assume this general liberal framework.

Scruton thinks that the question facing a liberal view is whether the harm involved is 'just that something is done to someone without her consent?' His view is that the liberal view of persons

> tells us that a person has a right not to be raped since, rape casts aside her consent, rides over her will and treats her as a means to pleasure. All this is bad, of course. But the same offence is committed by the one who hugs a woman against her will (2011: 115)

Scruton contends that in order to grasp the harm caused, concepts that lie outside of the liberal view need to be invoked: '[f]orced against her will to experience her sex as a bodily function rather than an intimate gift, [the victim] feels assaulted and polluted in her very being.' (2011: 113) In this region of personal relations the harm caused is not adequately captured in terms of a violation of individual freedom or rights but that concepts of 'pollution', 'desecration', 'defilement' need to be employed that belong to, and so suggest the existence of, a different order of moral thought that belongs to the Lebenswelt than is made available by liberalism.

This view is grounded in Scruton's understanding of persons. As discussed, in the previous section, Scruton's view is that 'the human face is to be understood in quite another way from the body-parts of an animal.' (2012a: 109) One distinguishing feature is that Scruton thinks that animals do not see faces 'since they cannot see that which *organizes* eyes, nose, mouth and brow as a face namely the self' (2012a: 109) Scruton thinks that it is 'in part from our experience of the face that we understand our world as illuminated by freedom.' (2012a: 109) So the face for Scruton cannot simply be understood as a collection of objects, and there is a kind of harm the can be done to persons which comes about not in the form of denying rights but in a more essential form of violation, dragging the human person down from their place in the realm of freedom into the world of objects, for example, in the sexual case, as the target of a transferable and purely instrumental desire. In order to understand the harm here Scruton thinks we need to talk of the form of 'defacing' involved as a form of 'desecration'. Scruton understands desecration to come about through 'objectification' in which 'the face disappears, and the human being disintegrates into an assemblage of body parts.' (2012a: 111)[39] As we can only desecrate what is sacred Scruton thinks 'the abstract liberal concept of the person as a centre of free choice, whose will is sovereign and whose rights determine our duties towards him delivers at best only a part of moral thinking' (2011: 115) and instead Scruton believes the proto-religious dimension of 'the sacred' needs to be invoked as governing our personal relations.

[39] An example that Scruton briefly mentions here is the holocaust and 'the genocides of the twentieth century that…proceeded as they did only because subjects were first reduced to objects, so that all faces disappeared.' (2012a: 110) Scruton's suggestion is that in order to comprehend this kind of atrocity we need to make appeal to a region of moral thought – a kind of desecration – that is suggestive of the sacred.

Beyond Liberalism Continued . . .

Scruton argues that the potentially limited nature of the liberal view of personal relations suggests the possibility of broadening the *Lebenswelt* beyond the limits of those imagined by liberalism to encompass a 'wider sphere of "unchosen" moral requirements'. Scruton maintains that there are such requirements incumbent on persons and he proposes that '[t]he all-important concept in articulating these requirements is that of piety – the ancient pietas which, for many Roman thinkers, identified the true core of religious practice and of the religious frame of mind' (2011: 116). This brings us 'to another deficiency in the liberal individualist world-view', that it does not recognise this broad realm of claims made on us as persons by 'unchosen' moral requirements. Scruton claims of piety that

> Piety is a posture of submission and obedience towards authorities that you have never chosen. The obligations of piety, unlike the obligations of contract, do not arise from the consent to be bound by them. They arise from the ontological predicament of the individual. (2012a: 158-9)

An example of this kind of unchosen yet binding form of obligation that arises from 'the ontological predicament' of individuals that Scruton gives is that of 'filial obligations'. As Scruton puts it,

> I did not consent to be born from and raised by this woman. I have not bound myself to her by a contract, and there is no knowing in advance what my obligation to her at any point might be or what might fulfil it. (2012a: 159)

Another example Scruton engages in his discussion is that of 'the cavalier attitude to the family' found in liberal thought:

> The emphasis on autonomy and the expropriation of justice by the impartial state mean that families are considered only as defeasible ties, which originate in a contract between two individuals to get together and produce, or at any rate to raise children. Marriage and the family are matters to be regulated privately and according to the fundamental principles of liberal morality, which is that all arrangements should be consented to by those involved. Children, of course, are only *on the way* to consenting to the arrangement that includes them. However, the arrangement is legitimate provided that they can reasonably be expected, on reaching the age of consent, to endorse it. (2011: 117)

However, Scruton thinks that recognising the possibility of unchosen yet binding forms of obligation that arises from 'the ontological predicament' of individuals – the idea that 'most of what we are and owe has been acquired without our consent to be bound by it' (2011: 116) – provides a different way of understanding the standing of persons to the *Lebenswelt,* the world constituted by our inter-personal forms of life. As Scruton puts it 'we come to another set of

concepts which push us towards a richer, and darker description of human ties – the concepts of the sacred and the sacramental.' (2011: 117) He claims that the lives of persons and the life of the *Lebenswelt* are structured by significant events that arise not from individual free choice but from this 'ontological predicament of persons' and that the life of society is structured by rites of passage that single out these events as significant objects of piety and as bound up with the sacred and the sacramental. Scruton has in mind marriages, Christenings, Bar Mitzvahs and funerals. However, Scruton's view is that these near universal features of the life of society, because they do not arise from individual free choice, are difficult for the liberal view of the personal relation to society to make sense of.[40] For Scruton,

> In all societies rites of passage have a sacramental character. They are episodes in which the dead and the unborn are present, and in which the gods take a consuming interest, sometimes attending in person. In these moments time stands still, or rather they are peculiarly timeless. The passage from one condition to another occurs outside time – as though the participants bathe themselves for a moment in eternity. Almost all religions treat rites of passage in such a way, as "points of intersection of the timeless with time". (2011: 117)

The reason Scruton gives for thinking that these events are sacraments that are 'peculiarly timeless' is because 'these are moments in which individuals assume the full burden of responsibility, before the eyes of those who will hold them to account for what they are and do.' (2012a: 160) In order to justify this thought Scruton relies again on his understanding of persons. He claims that the reason 'the sacred influences our response to sexual behaviour, to the rites of passage of the community, and to the moments of consecration in which the deep solemnity of the human condition is rehearsed and condoned' is that '[t]he idea of the sacred is attached to times and places in which the real presence of the subject comes vividly into view, so that we sense a bottomless chasm in the scheme of things, a falling away into the transcendental, and ourselves as poised on the edge.' (2012a: 160) In moments that Scruton refers to as rights of passage – marriages, Christenings and funerals – moments in which 'individuals assume the full burden of responsibility', the reality of our nature as persons, poised on the edge of things (and even of time) is fully confronted.

[40] Marriages might seem an odd inclusion here as in an obvious sense they are freely entered into. I think that what Scruton has in mind is that marriage involves not the entering into a contract but something more binding. It is the character of this relation that Scruton would argue is difficult to make sense of from a liberal point of view. I am not intending to defend this view, just pointing out that Scruton does.

A Potential Concern

A worry might arise here that Scruton's argument fails to make clear why our relations to others are relations to 'the sacred'. It is not clear whether Scruton presents a good argument, based on the idea that we are persons, for the view that we *must* understand persons as subject specifically to 'pollution', 'desecration' and so suggestive of a 'higher order in things' understood in terms of 'the sacred'.

What Scruton claims about persons is that they must 'not to be treated as…object[s]' (2012a: 109-10), that others are 'not a means to my purposes, but an end in himself', that '[t]he calculation of my own advantage, which runs riot through the world of objects, ceases abruptly at the threshold of the other, awaiting his consent', and persons are 'unique and irreplaceable.' (1998: 166) All this may be accepted. However, the concern is, given this view of persons, whether Scruton provides a good argument for the view that these ideas *require* us to employ the specific proto-religious concepts that Scruton claims we must invoke in order to accurately understand interpersonal relations: 'pollution', 'desecration' and 'the sacred'.

In response to the worry about whether he provides an argument for framing interpersonal morality in terms of 'desecration' and 'the sacred', as discussed above, Scruton put forward a couple of lines of thought. The first concerns the idea that persons must be understood as subject to unchosen yet binding forms of obligation that arise from 'the ontological predicament' of individuals, what Scruton thinks of in terms of bonds of 'piety'. Yet it is not clear how this thought is meant to support the specific proto-religious view of persons that Scruton accepts. Perhaps the argument that is meant to be doing the most work in this area is Scruton's thought that persons can be harmed in ways that cannot be construed in terms of inhibiting their freedom or violating their rights. But it is unclear how this thought gets us to the specific proto-religious concepts of pollution, desecration and the sacred. Someone might accept the view that the sphere of 'harm' and moral obligation is broader than freedom and rights whilst resisting the move to the proto-religious, in particular resisting the introduction of the specific concepts of 'desecration' and 'the sacred'.[41]

The point I want to draw attention to here is that, although he says many suggestive things about this issue, Scruton does not appear to provide a particularly convincing argument that justifies his view that persons must be seen in terms of the particular concepts of 'pollution', 'desecration' and 'the sacred'. But what raising this worry does not do is undermine Scruton's sense – crucial to his re-enchantment – that persons are distinctive, 'not a means to

[41] One thought that Scruton might appeal to in order to answer such a worry is that by accepting that persons must be understood as 'ends in themselves', 'unique and irreplaceable' and 'not as objects', that persons cannot be understood as objects in the *natural* world but must, in some sense, be viewed as *supernatural* or *transcendent*. But this itself is an aspect of Scruton's argument that could be called into question. Many people that are sympathetic to the thought that our relations to others are distinctively moral in the way that Scruton claims, could reasonably dispute the apparently proto-religious metaphysical consequences that Scruton takes to follow from this thought: that persons are supernatural and transcendent.

my purposes, but an end in himself', 'unique and irreplaceable', and so to be understood as placing strong moral demands on us. All I want to do here is draw attention to the fact that some may be concerned about whether Scruton provides a convincing argument for framing those moral demands in the particular way he wants to, in terms of 'pollution', 'desecration' and 'the sacred'.

7. The Face of The Earth

But now I want to move on to Scruton's claim that the unchosen obligations that arise from the condition of personhood, obligations of piety towards what Scruton thinks of as sacred, extend beyond human relations to the world apart from human beings, the claim that '[a]ll these feelings come together in our humility before the works of nature' (1996: 117). When Scruton talks about humility and piety towards the 'works of nature' he does not mean nature understood from the point of view of the sciences but nature as it shows up and is present through the *Lebenswelt*. Just as with 'the face' Scruton argues that the thoroughly objective view of the human relation to the natural world, whilst possible, leaves out what Scruton calls the 'radically different intentionality' of human relations to the world.

One way of understanding this area of Scruton's thought is to examine the approach he takes to environmental concerns. Scruton suggests that the environmental movement began as a response to the industrial revolution, and that the environmental response was to portray the earth 'as a quasi-animate being, to whom we could relate as pagans related to their gods.' (2012a: 124) Scruton sees this same perspective being developed in contemporary thought by advocates of the 'Gaia hypothesis'[42]. However Scruton maintains that there is something wrong with all attempts to ground our obligations to the environment in this way. Scruton thinks that the genuine thought contained in the environmental movement is the

> opposition to the habit of seeing all value in instrumental terms. People have treated the earth and their surroundings as things to be *used*, and when their use is exhausted to be thrown away. (2012a: 126)

But Scruton thinks that the way in which the intrinsic value of nature can be understood is not by animating the natural world from a view from nowhere. As Scruton puts it,

> the Gaia hypothesis misses what is really at stake. There is something left out of every scientific account of our relation to our surroundings, and that is the I to You encounter, and the sense of responsibility that it precipitates. (2012a: 124-5)

Scruton's way of presenting this alternative view of our relationship to the environment can be seen to arise from his conception of persons belonging to the *Lebenswelt.* The *Lebenswelt* for Scruton is 'something like the implied community of language users, who together construct the common-sense world': 'it is a world constituted by our social interaction, and endowed with the "meanings" that inhabit our communicative acts' (2002: 267-8). For this

[42] The Gaia hypothesis was originally advanced by James Lovelock. For a statement of the view *see* Lovelock (1979). For a more recent defence of the Gaia hypothesis *see* Harding (2006). For a specifically philosophical endorsement of the view *see* Midgley (2001) and *see* Gray (2002) for a perspective sympathetic to the non-anthropocentric worldview that he detects in Lovelock's idea.

reason the *Lebenswelt* is to be distinguished from the world of nature as it is understood by the natural sciences. For example,

> [t]his before me is not a member of the species *Homo sapiens* but a *person*, who looks at me and smiles; that beside her is not a piece of bent organic tissue but a *chair* on which I may sit; this on the wall is not a collection of tinted chemicals but a *picture*, in which the face of a saint appears; and so on. (2002: 268-9)

Following his understanding of Husserl, Scruton extends this idea of the *Lebenswelt* by suggesting that the pre-scientific vision of the world expresses not merely our identity as rational beings, but our *life.* The world appears to us 'in the guise of a "lived environment"' (2002: 269). Scruton elaborates on this thought in the following way:

> Husserl reminds us that our experience and our concepts are interwoven, and that the way the world appears to us will be affected by the way we interact with it. Human beings live in a world of nature, and seek to explain it through scientific categories and causal laws. But they also live in the 'natural world' to which their primary attitude is not one of explaining, but of belonging. This natural world is a 'surrounding world' (*Umwelt*) and a 'world of life' (*Lebenswelt*). It is known through appearances, which we conceptualize in terms of our interests and needs, rather than in terms that would enable us to explain how it functions. (2012b: 228-229)

Scruton defends the view that the thoroughly objective view of human relations to their world leaves out the fact that our relation to the world is not just a relation to a collection of objects but is a relation to a 'surrounding world' or 'lived environment'.

Scruton thinks that the way of understanding how to oppose the habit of seeing the environment in instrumental terms, in contrast to the approach taken by proponents of the Gaia theory, is to approach the environment from the point of view of this *lived* environment or *Lebenswelt.* As Scruton puts it, as existing in the *Lebenswelt,* persons have an interest in the surface or appearance of their world and not merely in their scientific depths: '[o]ur interest in appearances stems from the desire to be at home in our surroundings, and to find inscribed in the world of objects some record of our personal concerns.' (2014: 136) As persons that belong to the *Lebenswelt,* '[i]n our everyday interaction with the world, the objects of experience come before us as "to be known" or "to be used"' (2014: 136).

However, another manner in which our relation to things disclosed through the *Lebenswelt* can be 'come before us in experience' is 'to be contemplated' and Scruton regards aesthetic experience as the paradigm example of this desire to belong to the *Lebenswelt,* where, for Scruton, aesthetic experience is the experience through which our place in the *Lebenswelt* is disclosed. Scruton argues that,

> [i]n the experience of the beautiful we take the world into consciousness and let it float there…[t]o put it in another way: we savour the world, as something *given*. (2014: 136)

As introduced earlier, for Scruton philosophy is to be understood as the attempt to elucidate and defend the indispensability of the *Lebenswelt* against scientific attempts to reductively explain it away. The world that philosophy reflects upon is 'the given', not the subjectively given but the given world of shared practices, of life in the lived environment or surrounding world. In this sense, by allowing us to appreciate the world of appearances as given, for Scruton aesthetic experience is the paradigm experience that discloses our standing as persons to the surrounding world.

Scruton argues that 'aesthetic values are intrinsic values'; the significance of this idea is that 'when I find beauty in some object, it is because I am seeing it as an end in itself and not only as a means' (2014: 137) This last point means for Scruton that this 'way of encountering objects in the world is importantly like my way of seeing persons', that '[i]n the aesthetic experience we have something like a face-to-face encounter with the world itself, and with the things that it contains' (2014: 137); and just like in the face-to-face encounter, it forms the basis of an interpersonal relationship of accountability.

Scruton claims that, '[i]n designing our surroundings, we are bringing them within the sphere of accountability to others and theirs to us' (2012a: 138), which he thinks amounts to 'providing the world with a face' (2014: 138). Crucial for Scruton's argument is the thought that '[a]esthetic values govern every form of settlement' (2014: 138). This means that 'the face of nature', for example, in the paintings of Constable and Crome, or Courbet and Corot, which aim to depict our surrounding world as we have shaped it and as it is given to us, can be presented as 'a face *turned towards us*' (2014: 138) Other examples that Scruton cites are the paintings of Van Gogh in which 'trees, flowers, orchards, fields, and buildings break open to the artist's brush, in something like the way that a human face can break open in response to a smile, to reveal an intense inner life and an affirmation of being.' (2014: 138)

Another example that Scruton cites is Rilke's *Duino Elegies*:

> Rilke, in the ninth of the *Duino Elegies*, writes of the earth's "dream to be some day invisible". This extraordinary poem invites us into a wholly new relation to the world, and one that engages immediately with the crisis through which we have been living. For Rilke the earth must no longer be treated as an object among objects, a thing of purely instrumental value, which has no claim on our commitments. It must enter the world of thinking, naming and loving, so as to exist in another way, as lover's exist in each other's feelings, as the past lives in memory, and as the future is contained like a seed in our most reflective states of mind. The earth must become part of each of us, not an object but a subject, which addresses me I to I. This is the great *Verwandlung* – the transformation – which is the earth's "insistent demand". And to accomplish it we much live in another way,

> with a kind of tenderness towards places and their history, towards the things that we see and name, and which are "refashioned age after age", until they "live in our hands and eyes as part of ourselves". The transformation of the earth is a transformation of ourselves. We must discard the habit of using things and learn instead to praise them; the *Elegies* are a kind of "praiser's manual" for those who love the earth. (2012b: 289)

Significantly for the kind of argument that Scruton is providing,

> Rilke's purpose in the *Duino Elegies* was to draw on the raw material from which every experience of the sacred is derived – namely, the first-person experience of embodiment – and to use it to build a path away from nihilism. The earth is not just a heap of objects; it has its own subjectivity, and it achieves this subjectivity in me. (2012b: 290)

Scruton thinks that this 'desire to perpetuate this face and to save it from unnecessary blemishes' (2014: 139) can serve the basis of humility and piety towards nature. Given that Scruton holds that in aesthetic experience the *Lebenswelt* or surrounding world can be disclosed not merely as a collection of objects but a realm of the intrinsically valuable, not to be treated as merely objects but a realm of ends, aesthetic experience presents our relation to the surrounding world as an 'I-You' encounter.

Scruton's argument to the 'face of the earth' conclusion is not very clear. He invokes several ideas. The first is involved in his discussion of the way the world does not simply show up as an object of scientific study but in terms of a *Lebenswelt*: a lived environment or surrounding world. But this can seem too close to saying that we experience the world purely in instrumental terms, a world that we 'conceptualize in terms of our interests and needs' (2012b: 229), which does not get Scruton to the thought that the world shows up in terms of the unique and irreplaceable. Crucial to Scruton's argument then seems to be the subsequent idea that through the *Lebenswelt* things not only show up as 'to be used' but also 'to be contemplated'. In particular, the key argument seems to be that through aesthetic experience the world shows up as possessing not merely instrumental but also intrinsic value. In this way, Scruton believes that from the perspective of our personal point of view on the world, the earth shows up to us as 'irreplaceable, just as we [persons] are' (2012a: 127). It is because we can stand to the earth in this way, as not simply a collection of objects to be used but as an end in itself, as unique and irreplaceable, that Scruton is willing to talk in terms of 'the face of the earth'.

As I discussed earlier, there are questions about whether Scruton provides a good argument that shows, given how he understands persons as 'not to be treated as…object[s]' (2012a: 109-10), that others are 'not a means to my purposes, but an end in himself', persons being 'unique and irreplaceable' (1998: 166), why persons should be understood as subject specifically to 'pollution', 'desecration' and so regarded as 'sacred'. Scruton thinks that his

argument allows him to see the earth in terms of the same catergories, in particular, in terms of 'the sacred'. However, the worry raised carries over to Scruton's account of our 'personal' relation to nature or 'the face of the earth'. He supposes that by showing that our relation to the surrounding world is not a relation to a world of objects but in some sense reflects a personal 'I-You' encounter, that he has vindicated the sense in which our relation to nature can be conceptualised in the specifically proto-religious terms of 'desecration' and 'the sacred'. But if Scruton does not provide a convincing argument as to why we can understand persons in this proto-religious way, then simply by showing that our relation to the lived environment or surrounding world perpetuates this 'face-to-face' encounter, is insufficient to establish that our relation to the environment is to be understood in terms of 'desecration' and 'the sacred'.

However, continuing my line of thought from where I originally raised my concerns about Scruton's argument, this worry here does not derail the sense in which Scruton is providing a substantially re-enchanted sense of our relations to the surrounding world. Though he insists that '[i]t is of course nonsense to suggest that there are naiads in the trees and dryads in the groves.' (2012a: 151), through his argument that the manner in which our 'building' on the earth is governed by aesthetic demands, and that aesthetic demands involve a sense of intrinsic value and an encounter with the unique and irreplaceable, Scruton can be seen to provide a sense in which our relations to the surrounding world are not relations to a world of objects but like our relations to other persons. According to this view our relations to the built and natural environment is a relation to a world 'not to be treated as…object[s]' (2012a: 109-10), in which the natural world is not a means to my purposes, but an end in itself, nature is seen as populated, in a person-like way with the 'unique and irreplaceable' (1998: 166). So despite questioning Scruton's case for introducing the specific proto-religious concepts that he does, this view of nature might be re-enchantment enough. What is at the heart of Scruton's re-enchantment, even if his move to the concepts of 'desecration' and 'the sacred' is questionable, is that:

> The sense of beauty puts a brake upon destruction, by representing its object as irreplaceable. When the world looks back at me with my eyes, as it does in aesthetic experience, it is also addressing me in another way (2014: 139)

What Scruton believes 'is revealed to me in the experience of beauty is a fundamental truth about being—that being is a gift', (2014: 139) and it is Scruton's idea that Being is something 'given' that I want to discuss next.

8. The Givenness of Being

The way in which Scruton approaches the idea of the givenness of being is by contrasting the modern scientific view of nature and the universe with the view of nature and the universe as surrounding us as agents or persons in the world. In the introduction to this chapter, I discussed Scruton's understanding of the modern view of nature. This is a view of nature as an 'ongoing stream of physical events' in a realm of blind efficient causation, characterised as such by the fact that it avoids reference to teleology, intentionality, purpose or evaluation as causally relevant factors. This characterises the world as disenchanted for Scruton.

In order to present an alternative Scruton makes the point that

> Physics has no use for the idea of creation. In the order of nature there is neither creation nor destruction, and what we know as objects are merely the passing shapes adopted by particles and forces on their way from the singularity at one end of the causal envelope to the singularity at the other. In the order of nature one thing morphs into its successor without any absolute loss or gain, the whole being governed by laws of conservation that forbid us to say that something is created out of nothing, or that another thing simply disappears. (2014: 177)

Scruton's view is that it is possible to arrive at the idea of 'creation', and through this the 'givenness of being', even within a modern understanding of nature and the universe, by focusing on what it is to exist in nature or the universe that surrounds us as agents or persons in the world.

In order to do this Scruton focuses on the way in which persons 'face death' (2012a: 163). As discussed earlier, Scruton's view is that human beings can be viewed in two ways, as subject and as object, and that by relating to others face to face we relate to the embodiment of subjectivity in the world of objects, a perspective from beyond the world embodied within it. Scruton thinks that '[d]eath too presents us with the mystery of our incarnation, though it does so in another way.' (2012a: 161) Scruton thinks that in the experience of death there is an experience of the negation of this mysterious embodiment and that this impresses on us in an uncanny way the mystery of the perspective of the subject. As Scruton presents this thought, '[i]n death we confront the body voided of the soul, an object without a subject'. (2012a: 161) Scruton thinks that this is apt to produce feelings of awe because such feelings are warranted by 'the unfathomable spectacle of human flesh without the self' (2012a: 161). The suggestion that Scruton seems to make is that the death of people is in some sense unnatural, or at least, as he puts it, 'uncanny, *unheimlich*' (2012a: 161). The reason Scruton gives for this is that 'the dead body is not so much an object as a void in the world of objects – something that ought not to be there, since it ought not to be there as a thing.' (2012a: 161) As Scruton puts it,

> [s]omehow this body still belongs to the person who has vanished: I imagine him as exerting his claim over it, but from spectral regions where he cannot be touched. (2012a: 161)

For this reason Scruton thinks that, in encountering death we encounter a sense of 'void' in the world of objects, but also in such experiences, 'our imagination reaches spontaneously towards the supernatural.' (2012a: 161)

Scruton thinks that death is an experience of the negation of the mysterious embodiment of subjects and that this impresses on us a sense of the supernatural: '[i]n dealing with the dead body, we are in some way standing at the horizon of our world, in direct but ineffable contact with that which does not belong to it.' (2012a: 163) Scruton supposes it is death, the metaphysical fact of our existing as both persons and mortal, facing death, that explains the original experience of 'awe', 'wonder' and 'reverence' felt towards what is sacred. It is this experience that

> is the essence of the sacred. And the experience of the sacred needs no theological commentary in order to invade us. It is, in some way, a *primitive* experience, as basic as pain, fear or exultation, awaiting a theological commentary perhaps, but in itself the inevitable precipitation of self-consciousness, which compels us to live forever on the edge of things, present in the world, but also apart from it. (2012a: 163)

The sense of the sacred is impressed on us because we exist as persons 'facing death', and '[d]eath is a boundary that has no other side' (2014: 179). For Scruton, '[t]he dead body is an object that speaks completely of nothingness' but the significance of this, he supposes, is that, the encounter with death is an encounter with 'another order, in which things come into being by fiat, and are swept away without cause.' (2014: 179-80) Scruton elaborates on this point:

> Whatever language we choose to capture this elusive feature of our condition, we must accept that human life constantly presents us with the thought of annihilation, and of the absolute fragility of our attachments. It is as though, in the extreme situations into which we stumble, the veil of our comforts is torn suddenly asunder, and we confront another order, where being and nothingness, creation and destruction, wrestle forever and with no fixed result. (2014: 177-8)

Through a consideration of what it is to be a person, existing with others in an inter-personal realm shaped by that personal point of view, Scruton has arrived at an understanding of persons which gives rise to an understanding of nature or the universe that surrounds us as agents-in-the-world that contrasts with the view presented by science. Whereas in the scientific view of the universe there is no room for 'creation and destruction', 'being and nothingness', 'coming in and going out of being', according to Scruton's argument, nature or the universe as

it is understood from the point of view of our personal agency presents that agency as part of a world in which these ideas govern.

Here Scruton returns to the rites of passage discussed above which are singled out as sacred as moments that constitute another order of communal life than individual freedom, where 'being and nothingness' or 'creation and destruction' contend, moments of the coming in and going out of being that constitute the life of community:

> Human life is subject to constant disruption by experiences that cannot be accommodated in purely contractual terms. These experiences are not simply irrational residues, although they belong to another order of things, in which "coming to be and passing away," to use the Aristotelian idiom, are the ruling principles: the order of creation. (2014: 176)

Scruton thinks that '[t]he experience of the sacred is the revelation, in the midst of everyday things, of another order, in which creation and destruction are the ruling principles.' and for Scruton this is present in the way that

> The great junctures of life are precisely those in which this order shines through, so that deals lose their meaning and vows come in their place. New life is a gift from the place where things are created and destroyed for no merely human reason. Birth is therefore marked by rituals of acceptance and gratitude, and by vows of protection toward the body and the soul of the newborn child. Death is the moment when the gift of life is surrendered, and the funeral is the recognition in retrospect of this gift, and an acknowledgement that "the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."' (2014: 183)

From the point of view of our personal agency our lives show up as a gift of an order of creation. Scruton argues that nature or the universe, that which appears merely contingent without reason and meaning from the scientific point of view, from the personal point of view is referred to

> the being upon which all depends. Being then makes sense to us, not as mere being, nor as "being there", but as "being given". (2012a: 169)

The Face of God

Scruton thinks that by understanding persons in community, related to an order of meaning in which 'coming in and going out of being', 'creation and destruction' are the ruling principles, it is possible to make sense of being as something 'granted' and consequently of being as referred to a transcendental subjectivity.

Scruton argues that there is a difference between seeing something as 'just there' and seeing it as a gift. The reason, he proposes, is that '[o]nly what is owned can be given' (2012a: 170). Furthermore, Scruton adds that gifts 'come wrapped in the perspective of the giver, who has claimed them as "mine", and also relinquished that claim for another's sake.' (2012a: 170) The appropriate response to a gift is gratitude as 'the one who receives something as a gift receives it as a mark of the other's concern for him' (2012a: 170). Finally Scruton concludes that 'Gifts…can only be offered I to I, and gifts are acts of acknowledgement between persons, in which each recognizes the freedom of the other. (2012a: 170)

Scruton thinks that nature and the universe that surrounds us, viewed from the scientific point of view, seems contingent and without reason. However, from the personal point of view we can understand nature and the universe that surrounds us as given and suggestive of

> The transcendental subjectivity, the primordial 'I', in which each thing occurs as a free thought. It seems to me that this is the message of religion in all its forms: and we come to understand it by encountering the spirit of gift within ourselves. (2012a: 169)

So this is how Scruton understands God

> [i]f there is such a thing as the real presence of God among us…his presence must be understood…not as an abstract system of law, but as a subjective view that takes in the world as a whole. And in this view from nowhere we are judged, as we are judged by every 'I' that turns its face to us. (2012a: 156)

Or as he also puts it, God is 'a subject, addressing us in this world from a realm beyond it.' (2012a: 189)

So Scruton thinks that as both subjects and as objects persons are the embodiment of subjectivity in the world of objects, a perspective from beyond the world embodied within it. Another way that Scruton captures this 'mystery' is in terms of the presence of freedom in a world of objects. Scruton takes the liberal view of persons, that conceives of our moral and political obligations in terms of individual freedom to contain important truths about what it is to be a person. However, he does not think it contains the resources to adequately comprehend the nature of all our moral thought. That requires expanding the kind of obligations that are put on us as persons in community to include obligations that are incumbent upon us that we have not freely entered into but which arise from 'the ontological predicament' of personhood. Obligations of piety relate us to the communal experience of 'the sacred'. The sense of the sacred is impressed on us because we exist as persons 'facing death', and '[d]eath is a boundary that has no other side' (2014: 179) For this reason Scruton thinks that, '[t]he experience of the sacred is the revelation, in the midst of everyday things, of another order, in which creation an destruction are the ruling principles.' From the point of view of our personal agency our lives

show up as a gift of an order of creation. For Scruton that which appears merely contingent from the scientific point of view, from the personal point of view is referred to

> the being upon which all depends. Being then makes sense to us, not as mere being, nor as "being there", but as "being given". (2012a: 169)

According to Scruton, nature or the universe that surrounds us seen from the scientific point of view is described as contingent and without reason. However, from the personal point of view we can understand the surrounding world as given and as related to the perspective of a giver, a transcendental subjectivity, a primordial 'I', or the face of God.

9. Initial Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the way I think Scruton gives sense to the idea of a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world. The reason for looking at Scruton's re-enchantment was that, whilst McDowell provides arguments against a disenchanted understanding of nature, and attempts to make sense of the objectivity of value his re-enchantment does not extend to making sense of religious responses to the world such as awe, wonder and reverence.

Scruton can be seen as attempting to satisfy this sense of articulating a more positive re-enchantment. Scruton argues that there is a temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1) The emergence of the modern natural scientific understanding of nature and the universe entails 2) the unintelligibility of the sacred and God. Scruton argues that there is a temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2, to think that the emergence of the modern view of nature *entails* the view that meaning and value must be understood as merely existing in the minds of biological organisms that can be reductively explained with reference only to the same blind nature or universe to which such organisms belong and so to think that the emergence of the modern view of nature also *entails* the unintelligibility of the sacred and God. Scruton's suggestion is that with an adequate understanding of subjects as 'agents-in-the-world'[43] it is possible to respond to the 'illegitimate slippage' by accepting that nature independently of the human mind is no longer understood as an independently meaningful cosmos whilst rejecting the thought that the modern view of nature *entails* that meaning and value must be understood as arbitrarily chosen or contingently desired. In contrast Scruton makes the case for a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world in terms of a sense of the self as placed in a wider meaningful nature or universe that surrounds us which, he believes, suggests that as agents or 'persons' in the world we are related to the sacred and to Being as given by a giver, a transcendental subjectivity, a primordial 'I', or the face of God.

[43] There are some themes in Scruton's thought, such as his description of subjects as lying 'on the edge of things, like a horizon' (2012a: 32) and as 'transcendent' (2012a: 74) that can appear to contrast with the thought that we are 'agents-in-the-world'. I think it is right to note this tension but I do not think it undermines the thought that Scruton is offering a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world. Scruton's re-enchantment is based on the thought that we are persons and we exist as such because our identity as persons is constituted by our practical participation in a sphere of interpersonal accountability or the *Lebenswelt.* As such, we are persons to the extent that we participate, as agents, in the world. It is true that Scruton then goes on to say that we must describe persons as having a perspective on the edge of the world and for this reason embody a kind of transcendence, but we have this character only insofar as we participate as agents in the *Lebenswelt.*

10. Problems

Haldane's Worry

Whilst Scruton can be said to provide a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world that attempts to incorporate a proto-religious dimension, many issues could be raised regarding his particular re-enchantment. In the remainder of this chapter I want to focus on a particular worry put forward by John Haldane.

Scruton argues that we can accept the modern scientific view of nature whilst at the same time drawing on a Kantian understanding of the person which, he argues, allows, from the point of view of our personal agency, to make sense of a world that involves 'the sacred' and 'God'. However, because Scruton makes a distinction between the world of our agency and the world of objects and he wants to locate meaning, reason, the sacred and even God purely in relation to our personal agency, Scruton's re-enchantment gives rise to a worry. This worry is expressed well by John Haldane (2005) when he writes that Scruton is one of the 'deeply humanistic thinkers who have addressed the subject of religion but failed to embrace it':

> does Scruton suppose that the enchantment he is proposing is a reality, or a projected construction serving to insulate us from a world too empty and cold to contemplate, let alone to endure? His attitude to Nietzsche is somewhat ambivalent…Scruton offers something of a mixed message, leaving one wondering whether the abyss was a figment of Nietzsche's wild imagination, a description of how things would be if they were not (happily) otherwise, or an endorsement of a vision of how they really are. (2005: 210-11)

Haldane goes on to comment on Scruton's defence of the sacred:

> This is beautifully expressed, but it is ambiguous between the claim that we are warranted in seeing in things an expression of the being of a transcendent divinity, and the suggestion that the sacred is a sentiment of approbation arising in the human breast and then poured out over rocky ground, forming pools in which what we see are our own reflected images. If the latter, then a new disenchantment threatens as we recognise that the treatment for the sense of alienation in a meaningless world involves an illusion of objectivity. And with this we are returned to the philosophies of Hume, Nietzsche and Camus in which value is made and not found. It is as if Scruton is spiritually attracted to religion but cannot make an unambiguous commitment to it. (2005: 212)

So, there is a worry surrounding Scruton's thought on the sacred and God. Scruton makes sense of the sacred and God from the point of view of our agency and locates their 'reality' in the 'surface' of the world rather than in the 'depths', there is a question whether they can be regarded as anything more than subjective projections. Haldane's objection is that, whilst

Scruton might provide a descriptively rich phenomenological account of the experience of the sacred, it is unclear from Scruton's formulation of his position whether he manages to vindicate concepts such as 'the sacred' and 'God' as objective realities rather than just subjective projections onto the contingent and meaningless universe of the 'atheist worldview'.

Developing The Worry

Haldane's worry seems to be justified when certain ambiguities and oscillations are considered that are present throughout Scruton's work. However, I want to suggest that Haldane's worry fails to identify the root of Scruton's difficulties. There are reasons to believe that the problem with Scruton's thoughts on the sacred and God have their origin, not, as Haldane's objection suggests, in Scruton's understanding of the sacred and God but in the foundation of his re-enchantment, in his view of persons.

In contrast to the disenchanted atheist worldview Scruton begins by describing his view of what it is to be a person. He constructs his re-enchanted view of nature and the universe that surrounds us out of the conceptual resources made available by this understanding of persons. I believe that the ambiguities and oscillations that give rise to Haldane's worry are present in Scruton's description of personhood and it is from here that Scruton's talk of the sacred and God seems to unavoidably inherit the same problematic metaphysical status as his concept of the person.

For instance, Scruton often argues for his re-enchanted vision of the world by putting forward the view of persons that he traces to Kant that I referred to earlier:

> According to Kant, human beings stand in a peculiar metaphysical predicament - one not shared by any other entity in the natural world. We see ourselves, he argued, in two contrasting ways - both as objects, bound by natural laws; and as subjects who can lay down laws for themselves. The human object is an organism like any other; the human subject is in some way 'transcendental', observing the world from the point of view on its perimeter (2004: 123)

On this view, human beings are seen in an apparently dualistic way, as a combination of objects in the world of nature *and* beings that possess a metaphysically transcendental dimension that characterises their subjective viewpoint on the world. On this view, when we address each other as persons (as subjects) we address the aspect of ourselves that stands (metaphysically) outside of nature. Consequently, the idea that we 'direct the same attitude to the world as we do to persons', is that through the experience of the sacred we experience a supernatural reality that lies beyond nature.

However, Scruton is uncomfortable with unambiguously committing to this dualistic conception of the self, the idea that the transcendental self is a metaphysical reality. As he puts it, 'I do not believe that we can accept Kant's majestic theory, which ascribes to persons a metaphysical core, the "transcendental self", lying beyond nature and eternally free from its constraints.' (1986: 10)

Scruton attempts to deflate any dualistic or supernatural construal of the subject, whilst nevertheless, in a way retaining the transcendental vision of persons:

> We should look at the matter thus: we are animals, and have no securer individuality than animals have. Nor do we stand outside nature, or in any other sense possess a freedom from the bonds of causality which the animals are denied. However, language forces upon us two indispensable ideas, that of self-reference, which casts the shadow of the metaphysical I, and that of responsibility, which casts the shadow of metaphysical freedom. (1986: 57)

Such passages suggest that we are animals rooted in the realm of nature and through our social (linguistic) interaction create an *appearance* of being persons, having a subjectivity that transcend the realm of nature and time. Scruton suggests that there might be ways of vindicating this sense as a reality, but importantly he does not provide it. He is happy to

> remain sceptical…and treat these shadows as nothing more than shadows. They wander with us everywhere, and to lack them would indeed be a terrible misfortune, far worse than the loss of one's real shadow…but they have only an illusory existence. These shadows loom large, and determine our interpersonal attitudes in countless ways. Thy provide the focus of much that is most real in human existence – including love, longing and desire – while remaining unreal. Through their very unreality, moreover, they promise always and at any moment to betray the yearnings which they guide. (1986: 57)

Here Scruton is willing to treat the transcendental self as 'unreal' and as an 'illusion'. I believe that this is the source of the ambiguity in Scruton's work, a tendency to oscillate between the metaphysically real supernatural understanding of the self and the naturalistic 'unreal' and 'illusory' understanding. The ambiguity can be seen in Scruton's need to introduce further categories to allay this worry but which end up highlighting the ambiguity:

> Those first-person thoughts may, as I have said, be illusions. But they are (to mimic Leibniz) 'well-founded' illusions, which we may expose as such only from the third-person point of view, and never from the point of view of unalienated absorption in the first-person perspective, which is the natural condition of the rational agent. (1986: 58)

Whilst the 'unreal' and 'illusory' understanding might fit into a naturalistic metaphysics, and might be less metaphysically demanding, because of the way that the sacred and God depends on the idea of personhood, it means that the sacred and God seems also to be merely a shadow cast on the world but which ultimately inherits the metaphysical character of

the self from which it is formed. In Scruton's thought, the sacred and God are simultaneously put forward as either belonging problematically to a supernatural realm or (viewed naturalistically) as not objectively real but 'unreal' or 'illusory'. But this means that the experience of the sacred and of God is not an experience of an objectively real realm; the experience is no longer a 'window onto another realm' but a mirror reflecting the illusions of the self. It only seems that by committing to the metaphysically real and supernatural view of the transcendental self that Scruton can go on to conceive of the sacred and God as real in a way he ultimately must want to if his re-enchantment is to be taken seriously.

Though in more recent work Scruton's language has shifted from describing persons, the inter-subjective world of persons, and ideas of the sacred and God as illusions, instead preferring to speak of them as *real,* a 'real presence', there is reason to believe that Scruton's metaphysical commitments have not changed.

In more recent work Scruton maintains that he is still 'admitting ontological priority to the "scientific image"' (2014: 69). For this reason, although 'we are tempted to construe the I-You encounter as an encounter between objects that exist in some other dimension from the physical world around them', Scruton continues to argue that 'there is a cognitive dualism underlying our response to the human world, and that any ontological dualism (for example, the dualism of human animal and person) must be understood as a shadow cast across the order of nature by our twofold way of understanding things.' (2014: 76) For this reason, 'the *Lebenswelt*...is a world of appearances, made present to us in experience.' (2014: 77) Such remarks suggest that the old worries that attach to Scruton's thought are still present in his more recent formulation of his position. In his discussion of the face-to-face encounter Scruton makes the following admission: 'the individualised face of the other is, in a certain measure, our own creation' (2012a: 91). Scruton acknowledges that '[t]his observation leads to a certain anxiety, since it suggests that the other's presence in his face may be no more real than his presence in the mask' and that this gives rise to the fully-fledged objection to his position that '[p]erhaps we are even mistaken in attributing to persons the kind of absolute individuality that we unavoidably see in their features'; he goes on, '[m]aybe our everyday interactions are more "carnivalesque" than we care to believe' simply the result of a 'constant creative imagining' (2012a: 91). The worrying thought from Scruton's point of view is that '[m]aybe the individuality of the other resides *merely* in our way of seeing him, and has little or nothing to do with his way of *being*.' (2012a: 91) Scruton is forced into making the admission that 'there is no answer to the question' except to say that 'the notion of an absolute individuality arises spontaneously from the most fundamental inter-personal relations' and that it is 'built into our way of perceiving as well as our way of describing the human world.' (2012a: 91-2) Rather 'than dismiss it as illusion' Scruton opts again in his recent work to frame the phenomena in question as a 'well-founded phenomenon' (2012a: 92). This mean that Scruton's justification of

the reality of the inter-personal by appealing to how things appear inter-personally, seems to be an attempt to justify the reality of how things appear to us simply by reasserting and elaborating that this is really how things *appear*. Scruton however does not offer a reason to believe that we can move from how things appear to us to the thought that this is how things really are. Instead Scruton has to qualify the status of the phenomena in question as a subjective construction, though a construction he argues that we cannot do without.

This makes sense of the fact that Scruton sometimes describes the attitude that we take to the earth, the world as we live and build on it, in explicitly projectivist rhetoric, '[i]n seeing places, buildings and artefacts as sacred we in effect *project on to the material world* the experience that we receive from each other' (2012a: 161, my emphasis) There is ndeed something natural about this projectivist language given Scruton's ontological commitments. It seems that Scruton would have to describe our relation to the world in projectivist terms given that for him we inherit the attitude towards our surroundings from our experience of each other as persons and, as I have argued, Scruton is still disposed to treat our experience of each other as persons as a subjective construction. In seeing places, buildings and artefacts as sacred we are painting the material world in the colours of subjectivity, rather than responding to anything really present in the objective world.

For this reason I do not think that Scruton manages to escape the problematic metaphysical framework that in earlier work forced him to choose between either supernatural or illusory construals of the 'personal' phenomena that matter to his re-enchantment, and which in the end lead him to declare the 'personal' phenomena under discussion as 'illusions' and 'unreal'. If it is believed that all our relations to the face of the other, and to the face of the earth must be understood in projectivist terms then Scruton's ideas about the sacred and God, because they are constructed out of the materials made available through Scruton's prior understanding of persons more generally, would appear to inherit this projected status. As mentioned, Scruton declared explicitly in earlier work, 'I do not believe that we can accept Kant's majestic theory, which ascribes to persons a metaphysical core, the "transcendental self", lying beyond nature and eternally free from its constraints.' (1986: 10) Due to the way that Scruton's understanding of the sacred and God rests on the stance he takes to persons, a natural response would seem to declare that 'we do not believe that we can accept Scruton's majestic theory which ascribes to God a metaphysical core, a "transcendental self", lying beyond nature and eternally free from its constraints'. As Haldane puts it, God in Scruton's thought, seems to turn out to be 'a projected construction serving to insulate us' from reality, the reality of the disenchanted atheist worldview.

It seems that, whilst Scruton's considered view is to exercise metaphysical caution when it comes to thinking about self and world by sticking to a naturalistic line of thought, when it comes to elaborating his religious ideas Scruton relies on the more metaphysically

robust supernatural understanding of the self to justify the idea that religion is an attitude towards an independent reality. However, if Scruton is to remain consistently committed to what he thinks is philosophically defensible, then Haldane's worry would seem to follow. If religion and the sacred do not allow for the experience of a metaphysically real realm then it seems to follow that religious phenomena such as the sacred and God are a projected human construction serving to insulate human beings from a world of meaningless scientific fact. Haldane's worry appears to identify a genuine problem with Scruton's re-enchantment.

11. Drawing on a McDowellian Perspective

I want to suggest that the source and continued existence of this problem throughout Scruton's thought can be further clarified by situating Scruton's position in relation to McDowell's understanding of disenchantment and re-enchantment.

McDowell presents the modern problem of disenchantment in terms of a particular response to the loss of the medieval view of nature, in which this loss is thought to entail 'total' disenchantment, the view that the objective world is devoid of any meaning and value. McDowell captures this view in terms of the neo-Humean view of mind and world. This view holds that reality as it is independent of the human mind is as it is described to be by the natural sciences. According to the neo-Humean view, reason, meaning and value are understood to belong within the human mind in contrast with an outer world described by the sciences - the realm of disenchanted nature. States of affairs outside of the mind, and so outside of the space of meaning, can be understood as impacting on the human mind and as giving rise to subjective representations. Such a process can be understood not through the concepts that figure in the subjective representations, concepts that belong to the space of meaning, but through concepts that belong to disenchanted nature. A significant element of the neo-Humean view as McDowell presents it, is that features of our subjective representation of the world can be said to genuinely represent the fabric of mind independent reality if they can be vindicated as doing so by the standards and concepts made available by modern science. This has the consequence that any feature of our subjective representation of the world that cannot be captured from a 'dispassionate and dehumanized stance' (1998a: 175) of the sciences, is then held to belong merely to the human mind as a quality that is projected onto the world, rather than genuinely belonging to the objective world. The neo-Humean understanding of the relationship between subjectivity and objectivity has significant implications for how we understand the place of meaning and value in human life. Neo-Humean views open up the possibility of projectivist accounts of value experience. As our values cannot be captured from the 'dispassionate and dehumanized stance' on the world made available by modern science they are regarded as a merely subjective feature of our experience. Values are subjectively projected onto a world that does not genuinely contain them.

But McDowell does not think that projectivism is the only view of meaning and value opened up by the neo-Humean view of mind and world. There is the possibility of an objective understanding put forward within the neo-Humean framework. If, according to this view, meaning and value are thought to be objective, then as the natural sciences are thought to have a monopoly on objectivity, the meaning and value of human life, is to be specified, not in terms of meanings that belong to our human point of view, but from a view from nowhere of the natural

sciences. According to this view, meaning and value are to be reductively explained through concepts of the natural sciences, such as biology.

However, McDowell claims that if, from within a broadly neo-Humean understanding of mind and world, it is held that that meaning and value are objective, but also maintained that the meaning and value of human life cannot be reductively explained through concepts of the natural sciences then McDowell suggests that the only option that seems to be available for an objective ethics is to embrace a rampant platonist or supernatural ground for an objective ethics.

I think that Scruton's thought can be said to be still trapped within this problematic neo-Humean framework that McDowell identifies as one consequence of the process of disenchantment. Like McDowell, Scruton's thought on re-enchantment begins by suggesting that the shift to the modern view of nature does not entail 'total' disenchantment. In particular Scruton thinks that the shift to the modern view of nature does not entail the view that we can no longer make sense of ideas of the sacred and God. But the differences between McDowell and Scruton, and the reason for Scruton's oscillations, seem to me to be the following. Scruton actually accepts as true what McDowell understands as the distinctively modern view of nature as disenchanted. That is to say, Scruton accepts as the starting point of any re-enchantment the truth of significant elements of modern subjectivism, in other words the neo-Humean view of mind and world. McDowell on the other hand thinks that the neo-Humean view cannot be the starting point for any re-enchantment but must instead be exposed as importing a number of ultimately confused philosophical assumptions surrounding, in particular, notions of subjectivity and objectivity.

Underpinning the neo-Humean view of subjectivity and objectivity for McDowell is a confusion about what must be accepted as true in the light of the shift from the medieval to the modern view of nature. McDowell thinks that we get a tendency towards the neo-Humean view because it is believed that what the modern understanding of the 'realm of law' amounted to was 'a new clarity *about nature*.' (1994: 77, McDowell's emphasis). According to this view, for anything to count as part of nature then it must be able to be exhaustively accounted for through concepts that belong to the realm of law. A crucial part of McDowell's re-enchantment involves arguing that we can call the identification of nature with the realm of law into question. McDowell argues that this identification need not follow from the shift from an enchanted view of the cosmos to the view that nature can be understood profitably in terms of the realm of law.

The way in which Scruton accepts as his starting point aspects of McDowell's understanding of the neo-Humean view can be seen in a number of commitments Scruton makes, specifically in the way that Scruton accepts the view that nature is to be understood as identical to the realm of law. Scruton understands the notion of objectivity to be identical with a view from nowhere provided by modern science. Through this identification, what is objective,

or as Scruton prefers, the 'world of objects', can be grasped from no particular point of view. See for example this description of the view form nowhere:

> Imagine a complete description of the world, according to the true theory (whatever it turns out to be) of physics. This description describes the disposition of all the particles, forces and fields that compose reality, and gives spatio-temporal coordinates for everything that is. Not a thing has been overlooked (2012a: 31)

As can be seen here, Scruton not only commits himself to the identification of objectivity with a view from nowhere, but he thinks that modern sciences, specifically physics, can in principle form an exhaustive account from the view from nowhere of what is objectively real. This definition of objectivity results in a view of subjectivity in which it is defined - metaphysically - in opposition to objectivity or the world of objects. As Scruton goes on to say, *nothing* objective has been left out of this view of the world, 'yet there is a fact that the description does not mention, the fact that is more important than any other to me – namely, that which of the things mentioned in the description am I?' (2012a: 31) The oppositional view of subjectivity is explicit in this contrast Scruton draws:

> when I give a scientific account of the world, however, I am describing objects only. I am describing the way things are, and the causal laws that explain them. This description is given from no particular perspective. It does not contain words like "here", "now" and "I"; and while it is meant to explain the way things seem, it does so by giving a theory of how they are. (2012a: 32)

Scruton can be seen to accept as true certain elements of the neo-Humean view of mind and world, in particular its way of understanding of the subjectivity/objectivity relationship, which is motivated to a degree by his commitment to the view that the idea of the natural is the domain of the natural sciences. However, when it comes to understanding meaning and value Scruton is not happy with either of the options made available by the neo-Humean view. He is unhappy with the view that meaning and value are subjective, the result of merely subjective projections, free-choice on the part of individuals. He is also against the view that objective values can be understood by providing a reductive naturalistic explanation from the view from nowhere of the human condition, as the result of contingent desires. His resistance to these options is evident in his desire to make sense of the problem of disenchantment and re-enchantment as surrounding the fate of the sacred and of God.

Whilst wedded to the neo-Humean view of mind and world, Scruton then becomes radically anti-neo-Humean concerning meaning and value in the way that McDowell suggests. The neo-Humean framework encourages Scruton towards a rampant platonist supernaturalism concerning how to understand ourselves and our relation to objective meaning and value. As

McDowell says, according to rampant platonism, the realm of meaning and value, because not able to be understood as part of nature or the world of objects viewed from nowhere, must be seen as 'simply extra-natural'. As McDowell goes on to say 'our capacity to resonate to that structure has to be mysterious', so we think we must view ourselves, our being persons, as mysteriously split, 'it is as if we had a foothold outside the animal kingdom, in a splendidly non-human realm of ideality.' (1994: 88)

All the hallmarks of rampant platonism figure in the movement of thought present in Scruton's re-enchantment in particular in his understanding of 'persons'.[44] However, Scruton adds his own twist, one that I think explains Haldane's worry. Whilst Scruton is anti-Humean when it comes to meaning and value - he rejects its grounding in free choice or reductive naturalism, in contingent desire - he also, cannot unambiguously commit to what McDowell calls rampant platonism, precisely because of its supernaturalism. Therefore Scruton appears to recoil back towards the only other position available within the neo-Humean framework he adopts, in the direction of subjectivism. This explains Scruton's talk of person-related phenomena in projective language as 'illusions', 'shadows', or 'well-founded phenomena'. Nevertheless, Scruton suggests that the supernatural rhetoric is unavoidable from our subjective point of view. The Kantian view of personhood, of us as mysteriously split between the natural and the supernatural, a view of reason, meaning and value, the sacred and God as existing in a 'splendidly non-human realm of ideality' transcending the world, whilst not objectively real phenomena, can be seen as 'forced' on us from the subjective point of view.

If this diagnosis of Scruton's thought is right, it provides an explanation of why, when it comes to notions like the sacred and God, it is natural that Haldane would call into question whether Scruton, despite framing his subjectivist position in supernatural rhetoric, is really committed to the reality of these phenomena. I think that this is to be explained in the light of the fact that, despite Scruton claiming to reject the phenomenon of disenchantment in the form of subjectivism and reductive naturalism, he actually accepts as true the disenchanted view of the world, the definition of subjectivity and objectivity in neo-Humean terms, motivated by the identification of nature with the realm of law.[45] Despite his phenomenologically rich insights

[44] As discussed in the previous section, persons are suggested to be understood in two ways, in the world of nature and at the same time with a perspective outside of nature. It is suggested by Scruton that persons are 'transcendent', 'supernatural'. But in the light of a perplexing metaphysical mystery concerning how this supernatural view of persons, as both in and outside of nature, can make sense, Scruton retreats to a naturalism which supposes that ontologically the natural sciences exhaust the realm of objects and that our existence as persons belongs to a realm of appearance.

[45] Scruton does not question, in the way that McDowell does, this identification. Scruton is deferential towards the sciences. In one sense this is the right attitude to take. If you want to know about the realm of law then pursue these questions by adopting the methods and concepts made available through the sciences. But by wanting to respect the sciences Scruton defers to science on a *philosophical* question, nature is to be identified with the realm of law and as a consequence *objective reality* (a metaphysical not a scientific notion) is given over to what can be made intelligible by the sciences. I do not have space to develop the thought here, but one reason why Scruton might *not* want to make the move that McDowell does is that it involves suggesting the possibility of a *naturalistic,* albeit non-reductive naturalistic, understanding of subjects and this would appear to undermine Scruton's sense of subjectivity as charged with a religious dimension. It works in Scruton's favour, in advancing a form of religious commitment, to maintain a problematic dualism between subjectivity and objectivity, subjectivity and nature. For Scruton it is the problematic status of being both subjects and objects that religion

into proto-religious meaning and value, he never manages to escape the influence and threat posed by modern subjectivism and ultimately never manages to respond adequately to the disenchanted view of the world.

diagnoses and offers a redemptive solution. However, McDowell's non-reductive naturalism would appear to undermine the basis for this reading of our condition, therefore making the McDowellian move to a *naturalism* of second nature unappealing to Scruton not on philosophical but on religious or theological grounds.

12. Conclusion

Whilst Scruton can be said to present an example of a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the world that attempts to incorporate the proto-religious dimension, there is still a worry that hangs over his position, the worry put forward by Haldane. I argued that Scruton does not satisfactorily answer this worry. Furthermore, I attempted to show that the reason why Scruton's re-enchantment encounters a problem can fruitfully be understood by drawing upon McDowell's thought. Haldane's objection is that, whilst Scruton might provide a descriptively rich phenomenological account of the experience of the sacred, it is unclear from Scruton's formulation of his position whether he manages to vindicate 'the sacred' and 'God' as objective realities rather than just subjective projections onto the contingent and meaningless universe of the 'atheist worldview'. Following Haldane's formulation, it is unclear whether the meaning and value Scruton articulates is something 'found' or something merely 'made'.

I argued that the reason for this worry is that Scruton actually accepts as true what McDowell understands as the distinctively modern view of nature as disenchanted. That is to say, Scruton accepts as the starting point of any re-enchantment the truth of significant elements of modern subjectivism, the neo-Humean view of subjectivity and objectivity. Whilst Scruton argues against the view that the emergence of the modern view of nature *entails* that we can reductively explain meaning and value and that therefore we can't make sense of the sacred and God, Scruton articulates his understanding of the sacred and God from within a metaphysical outlook that accepts what from McDowell's point of view appears like a form of the 'illegitimate slippage': the view that the shift from 1) pre-modern to modern view of nature *entailing* 2) the neo-Humean drawing of a boundary between personal agency and the world in terms of a contrast between subjectivity and objectivity.

Scruton claims to reject the phenomenon of disenchantment in the form of the belief that modern view of nature *entails* that meaning and value must be understood as arbitrarily chosen or contingently desired and that therefore we can't make sense of the sacred and God. But despite that, from McDowell's point of view, Scruton actually accepts as true the disenchanted view of the world in terms of the definition of subjectivity and objectivity in neo-Humean terms. This means that, despite his phenomenologically rich insights into proto-religious meaning and value, he never manages to escape the influence and threat posed by modern subjectivism and so ultimately never manages to respond adequately to the view of the self as the origin and source of value that is projected onto an independently meaningless world. In this respect, Scruton's response to the disenchanted view of the world fails.

There are doubts then about the religious re-enchantment that Scruton offers. For this reason I am going to look at another re-enchantment that also attempts to make sense of the

world as warranting certain religious responses, but one which may escape the difficulties identified above, that offered by the later Heidegger.

Chapter Three - Later Heidegger, Later Heideggerians and the Re-enchantment of the World

1. Introduction

So far I have considered two examples of what Taylor calls a re-enchantment from the perspective of our agency-in-the-world. However, based on a further consideration of Taylor's understanding of the problem, I claimed that McDowell's re-enchantment does not encompass the proto-religious dimension. Whilst Scruton's position is developed specifically in order to address this dimension of the problem of disenchantment, I made the case that there are reasons to believe – from a McDowellian point of view – that Scruton accepts certain significant elements of the disenchanted view of the world and that this explains the ambiguous status of his re-enchanted understanding of the world.

In this chapter I will look at the later Martin Heidegger in order to explore the possibility that he provides a re-enchanted view of the world involving a proto-religious dimension. Heidegger's perspective on the issues of disenchantment and re-enchantment has quite a lot in common with McDowell and Scruton's positions. Like McDowell and Scruton, Heidegger sets out to reject a form of scientism which supposes that the world can be exhaustively understood through the natural sciences. Heidegger is similarly concerned to argue that the world understood from the perspective of our agency, our human historical and cultural perspective on the world, constitutes an *irreducible* part of the world as it shows up to human beings.

Heidegger can be understood, like McDowell, to be concerned with a movement of thought that supposes 1) the loss of the belief in various grounds for meaning independent of subjectivity i.e. an independently meaningful nature, *entails* 2) the modern drawing of a boundary between personal agency and the world. Heidegger's assessment of our current predicament in modernity is based on a reading of the history of Western philosophy as a history of reflection upon 'the meaning of Being'. Heidegger's history can be understood as telling the story of the shift from a view of the self as existing in an independently meaningful world, to a sense of self as the origin and source of meaning and value that are projected onto an independently meaningless world. In particular, later Heidegger can be seen to argue that there is a modern temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2 and therefore to think

that the loss of the belief in various grounds for meaning independent of subjectivity *entails* projectivism about meaning and value. Later Heidegger can be seen to argue that, with an adequate understanding of subjects as 'agents-in-the-world', it is possible to respond to the 'illegitimate slippage' by accepting that there are no grounds for meaning independent of subjectivity, whilst rejecting the modern disenchanted boundary between personal agency and the objective world, and on this basis rejecting the view that meaning and value are merely projected.

But later Heidegger, like Scruton, goes further than McDowell's concern with aesthetic and moral values. The later Heidegger is read by some as offering a re-enchantment which encompasses the idea that the world understood from the perspective of our agency involves a proto-religious dimension. The area of later Heidegger's thinking that is relevant here is that human beings do not exist in a world of objects as they have been understood in the Western philosophical tradition (simply as objects of scientific study) but a world of what Heidegger calls 'Things'.[46] On this basis Heidegger is read as making the case for a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world in terms of a sense of the subject as 'dwelling' in a wider meaningful nature or universe that surrounds us, understood as 'the fourfold' of 'earth', 'sky', 'divinities' and 'mortals'. The surrounding world of the fourfold warrants certain proto-religious responses such as awe, wonder, and reverence, as it is a world that Heidegger refers to at various times as involving 'the divine', 'the sacred' and 'the holy'.

Introduction of Later Heideggerian Themes

In order to provide a sense of the aspects of later Heidegger's thought that will concern me I will briefly give an overview of certain themes in later Heidegger's thought.

Later Heidegger positions himself critically against the tradition of Western philosophy going back to Plato and culminating in modern subjectivism captured by his reading of Nietzsche. Heidegger understands the history of philosophy as a series of ways of understanding 'being' or that on the basis of which beings are intelligible.[47] From Plato's theory of the Forms to Nietzsche's doctrine of the will to power, later Heidegger accuses the whole tradition from Plato to modern subjectivism of a single error that he terms 'metaphysics'. Part of the later Heidegger's project is a critique of metaphysics arguing that it fails to grasp, or has 'forgotten', the real question of being.

[46] As I explain later in more detail 'Things' is a Heideggerian term of art used to refer to entities understood in relation to our practical agency that co-disclose the surrounding world of that agency as 'the fourfold'. When I am talking about this specifically Heideggerian view I write 'Things'.
[47] *See* Heidegger (1962: 6).

But metaphysics and the forgetting of being for later Heidegger are not just intellectual problems; they are also cultural problems.[48] Heidegger engages critically with modernity as the cultural manifestation of metaphysics in the form of modern technology. He sees modern technology, because of its basis in a form of world disclosure that he terms '*Gestell*' (1977: 20), as distinctively violent technology. Modern technology has been 'set upon things' (1977: 20), in particular the natural world, as a mere resource for human consumption and control. For Heidegger, such an outlook leads to a form of disenchantment according to which the world no longer stands over and against us as meriting responses of 'wonder' 'awe' 'respect' and 'reverence', that register the sense of the world as a 'divine' and 'holy' place. Moreover, by understanding being as a mere resource in a realm of technological manipulation we too come to be seen in such a way –as human resources –eliminating any sense of our lives as having a meaning beyond the expression of a 'will to power' in a world of meaningless 'standing reserve' (1977: 20).

Heidegger's way out of the modern predicament as he understands it, is to critically engage with metaphysics both at the philosophical and the cultural level. He aims to articulate a sense in which the world's intelligibility – the intelligibility of 'Things' – whilst dependent on human subjectivity, is not something subjectively projected on the world. Rather 'Things' are 'Given' out of a world not of our subjective making and control. Heidegger looks to displace the view of our being-in-the-world as one of technological manipulation in a realm of standing reserve in favour of one in which our practical agency is understood to be environed by a prior world of significance that he calls in his later work the 'fourfold' of 'earth', 'sky', 'divinities' and 'mortals'. This understanding of the world, Heidegger believes, is capable of inspiring wonder, awe, respect and reverence. It is out of this sense that we can make the 'turn' from a disenchanted technological stance towards the world, to a re-enchanted relation in which we learn to 'dwell poetically on the earth'. (2001: 216)[49]

[48] Scruton's understanding of disenchantment has a similar character. For example, atheism, Scruton claims, 'is not only an intellectual phenomenon, expressing a disbelief in God, but also a moral phenomenon, involving a turning away from God.' (2012a: 1) Scruton adds that 'I do not deny that atheists can be thoroughly upright people, far better people than I am. But there is more than one motive underlying the atheist culture of our times, and the desire to escape from the eye of judgement is one of them. You escape from the eye of judgement by wiping away the face.' (2012a: 2)

[49] I am looking at the *later* Heidegger rather than the early Heidegger because the view that the world involves a proto-religious dimension is a stronger theme in Heidegger's later rather than his earlier thought. Heidegger's own early religiosity is a difficult, but now quite frequently-discussed, topic. For biographical detail, *see* Ott (1994 Part Two) and Safranski (1999). For other interesting studies of Heidegger's thought in relation to religion and theology, *see* Crowe (2006), and McGrath (2006). In his mature early work, Heidegger makes claims such as that 'any philosophy…, as philosophy, must stand outside of faith' (2010: 194). *See* also (1985: 314). But that *Being and Time* really does express an atheist outlook is an assumption that has been questioned, *see* Philipse (1998) and Rickey (2002).

2. Approaching The Later Heidegger

Later Heidegger employs a number of ideas and concepts – 'being', 'metaphysics', 'technology', '*Gestell*', 'the fourfold', 'dwelling', 'dwelling *poetically*' 'the holy' – that seem integral to his thought but are very difficult to understand. The difficulty surrounding his idiosyncratic terminology leads some to dismiss Heidegger's thought. For example, Scruton's assessment of Heidegger tends to be rather negative, suggesting that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to extract any coherent arguments or philosophical ideas from Heidegger's work. Writing specifically of *Being and Time,* Scruton remarks that,

> [i]ts language…is metaphorical and contorted to the point almost of incomprehensibility; the reader has the impression that never before have so many words been invented and tormented in the attempt to express the inexpressible (2002: 270)

Scruton goes on to clam that 'Heidegger does not give any arguments for the truth of what he says…Heidegger's ideas seem like spectral visions in the realm of thought; vast, intangible shadows cast by language.' (2002: 274)

However, Scruton's assessment of the *later* Heidegger is slightly less damning:

> in later essays Heidegger escaped from the prison of his early style and developed his vision of philosophy as a form of hermeneutics. He wrote pertinently on social matters, producing a profound critique of technological society, and an invocation of the condition of the human being, as a creature who *dwells* in the earth and who must consecrate his being here. (2007b: 295)

The reason I talk in the title of this chapter of later Heidegger and the later Heideggerians is that, due to the difficulty of Heidegger's thought, I am going to look at the re-enchantment he offers by engaging with two contemporary philosophers that are significantly influenced by the ideas of the later Heidegger and provide an interpretation of his later thought, Julian Young and Charles Taylor.[50] My concern will be with critically engaging with their interpretations of the later Heidegger's contribution to the problem of disenchantment and I have chosen Young and Taylor because their interpretations differ in interesting ways that are relevant to the question of Heidegger's re-enchantment.

[50] Other sympathetic overviews of the later Heidegger's thought are provided by Braver (2009), Pattison (2000) and Thomson (2005).

Part 1 – Julian Young's Reading of Later Heidegger

1. Introduction

Julian Young (2001, 2002, 2003) provides a sympathetic and comprehensive overview of Heidegger's later philosophy. He declares that, 'save where I explicitly criticize him, the views I attribute to Heidegger are ones I have learnt to adopt as my own' (2002: 1). Young's reading is concerned with establishing the view that later Heidegger argues for a 'universal, community-transcending meaning of life…written into the condition of being human as such.'(2003:198)[51] Young can be seen to argue that the later Heidegger provides an argument against the view that the meaning and value of our lives is based on subjective projection by arriving at a conception of man's unchosen and non-contingent *essence*, derived from the perspective of our 'agency-in-the-world'.

Man's essence and the good life for human beings to live, according to Young's reading of the later Heidegger, is one of 'dwelling', of living a life of 'guardianship' towards the 'world' due to it being a 'holy' and 'sacred' place. According to this reading, the world owes its holy and sacred character to its being the essentially mysterious 'self-display of the simultaneously self-concealing divinity' (2002: 41). Whilst Young denies that this is the God of traditional Christian theology' (2002: 22, 2003: 211), it is nevertheless '*some* kind of God' (2003: 211) and forms the basis of an understanding of the good life that is grounded in humanity-independent reality.

In what follows I will give an overview of Young's reading of the later Heidegger, his view of how Heidegger understands man's relation to language, world and Being as constituting the grounds of non-projected meaning of life which involves the view that the world warrants proto-religious responses. This will involve looking at what Young understands as Heidegger's philosophy of Being, how, on this basis Young sees Heidegger as diagnosing the modern turn towards projected views of meaning and value, and how Young then understands Heidegger's re-enchantment, his attempted reversal of this turn towards projectivism.

[51] This is in contrast to other 'post-death-of-God' philosophers who Young reads as holding that there is no such meaning. Young includes the 'early' Heidegger of *Being and Time* in this group of thinkers, interpreting early Heidegger as advocating the view that whilst the meaning of life is not established *personally* it is established *communally, see* Young *(*2003: 198). One of the differences between the early and the later Heidegger according to this reading is that Heidegger moves from a position in which there is no community-transcending meaning to human life to a position in which there is such meaning.

2. Later Heidegger's Philosophy of Being

Young's approach to the later Heidegger begins with an interpretation of what he refers to as Heidegger's 'philosophy of Being'. Young presents Heidegger's philosophy of Being as covering three topics: 'Being', 'truth' and 'metaphysics' and his approach begins with later Heidegger's theory of truth.

Truth As 'Correspondence' Depends On Truth as 'Disclosure'

Young explains Heidegger's understanding of truth by presenting his view in contrast to the view of truth that Heidegger maintains has prevailed in the western philosophical tradition. According to this tradition, truth is to be understood as 'correspondence' to 'the facts'. Young believes that Heidegger's concerns about the correspondence theory of truth can be highlighted by the shortcomings of an answer to the question, '[w]hat…tells us what the facts are' (2003: 203). Young thinks that implicit in correspondence theories is the answer that you 'look and see'. Heidegger's alternative theory of truth emerges from the realisation of why the 'look and see' response implicit in correspondence theories fails. Young discusses the following kind of example to illustrate the point:

> I say, pointing to the river, "You'll never bathe in that again". You, having bathed there every summer and firmly intending to continue the practice, dispute this. Actually, however, what I was referring to was not the river, but the particular body of water. (2003: 203)

Young claims that, far-fetched though the example might be, it illustrates an important philosophical point. The point is that 'looking and seeing' or mere 'word-object correlation' (2003: 203) is insufficient to establish meaning. This has the consequence, Young thinks, that 'looking and seeing' is not sufficient to 'establish what the relevant facts are against which statements are to be checked for correctness.' (2003: 203) In other words, mere 'looking and seeing' or 'word-object' correlation is insufficient to explain the possibility of truth understood as correspondence. Young understands Heidegger as holding the view that the possibility of truth as correspondence depends on the intelligibility of the world prior to any 'checking' of statements or 'looking and seeing', or 'word-object' correlation; the world's intelligibility depends on a relation that lies outside of the sphere of any correspondence relation.

Ordinarily our conversations are not fraught with ambiguous references and failures of meaning. Young suggests that the reason later Heidegger gives for this is that 'there is a – usually unnoticed – background assumption as to the kinds of entities – for example, objects

rather than the ever-changing stuffs that make them up – that are under discussion.' (2003: 203-4) Young thinks that these 'background assumptions' are key to understanding why Heidegger is dissatisfied with truth understood merely as correspondence. For Heidegger, truth as correspondence depends on a form of truth or prior intelligibility of the world, that he thinks of as 'horizons of disclosure' or following Nietzsche 'perspectives'. Young is keen to stress that

> Heidegger does not deny that truth is correspondence. His point is rather that since the possibility of propositions being true or false (the possibility…of reality's becoming "intelligible" to us) depends on there being things to which they refer and facts about those things to which they may or may not correspond, and since the identification of such a realm of facts depends on a horizon of disclosure which alone makes it possible, truth as correspondence is dependent on something more "primordial". This condition of the possibility of propositional truth Heidegger calls 'truth as disclosure' or often, using the Greek word, '*aletheia*' - *aletheia*, bringing out of "oblivion" or concealment. (2002: 7)

Truth As 'Disclosure' Entails Truth As 'Concealment'

Young claims that the consequence of Heidegger's view that truth, understood as correspondence, depends on truth, as disclosure, is that Heidegger conceives of 'disclosure' as also involving 'concealment'. Young understands concealment simply as the view that, '[h]orizons conceal the intelligibility that would be revealed by other horizons.' (2003: 204) Young argues that this is precisely the point of horizons of disclosure. Horizons rule out ambiguity because they serve, in their role as background assumptions, to rule out and so 'conceal' other horizons that could confuse the object of reference and so what is meant.

But Young claims that, for Heidegger, that which truth conceals, and so the idea of 'concealment' is meant to indicate something yet more profound. What gets concealed by the 'horizonal' character of the world's intelligibility is something with a 'hidden depth', it is 'the uncanny', 'the awesome' and ultimately 'the mystery' (2003: 204). Young recognises that it is puzzling why such a conclusion would be drawn simply from the fact that horizons serve to conceal other horizons. As he puts it, 'although, for example, the object horizon occludes the constituent-stuff horizon for the time being, the latter is certainly a horizon I can come to inhabit if I choose.' (2003: 204) The implication of the thought that truth conceals a 'hidden depth' to reality that is ultimately 'mysterious' is not that horizons temporarily obscure other horizons that can, if I choose to occupy them, become intelligible to me. Talk of what is concealed as 'uncanny', 'awesome' and 'mysterious' implies that there is a depth to reality that is forever beyond the horizon of knowledge and understanding, something *in principle* unintelligible about reality.

Young defends his reading of Heidegger on this point by suggesting Heidegger draws a distinction between the 'horizons' so far discussed, local horizons between which individuals can choose, and what Young refers to as 'ultimate horizons'. An ultimate horizon according to Young is

> embodied in the language we speak, [it] represents the ultimate limit of what, to us, is intelligible. It is, so to speak, the horizon of all our horizons. (2003: 204)

On the basis of this distinction between 'local' and 'ultimate' horizons, Young argues that Heidegger understands an ultimate horizon of disclosure to be the *unchosen* transcendental, *a priori*, limits of intelligibility determined by the historical-cultural epoch that individuals inhabit as a matter of necessity.[52]

The main argument Young identifies as supporting the thought that the existence of ultimate horizons entails that reality possesses a hidden and mysterious depth is that 'it would be mere arrogance to assume that the limits of intelligibility for my historical-cultural epoch constitute the limits of intelligibility *per se*' (2003: 204) Young views Heidegger as understanding language to be essentially historically and culturally conditioned, so that different 'epochs' inhabit different ultimate horizons, that different epochs have different ultimate horizons or ultimate perspectives on reality, and Young takes this to entail that

> in addition to what is intelligible to us, reality – "Being" – possesses an infinite "plentitude" or "facets" which would be intelligible to us were we to inhabit horizons beyond our ultimate horizon, but which, in fact, are entirely unintelligible to us. (2003: 204)

It is this, Young argues, that 'makes Being an unfathomable "mystery"' (2003: 204) According to this argument, once the existence of ultimate horizons is recognised and the culturally and historically relative character of ultimate horizons is understood, it follows that in addition to what is intelligible to us, reality possesses an infinitely large number of aspects, a 'plentitude' of horizons of intelligibility. Intelligibility, due to its historically and culturally relative character,

[52] Later I trace some problems associated with Young's idea of a "ultimate horizon". But there are others. For example though it is fairly clear what a local horizon is it is not clear in Young's work what an ultimate horizon is. The definition that Young gives is that, as opposed to local horizons, an ultimate horizon is something unchosen and represents the ultimate limit of what is intelligible to a cultural epoch. But whereas it is fairly clear what a local horizon is a perspective *on,* it is not at all clear what an ultimate horizon is a perspective on and for this reason just what an ultimate horizon is quite meant to be. It takes work to construct a sympathetic answer to this question from Young's writings on Heidegger. Presumably when Young invokes Heidegger's idea that the world of the Greeks, the world of the Jews and the world of the Middle Ages amount to distinct worlds that these are meant to be paradigmatic examples of what later Heidegger means by different and incommensurate 'ultimate' horizons. But what marks the difference between these 'worlds', what are they different perspective on? It would seem that one answer Young might give is that the Greeks, the Jews, and those living in the Middle Ages inhabited an unchosen ultimate horizon on what it means for any entity 'to be'. To take just two of these cases, whilst for the (pre-Socratic) Greeks 'to be' is to be a 'Thing', a gift of 'the fourfold', for those living in the Middle Ages the unchosen orientation on what it means 'to be' is to be the creation of an omnipotent God. This might be one way of filling out what Young means by an ultimate horizon but I am not completely sure that this is his view. For this reason Young's idea of an ultimate horizon remains unclear.

is also a concealment of all the other ultimate horizons of intelligibility. Reality is the never wholly intelligible 'mysterious' 'origin' and 'source' of all these horizons. As Young puts it,

> Heidegger calls that which truth conceals…"the mystery". Because of the hidden "reservoir", the hidden "depth" to truth, truth is "uncanny", "awesome" (2002: 8)

Young makes the point that though, for Heidegger, language is essentially historically and culturally conditioned, '[t]he language we speak, together with the horizon of disclosure it embodies, is no human creation.' (2003: 204) Young understands Heidegger as arguing that language cannot be a human creation because 'we need to possess language *already* in order to think, to plan, to form intentions – in short, to create.' (2003: 204) On Young's reading, Heidegger advances the alternative view that '[l]anguage happens through human beings but not by human intention', rather than our 'creation', language and the world it discloses is something that we 'receive', is 'sent' to us. (2003: 204-5) If we ask, 'What is language sent by?', Young's view is that all we can say in answer to this question is that language is sent 'by the real', or by 'Being'. As Young goes on to put it, 'Being gives birth to a language and a linguistic community and so, as it were, kindles itself a light, enters the realm of intelligibility.' (2003: 205) But nevertheless 'Being' as I now want to discuss must, according to Young's reading of later Heidegger, be understood as 'the Mystery'.

The Distinction Between 'being' and 'Being'

According to Young's interpretation of Heidegger's philosophy of Being

> Being…has two essential characteristics. First, it discloses itself, becomes intelligible as a world (the world of the Greeks, the world of the Jews, the world of the Middle Age and so on) by "sending" language. But, second, it conceals itself: remains, though "near", at the same time infinitely "far" (2003: 205)

Young believes that in order to accurately capture the way later Heidegger understands Being to exhibit an intelligibility/unintelligibility, self-disclosure/self-concealment structure, it is absolutely necessary to make a distinction between two senses of 'being' present in Heidegger's later thought. In order to do this Young writes 'being' in two ways, as 'being' and 'Being'. By 'being', Young understands, 'just a synonym for that which, in discussing truth, Heidegger refers to as a (fundamental) horizon of disclosure and as "world"' (2002: 12). 'being' for Young, is what Heidegger calls the 'transcendental' that which transcends beings and determines the way in which beings show up to human understanding. However, Young

opposes interpretations of the later Heidegger that think that what Heidegger has to say about Being is exhausted by what Heidegger means by 'being' (lower case 'b').

As well as ‘being’, Young believes the core of later Heidegger’s thought is a concern with ‘Being’. Young explains what he understands by 'Being' in contrast with 'being' by claiming that, whilst what defines 'being' is that it is the 'clearing', the condition of the possibility of our apprehension of beings, 'Being' is its opposite, namely the unintelligible ‘Origin’ or ‘Source’ of ‘being’. 'Being' is that which 'really is', the infinite concealed 'plenitude' of reality's 'facets', the ‘mystery’.

Arriving at this distinction between ‘being’ and ‘Being’ can be seen as the most important feature of Heidegger’s later philosophy of Being according to Young’s interpretation. It is important to note that by arriving at this view of reality as ‘B/being’, as structured in terms of an intelligibility/unintelligibility, self-disclosure/self-concealing split, Young sees Heidegger as attempting to recover a pre-Platonic ancient Greek understanding of the world in terms of ‘B/being’. Young presents later Heidegger as holding that the pre-Platonic Greeks had the greatest insight into and understanding of Being as structured in this way, of their world as having its origin and source in a hidden and mysterious reality. As Young puts it, ‘[t]hese two characteristics…creative self-disclosure and self-concealment, are precisely the two essential characteristics of the Greek understanding of their world as nature’s *poiesis*.’ (2003: 205) and the world understood in this way constituted for them ‘*some* kind of God’ (2003: 211).

Young holds that for Heidegger in modernity we have lost or ‘forgotten’ the Greek way of understanding reality as nature’s *poiesis,* of ‘B/being’ as divine self-revelation and this is due to ‘metaphysics’.

Metaphysics

This way of understanding Heidegger’s philosophy of Being, that culminates with the insistence that being, to be understood properly, *must* be understood as ‘B/being’, provides Young with a way of interpreting Heidegger’s unique use of the term ‘metaphysics’. In short, Young’s view is that what Heidegger means by ‘metaphysics’ is taking ‘being’ to be all that there is to reality and so overlooking, or ‘forgetting’, ‘Being’.

Young claims that Heidegger employs the term ‘metaphysics’ in a pejorative sense ‘with an eye to the traditional metaphysician’s claim to have discovered *the* nature of ultimate reality.’ (2003: 205) For Young this claim to understand ultimate reality can be seen to consist of four thoughts. The first is that, ‘it consists in thinking – either explicitly or implicitly – that there is no more to truth than correspondence.’ (2003: 205) Relatedly, metaphysics ‘is the failure to realise that the world as one experiences it is disclosed and conditioned by a particular

horizon of disclosure, a horizon that simultaneously occludes indefinitely many other horizons and conceals, therefore, indefinitely many other worlds.' (2003: 205) According to this line of thought, metaphysics can be understood as, 'the "absolutisation" of some particular horizon of disclosure into *the* (one and only) way that reality is.' (2003: 205) Finally, metaphysics is, '"oblivion" to "the mystery", oblivion to the awesome darkness that is the other side of our illumination of Being.' (2003: 205) Young suggests that this can all be captured in a single image that Heidegger borrows from Rilke, the error involved in metaphysics is a stance to the world that is equivalent to the 'illusion that the moon is a flat, illuminated disc' (2003: 206) with no dark side to it.

Young argues that the kind of confusion that Heidegger thinks 'metaphysics' is involved in and which leads to the 'oblivion of Being' is the failure of metaphysical thinking to register '"[the] way the essence of human being belongs to being".' (2002: 27) As Young explains,

> [t]he crucial truth metaphysics misses is the dependence of being on human being. For short, the "subjectivity" of being. (2002: 27)

Young explains what he means by 'subjective' in this context: '[w]hat is subjective…is not *what* we experience as characterizing reality but rather the *selection* we make from the infinite richness of attributes possessed by reality itself.' (2002: 28) What Young means by 'subjective' here is a reiteration of the point that truth is 'horizonal', its intelligibility is not absolute but relative to linguistic 'perspective'.

The consequence of missing the 'horizonal' character of our perspective on beings is that it 'elevates its account of the being of beings into *the* (one and only) categorical account of reality itself.' (2002: 29) This is what Young takes Heidegger to mean when he claims that the metaphysical interpretation of being 'drives out every other possibility of revealing'. Young refers to the elevation of a particular horizon of disclosure to 'tyrannical status' as 'absolutization', and the error of metaphysics as the absolutization of an horizon of disclosure.

Metaphysics and Disenchantment

Young claims that Heidegger's pejorative use of the term 'metaphysics' is slightly unfortunate because it can wrongly give the impression that the problem Heidegger is concerned to diagnose is purely a 'philosopher's vice' confined to a few 'professional metaphysicians' (2003: 206). In fact Heidegger sees the problem as more widespread than that. The term

'metaphysics' and the 'forgetting' of Being it embodies is meant also to capture a wide-ranging cultural problem that has come to fruition uniquely in modernity.

As mentioned earlier, Young reads later Heidegger as holding that with his philosophy of B/being, Heidegger attempts to recover the pre-Platonic or pre-metaphysical understanding of reality as possessing an intelligibility/unintelligibility, or self-disclosure/self-concealment structure. However, with the onset of 'metaphysics' in the post-Platonic tradition of thinking about Being, what has been lost is not just that reality has an unintelligible side, but the Greek understanding of *what it is* that simultaneously discloses and conceals itself. According to the Greek experience of their world reality does not only exhibit the intelligibility/unintelligibility structure but is regarded as 'mysterious', 'awesome', 'holy', and 'sacred', as *God's* self-revelation/concealment. With the onset of metaphysical thinking, the post-Platonic western 'worlds' have drifted away from the Greek experience due to the loss of mysterious depth to reality, towards disenchantment, the inability to understand their world as 'awesome', 'holy', 'sacred', the 'mystery' of God's self-disclosure/concealment. As Young explains it,

> loss of radiance, *Entzauberung*, dis-enchantment, to use the term Max Weber used to identify what he took to be the defining characteristic of modernity, is a necessary consequence of metaphysics. If, that is to say, we absolutize our horizon of disclosure then we become oblivious to the unfathomable depth of Being, oblivious to our world as the self-disclosing gift of the infinitely self-concealing. Instead of the mystery of the "globe of Being", reality is reduced to (in every sense of the word) a flat, illuminated disk. Instead of something awesome and astonishing, an object of "wonder", the world "obtrudes…in a dry, monotonous and therefore oppressive way". It loses its magic, becomes dis-enchanted. (2002: 36)

So, Young's reading of Heidegger presents a unique perspective on the transition from the enchanted to the disenchanted world. The transition from enchantment to disenchantment is from an understanding of the world as something mysterious to an understanding of the world as wholly intelligible, say to the natural sciences.

Young argues that Heidegger diagnoses three major symptoms that characterise the 'destitution' or disenchantment of modernity, These are 1) Loss of the gods; 2) Man's inability to 'own' death; and 3) The 'violence' of modern technology (2002: 32-3) What I will focus on now is Young's explanation of 3) the violence of modern technology. This forms a substantial part of Young's interpretation of later Heidegger understanding of disenchantment. I will have reason later to discuss how Young understands 1 and 2.

3. Metaphysics and Technology

According to Young's reading of Heidegger, metaphysics is a wide-ranging cultural problem because 'a powerful tendency towards the "oblivion" of metaphysics is inherent in all human beings' (2003: 206). However, to understand how Heidegger views 'metaphysics' as both a philosophical error and a cultural problem, Young relates the idea of 'metaphysics' to the concept of 'work' thereby drawing a contrast between Greek and modern technology in Heidegger's thought.

Young suggests that for Heidegger, 'work' is to be understood as 'the normal, the "everyday" state of human beings.' (2003: 206) That is to say, Heidegger understands 'work' or 'intentional production of a change in the world' as something essential to the being of man. In this sense, Young understands Heidegger to be claiming that to be human is to be 'essentially, uniquely, and almost always a worker, a technological being engaged in technological activity.' (2002: 48) Young reads Heidegger as making a point which he claims is first introduced by Schopenhauer, that "work" requires that things are represented and so 'show up' in work-suitable ways. In order to build a temple things must be intelligible as 'resources' for such a task, the hillside must show up as a quarry of stone and the piece of metal as a chisel. Also, the building of a temple requires that masons, sculptors and painters also 'show up' as resources for the task. On the basis of this thought Young makes the further claim on behalf of Heidegger's view, that '[b]ecause he is necessarily and almost always "at work", the world as he experiences it is "twisted around towards the human being", shows up, that is, under technological descriptions.' (2002: 48) The important point is that, for man, things 'almost always' show up in relation to our work practices, that is 'twisted around' as resources.

Heidegger holds that this is true in every age. As man is essentially at work, the world has a particular way in every age of showing up as resource. However, Heidegger regards modernity as uniquely possessed by what he calls '*Gestell'*. If in every age man is primarily a worker and things have their 'resourceful' ways of showing up, then what does it mean to say that modernity is uniquely the age of *Gestell*? *Gestell* is a mode of world understanding in which the real reveals itself as resource, but as this is true of every age it cannot serve as an adequate definition of what is unique about modernity. Young's view is that the key to understanding *Gestell* – and its connection with 'metaphysics' – is Heidegger's thought that when *Gestell* holds sway it drives out every other possibility of revealing. As Young puts it, '[w]hat this suggests is that *Gestell* is not just the disclosure of things as resource: it is their disclosure as *nothing but* resource, *pure* resource.' (2003: 202) Whilst Heidegger holds that each age discloses beings in technological terms, not every age is guilty of metaphysics and shaped by *Gestell*, not every age takes the technological disclosure to *exhaustively* characterise

the world. However, Heidegger thinks that modernity is the age of metaphysics because *Gestell* has come to fruition in practice as the lived experience of our world as *nothing but* resource for our human purposes. Just as metaphysics is the mistake of forgetting the subjectivity of being so, Young suggests, is *Gestell* the forgetting of the subjectivity of the world's showing up as resource, and instead taking 'resourcefulness' to exhaustively characterise the nature of reality.

Contrast Between Pre-Modern And Modern Technological Disclosure Of Being

In this context Young describes the contrast later Heidegger wants to bring out between pre-Platonic/pre-metaphysical Greek technology and modern technology:

> Compare and contrast "the old wooden bridge"…that "lets the river run its course"…with the modern hydro-electric dam that turns it into a reservoir. Or the ancient peasant farm where the farmer "places the seed in the keeping of the forces of growth"…with the modern mono-cultural, artificially fertilized, E.U.-subsidized, mechanized (and so countryside depopulating) branch of "the mechanized food industry"…. Or compare the ancient woodcutter who took the wood he needed but allowed the forest to remain the forest, with the modern timber company which clear-fells the native forest, and replants with exotic pines whose acid needles make it impossible that anything else should grow. It seems that whereas ancient technology existed in harmonious and respectful rapport with nature, modern technology constitutes a kind of 'setting upon'…, a rape or violation of nature. Whereas ancient technology was, as we may put it, "gentle", modern technology is, to use E. F. Schumacher's term. "violent technology". (2002: 37-8)

Young thinks that Heidegger explains the contrast between Greek technological practice and modern technological practice on the basis of Heidegger's commitment to the view that our – modern – understanding of the world is determined by metaphysics, the unnoticed 'absolutisation' of our merely subjective view on the world as resource as exhausting the nature of what is, reality cannot but show up in terms of its relation to our resourceful manipulation of it. However, given their understanding of reality as involving an intelligible and an unintelligible side as the self-disclosure of the self-concealing, the Greeks experienced their world as always exceeding the human subjective view, and so as exceeding a merely resourceful manipulation of it.

We have seen, through the discussion of his philosophy of B/being how Young thinks Heidegger understood the Greek view of the world. Young thinks that what is at the basis of the Greek understanding of the world for Heidegger is the intelligible/unintelligible, self-disclosure/self-concealment structure, or as Young claims it is also understood by Heidegger, as nature's *poiesis.* Young elaborates on the idea of nature's *poiesis* by claiming that for the

Greeks it can be divided into two kinds. First by what Young refers to as a form of "unaided bringing forth". This is exemplified by the blossoming of a flower into bloom, and this form of *poiesis* is to be understood as *physis*. Secondly, there is a form of *poiesis* involved in an "aided" bringing forth in which a craftsman or "technician" lends a hand to nature's blossoming. This second kind of bringing forth is *techne*.

Young makes the point that, for Heidegger, the Greeks understood their technological practice as continuous with, and a completion of, nature's own building: '[t]he model for *poiesis* is *physis*, the rising forth of the spring from the rock, the plant from the seed or the blossom from the bud.' (2003: 200) But Young insists that

> while the flower bud is…visible and known, the, as it were, "world bud" is utterly mysterious, incomprehensible. (2003: 200)

For this reason, Young supposes that 'by virtue of [nature's] creative power, [it is]breathtakingly awesome.' (2003: 200) So what Heidegger thinks the Greek ideas of nature's *poiesis* really intimates is the emergence and bringing-forth of beings out of the hidden depths, out of the mystery of Being:

> The Greeks…experienced their world as created and sustained by an incomprehensible but overwhelmingly powerful force. More exactly, they experienced it as the self-display of the simultaneously self-concealing divinity "earth"; as Sophocles called it, "the most sublime of the gods'. The Greek cosmos was "touched by the exciting nearness of the fire from the heavens". It was a numinous world, a holy place. (2003: 200)

Greek technology is viewed by Heidegger as continuous with nature's building because this view of the cosmos had two consequences for Greek practice according to Young:

> Towards the major, structural features of the divinity's self-expression (its performance artwork, as one might be inclined to think of it), towards great rivers, forests, mountains as well as human communities and life-forms ("peoples"), technological activity will always be circumscribed by fundamental considerations of conservation. Second, insofar as one's being in the world is a matter of making changes rather than conserving things as they are, then, rather than the violence of "making", it will be the "gentleness" of "letting what is coming arrive". Better put, it is a matter of allowing the divine "Origin"…of things to complete its self-disclosure through one's creative activities. (2002: 42)

Young sums this up, '[i]n a word, the gentleness of the Greek's technology was grounded in the fact that their world disclosed itself to them as a sacred place.' (2003: 200) In contrast,

> [m]odern technology is…violent technology. It violates both non-human and human nature, not because modern humanity (or some self-serving élite within it)

> is especially wicked, but because, as a culture, it is afflicted by a peculiarly one-dimensional way of experiencing reality. (2003: 203)

4. Re-enchantment – Overcoming Modern Technology

Young's later Heidegger was seen to provide a unique perspective on the transition from enchantment to disenchantment in terms of a shift from an understanding of the world as mysterious to it being exhaustively intelligible to human beings. In modernity this is understood from the perspective of our agency – the perspective of 'work – in terms of the world showing up as 'pure resource'. Young sees later Heidegger as suggesting that the violence of modern technology can be resisted by overcoming the one-dimensional way that the world is disclosed as resource by recovering, from the perspective of our agency, the ancient Greek appreciation of nature's *poiesis*, the mystery of Being.

Young approaches Heidegger's re-enchantment by looking at what he believes saved 'the Greeks' from *Gestell*.[53] By answering this question it is possible to understand the 'turn' that Heidegger imagines we in modernity can make towards a re-enchanted understanding of the world. The reason Heidegger gives is that the Greeks were saved by 'the festival' the authentic 'holiday' (holy day) (2003: 206). These constitute, for Heidegger, a break with the work relationship to the world, the authentic holiday constituting genuine time out from work. It is a genuine stepping out of the 'everydayness' in which things show up as pure resource. What does the festive or the holiday involve stepping into? Young thinks that when Heidegger talks about 'the festival' he has in mind things like the gathering at the Greek temple and the Olympic Games. However, Young maintains that what is essential to Heidegger's idea of 'the festival' is a 'mood' or manner of 'world-disclosure', what Young calls the 'festive mood'. The essential feature of this 'mood' or 'world-disclosure', Young believes, is that, as Heidegger puts it, man steps into 'the full breadth of the space proper to his essence' (1977: 39).

Young understands this 'space' that man belongs to and which is proper to his essence as involving two things. First, unlike in the manner of world-disclosure characteristic of *Gestell*, in the 'festive mood', 'instead of being shut down to their being-for-us, things show up in their "ownness"…their being-in-itself.' (2003: 207) Young elaborates on this reversal of our relationship to things by claiming that, '[i]n the festive mode of disclosure…we step into the *fullness* of the world that is disclosed to us by language, by the "clearing of Being", that we inhabit.' (2003: 207) An example of things showing up not in their 'being-for-us', but in their 'ownness' or 'being-in-itself', Young suggests, is when, '[t]he wooded hillside…shows up not

[53] Commenting upon Heidegger's portrait of the Greeks, Young responds to an objection that Heidegger is guilty of sentimentalising them. Young's view is that Heidegger's Greeks can fulfil the role he intends even if they are partially or even totally mythical. They serve the purpose of providing a contrast between the modern view of being and point towards an understanding of Being that is available to us in the present. In fact Young suggests that perhaps a better way of understanding Heidegger's Greeks is as representing 'a possible *future* not that they represent an actual past' (2003: 201), so that 'intuitively and poetically' we have the possibility of 'recovering' the fundamentally correct understanding of truth and Being as nature's *poiesis*.

merely as a store of building material but also as a hillside that is home to the flora and fauna that inhabit it.' (2003: 207)

The second aspect of this 'stepping into the full breadth of the space proper to our essence' is our 'step[ping] into an intuitive sense of our world as nature's *poiesis*' (2003: 207) What Young means by this is we come to appreciate the truth arrived at through Heidegger's philosophy of Being, we step out of the 'dull overcastness of the everyday, and into the "infinite depth, the boundlessness of Being."' (2003: 207) In the 'festive mood' we come to appreciate the 'mystery' of Being'.

> we step…into "the wonder that around us a world worlds, that there is something rather than nothing, that there are things, and we ourselves are in their midst". We step, in other words, into an apprehension of our world as something *granted* to us, something which, rather than being *of course* there, is something which *might not have been*, something fragile and precious. As a result, we experience a profound sense of "gratitude", gratitude for the "clearing", for illumination, for light, gratitude that there is something rather than nothing. (2003: 207)[54]

But a question arises, why would we be motivated to make this turn in which there is a reversal of our modern relationship to the world? Are we not quite happy to understand and treat the world as a mere resource for our own purposes? Young can be seen to address this question through his view that as well as modernity's disenchantment involving the violence of modern technology, it also involves the evasion of death. This is the second feature of Heidegger's understanding of disenchantment as Young understands it, the inability to confront death. Young maintains that this evasion is something we cannot be happy with. Young's reading suggests that the motivation to 'face' death also involves as a consequence the motivation to 'care' for the world in more than modern technological ways. In order to face death with 'equanimity' we need to displace the object of our care and concern from a mere subjective source in ourselves, to a realm that according to Young, in a sense transcends death. It is this that explains the motivation to stand to things not in their 'being-for-us' but in their 'ownness'.

[54] Young also expresses the point in this way: 'We step…into the sense of the world as *poiesis*, as something *given* to us…it is something "granted" to us in the self-disclosure of the divine and self-concealing Origin. Experienced as such, one understands the world as something contingent, fragile, precious, something which, far from being *of course* there, *might not have existed at all*. Subjectively this produces a profound sense of "wonder" and "gratitude"…Wonder that there is something rather than nothing, gratitude because, whatever its darknesses…the world is still, for those with eyes to see, an extraordinarily beautiful place: not just "granted" to us, therefore, but rather "gifted", gifted by an extraordinary "graciousness"' (2002: 60) This is very similar to things that Scruton has to say about the givenness of Being, as we saw above.

5. Death and Dwelling

Young claims that Heidegger holds that those in modernity are constantly in a state of negating death. Young supposes that when Heidegger talks about 'negating' death what he means is the same as what he meant when in *Being and Time* he talked of 'average everyday', 'inauthentic' Dasein's stance to death as one of 'evasion'. According to this view, most in modernity are not able to face death without terror, and this is to be understood as terror before the 'abyss', horror at the 'void', the 'empty nothing' understood as 'absence of ground'. However, Young claims that, for Heidegger, though we may try to achieve 'ontological security' by evading the terror of death, we never succeed. Knowledge of death as 'nothingness' remains and the result of our evasive strategies is anxiety. However anxiety in the face of death is the exact opposite of 'ontological security' and so Young claims, for Heidegger, overcoming the thought of death as entry into an 'empty nothing' is the only way human beings will be able to face death with equanimity. Young holds that the reason why Heidegger thinks modern humanity cannot face death without anxiety is because of metaphysics, the 'oblivion' or 'forgetfulness' of Being. By taking 'what there is' to be exhausted by what is intelligible to human beings,

> we take its other "side" to be an *absolute* – an, as Heidegger puts it, "empty", a completely "privative-negative" – "nothing". In place of an *Urgrund* on which we might found our being we confront only an "abyss [*Abgrund*]". Gripped by metaphysics, in other words, we take it that there is *no* other "side" to our world of beings, that its inhabitants are "suspended" in "a complete emptiness"(2002: 68)

Given such an understanding, death presents itself as 'absolute annihilation'. To avoid the terror of 'blindly staring towards the end', life becomes the anxiety of evasion. Such a life is one of anxiety and ontological insecurity, it is marked by 'homelessness'[55] It might be objected that this doesn't make sense: the 'other side' cannot be an 'absolute empty nothing' because metaphysics is the view that there is no other side to the world. But this, I take it, is just what Young takes Heidegger to mean when he says that metaphysics entails that the other side of the world is an 'absolute empty nothing'.

According to Young, the human essence for Heidegger is to be understood in terms of 'dwelling' (2002: 63). The human essence is to be in the world as a '*Heimat*' (homeland) or

[55] It is interesting to note that this is the view that Young attributes to the early Heidegger of *Being and Time.* As Young puts it, '*Being and Time* is, I suggest, a work of "heroic nihilism". It is heroic because it advocates "living in the truth" about death, nihilistic because the "truth" it discovers is that beyond the intelligible world of beings, is the absolute nothing, "the abyss".' (2001: 131-2). It is also interesting to note the existence of a theological critique of the later Heidegger from the movement in theology called 'Radical Orthodoxy'. It is argued that the Heidegger of *Being and Time* was a nihilist for similar reasons as Young gives but that this nihilism characterises *all* of Heidegger's thought; *see* for example Milbank (part IV, 1990), Blond (1998) and Cunningham (ch. 6, 2002). However, if Young's reading of the later Heidegger is right then this theological critique is mistaken, Heidegger offers a way out of his (apparent) earlier nihilism in his later thought.

dwelling-place. What it means for our being-in-the-world to have the character of dwelling is 'to be at peace', 'to be brought to peace', 'to remain in peace', 'preserved from harm and danger'.

Young's interpretation of this thought is that if the ultimate threat to one's security is death, 'death understood as annihilation, nothingness' (2002: 65), then if instead you dwell, you experience yourself as 'ontologically secure'. That is, you experience yourself as secure even in the face of death. On this reading, dwelling amounts, as Heidegger himself puts it, to confronting death with '*Gelassenheit*', 'equanimity'. Young claims that, for Heidegger, doing so is not a coming to terms with annihilation, but is overcoming the thought that death, the terminus or 'goal' of life, is an 'empty nothing'. As metaphysics is the source of that anxiety, overcoming metaphysics is the key to overcoming the anxiety in the face of death:

> One needs…to understand that though the other side of the world is indeed the "nothing", nothing knowable or comprehensible by us - in other words, "the mystery" - it is not the "empty" or "abysmal" nothing but rather the concealed side of the "globe of Being", something which, though unknown, is nonetheless "positive (the *positum*)" One needs to understand, says Heidegger, borrowing Rilke's words, that "death is the *side of life* that is averted from us, unilluminated by us", that "death and the realm of the dead belong to the whole of beings as its other side", and that "there are regions and places which, being averted from us, seem to be something negative, but are nothing of the kind if we think all things as being within the widest orbit of beings". One needs to understand, in short, that as the "shrine of the nothing…death harbours within itself", not the abyss of annihilation, but rather "the mystery of Being itself". (2002: 69)

So how does overcoming metaphysics by understanding "the nothing" to be, not the *ontological* nothing of the abyss, but the *epistemological* Nothing – the nothing of 'the mystery of Being itself' – allow us to overcome the terror of death? Or as Young also puts it, why should grasping, that there is something completely and utterly Other, beyond beings, enable someone to face death with equanimity?

The first point that Young makes is that 'the Other of beings must be exempt from the dissolution of beings, in particular from that dissolution which is the death of the being I call myself.' (2002: 69) However, this view too raises a question: Why should the thought that the 'Other' of beings persists beyond my death be any more comforting to me than the thought that the matter that composes my body does? Young makes a second point in defence of this idea: '[c]learly, if openness to the Other of beings is to enable me to face death with equanimity that Other must be experienced as being, in some sense, *me*.' (2002: 69) In order to make this identification, Young suggests that Heidegger maintains that there is a distinction to be drawn between the 'ego' and the 'self'; that the position later Heidegger holds is that, 'though, of course, the ego dissolves along with the body, something I regard as more authentically my "self" (my "real self", in Kantian language) is unaffected by such dissolution.' (2002: 69)

At this point it is interesting to note that, despite the language that Young uses, what he attributes to Heidegger, and I think is himself defending, is not the view that we do not die - that we are in some sense immortal - nor is he defending a view of an after-life, the view that whilst our ego/body dies we can expect a time when we will enjoy their resurrection.[56] The difficult question to answer is, with an acknowledgement of 'the Other' of beings as something 'positive', what is Young claiming later Heidegger offers us over and above the view that that we are born, we live, and eventually, we die?

The crucial question is what does it mean to say that my ego and body cease to be but my authentic self, as constituted by the Other of beings, is unaffected? Young's attempt to answer this question begins by recounting what it is to overcome metaphysics. It is to enter into the 'festive state'

> the state in which the world shows up as the "radiant", holy place that it is, as Being's *poiesis*, the self-disclosure of the infinitely self-concealing divinity, as a consequence of which…beings show up in their "ownness", show up as they are in themselves. The result is that instead of being the exploitation and violation of things that is the character of life in *Gestell,* our "care" becomes "obedience to a protecting" derived from an ecstatic "belonging to the essential in all beings". (2002: 69-70)

Young puts forward the following argument to explain why Heidegger thinks that realising and living in the light of the holy and sacred character of the world allows us to face death without negation. Who you are, Young claims, can be understood as what you identify with. And he suggests that what you identify with is what you care about. So he suggests that if all I care about is nothing but satisfying my ego, then this is where my identification and so my identity resides. The same, he suggests, can be said for family, or country. However the point he really wants to make is that:

> [i]f…what I most of all care about is the world-"centre"'s venture then it is with it that my primary identification lies. In other words, not the ego but rather the world-centre itself constitutes my primary "self". Overcoming metaphysics entails a relocation of the "I". It is this self transcendence, I think, that Heidegger refers to when he calls the experience of the *Ereignis* as an experience of "*transport* [*Entrückung*] and enchantment". (2002: 71)

In Heidegger's terms, equanamity in the face of death comes from 'unification with Being' (2002: 71). But this unification cannot be experienced from within metaphysics and so genuine security lies in its overcoming. So the second aspect to dwelling is not being cared for

[56] Young claims that '[t]he Christian doctrine of personal immortality might itself, of course, be regarded as the ultimately "inauthentic" evasion of death.' (2002: 65)

but caring for Being. It consists in not being a violator but a ‘shepherd of Being’, shepherding its self-disclosure as world.

The Fourfold

What then is the object of our care as beings whose essence it is to dwell? In answer Young seeks to explain what later Heidegger understands by the ‘world’ that, whether or not we acknowledge it, we always inhabit. Young notes that the later Heidegger refers to the world as ‘the fourfold’, of ‘earth’, ‘sky’, ‘divinities’ and ‘mortals’. The world or ‘fourfold’ Young describes as ‘the fundamental order of things, natural and human, in the midst of which I find myself.’ (2003: 210) This can be understood ‘roughly speaking’, as ‘land, climate, community-creating customs personified by the lives of “divine” figures (roughly “role models”), and ourselves.’ (2003: 210)

Young interprets the fourfold as later Heidegger's understanding of 'world'. It is the world one inhabits in so far as one dwells. Young explains Heidegger's later understanding of 'world' by comparing it with earlier understanding in *Being and Time*. Young explains that

> In *Being and Time* Heidegger conceives human (‘Dasein’s’) “being-in-the-world” as a structural concept to be elucidated by means of an elucidation of the elements of this structure. He calls these structural, necessary or *a priori* features of human existence ‘existentials’. The structure as a whole he refers to as ‘care [*Sorge*]’ which he defines in terms of the threefold structure of Dasein’s ‘temporality’. Care, that is to say, is Dasein’s involvement in a *present* world of ‘equipment’ (or the ‘ready-to-hand’) and other Dasein, an involvement which is conditioned by the legacy of a cultural *past* (‘heritage’), a legacy which provides Dasein with the outline of the proper projection of its life into the *future*. (2002: 93)

According to Young's view, later Heidegger also understands the world that human beings inhabit and dwell in to be a structural concept, one that is to be elucidated in terms of the elements of the structure as a whole. As Young puts it, ‘Being “on the earth” “under the sky”, among men (“mortals”), and “before the divinities” are the “existentials” (though Heidegger no longer uses this language) that make up this structure.’ (2002: 93)

Young thinks that the element of later Heidegger's notion of being-in-the-world that is most difficult to understand is 'the divinities'. Described as 'messengers' and 'Angels' Young claims that for Heidegger they are always closely associated with the divine 'destinings', 'laws' or 'edicts' (2002: 15) Divine laws are laws of a community, 'simple and essential decisions', granted by history, the understanding of the proper way to be, both individually and collectively, a community's fundamental *ethos* (2002: 95). Divine laws provide a standard against which state law can be judged and basis for the critique of public opinion. These laws

are unwritten, the gods do not communicate or express them in words. They communicate them by being incarnations or embodiments of these laws. Young compares 'the gods' with, in *Being and Time,* 'existence possibilities' embodied in 'heritage' as the 'sole authority acknowledged by a 'free being', that stands in judgement over the 'One' or ‘the They’ (2002: 96).

> These parallels make it clear, I think, that the 'divine laws' of later Heidegger correspond to the 'existence possibilities' preserved as 'heritage' of early Heidegger, and that 'the gods' of later Heidegger are the reincarnations of early Heidegger's 'heroes'. (2002: 96)

Young sums up his understanding of later Heidegger’s concept of ‘world’:

> late Heidegger's account of being-in-the-world is given in terms of four 'existential' elements: as human, we live our lives on (a part of) the planet ('earth'), in a particular climate ('sky'), among human beings ('mortals') and under the (appropriated or unappropriated) guidance of a particular ethical heritage ('gods'). (2002: 98)

He provides another way of understanding this when he says, ‘Alternatively put, since sky and earth add up, evidently, to nature, and mortals together with their gods to culture, we might say that human being-in-the-world is being-in-the-of course “interconnected”…- 'twofold' of nature and culture.’ (2002: 98)

Young argues that, so conceived, there must be something more to the fourfold, that makes the difference between 'homelessness' and appropriating the fourfold, dwelling. Young says it is 'understanding it as “the shrine” of the presencing of the “mystery of Being itself.”' (2002: 99) To dwell, to appropriate the fourfold, is to inhabit ‘the poetic' (2002: 99): ‘it is for the existential structure of being-in-the-world to light up poetically, for it to become transparent to Being, for the “unknown” God to come to presence in “the sight of . . . what is familiar to man”.’ (2002: 99)

6. The Significance of Young's Reading

Young's reading of Heidegger provides another version of a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world. Heidegger can be understood to be concerned with a movement of thought that supposes 1) the loss of the ancient Greek understanding of the world as mysterious, *entails* 2) the modern drawing of a boundary between personal agency and the world in terms of the technological subject in relation to a world of pure resource. Young's Heidegger can be seen to argue that there is a modern temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2 and therefore to think that the loss of the belief in various grounds for meaning independent of subjectivity *entails* projectivism about meaning and value.

According to Young's reading Heidegger arrives at his understanding of reality as mysterious based on a consideration of the nature of truth, as well as truth understood as correspondence, Heidegger argues that truth must be understood as involving ultimate horizons of intelligibility that conceal other worlds or ways in which reality is disclosed. Reality must be understood as what is intelligible to us and the infinite plentitude of all the other ways that reality can be. This for Young serves to establish that reality must be understood as involving a dimension of mystery.

Young's Heidegger can be seen to argue that, with an adequate understanding of subjects as 'agents-in-the-world', entities can be understood not as 'for us' but in their 'owness', as things that get their identity from a non-subjective surrounding world of significance understood as the fourfold of earth, sky, divinities and mortals. The significance of Young's reading of the later Heidegger for my purposes, is that in contrast to a disenchanted view of our condition in *Gestell,* in which, as Taylor puts it, meaning and value are 'just arbitrarily projected through choice or contingent desire' (2011: 294), Young reads later Heidegger as re-enchanting the world by articulating a meaning of life that is not the result of subjective projection, but which is derived from man's unchosen and non-contingent *essence,* as existing in a world that warrants certain proto-religious responses.

Young understands the meaning that this involves like this: '[l]ater Heidegger…claims that we all, simply by virtue of being human beings, have, in Sartre's language, a fundamental project', and this fundamental project is 'to be guardians of our world.' (2003: 209) This, according to later Heidegger is our essence. Young suggests that seeing man as a guardian of the world stands in stark contrast to what Heidegger sees as the modern way in which man stands to the world, as its exploiter.

Young argues that 'guardianship' is not a project that is a matter of groundless choice. 'Guardianship' is a manner of being that derives from our place in the world that whether or not we acknowledge it we, as man, always, inhabit. As discussed this world is understood by

Heidegger as the fourfold which includes the dimension of 'earth', 'sky', 'divinities' and 'mortals'. Young thinks that as well as these four dimensions to the world there is another extremely significant fifth dimension, the dimension that the Greek's referred to as 'nature's *poiesis*', and which Young suggests Heidegger understands as 'the self-disclosure of the self-concealing "mystery".' (2003: 210) This is the dimension that for Young gives the world its 'holy' nature. Young argues that

> since the world is a holy place it follows that *we have no choice* but to stand to it in a relation of respect and reverence. For the holy simply *is* that before which one bows down in awe. If, in one's actions, one does not reverence the world, then one simply *does not understand* its holiness. If one becomes its exploiter rather than its guardian, then…one is a victim of that intellectual and spiritual blindness which Heidegger calls (in his special sense of the word) "metaphysics". (2003: 210)

It is important to note that Young understands Heidegger's 'Being' as in some sense identical with 'God'. But as mentioned above Young is keen to stress that the 'God' that is identical to Heidegger's 'Being' has very little to do 'with the God of traditional Christian theology'. The reason for this is that Heidegger has 'nothing but scorn for a theology that seeks to diminish God's majesty and mystery by endowing him with a nature determined by "articles of faith and Church dogmas"', for example, by understanding God as 'first cause, being wholly benevolent, an intelligent designer' (2003: 211) Nevertheless the reason why Young thinks Heidegger's Being should be understood as God is that 'Being is clearly an object of reverence and awe, the object of *religious* feeling.' (2003: 2011) Young attempts to explain the kind of God Heidegger thinks can 'save us' from *Gestell*, by drawing a distinction between the God that Heidegger rejects, the God of Christian theology, and what Young calls the 'God of the poets'. The God of the poets is, Young tells us, Hölderlin's 'unknown God' a God 'who approaches us in the sight of "familiar" things', and who, unlike the God of Christian theology, 'is genuinely mysterious and so genuinely "far away"' but who is also '"the nearest of all", immanent in the world, "so close" to us.' (2003: 211) Young thinks it is this God that Heidegger identifies with Being, and the reverence of which is the unchosen and non-contingent meaning of our lives.[57]

[57] Just how we are meant to understand Heidegger's God is unclear as it is not something Young develops beyond this negative contrast with the 'God of Christian theology', whatever that God is meant to be! At times Young presents Heidegger as a pantheist and so this would perhaps serve as a starting point for spelling out how he understands Heidegger's (and Hölderlin's) God. However, it appears that on Young's reading, later Heidegger is committed to the existence of God on the very minimal grounds that because 'B/being' is such as to elicit certain proto-religious responses then, as the object of such responses, Being *must* in some sense be God. But it is a bit much to expect to be convinced of a form of theism simply on these grounds. For example, at other times Young compares Heidegger's understanding of Being with conceptions of the ground of being, such as the Taoist 'Way', which does not appear to me to have any theistic connotations and so perhaps could provide the basis for a non-theistic construal of Heidegger's Being whilst retaining the sense in which 'B/being' warrants certain proto-religious responses. Young would then have to provide some other reason why Heidegger's Being involves a form of theism beyond the thought that it is the object of 'awe', 'reverence' and other proto-religious responses as these responses are equally compatible with a non-theistic outlook.

7. Problems

There are many questions that Young's reading of later Heidegger invites; but I will concentrate on questions surrounding the way Young presents his interpretation of Heidegger's philosophy of Being to justify the re-enchanted, proto-religious view of the world that he reads later Heidegger as offering. In particular I am concerned about the way Young takes Heidegger's philosophy of Being to support the 'Greek experience' of the world as 'mysterious', 'nature's *poiesis*' and 'the self-display of the self-concealing divinity'.

I want to separate the core of Young's argument into two (related) parts. The first part is what Young calls later Heidegger's 'philosophy of Being'. This covers the topics of 'Being', 'Truth', and 'metaphysics'. Young's view is that later Heidegger supplements or elaborates on the correspondence theory of truth by arguing that truth understood as correspondence depends on horizons of disclosure. For later Heidegger not only are there local horizons of disclosure that we as language using beings employ but, Young argues, for Heidegger, we also inhabit *ultimate* horizons of disclosure. These ultimate horizons are historically and culturally relative and set a limit upon what is intelligible to those that belong to it. Young suggests that it would be 'epistemologically arrogant' to suppose that our particular historical and cultural epoch has the one and only perspective. For this reason, Young reads later Heidegger as holding the view that there are many different possible ultimate horizons or perspectives on the world. The fact that ultimate horizons of intelligibility are relative means, according to Young, that no particular horizon exhausts the nature of reality. The fact that human beings inhabit a particular historically and culturally relative ultimate horizon means that the 'plentitude' of reality, all the other perspectives, is something necessarily concealed form us, reality is a mystery.

This form of historical and cultural relativism which Young thinks entails that reality is mysterious then serves as the ground for what I want to understand as the second part of Young's interpretation of later Heidegger. This is the rejection of the modern disenchanted view of being in favour of the re-enchanted Greek experience of being as the mysterious self-disclosure of some kind of God. Put generally, for Young's later Heidegger, the problem with disenchantment is that we take there to be nothing beyond the intelligible world, and in particular, unconsciously take the world to be exhaustively characterised in terms of resource. This contrasts with 'the Greek' experience, in which the entities that make up the world are not understood as mere resource, objects that are not just 'for-us', but independent 'Things', dependent on a fourfold world and ultimately dependent on a realm of the unintelligible, 'the mystery'; the world is to be understood as nature's *poiesis,* as the self-disclosure of the simultaneously self-concealing divinity.

What I am concerned about is whether the (first part) particular philosophy of Being that Young's attributes to the later Heidegger provides the best way of making sense of the (second part) Greek experience of the world. The first question I want to pose of this account of later Heidegger's re-enchantment is whether the 'mystery of Being' that Young presents is actually mysterious. There is a question whether what Young takes the argument from relativity to establish about 'Being' actually entails that 'Being' is something mysterious, in the sense of being in principle unintelligible. 'Being' is thought to be mysterious because whereas 'being' is the world that is intelligible to human beings inhabiting particular epochs, 'Being' is thought to be the *unintelligible* and, for this reason, *mysterious* ground of 'being'. However, it seems as though, given what Young also says about 'Being', there is reason to question whether Being is really unintelligible, and so really mysterious. Young arrives at his understanding of Being through the thought that, 'in addition to what is intelligible to us, reality possesses an indefinitely large number of aspects, a "plentitude" (*Vollzähligkeit*) of "sides" or "facets" (*Seiten*) *which would be disclosed to us* were we to inhabit transcendental horizons other than the one we do.' (2002: 9, my emphasis) 'Being', then, is the totality of 'facets' which would be *intelligible* were we to inhabit transcendental horizons other than the one we do. Rather than being the 'ineluctably' mysterious because intrinsically unintelligible, Being actually seems, according to Young's interpretation, like the totality of the in principle *intelligible* though merely unintelligible *to us* who happen to inhabit the particular historically and culturally relative horizon that we do. The worry then is that Being, because in principle intelligible, does not serve as a mysterious ground of 'being'. Being figures in this picture as the realm of the intelligible, just not intelligible to us, rather than featuring as the unintelligible and so intrinsically mysterious.

The previous objection depends on the thought that, though there might be horizons that are not intelligible *to us,* it is not clear why reality taken as a whole is not the in principle *intelligible* to the totality of epochs, rather then something mysterious. There is a second aspect to the worry that Young's Being is not actually mysterious. It may be conceded that there are horizons of intelligibility, or worlds other than our own but why does it follow that these worlds are in principle not even intelligible *to us*. It might just be the case that they are not the world we happen to inhabit, rather than being in principle forever beyond our knowledge and understanding. So whilst there may be the possibility of languages, horizons and worlds other than our own, it does not mean that therefore there is something unintelligibly mysterious about the potential ways the world can show up. It might be that they are contingently unintelligible to us, but in principle a world that we could come to inhabit and understand. So, again it seems

that there is a question about whether establishing the existence of other horizons establishes the mystery of Being.[58]

Perhaps Young could respond to these worries by claiming that what the argument for the relativity of the horizons of intelligibility establishes is something more than so far acknowledged. The argument from the relativity of ultimate horizons does not just show that there are *a number* of other horizons than our own, but that the relativity of horizons entails that there is an *infinite* number of horizons/worlds, and that this *infinite plentitude* is what the later Heidegger means by Being. Young might then be able to concede that worlds are intelligible to the people that inhabit them, and so worlds that are not intelligible to us are not *in principle* unintelligible. Young also might be able to concede that some of the worlds other than our own are not in principle unintelligible to *us*. But he can still maintain that Being, as the *infinite* source of worlds is, as infinite, in principle unintelligible. It is this reason, its *infinite* depth, that explains why the relativity of horizons entails that Being is uncanny, awesome and mysterious; it has an infinite depth to it.

Whilst there is reason to think that this is the position Young takes the later Heidegger to advocate, it is unclear how merely pointing out that horizons are relative *establishes* it. It might be epistemological arrogance to think that my horizon is the one and only and therefore acknowledge the existence of others. But it is unclear how this argument establishes that there *must* be an infinite plentitude to reality's facets. Why not a finite amount that are in principle intelligible and then not ineluctably mysterious? Maybe Young would attempt to respond that this is an insufficient display of epistemological humility, and only accepting that there are an infinite number of other horizons is acceptable. But it is unclear why an argument which suggests that there must be worlds other than our own *establishes* that, and it is this stronger claim that the idea of Being as mysterious on the grounds of the relativity of horizons seems to require.

There is another question that Young's Heidegger faces and that concerns the relationship between 'Being' understood as the conclusion of philosophical reflection on the nature of truth and the particular Greek experience of the world as Young presents it: as nature's *poiesis* and the self-disclosure of the self-concealing divinity. It seems that, in one sense, Young intends to present them as different ways of designating the same phenomenon, that Being is the awesome, uncanny mysterious depth to truth, and that physis/nature's *poiesis* is the same truth realised from the perspective of practice, 'work' or 'technology'. But the core of this 'truth' – what is realised at the level of theory – is a form of relativism: the relativity and so partial nature of our world as a view of reality. The question is, do the core ideas of *physis* and *poiesis* have anything to do with relativity of horizons? Did, for example, the Greek temple, in gathering the Greek

[58] An objection to Young's interpretation along these lines is put forward by Cooper (2001).

world as nature's *poiesis* have anything to do with revealing their world relativistically as merely one world amongst other worlds? It might have played the role, as Young discusses, of gathering their world as awesome, holy, sacred as having mysterious depth, without having anything to do with the relativism thesis. But if relativism is not involved, it raises the possibility that the significance of *physis/poiesis,* as indicating that the world is awesome, and mysterious might not depend on the view of language, truth, world and 'B/being' that Young supposes, but could be understood in terms separate from this argument from relativism.[59]

Perhaps Young's response to this would be that the philosophy of B/being that he ascribes to later Heidegger is that the world has an intelligibility/unintelligibility structure and at the level of practice the Greek experience of the world exhibits the same structure. In that way, the particular philosophy of Being might be said to justify the Greek experience of the world. It is true that there is this link between the ideas, but because the relativism idea seems to drop out of the mystery idea as it is disclosed to us from the point of view of practice, it leaves open the possibility that the relativism idea is not the only or the best way to justify this view of the world.[60]

In fact, an alternative way of proceeding is suggested by pursuing the following objection to Young's position. In his account of Heidegger's later philosophy Young appears to ascribe to Heidegger two different but apparently incompatible views of the nature of the reality that is disclosed through language. Young appears to ascribe to Heidegger a version of the view that, whilst language manifests features of objective reality, language is something subjectively chosen on the part of the speech community that use it. As he puts it when explaining 'metaphysics',

> [t]he crucial truth metaphysics misses is the dependence of being on human being. For short, the "subjectivity" of being.' (2002: 27)

Let us also remind ourselves of what he means by 'subjective' in this context: '[w]hat is subjective…is not *what* we experience as characterizing reality but rather the *selection* we make from the infinite richness of attributes possessed by reality itself.' (2002: 28) Again Young says, '[w]hat [metaphysics] misses is not the being of beings, not being, but rather the fact that there are just these universal traits which have categorical status for us is dependent on the selection made from the smorgasbord of attributes possessed by reality itself which is made by the linguistic practices, the forms of life, in which we live, and move, and have our being.' (2002:

[59] I make this point because the suggestion that relativism might not be involved is one of the things I consider in part 2 of this chapter when examining Taylor's approach to the later Heidegger.

[60] Another worry concerns the role that Young supposes mystery to play in relation to overcoming the problem of death, that serves as the motivation to dwelling. The thought here seems to be that it needs to be mystery to be that which can allow us to genuinely overcome anxiety, but this mystery, as mysterious, is (epistemologically) nothing to us. If this is so, how do we identify with that? How does this serve as the basis for an overcoming of the inability to face death, rather than - as nothing to us - adding to the anxiety?

28-9) Here, not individuals but 'linguistic practices' and 'forms of life' are being claimed in some sense to be performing the role of subjectively 'selecting' the manner in which objective reality shows up.

However, this seems to go against the spirit of the view that Young at other points ascribes to Heidegger, '[t]he language we speak, together with the horizon of disclosure it embodies, is no human creation.' (2003: 204) Language cannot be a human creation because, as mentioned above, 'we need to possess language *already* in order to think, to plan, to form intentions – in short, to create' (2003: 204); and as also mentioned, Young views Heidegger as holding that '[l]anguage happens through human beings but not by human intention', rather than 'creation', language and the world it discloses is something that we 'receive', that is 'sent' to us. (2003: 204-5) Here Young seems to ascribe to Heidegger the view that language cannot be understood as the choice or self-expression of the speech community – not the selection of 'linguistic practices' and 'forms of life' – but reflects a reality beyond the speech community, language is sent 'by the real', or by 'Being'.

Being subjectively 'selected' by 'linguistic practices' and 'forms of life' and being 'sent' by 'the real' or 'Being' seem to express different ideas and, hence, Young's reading of Heidegger seems to attribute two contrasting views to Heidegger. Despite Young claiming at some points that, for Heidegger, language is not chosen but 'sent by the real', it would seem that Young's interpretation, which emphasises a 'being'/'Being' difference and stresses the 'mystery of Being', depends on revoking this 'not of our making but sent by the real' idea. Instead Young's reading depends on giving priority to the thought that the making of, or the choice of the linguistic medium, is something that *we* do, (albeit in a way of which as individuals we are unaware when under the sway of metaphysics), as the subjective choice or selection happens through the speech community or cultural epoch that we as individuals cannot chose to opt in or out of. According to this view, the linguistic 'given' is not sent by the real but subjectively selected by the speech community or cultural epoch, thereby underpinning Young's argument that, for Heidegger, as well as what shows up to our epoch there are an *infinite* plentitude of other ways that Being could show up, hence Being's mystery. If language was thought to be 'sent by the real' and in that sense, reflect a reality beyond the speech community, then it could provide a different approach to the idea of the 'mystery of Being'.[61]

The idea that I want to explore is the possibility of making sense of later Heidegger's re-enchantment that is based, not on the idea that ultimate horizons are historically and culturally relative but is based on Heidegger's claim that it is not human beings but 'strictly, it is language that speaks.' (2001: 214) What I will do now is look at Charles Taylor's (1997) reading of later Heidegger which does not attribute to Heidegger the view that language is

[61] I return to this idea in Part 2 of this chapter.

something subjectively chosen on the part of the speech community that use it and that, for this reason, obscures other ways that a mysterious reality can appear, but which pursues the other view that Young attributes to Heidegger; Taylor focuses on Heidegger's claim that it is not human beings but language that speaks, which itself may lead to another way of approaching Heidegger's re-enchantment.

Part 2 - Charles Taylor's Reading of Later Heidegger

1. Introduction

Charles Taylor (1997) provides an alternative way of approaching later Heidegger's re-enchantment. Whereas Young reads later Heidegger as arguing for a Kantian-inspired philosophy of Being, Taylor can be seen to situate Heidegger in a broadly Aristotelian framework. According to this tradition, to be human is to be a 'rational animal'. But Taylor claims that Heidegger suggests we go beyond the traditional interpretation and simply render it as 'animal possessing logos', with the idea of *logos* understood as centred on language, so the Heideggerian rendering of the 'rational animal' idea is '[t]he human is in its nature given to speech'.[62] According to this line of thought, '[h]umans are language animals': 'They are beings that somehow possess, or are the locus of, this constitutive power of expression.' (1997: 113) Taylor clarifies what is meant by this broadly Aristotelian framework when he writes that:

> The human essence is not here derived from the…examination of a particular species of hairless ape, which happens to use language. We don't derive this from the nature of the "rational animal." It is, on the contrary, purely derived from the way of being of the clearing, by being attentive to the way that language opens a clearing. (1997: 121)

This means that in order to understand the human essence 'you have to understand language in the broad sense': '[t]his will give you the *areté* of human beings, what life is proper for them.' (1997: 113) Taylor thinks that 'Aristotle can be read as proceeding in this way, and so can Heidegger, even with all the massive differences between them. (1997: 113)

Despite this contrasting approach, like Young, Taylor reads the later Heidegger as contributing to the question of the good life for human beings to live.[63] Taylor's interpretation is shaped by the belief that the best way to approach Heidegger's later thought is through his philosophy of language.[64] Taylor approaches Heidegger's later philosophy of language by

[62] Of course there are other ways of interpreting this Aristotelian idea but Heidegger takes it to be centred on language.

[63] Taylor notes that one of the features of Heidegger's philosophy is that it is 'anti-humanist', and that one benign consequence is the way it aligns Heidegger with ecological thinking, in particular with the critique of the 'unreflecting growth of technological society' (1997: 100). Like Young, Taylor offers a perspective on the unique grounds that the later Heidegger provides for a broadly 'ecological' conception of the good life. According to Taylor, Heidegger's protest against technological society fits into neither the 'shallow' or 'deep' ecological camps, instead he claims that 'Heidegger's philosophy of ecology is sui generis' (1997: 100).

[64] It is by understanding this that Taylor offers a sketch of the way 'our status as language beings can be thought to lay us open to ecologically relevant demands.' (1997: 101)

focusing on Heidegger's claim, '[f]or strictly, it is language that speaks' (2001: 214), noting that the implications of this remark appears to be that Heidegger holds an 'anti-subjectivist' understanding of language in which he 'inverts the usual relation in which language is seen as our tool, and talks of *language speaking* rather than human beings speaking.' (1997: 101) Taylor acknowledges the difficulty of interpreting such remarks but claims that some light may be shed on them by considering what they could mean in relation to other traditions of thinking about the nature of language.

Before I explore the way Taylor situates later Heidegger's philosophy of language, I will first give an overview of how Taylor sees later Heidegger's philosophy more broadly as this provides a context for making sense of the significance of Heidegger's understanding of language.

2. Heidegger's History of Western Philosophy

Part of Taylor's interpretation involves a discussion of Heidegger's understanding of the history of Western philosophy as the development of subjectivism, which can be understood as the story of disenchantment. Taylor thinks that language is essential to Heidegger's concern with 'the fact or event that things show up at all' (1997: 114). Heidegger refers to 'the fact or event that things show up at all' or 'that on the basis of which things are intelligible' as 'the clearing', and according to Taylor the clearing is essentially linguistic. Taylor sees Heidegger as teaching us 'to reorder the history of philosophy and culture in the light of how the clearing has been understood.' (1997: 114)

One crucial point that Taylor sees Heidegger making is that the clearing should not be identified with any of the entities that show up in it. As Taylor puts it, '[i]t is not to be explained by them as something they cause, or as one of their properties, or as grounded in them.' (1997: 114) According to Heidegger's history, certain pre-Socratics held a vision of the clearing that avoided this identification. However, with Plato, and the Platonic understanding of the clearing, Western culture is put on a course that leads to modern subjectivism. The mistake that Heidegger sees Platonism making is that 'Plato's notion of the Idea places the clearing among beings.' (1997: 114) Plato's Ideas or Forms are not *ordinary* beings but are beings nevertheless, as Taylor explains:

> An Idea is not just another entity waiting to be discovered. It is not like the things that participate in it. It can be understood as self-manifesting. It gives itself to be understood. That is what underlies the image of light in which Plato frequently expounds the Idea, particularly that of the Good. The Good is likened to the sun; turning from the changing things of this world to the Ideas is likened to leaving the dark cave. He speaks of the soul turning to the illuminated side. And so on. (1997: 114)

Whilst the Platonic view does not identify Ideas with ordinary beings, according to Heidegger, Platonism is committed to an *ontic* account of the clearing. What it means to hold that the clearing is ontically grounded is that the intelligibility of language is understood as being derived from a separate or external realm to language. According to Heidegger's understanding of Plato the clearing is grounded in something, in this case Ideas. For Heidegger, Western philosophy and culture is a series of footnotes to Plato, in the sense that it is made up of different attempts to understand the nature of the clearing within the terms set by the Platonic understanding, that is, in terms of the clearing as something *ontically* grounded. Heidegger reads the history of Western philosophy as the steady development, from Plato's nonsubjectivist account of the clearing, to modern subjectivism in which Ideas in the human mind, and not a metaphysical sun, come to be viewed as the source of light and illumination, as that which

grounds the intelligibility of things. The modern picture is still an ontic explanation of the clearing because the internal ideas held to ground the intelligibility of language are held to be separable from, and external to, their expression in language.

Why this would be the direction the history of Western philosophy takes is not clear. Taylor offers one suggestion:

> [p]erhaps because the very act of ontically placing the clearing reflects a drive towards grasping it, exercising intellectual control over it; and this, fully worked out, will emerge in the will to power. (1997: 114)

Whether or not this is a good explanation of the emergence of subjectivism, it informs Taylor's reading of Heidegger's account of the development of Western philosophy and culture. Taylor reads Heidegger's history as suggesting that the Platonic understanding of the clearing is transformed after Aristotle in an increasingly more subjectivist direction. A key point, for Taylor, is the medieval view according to which the world is understood as the creation of an omnipotent God. Taylor thinks this puts in place the idea that the clearing can be accounted for in terms of 'the power of a subject' (1997: 114), in this case God. Taylor claims that 'it is the high noon of what Heidegger calls "onto-theology"': 'its inherent thrust pushes toward a definition of being as what it is through the disposition of subjective power.' (1997: 114) In the modern period the subjective power that comes to take the place of God as the ontic ground of the clearing is the human subject. Modernity is the age in which the clearing is understood not as grounded in the subjective power of God, but the subjective power of the human mind. Taylor claims that for Heidegger

> the same thrust leads to our conceiving reality itself as emanating from will. It is not to be understood only in relation to the knowing subject, but to a subjectivity of striving and purpose. Leibniz is obviously one of the key figures in this development. It reaches its culmination in the Nietzschean claim that everything is Will to Power. (1997: 114-5)

The culmination of Western philosophy in Nietzsche's idea of the 'will to power' concludes Heidegger's understanding of the development of philosophy and culture in the West. It is inaugurated by Plato's nonsubjectivist ontic grounding of the clearing and reaches its conclusion in its opposite - modern subjectivism - exemplified by the way that Heidegger understands Nietzsche's Will to Power. As Taylor puts it,

> [m]odern subjectivism onticizes the clearing in the opposite way from Platonism. Now things appear because there are subjects who represent them and take a stand on them. The clearing is the fact of representation; and this only takes place in minds, or in the striving of subjects, or in their use of various forms of depiction, including language. (1997: 115)

The real nature of the clearing according to Heidegger as Taylor interprets him is in neither the Platonic nonsubjectivist ontic grounding in Ideas, nor is it in the modern ontic grounding in the subjective representational power of the human mind. Taylor claims that, for Heidegger, '[b]oth views can be seen as making equal and opposite mistakes.' (1997: 115) Both Platonism and modern subjectivism miss something important about the clearing,

> [t]he clearing in fact only comes to be around *Dasein*. It is our being-in-the-world which allows it to happen. At least the representational theory grasps that. (1997: 115)

However, the problem with the representational theory is that, 'it for its part can't appreciate that the clearing doesn't just happen within us, and/or is not simply our doing.' (1997: 115) The reason is that

> Any doing of ours, any play with representations, supposes as already there the disclosure of things in language. We can't see this as something that we control or that simply happens within our ambit. The notion that it is in our heads already supposes, in order to make sense, that we understand our heads and ourselves as placed in a world, and this understanding doesn't happen only in our heads…The idea that the clearing is our doing collapses into incoherence as well; it is only through the clearing that we have any idea of doing at all, that action is in our repertory. (1997: 115)

For Taylor's Heidegger, modern representational views get it right; the clearing only comes to be around subjects. But it fails to grasp that subjects must be understood as agents in a world. According to Taylor, 'Heidegger's position can be seen from one point of view as utterly different from both Platonism and subjectivism because it avoids onticizing altogether; from another point of view, it can be seen as passing between them to a third position which neither can imagine, [the clearing is] Dasein-related but not Dasein-centered.' (1997: 115-6)

This historical sketch serves to situate, in outline, Taylor's understanding of later Heidegger's thought. Later Heidegger, according to Taylor's interpretation, can be seen to challenge the Western tradition of *onticising* the clearing in either direction, either by ontically grounding the clearing in a metaphysical reality beyond the subject or ontically grounding the clearing in the subject. The way Taylor seeks to make sense of later Heidegger's rejection of ontic grounding – the view of our agency that amounts to a 'middle way' between Platonism and modern subjectivism – is by arguing that Heidegger belongs to and develops a tradition of thinking about the nature of language that Taylor calls calls the 'constitutive-expressive' tradition.

Taylor distinguishes what he calls 'enframing' views of language and 'constitutive-expressive' views because he thinks that grasping the way in which Heidegger works out a

unique position within the constitutive-expressive tradition is the key to understanding later Heidegger's thought that it is not humans but language that 'speaks'.[65] Also, this provides Taylor with a way of interpreting Heidegger's concern with the technological disclosure of the world and how the technological disclosure can be addressed by articulating the sense in which as agents we 'dwell' in a wider meaningful surrounding world of 'Things', which 'gathers' a worldly context of non-projected meaning and value.

In what follows I will explore how Taylor understands the enframing view of language and the constitutive alternative, and how Taylor situates Heidegger in relation to this tradition.

[65] The contrast between enframing and constitutive views of language was first made by Guignon (1983). It also informs Lafont's (2000) work on Heidegger.

3. Enframing and Constitutive Views of Language

The Enframing View of Language

Enframing views represent modern subjective ontic grounding of the clearing. Taylor introduces the enframing view by claiming that, '[o]n that classical view, language is conceived as an instrument.' (1997: 101) and contrasting it with the expressive-constitutive views:

> The instrumental view is an 'enframing' theory. I shall use this term to describe attempts to understand language within the framework of a picture of human life, behaviour, purposes, or mental functioning, which is itself described and defined without reference to language. Language can be seen as arising in this framework, and fulfilling a certain function within it, but the framework itself precedes or at least can be characterized independently of language. By contrast, a "constitutive" theory gives us a picture of language as making possible new purposes, new levels of behaviour, new meanings, and hence is not explicable within a framework of human life conceived without language. (1997: 101)

According to Taylor, the enframing theory emerged from and 'seeks to understand language within the confines of the modern representationalist epistemology made dominant by Descartes.' (1997: 102) He explains this theory as holding that the human mind must be understood as containing internal 'ideas', representations of the external world, prior to the acquisition of language. The external world can also be understood as made up of states of affairs that can be understood independently of the possession of language. According to this view, language enters the picture when '[w]ords are given meaning by being attached to the things represented via the ideas that represent them.' (1997: 02) So language provides human beings with greater expressive and symbolic power but what it expresses are internal representations of an external world, ideas about a world that can be understood as intelligible prior to, and independent of, the possession of the linguistic medium in which they get expressed.

Taylor discusses this tradition further by focusing on the role it gives to the notion of 'expression'. Taylor claims that the view '[t]hat language originated from the expressive cry became the consensus in the learned world of the eighteenth century.' (1997: 106-7) Enframing views relate linguistic expression to some preexisting content,

> [f]or Locke, a word is introduced by being linked with an idea, and henceforth becomes capable of expressing it. The content precedes its external means of expression. (1997: 106)

Taylor sees this view of expression being advanced by later proponents of the enframing view:

> Condillac…gave emotional expression an important role in the genesis of language. His view was that the first instituted signs were framed from natural ones. But natural signs were just the inbuilt expressions of our emotional states—animal cries of joy or fear…Yet the conception of expression here was inert. What the expression conveyed was thought to exist independently of its utterance. Cries made fear or joy evident to others, but they did not help constitute these feelings themselves. (1997: 106-7)

Taylor sees Condillac's view as representative of the enframing view of language as having its origin in expression. This view of the meaningfulness of language is explained in terms of the meaning that belongs to the natural capacity for the expression of emotions that human beings possess before the acquisition of language. These cries and shouts are the 'natural signs' Taylor refers to, and the 'instituted sign' is made possible on the basis of the meaning that pre-exists in the natural sign. But as Taylor claims, whilst an essential role is given to expression, these natural signs are 'inert'. What he means by this is that natural signs are themselves viewed as getting their meaning from their connection with preexistent ideas, so that what they express is an idea that preexists its external expression through the natural sign.

Constitutive Opposition to Enframing

Taylor sees the constitutive theory as finding its earliest expression in Herder. The criticism that Taylor sees Herder making of the enframing view of language is that linguistic meaning introduces a different kind of consciousness, something new both in terms of thoughts and features of the world made available to understanding or 'linguistic-consciousness' that cannot be explained by making appeal to states that preexist language. What this something new is according to Herder is 'reflective consciousness'. Taylor outlines this idea by drawing the following contrast. He suggests that 'a pre-linguistic animal can react to the things that surround them' and adds, '[b]ut language allows us to grasp something *as* what it is.' (1997: 103) Taylor explains this distinction in the following way:

> Herder's basic idea seems to be that while a prelinguistic animal can learn to respond to some object appropriately in the light of its purposes, only the being with language can identify the object as of a certain kind, can, as we might put it, attribute such and such a property to it. An animal, in other terms, can learn to give the right response to an object–fleeing a predator, say, or going after food–where "right" means "appropriate to its (nonlinguistic) purposes." But language use involves another kind of rightness. Using the right word involves identifying an object as having the properties that justify using that word. We cannot give an account of this rightness in terms of extralinguistic purposes. Rightness here is irreducible to success in some extralinguistic task. (1997: 103)

The point is that, contrary to the enframing theory, linguistic meaning cannot be explained by making appeal to anything outside of 'reflective consciousness' or language, in terms of pre-existing states of mind, purposes and independently existing states of affairs. Using the right word involves identifying an object as having the properties that justify using that word, and according to the expressive-constitutive theory, what justifies the use of a word as correct or incorrect is constituted by language. So to possess language is to be sensitive to demands of *non-reductive* linguistic rightness. It is, Taylor claims, to be operating in another dimension to pre-linguistic reactions, which he calls the 'semantic dimension'. Taylor claims that Herder's opposition to the enframing theory of language, that acquisition of language involves inhabiting a different 'reflective' kind of consciousness, can be understood as the view that acquiring language is coming to inhabit this 'semantic dimension'. So that to be 'reflective' in this sense is to be sensitive to the demands of irreducible semantic rightness.

According to Taylor, constitutivists like Herder accept that expression plays a key role in the origin of language but argue that expression too must be understood in terms of the logic of a constitutive view of meaning. If the constitutive criticisms of the enframing view of language are right then, whilst expression might play an essential role in the acquisition and development of language, it cannot play the inert role it is given by an enframing theory. Taylor thinks this marks a point of difference between the enframing view of expression and the constitutive-expressive view. Whilst enframing theories hold a view in which expression is depicted as inert, Taylor understands the constitutivists as 'attributing a creative role to expression.' (1997: 107) In line with the constitutive criticism of enframing theories, constitutivists hold that expression cannot be understood as carrying a content that can form the independent building blocks of linguistic meaning. Whilst the idea of expression is held to be essential to linguistic meaning in the constitutive tradition,

> Bringing things to speech can't mean just making externally available what is already there. There are many banal speech acts where this seems to be all that's involved. But language as a whole must involve more than this, because it is also opening possibilities for us which would not be there in its absence. The constitutive theory turns our attention toward the creative dimension of expression, in which, to speak paradoxically, it makes possible its own content. (1997: 107)

So although Taylor views both the enframing, and the constitutive-expressive theories as giving a fundamental role to expression in their understanding of language, these roles differ. Enframing theories depict expression as 'inert' so that expression - Condillac's expressive cries and natural signs - express an idea that pre-exists its external means of expression. In contrast, constitutive theories see expressive cries, natural and instituted signs not as *inert*, but as *creating* the medium in which meaning comes into being: 'expression must be seen as creative, where language opens us to the domain it encodes' (1997: 108)

Constitutivists maintain that being initiated into the 'semantic dimension', in which the demands of irreducible semantic rightness are in play, transforms the world for human beings in ways which cannot be explained on the basis of a pre-existent nonsemantic nature. The semantic dimension makes agents capable of new kinds of social relations. As Taylor puts it '[g]regarious apes may have what we call a "dominant male," but only language beings can distinguish between leader, king, president, and the like.' (1997: 106) Similarly, '[a]nimals mate and have offspring, but only language beings define kinship.(1997: 106)

Another important feature of this transformation is that it makes possible value in a strong sense. Taylor thinks that prelinguistic animals treat things in their environment as desirable or repugnant but he claims that it is only language being that can really deem something as *worthy* of desire or aversion. This is due to the fact that such matters involve issues of intrinsic rightness, 'they *ought* to be treated in one or another way.' (1997: 106) Issue of intrinsic rightness, at least according to the constitutive tradition, are only intelligible from the point of view of the semantic dimension. Hence, according to constitutivists

> language enters into or makes possible a whole range of crucially human feelings, activities, and relations. It bursts the framework of prelinguistic life forms, and therefore renders any enframing account inadequate. (1997: 106)

In summary, the constitutive view of meaning maintains that language constitutes the semantic dimension and that through initiation in that dimension language opens up new ways of relating to the world, it makes possible new emotions as well as a sense of intrinsic rightness and strong value. Taylor thinks that, in this sense, the constitutive view of language must be understood as world transforming for agents as they come to participate in it.

According to Taylor, the constitutive-expressive view involves a different view from enframing theories about how language is acquired, '[t]he crucial step is no longer seen as taking on board a *mental capacity* to link sign and idea, but as coming to engage in the *activity* of overt *speech*.' (1997: 109) This gives rise to another element of the expressive-constitutive view of language, that of 'conversation':

> The first and inescapable locus of language is in exchange between interlocutors. Language involves certain kinds of links with others. In particular, it involves the link of being a conversational partner with somebody, an "interlocutor." Standing to someone as an interlocutor is fundamentally different from standing to him or her as an object of observation or manipulative interaction. Language marks this most fundamental distinction in the difference of persons. I address someone as "you," speak of them as "him" or "her." (1997: 109)

The idea that language involves links with others and has its primary use in conversation leads to the thought that language opens us to a shared space or world:

> What this corresponds to is the way we create a common space by opening a conversation. A conversation has the status of a common action. When I open up about the weather to you over the back fence, what this does is make the weather an object for *us*. It is no longer just for you or for me, with perhaps the addition that I know it is for you and you know it is for me. Conversation transposes the weather into an object we are considering together. The considering is common, in that the background understanding established is that agency which is doing the considering is us together, rather than each of us on our own managing to dovetail our action with the other. (1997: 109-10)

The world of expression that Taylor is interested in is the world that comes into view when we consider that we are agents, who exist together, not in a nature or universe described by the natural sciences - but in a world that is constituted by our personal and social agency, one opened up by the "semantic dimension". For constitutive-expressivists, this world is not identified with or reducible to physical space but neither is it to be understood as mental space, it is a world constituted by our linguistic agency. But the constitutive-expressive tradition still faces questions about the status of *that* world in which we exist as linguistic agents and which is constituted by expressions; and within that tradition different answers have been offered as we will see below. First, let us see how Taylor views the later Heidegger as belonging to the constitutive-expressive tradition.

4. Heidegger's Radical Twist

Taylor sees later Heidegger as accepting a truth contained in modern subjectivism, that the clearing only comes to be in relation to subjects, or *Dasein,* but as maintaining that the clearing or world does not take place in minds in the form of representations, but belongs to a new space constituted by expression or our agency in a world.

According to Taylor, the twist Heidegger gives to the constitutive-expressive tradition lies in his attempt to understand the space of meaning and the world as it is related to our linguistic agency whilst at the same time rejecting the traditional question of the ontic grounding of the clearing. As he puts it, 'Heidegger alters the whole philosophical landscape by introducing the issue of the clearing and its ontic placing.' (1997: 120) For Taylor, Heidegger does this by raising the issue of the 'ontological difference'. This is the difference between being, or the semantic dimension, and beings, the entities made intelligible through the semantic dimension.[66] Heidegger argues that the intelligibility of the semantic dimension, or being, cannot be explained as getting this intelligibility from its grounding in an external realm of meaning-giving Ideas, entities, facts or beings. Rather, the intelligibility of ideas, and of the beings that they are about, depends on the space of meaning. According to this claim, the semantic dimension cannot be understood as *ontically* grounded in beings such as a Platonic realm of Ideas. As Taylor puts it, '[i]t is not to be explained by them as something they cause, or as one of their properties, or as grounded in them.' (1997: 114) In posing the question of the ontological difference, Taylor reads Heidegger as following through the argument of the constitutive-expressivist tradition to its natural conclusion. Taylor's sees Heidegger's rejection of the idea that language gets its meaning from ideas or entities that are intelligible independently of language as entailing that the *ontic* question, the question that Heidegger views as shaping Western philosophy, is not to be answered. By raising the issue of the ontological difference, later Heidegger rejects the ontic question as the last residue of the enframing conception of language.

But just because Heidegger rejects the view that the semantic dimension is to be ontically grounded in a metaphysical reality beyond our agency does not entail that language is therefore mere self-expression, something *we* make or choose. This is because the raising of the ontological difference also calls into question the idea that the semantic dimension can be ontically grounded in a self or community – a 'we' – that exists prior to the semantic dimension; a 'we' that can intelligibly be said to think, choose, or make anything. Again, the ontic view as

[66] Here Being is identified with the semantic dimension. I do not think that Young would object to this. What Young would object to is taking the semantic dimension to exhaust what Heidegger has to say about B/being and so forgetting the being/Being difference.

it applies to the self or community is rejected by later Heidegger with his opposition to the enframing conception of language.

So although language is not thought to be ontically grounded in something beyond our agency, in a realm of Platonic Ideas, it nevertheless is not grounded in the modern subject. Any subjectivity that thinks and acts depends – if this is to amount to intelligible thought and action – on that subjectivity's already having an orientation to an intelligibly articulated world.

A Problem

Where Taylor sees later Heidegger's originality is in holding that the clearing is 'Dasein-related' but not 'Dasein-centred', whilst at the same time rejecting the idea that the clearing must be understood as ontically grounded. As Taylor puts it,

> the space of expression is not the same as, that is, can't be reduced to, either ordinary physical space or inner psychic space, the domain of the "mind" on the classic epistemological construal. It is not the same as [physical space] because it only gets set up between speakers. (It is Dasein-related.) It is not the same as [the "mind"] because it cannot be placed "within" minds, but rather is out there between interlocutors. In conversation, a public or common space gets set up, in which the interlocutors are together. (1997: 116-7)

Taylor's understanding of later Heidegger's position within the constitutive tradition leads to the rejection of traditional ontic posits and instead our taking language or the clearing as the basic origin and source of meaning. However, it is not clear how this idea is to be understood. Given the central role given to language or the clearing in this position, what role do we users of language have in the clearing coming about and in the disclosure of the world?

Taylor outlines a number of positions that might be taken on the question of the role that speakers play in world disclosure. For present purposes I am going to suggest that there are three main different positions presented by Taylor.[67] What all positions in the constitutive tradition have in common is the view that the clearing/world is in some sense subjective, but this subjectivity can be regarded as amounting to 1) individual projection, 2) communal projection or 3) the view that 'language does it itself'.

The positions that fall into 1 are views which hold that the clearing is constituted by the projective activity of *individual* subjects, so that individual speakers are thought to play an essential role in the disclosure of the world through language. Taylor thinks that this view is largely discredited in the constitutive tradition and a more common view is that the clearing is constituted by the projective activity of a *community* of speakers. According to such a view,

[67] Taylor outlines the possible answers given in the constitutive tradition but in a way that is quite difficult to understand.

> All speakers, as they enter the conversation from infancy, find their identity shaped by their relations within a preexisting space of expression. In this sense, they are the creatures of this space. But as they become full members of the conversation, they can in turn contribute to shape it, and so no simple, one sided relation of dependence can capture the reality of speakers and language (1997: 118)

According to the communal position no simple one sided relation of dependence can capture the reality of speakers and language as speakers belong to an intersubjective sphere of meaning that pre-exists them. The communal position still holds that the clearing is something *projected*, but this time by a community of speakers.

The third position is the 'language does it itself' view which Taylor claims can be found in the thought of Derrida and other deconstructionists. This position is presented by Taylor as committed to the view that there is no reality outside of language or the clearing and that, whilst still within the constitutive tradition, is a form of extreme anti-subjectivism according to which language is a 'nonagent setting up the space of expression.' (1997: 118)

The question is: which kind of view does later Heidegger offer? Taylor himself argues that we should read later Heidegger as offering a unique position that is close to 2, rather than 3. For this reason, Taylor thinks that Derridian readings of later Heidegger 'gravely misperceive' (1997: 119) the view of the clearing offered by Heidegger. Such a reading of Heidegger is also exemplified by Lafont (1999) who believes that what characterises his view of language and the clearing is a radical form of anti-subjectivism in which language is a kind of super-(non)agent. As Lafont describes this reading of Heidegger, 'the very constitution of th[e] world-disclosure' is 'a demiurgic language, alien to any intraworldly activity' (1999: 74).

Now Taylor thinks that '[w]hat emerges with Heidegger is…a novel position', one that offers a 'de-onticized' (1997: 119) view of the clearing. This view holds that the clearing cannot be said to be grounded in any worldly ontic posits in a Platonic realm of ideas or Forms *or* grounded in the subject. But both 1) the individual projection view and 2) the communal projection position seem to be versions of the thought that the clearing is grounded in subjects, either individuals or a community of subjects. Heidegger's radical twist on the constitutive-expressive opposition to enframing would appear to distance him from 2 which would seemingly read him as providing an ontic grounding for the clearing in a community of subjects.

Just what to make of Taylor's view that it is possible to combine both 2 and a de-onticised view of the clearing is something that I will come back to. What I want to do now is present how Taylor understands Heidegger's idea of the fourfold based simply on the negative claim that Heidegger opposes enframing theories of the clearing and instead sees the world as constituted by our linguistic agency-in-the-world.

5. Taylor on the Fourfold

Taylor acknowledges that, for Heidegger, the ideas contained in the enframing views of language are not confined to philosophical thinking about language but also constitute a cultural problem. The view that the world of meaning and value originates in purposes of subjects, which can be understood prior to the acquisition of language, so that through language we are understood as projecting subjective purposes of ours onto an objectively meaningless world, comes to inform the modern disclosure of the world. According to Taylor's reading, the thought seems to be that in modernity the objective world is thought to be composed of entities that are understood as 'context-free objects' whose nature is exhausted by 'scientific study' (1997: 124). In this cultural predicament, we can end up 'swept up in the technological way of life and treat [entities] as standing reserve', that is, we 'go on talking, mindful only of our [subjective] purposes, unaware that there is anything else to take notice of.' (1997: 124) As Heidegger himself expresses this concern,

> there rages round the earth an unbridled yet clever talking, writing, and broadcasting of spoken words. Man acts as though he were the shaper and master of language, while in fact language remains the master of man. When the relation of dominance gets inverted, man hits upon strange maneuvers. Language becomes the means of expression. (2001: 213)

To borrow the image presented by Murdoch in my introduction, the Heideggerian view seems to be that the technological disclosure of beings entails that 'our picture of ourselves has become too grand' as a consequence of which we have 'identified ourselves with, an unrealistic conception of will' (1999: 338). This involves a loss of the sense that meaning and value can amount to anything more than the subjective manipulation, mastery and control of a reality that stands over and against us as a 'standing-reserve'.

However, if Heidegger's anti-enframing understanding of the clearing is right then the 'technological disclosure of beings' must involve an error concerning the nature of subjectivity and objectivity. The view that the world of meaning and value originates in purposes of subjects which can be understood prior to the acquisition of language, so that through language we project our subjective purposes onto an objectively meaningless world cannot be right according to Heidegger's anti-enframed view of the world as it is disclosed through language.

As Taylor presents the constitutive tradition '[t]he first and inescapable locus of language is…exchange between interlocutors.' (1997: 109) Language opens us to a shared space or world in which we exist as not as 'object[s] of observation or manipulative interaction' but as agents in a world of entities that are not principally 'context-free' objects of scientific observation but show up in relation to our agency. This clearing which our first and inescapable

use of language discloses to us cannot be understood as subjectively projected onto entities understood as objects of scientific study. This is because, whilst on Heidegger's account the clearing cannot be understood as ontically grounded in Platonic terms in Ideas, it cannot be understood as grounded in the subject understood as possessing purposes that can be made sense of prior to the placing of the subject in a clearing or a world of meaningful entities.

Taylor's view is that, for later Heidegger, whilst we might have fallen into the error of the technological disclosure of beings, 'if we stop to attend to language' then 'the entities will demand that we use the language which can disclose them as things.' (1997: 124) When later Heidegger talks about 'things' he does so in an unique and idiosyncratic way. So far I have spoken of 'entities' rather than 'things' to refer to the objects that are disclosed through language and compose the clearing. This is because a Thing for Heidegger is reserved for a subset of entities that in being disclosed show up not as context-free objects but 'co-disclose' their place in the clearing. Things co-disclose the prior world of significance that subjects, as already placed in a (non-subjective) world of meaningful entities, belong. For this reason when I talk about 'things' in this specifically Heideggerian sense I will write it with a capital T as 'Things'.

So according to Taylor, later Heidegger believes that, though we might have fallen into ways of thinking, talking and acting in which we are mindful only of our subjective purposes, by attending to language, we can appreciate the manner in which entities are not context-free objects of scientific study that are imbued with our subjective purposes. Rather than showing up as mere standing-reserve, entities can be disclosed through language (and as we will see, in particular, art)[68] as Things that have their place in a non-subjective world of meaning and value.

Taylor develops this thought with the idea that the clearing or world to which the Thing belongs is what Heidegger refers to as 'the fourfold'. In being disclosed the Thing co-discloses its place with 'mortals' amidst the 'divinities', on the 'earth' and under the 'sky'. The example of a Thing that Taylor focuses on is Heidegger's description of a jug in his essay 'The Thing' (2001: 161-184). Taylor thinks that the point of Heidegger's example of the jug is that 'still unmobilized by modern technology' such a thing is 'redolent of the human activities in which it plays a part', something simple like the 'pouring of wine at the common table' (1997: 122). The jug shows up as, or more appropriately, the jug *is* 'a point at which this rich web of practices can be sensed, made visible in the very shape of the jug and its handle, which offers itself for this use.' (1997: 122) The fact that Things show up as a point at which human practices gather is what Taylor takes Heidegger to mean by the Thing co-disclosing a world one element of which is to be understood as 'mortals'.

[68] This theme is covered in detail by Young (2001) and Thomson (2011).

At the same time, Taylor thinks that such forms of life are understood by Heidegger as 'interwoven with strong goods, matters of intrinsic worth' as 'this life together has central meaning in the participants' lives.' (1997: 122) The matters that make a strong claim on us, Taylor claims, can be understood as 'divine'; 'the human modes of conviviality that the jug co-discloses are shot through with religious and moral meaning.' (1997: 122) The fact that things show up as a point at which this realm of strong goods gather is another element of the fourfold an element that Heidegger understands as 'the divinities'.

Also, the Thing is a material object, fashioned for human use. Taylor suggests that 'all forming is surrounded by and draws on [the] unformed', it 'stands on and emerges out of a vast domain of still unformed and unidentified reality', a reality that is 'a field of potential future forming' which is 'limitless, inexhaustible' (1997: 122). Taylor thinks that Heidegger's view is that if we are not closed to this aspect of the Thing the jug will 'speak of its history as a formed entity', that is, it will speak of 'its emergence from unformed matter, of its continuing dependency on the unformed' (1997: 122). This is because the jug can only exist by being supported by this surrounding reality, a surrounding reality co-disclosed by the Thing that Heidegger terms 'earth'.

Taylor thinks that Heidegger idea of the fourfold culminates in the view that the realm of human practices, matters of central importance in our lives and the realm of the earth, are all surrounded or 'framed' by a space within which the earth can be partly shaped as our world. Our lives are 'open to greater cosmic forces which are beyond the domain of the formable, and which can either permit them to flourish or sweep them away.' (1997: 123) This dimension of the fourfold, '[t]he alternation of day and night, storms, floods, earthquakes, or their benign absence', is what Heidegger means by that element which is co-disclosed by the Thing and that he calls 'sky'.

6. Dwelling

For Taylor, living among Things relates back to Heidegger's philosophy of language. We can take the right attitude to entities and care for Things if we understand them *as* Things, which requires understanding the way in which they are disclosed through language. Taylor claims that 'the fourfold can be disclosed only to us, who have already identified the thing itself and marked out the four dimensions in language.' (1997: 123) We can get some sense of what this might mean by considering the roles that Taylor sees in Heidegger's thought for art and a kind of ecological thinking.

Taylor thinks that for Heidegger, 'there is a more concentrated mode of language, where we try to bring to its own proper expression what is co-disclosed in the thing.' (1997: 123) As Taylor puts it, 'we try to capture this in a deliberate formulation through an expressive form.' (1997: 123) Taylor thinks that Heidegger's philosophy, his 'thinking', is just such an attempt but this is also performed by works of art.[69]

Taylor thinks that if we think of Things as just context-free physical objects or standing reserve then 'we abolish things, in a more fundamental sense than smashing them to pieces.' (1997: 124) This, for Taylor, means that for Heidegger language has 'a telos…which requires that entities show up a certain way.' (1997: 124) When this 'telos' is lost, when, for example, we 'are swept up in the technological way of life' (1997: 124) that treats Things as standing reserve, then 'an essential role in its retrieval devolves on certain uses of language in philosophy and art' (1997: 124) As Taylor also puts it, 'language, through its telos, dictates a certain mode of expression, a way of formulating matters which can help restore thingness.' (1997: 124) Taylor elaborates on this in a way that amounts to his fullest explanation of what Heidegger means by the idea that 'language speaks':

> It tells us what to say, dictates the poetic or thinkerly word, as we might put it. We can go on talking, mindful only of our purposes, unaware that there is anything else to take notice of. But if we stop to attend to language, it will dictate a certain way of talking. Or, otherwise put, the entities will demand that we use the language which can disclose them as things. In other words, our use of language is no longer arbitrary, up for grabs, a matter of our own feelings and purposes. Even, indeed, especially in what subjectivism thinks is the domain of the most unbounded personal freedom and self-expression, that of art, it is not we but language that ought to be calling the shots. (1997: 124)

[69] Taylor thinks this is exemplified in Heidegger's analysis of Van Gogh's painting of the pair of boots. The peasant woman to whom Heidegger imagines the boots belong implicitly experiences the dimensions of the fourfold. But in Van Gogh's painting the 'Thingly' nature of the shoes is made explicit and available for contemplation. (1997: 123)

Such responses to language

> constitute authentic thinking poetry. They are on a different level from everyday speech—not because they are "heightened" speech, but because everyday speech is a kind of dulling, a falling off, a forgetfulness of the more fullblooded disclosure that words bring. (1997: 125)

But dwelling also manifests in a kind of ecological thought and practice, our being among Things in a way that acknowledges the fourfold world by respecting and 'taking care' of Things. Taylor cites the idea that Things secure the fourfold only when things *as* Things are 'let be' and this happens when mortals 'nurse and nurture the things that grow' and 'specially construct things that do not grow.'[70]

Taylor's view is that 'there is…a positive relevance of Heidegger's philosophy to modern politics' and it underpins his sense that later Heidegger provides a meaning for human life that places us in dialogue with something more than merely subjective. This is the view that Heidegger's understanding of language, its telos, and the human essence can be the basis of an ecological politics, founded on something deeper than an instrumental calculation of the conditions of our survival…[i]t can be the basis of a "deep" ecology.' (1997: 125):

> [W]e can think of the demands of language also as a demand that things put on us to disclose them in a certain way. This amounts to saying that they demand that we acknowledge them as having certain meanings. But this manner of disclosure can in crucial cases be incompatible with a stance of pure instrumentality towards them. Take wilderness for instance. It demands to be disclosed as "earth," as other to "world." This is compatible with a stance of exploration, whereby we identify species and geological forms, for instance, as long as we retain a sense of the necessary inexhaustibility of the wilderness surroundings. But a purely technological stance, whereby we see the rain forests as only a standing reserve for timber production, leaves no room for this meaning. Taking this stance is "annihilating" wilderness in its very meaning(1997: 125-6)

Taylor reads Heidegger as holding the view that the enframed view of beings can be seen to do 'violence to our essence as language beings.' (1997: 126) Taylor notes that this might make it seem like Heidegger's position is a 'shallow' ecology, an ecological ethics grounded ultimately on human purposes. However, because the purposes disclosed to us through language and Things takes us beyond ourselves to something not of our making and control and to which we are answerable:

> Properly understood, the "shepherd of Being" can't be an adept of triumphalist instrumental reason. That is why learning to dwell among things may also amount

[70] Taylor already detects environmental implications of Heidegger's thought here because 'things include more than made objects. They include living things.' (1997: 123) Taylor also cites Heidegger's thought that, 'But tree and pond, too, brook and hill, are things, each in its own way.' For this reason Taylor already thinks part of what is involved in preserving the fourfold for Heidegger is 'saving the earth'.

> to "rescuing the earth." At this moment, when we need all the insight we can muster into our relation to the cosmos in order to deflect our disastrous course, Heidegger may have opened a vitally important new line of thinking. (1997: 126)

Just what sort of life should follow from one that 'dwells' amongst 'Things' is unclear. Taylor's discussion of the ecological relevance of later Heidegger's thought, whilst interesting, is rather thin. Taylor is aware that the anti-enframing view of language that he finds in later Heidegger's thought, whilst it might have benign influences such as in the area of ecology, has 'terrifyingly dangerous' (1997: 125) uses as well. The danger that Taylor thinks belongs to a view of language which holds that there is a forgotten realm of unchosen attachments to language, culture, people, and a place, is that 'so much can be retrieved from the gray zone of repression and forgetfulness' as well as the good: there are 'resentments and hatreds and dreams of omnipotence and revenge, and they can be released by their own words of power.' (1997: 125) Taylor believes that 'Hitler was a world-historical genius in only one respect, but that was in finding dark words of power, sayings that could capture and elevate the fears, longings, and hatreds of a people into something demonic.' (1997: 125) Whilst 'Heidegger has no place for the retrieval of evil in his system' (1997: 125) there are uses of language to which Heidegger's view draws our attention which shows up an ambivalence concerning what can possibly be inspired by Heidegger's understanding of the prior world of significance that environs us as linguistic agents; there is an ambiguity surrounding just what sort of life is meant to follow from the realisation that we 'dwell' amongst the four elements of mortals, divinities, earth and sky. Are we meant to be gentle greens or demonic Nazis? Presumably for Heidegger, 'language speaks' on this issue, but if we cannot tell what language says when it 'speaks' then this problem is exacerbated.

The Significance of Taylor's Reading

Despite these worries, Taylor provides a reading of later Heidegger as providing a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world. On Taylor's reading, Heidegger can be understood to be concerned with a movement of thought that supposes 1) the loss of the belief in various grounds for meaning independent of subjectivity i.e. an independently meaningful nature, *entails* 2) the modern drawing of a boundary between personal agency and the world in the form of a technological subject in relation to a world of context-free objects of scientific study in which entities come to be treated as standing-reserve.

Taylor presents Heidegger's history of Western philosophy as telling the story of the shift from a view of the self as existing in an independently meaningful world, to a sense of self as the origin and source of meaning and value that are projected onto an independently

meaningless world. Taylor's Heidegger can be seen to argue that there is a modern temptation to make 'illegitimate slippage' between 1 and 2 and therefore to think that the loss of the belief in various grounds for meaning independent of subjectivity *entails* projectivism about meaning and value. Just because the clearing is not understood as ontically grounded in a Platonic realm or brought into being by God, does not mean that it is the result projective activity of human subjects. With an adequate understanding of the clearing as not ontically grounded in a metaphysical reality beyond the subject and not ontically grounded in human subjectivity, it is possible to respond to the 'illegitimate slippage' by accepting that there are no grounds for meaning independent of subjectivity, whilst rejecting the modern disenchanted boundary between personal agency and the objective world, suggested by the technological subject in relation to a world of context-free objects or standing-reserve.

In contrast to this enframed view, subjects are to be understood as always already placed in a world constituted by linguistic agency. Human beings do not exist in a world of objects understood as objects of scientific study but a world of what Heidegger calls Things. On this basis Taylor's Heidegger can be seen as making the case for a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world in terms of a sense of the subject as 'dwelling' in a wider meaningful nature or universe that surrounds us, understood as 'the fourfold' of 'earth', 'sky', 'divinities' and 'mortals'.

7. Young's Worry

However, further issues arise. These concern the question why, if we are to accept Taylor's interpretation of later Heidegger's constitutive view of language, we should accept the particular phenomenology of what it is like to inhabit a meaningful world offered as 'the fourfold'. In particular, why should we accept that 'the divinities' have an essential role? This leads to the question that would likely be posed by Julian Young of Taylor's reading.

In contrast to Young, Taylor's reading of the later Heidegger is not based on a view of language, truth and being which draws a distinction between the historical and culturally relative horizons of intelligibility which generates a sense of reality as mysterious. Instead Taylor interprets Heidegger's view of language and the world in the context of a contrast between enframing and constitutive-expressive traditions of thought about language. Taylor situates later Heidegger in this debate in such a way that for Heidegger the question of ontic grounding is seen as bound up with the problematic framework for thinking about the world's intelligibility embodied in the enframing tradition. As I understand Taylor's reading, later Heidegger's originality lies in thinking through what it would be to abandon the enframing view of language in a wholehearted way, which includes abandoning the question of grounds whilst at the same time maintaining that language is a disclosure of a non-subjective world. Taylor claims that the significance of Heidegger's later thought is based

> [o]n a reading of the space of expression itself. Otherwise put, the clearing itself, or language itself, properly brought to light, will show us how to take it. (1997: 120)

As Taylor puts it, 'Heidegger as always moves to retrieve what is hidden, not in some distant point, but in the event of disclosure itself.' (1997: 120)

However, the idea that the significance of later Heidegger's thought lies simply on a 'reading' of the clearing 'from within' is likely to give rise to Young's worry that, in his words, it is a capitulation to a 'flaky analytic' (2002: 23) reading of later Heidegger. A reading that fails to accommodate the being/Being distinction in Heidegger's thought and for this reason fails make sense of proto-religious core of later Heidegger's thinking. Young opposes interpretations of the later Heidegger that think that what Heidegger has to say about Being is exhausted by what Heidegger means by 'being' (lower case 'b'). The reason Young gives for this is that

> Lower case 'being' is incapable of bearing the religious weight of Heidegger's language and concern. By denying Being, by taking the discussion of being to be the totality of his *Seinsphilosophie*, one can undoubtedly produce an interesting figure, one very much in tune with the secular tenor of modern Western philosophy. One may even succeed in convincing a few of the "flakier" members

> of the "analytic" hegemony within modern anglophone philosophy that Heidegger is, in their own terms, a respectable figure, a genuine philosopher. What one will miss, however, is everything that, to him, is of ultimate concern. One will bypass the - essentially "theological" - core of his "matter of thinking". And to the extent that one identifies one's own thinking with that of the diminished Heidegger one will lapse, oneself, into *Seinsvergessenheit.* (2002: 23)

What I want to show in the following section is that, in a certain sense, this sort of concern raised about Taylor's reading is appropriate. This is because there are a number of respects in which Taylor's reading of the later Heidegger is similar to McDowell's Aristotelian re-enchantment that draws on the idea of second nature. However what I will go on to argue is that contrary to the objection raised by Young, this similarity with McDowell's position does not mean that Taylor's reading of Heidegger has no room for the proto-religious dimension of later Heidegger's thought.

8. A Possible Line of Response

What I will do now is discuss these issues by first focusing on the still outstanding question of the position we mortals have in the disclosure of the clearing. Given Heidegger's radical twist on the clearing as not ontically grounded what role do we, as the users of language, play in the clearing coming to be? The suggestion I will make is that the best way to proceed may be simply to embrace the core anti-reductionist idea apparent in Heidegger's thought according to Taylor, the idea of meaning as *given*. Though Heidegger gives a peculiar formulation of this position, that it is not we but language that speaks, there are elements of the idea of meaning as something given in McDowell's framework of second nature too. What I'm going to look at now is the idea of meaning as *given* as it can be seen to figure McDowell's thought.

Connections with McDowell

Some would no doubt object that comparing later Heidegger on the nature of language to McDowell's thought on mind and world is to completely fail to accommodate what is distinctive and subversive about Heidegger's position. It is to fail to appreciate the way in which the weight of authority is accorded to something utterly beyond the human that appears to characterise Heidegger's later philosophy, in which it is not human beings but language that speaks. It might be argued that, as McDowell is part of a tradition that gives 'no-priority' to the relationship between mind and world, that looking to his thought in order to understand later Heidegger is bound to be a mistake.[71]

But I want to suggest that Taylor's way of reading Heidegger can be illuminated by looking at McDowell's re-enchantment. McDowell presents the idea of second nature as standing in contrast to a way of thinking about the relationship between subjectivity and objectivity that he understands in terms of the neo-Humean view of mind and world. According to the neo-Humean view, meaning is understood to belong within the human mind, to subjectivity, in contrast with an objective world which is exhaustively described by the sciences in disenchanted naturalistic terms. According to this drawing of a boundary between subjectivity and objectivity, the meaningful and intelligibly structured appearance of the world can be explained in terms of objective states of affairs or facts outside of the mind, and so outside of the space of meaning, impacting on the human mind and giving rise to subjective representations of the world. McDowell's account of the neo-Humean view of mind and world

[71] An argument along these lines can be found in Cooper (2007).

can be seen as an example of what Taylor understands as the enframing view of language. A significant element of the neo-Humean view, as McDowell presents it, is that features of our subjective representations of the world can be said to genuinely represent mind-independent reality if they can be vindicated as doing so through the concepts made available by the modern scientific disenchanted view of nature, that is to say if they can be made sense of in terms of a view of human life which only appeals to facts about our nature independent of any unique linguistic or cultural expression that our lives are given. According to this view of the relation between subjectivity and objectivity, if a feature of our thought or experience is subjective – that is only intelligible in relation to its disposition to appear the way it does to us as beings with a certain sensibility – then it is to be understood as merely subjective, a property that is projected onto the world.

In contrast, McDowell presents second nature as involving the view that human beings are born as animals possessed with the potential to grow into 'thinkers and intentional agents in the *course* of coming to maturity' (1994:125). Crucially it is through initiation into language and culture that '[h]uman beings mature into being at home in the space of reasons, or what comes to the same thing, living their lives in the world' (1994: 125). McDowell's no-priority view of the relationship between mind and world is articulated in response to the following demand: '[w]e…need rational constraint on thinking and judging, from a reality external to them, if we are to make sense of them as bearing on a reality at all.' (1994: 25) It is at this point that the neo-Humean view might seem appealing because it provides a particular answer to this demand. It suggests that features of our subjective representations of the world can be said to genuinely represent mind independent reality because they are constrained by and ultimately answerable to reality understood in disenchanted terms, through the concepts made available by the modern scientific disenchanted view of nature. McDowell thinks that here we can find ourselves appealing to 'the myth of the Given': '[w]hen we try to acknowledge the need for external rational constraint, we can find ourselves supposing there must be relations of ultimate grounding that reach outside the conceptual realm altogether' (1994: 25), grounding in a world that is external to thought. This can be understood in Heideggerian terms of appealing to an ontic grounding to the conceptually articulated world. McDowell argues that the idea of the Given is a myth, and as a consequence of this that the world must be understood, not as lying outside the boundary of thought, but as falling within the bounds of the conceptual. As McDowell expresses his view, '[a]lthough reality is independent of our thinking, it is not to be pictured as outside an outer boundary that encloses the conceptual sphere.' (1994: 26) However, McDowell's picture of the world as lying within the realm of thought can seem like a kind of idealism, understood as a view that gives *priority* to the mind in giving intelligible order to a world, a position that is problematic for McDowell's concerns because it seemingly does not genuinely acknowledge how reality is independent of our thinking. McDowell's response to the

claim that his position gives priority to the mind, projecting intelligible order on to the world, is to claim that:

> we might just as well take the fact that the sort of thing one can think is the same as the sort of thing that can be the case the other way round, as an invitation to understand the notion of the sort of thing one can think in terms of a supposedly prior understanding of the sort of thing that can be the case. *And in fact there is no reason to look for priority in either direction*. (1994: 28 my italics)

But the objection will still be made that, even if McDowell avoids idealism - it does not give priority to the mind in projecting conceptual order onto the world - it nevertheless is a *no-priority* view, where the later Heidegger gives priority to *language* speaking. It is the priority given to something beyond the human in this way that underpins the later Heidegger's whole philosophical outlook. The objection that may be levelled is that a no-priority view cannot accommodate this idea.

But note that McDowell can be seen to respond in a Heideggerian way, also opposing ontic grounding in subjectivity. McDowell's idea of second nature involves the view that through initiation into language and culture, 'the language into which a human being is initiated stands over against [them] as a prior embodiment of mindedness, of the possibility of an orientation to the world.' (1994: 125) McDowell's idea of second nature can be seen to stand then in opposition to what Taylor calls the enframing tradition of thinking about language: language is not an instrument of ours. On this view, the feature of language that really matters is 'that a natural language, the sort of language into which human beings are first initiated, serves as a repository of tradition, a store of historically accumulated wisdom about what is a reason for what.' (1994: 126) McDowell elaborates on this thought when commenting on his indebtedness to the Gadamerian idea of 'tradition',

> Understanding is placing what is understood within a horizon constituted by tradition, and I suggest that the first thing to say about language is that it serves as the repository of tradition. Initiation into a language is initiation into a going conception of the layout of the space of reasons…On this view, a shared language is the primary medium of understanding. It stands over against all parties to communication in it, with a kind of independence of each of them that belongs with its meriting a kind of respect. (1994: 184)

The significant idea here is that language, whilst only intelligible from the point of view of second nature, 'stands over against all parties to communication in it, with a kind of independence of each of them that belongs with its meriting a kind of respect.' This means that the framework of second nature, though it involves a no-priority view of mind and world, involves giving priority to language as not subjective or merely intersubjective but stands over and against all speakers with a kind of independence.

The interesting idea in McDowell's thought, that follows from this position on language is that, as McDowell puts it, language has an independence of the self and the speech community in a way that 'belongs with its meriting a kind of respect.' (1994: 184) What McDowell means by this is that 'not just the respect due to an effective instrument…[t]he respect I mean is the respect that is due to something to which we owe our being what we are.' (1994: 184) According to McDowell, language is no mere vehicle of thought nor is it an effective instrument of ours, it is that through which we become what we are as speakers, agents with a world intelligibly in view. Therefore, the way in which we stand to language or the world, rather than something that serves ends of ours, is a stance towards something that we owe our being to as speakers/agents, something to which we are answerable for understanding our purposes/ends.[72]

In this respect, there is a great deal of similarity between Taylor's Heidegger and McDowell. For McDowell, the basic background against which we experience the world as meaningful – tradition – turns out to represent something like a *given* for which we should have respect.[73]I will return to this idea at the end of the chapter. But first I want to consider an objection it invites, that, whilst there is a sense of givenness in this framework of second nature, by thinking of language as 'the primary medium of understanding', as 'standing over and against all parties to communication', and as standing with a 'kind of independence', McDowell is in danger of giving language the monolithic status that interpreters like Lafont think Heidegger gives to language. Rather than helping to resolve the worry facing later Heidegger of just where we speakers might fit into the use of language, McDowell who accords a significant role to tradition, might seem to raise the problem anew.

In the light of this it can seem, if we are to embrace the anti-reductionist position which holds that the clearing is not ontically grounded in extra-linguistic worldly entities or in the subject, that we must opt for a version of a Derridian view of language as Taylor understands it. This is because to opt for a version of individual or communal views would be to embrace a version of ontic grounding in the subject and thereby undermine the anti-reductionist thrust of Heidegger's de-onticising move with respect to the basic background against which we experience the world as meaningful.

However, this may not be so. The threat seems to come from the role played by the understanding of tradition. The threat of undermining the idea of meaning as given is only a threat if we are reductionists with respect to traditions. What I want to argue is that a consideration of Scruton's thought about tradition as the basic background against which we

[72] On this view, language, which is only intelligible in relation to speakers, nevertheless takes us beyond ourselves to a world of meaning and value to which our agency is answerable without pointing to a reality external of language.
[73] He says as much: 'The horizon is pretty much given…by the tradition embodied in the language'. (1994: 184-5)

experience the world as meaningful might suggest how tradition can be understood as something that we play a role in bringing about, but still in a non-reductionist way.[74]

Scruton on Tradition

The idea of a non-reductionist view of tradition is that there is a way of holding that tradition is not wholly independent of subjects whilst accommodating McDowell's insight that tradition forms the background against which subjects experience the world as meaningful. According to this view subjects play an essential role in the formation of tradition, but that tradition cannot be reduced to merely subjective (individual or communal) purposes or ends. Instead tradition places subjects in a meaningful world that is given.

This is the view of tradition that Scruton articulates. As I discussed earlier when examining Scruton's understanding of the *Lebenswelt,* Scruton holds that the concepts through which objects are disclosed to persons or agents describe entities in accordance with human purposes. The objects that compose the *Lebenswelt* 'are conceived under classifications that reflect our own practical and contemplative interest in them.' (1986: 8) These concepts, Scruton claims, cannot be understood or vindicated from the view from nowhere of the sciences but 'have evolved precisely under the pressure of human circumstance and in answer to the needs of generations.' (1986: 9) To claim that certain concepts emerge 'in answer to the needs of generations' is to claim that they make sense against the background of tradition. Scruton's view is that, in discussing traditions, we are concerned with something 'tacit, shared, embodied in social practices and inarticulate expectations.' Following Burke, Scruton describes tradition as involving 'prejudices' because 'though the stock of reason in each individual is small, there is an accumulation of reason in society that we question and reject at our peril.' (2012b: 220)[75] In Scruton's understanding of traditions, '[t]hose who adopt them are not necessarily able to explain them, still less to justify them.' (2012b: 220) But for Scruton, despite the dependency of traditions on 'us' – in one sense they are creations of ours – this does not mean that traditions are merely subjective such that, for example, they can be reconstructed as fulfilling purposes that we have as subjects prior to our immersion in tradition. As mentioned above, Scruton's view is that though these concepts cannot be rendered intelligible from a view from nowhere, say, of science, they cannot be replaced. By attempting to replace them, we run the risk of rejecting concepts which represent 'a vital link with reality, and without this link appropriate

[74] Another sort of response which I will not explore might be that McDowell accepts the view discussed by Taylor above, that no 'one-sided relation of dependence' can capture the relation between speakers and language.
[75] McDowell also discusses traditions in terms of 'prejudices', *see* (1994: 81).

action and appropriate response could not emerge with the rapidity and competence that alone can ensure our happiness and survival.' (1986: 9) An example that Scruton gives is manners:

> [g]ood manners form an excellent illustration of what I have in mind. Knowing what to do in company, what to say, what to feel – these are assets we acquire by immersion in society. They cannot be taught by spelling them out but only by osmosis, yet the person who has not acquired these things is rightly described as ignorant. (2012b: 220-1)

This means that there might be a way of accepting the Heideggerian de-onticising move and understanding the role that we speakers have in the clearing by appealing, in the way that McDowell does, to the idea of tradition. This need not mean that to appeal to tradition is to appeal to language understood, as Taylor puts it, as a 'super-(non)agent'. Tradition can be understood in the way that Scruton suggests, as something in the creation of which we subjects play an essential role but which at the same time bequeathes to us concepts that cannot be understood as ontically grounded in subjects (individuals *or* communities) because they do not disclose merely subjective purposes or ends. Instead they articulate a reality that is given, in the sense that they constitute the basic background against which the world is experienced as meaningful.

But this still leaves certain questions outstanding. If what McDowell and Scruton have to say about tradition as the background against which agents experience a meaningful world addresses the issue of the role we 'mortals' play in the coming to be of the clearing why should we accept the particular phenomenology of what it is like to inhabit a meaningful world offered as 'the fourfold'? In particular, echoing Young's worry, why should we accept an understanding of the world as involving the divinities or a proto-religious dimension?

Taylor on the Fourfold Again

After considering Taylor's interpretation of the later Heidegger I raised the question, given Heidegger's radical twist on the clearing as not ontically grounded what role do we, as the users of language, play in the clearing coming to be? I argued that we can accept the idea of meaning as given implied by the de-onticised view of the clearing without having to accept a view of language in which speakers of language are thought not to play a role in the constitution of the clearing. In order to do this I turned to the sense in which as mortals one of the constituting elements of the clearing is tradition. Tradition can be understood as something that subjects play an essential role in the formation of whilst at the same time holding that tradition

cannot be reduced to merely subjective (individual or communal) purposes or ends. As mortals, tradition is *one* of the elements that *gives* meaning.

But perhaps tradition is not the only element, and as such perhaps it is natural to extend the clearing, that which gives meaning, to encompass other elements. For Taylor the concepts that constitute the clearing can be understood, following Scruton, as 'something like the implied community of language users, who together construct the common-sense world…it is a world constituted by our social interaction, and endowed with the "meanings" that inhabit our communicative acts' (2001: 267-8) As such these concepts are not made intelligible based on a view of human life understood in disenchanted terms – viewed from nowhere – they must be understood in relation to our subjectivity. However, due to the way such concepts are bequeathed to us by tradition, from the point of view of subjects that use them, they represent something given.

As a consequence of this the entities that are disclosed through these concepts are not objects of scientific study but entities that show up in relation to our lives. The entities that are disclosed through tradition are not context-free, precisely because they belong to a lived environment. That is to say the entities disclosed through the clearing are constituted not only by tradition but by their place in and dependence on nature as it enters the surrounding world of our agency understood in terms as 'earth' and 'sky'. As such not only is it tradition, but the dimensions of earth and sky that *gives* the entities that meaningfully show up to us through 'the clearing'. (I will return to these ideas yet again below.)

Young might respond that this is all very well, but it leaves out the divinities and also the dimension of the fourfold that is most important to Heidegger from Young's explicitly proto-religious perspective. As Young claims '[t]here must be more to the fourfold than has so far met the eye.' (2002: 99) What Young supposes is missing from this sort of account of the fourfold is the manner in which reality involves a dimension of mystery. According to Young's reading of Heidegger, the world understood as the fourfold has an intelligible *and* an unintelligible side; it is simultaneously self-disclosing *and* self-concealing, and as such the fourfold involves the presencing of the mystery of Being. It is because the fourfold involves a dimension of mystery that it makes sense as an object of proto-religious 'wonder', of 'awe' and 'reverence'.

Comparing Young and Taylor on The Divinities

In order to defend Taylor's reading against Young's worry I first want to compare what Taylor and Young have to say about the later Heidegger's concept of 'the divinities'.

Taylor claims that the 'form of life' that is disclosed by the Thing is 'based on and interwoven with strong goods, matters of intrinsic worth' and that such matters 'can be called

"divine."' (1997: 122) It is because of the existence of matters of intrinsic worth that Taylor thinks Heidegger invokes the proto-religious category of 'the divinities'. Now in response to such a construal of the divine in later Heidegger's thought it is easy to see why someone, such as Young, might think that this is a rather 'flaky' construal. Many would accept the existence of 'matters of intrinsic worth' without thinking of them as 'divine' – McDowell, for example – therefore to try and construe Heidegger's category of the divinities in this way is an unconvincing attempt to frame the existence of the divinities in later Heidegger's thinking.

However, on further examination, what Young himself says about 'the divinities' could equally be accused of being a rather 'flaky' construal of the category of the divine. As discussed earlier, when considering Young's interpretation of later Heidegger, Young admits that the divinities (or the gods as Young also describes them) are difficult to understand. Nevertheless Young puts forward a number of claims about how to understand the divinities: the divinities are 'messengers' that communicate 'laws' or 'edicts' (2002: 15), laws of a community, that communicate 'the proper way to be, both individually and collectively, a community's fundamental *ethos*'. (2002: 95) Identifying the divinities with the personalities or cultural figures that communicate a communal ethos hardly seems to go beyond Taylor's suggestion that the divinities are invoked because of the existence of matters of intrinsic worth.

Young goes on to say that the divinities can be understood as 'existence possibilities' or 'heroes' embodied in 'heritage' (2002: 96), categories found in Heidegger's *Being and Time*. But this is a curious point for Young to make. As mentioned earlier he reads the early Heidegger of *Being and Time* as a 'heroic nihilist', and later Heidegger as offering a proto-religious view of the *meaning* of human life. To then explain the divinities in terms of categories that belong to a work of 'heroic nihilism' seems to suggest that either Young is wrong to regard *Being and Time* in those terms or, rather the more relevant point here, that Young's understanding of the divinities is a rather flaky construal of the category of the divine in later Heidegger's thought after all.

Young and the Givenness of Being

This leads me to believe that what, according to Young, is doing the work of explaining the proto-religious in Heidegger's thought is not the divinities as such, but rather a view of the 'givenness of Being' (a similar view to that found in Scruton's thought).

The crux of Young's proto-religious reading of the later Heidegger is the view that the world warrants certain proto-religious responses, such as 'awe', 'wonder' and 'reverence', and is understood as 'holy' and 'sacred' because, as discussed already, the world has an intelligible *and* an unintelligible side, that it is simultaneously self-disclosing *and* self-concealing, and as

such the world involves the presencing of the mystery of Being. This view of the world is derived from the thought that the world is to be understood as '[nature's] *poiesis,* as something *given* to us': 'it is something "granted" to us in the self-disclosure of the divine and self-concealing Origin' (2002: 60) According to this view, when one sees the world as given, one experiences and understands it as 'something contingent, fragile, precious, something which, far from being *of course* there, *might not have existed at all*.' (2002: 60) Here, for Young, '[w]e step…into an apprehension of our world as something *granted* to us' (2003: 207). Young thinks that, as a result, 'we experience a profound sense of "gratitude"…gratitude that there is something rather than nothing.' (2003: 207) and that 'gratitude because, whatever its darknesses…the world is still, for those with eyes to see, an extraordinarily beautiful place: not just "granted" to us, therefore, but rather "gifted", gifted by an extraordinary "graciousness"' (2002: 60) An appreciation of the contingency of the world in this sense is apt to produce a sense of 'wonder', 'awe', 'reverence' due to the experience of the world being understood as 'created and sustained by an incomprehensible but overwhelmingly powerful force' (2003: 200) In this way, the world is understood as a 'numinous' and a 'holy place'. (2003: 200)

Taylor and the Givenness of Being

What I will argue here is that the idea of the fourfold as involving an intelligible *and* an unintelligible side, that it is simultaneously self-disclosing *and* self-concealing, and as such the involves the presencing of the mystery of Being because of the manner in which the world is given, may able to be accommodated on Taylor's understanding of the fourfold.

Instead of advancing a reading of Heidegger's philosophy of being that is based on a form of historical and cultural relativism, Taylor's approach to the later Heidegger depends on a de-onticised view of the clearing which results in a view of language or meaning as something given. This is to be appreciated on the basis of a contrast between enframing and constitutive traditions of thought about language. Taylor reads Heidegger as belonging to the constitutive tradition whilst giving that tradition a radical twist by raising the issue of the 'ontological difference'. What results is Heidegger's de-onticised view of the clearing. Whilst the clearing cannot be understood as *ontically* grounded in a metaphysical reality beyond the subject it cannot be understood as ontically grounded in an understanding of subjectivity prior to being already placed in the clearing. For this reason although the clearing is not grounded in a metaphysical reality external to itself, the clearing cannot be understood as 'in our heads' or as something that *we* do, as any thought or doing of ours requires the disclosure of entities in the clearing. The clearing understood in this de-onticised way results in a view of meaning, and the entities meaning disclosed to us through language as something given.

So, Taylor's de-onticised view of the clearing results in a view of meaning, and the entities disclosed through language as something given. As such it results in a view in which meaning, and the entities disclosed through language, depend on a world that is itself not one of the entities disclosed through language, but that in which language and the entities disclosed through language have their ground or origin and source. This is not to suggest that language or the clearing is ontically grounded in a reality external to language but that the de-onticised view of the clearing suggests an ontological difference between meaningful entities, and that which gives them: the world. As discussed in the previous section the clearing or world can be understood as constituted by cultural tradition, earth and sky. Taylor's view then suggests an ontological difference between meaning and entities, and the clearing or world, constituted by these dimensions of tradition, earth and sky. These dimensions are not entities, but the ground or origin and source of meaningful entities.

This ontological difference between entities and their world that *gives* Things can be seen to be what Taylor attempts to articulate in his description of the Thing-fourfold relation. So, in Taylor's account of the fourfold that I discussed earlier in the chapter, Taylor talks of the Thing as 'redolent of the human activities in which it plays a part', in this case a jug is redolent of activities such as 'pouring of wine at the common table' (1997: 122). The jug is 'a point at which this rich web of practices can be sensed, made visible in the very shape of the jug and its handle, which offers itself for this use.' (1997: 122) From my discussion of how best to understand our relation to the dimension of human practice, the idea that an entity like a jug suggests a 'rich web of practices' expresses the thought that such an entity which is disclosed in relation to our practical interest shows up as meaningful against the background of tradition. As Taylor mentions in his discussion, Heidegger imagines the jug in his example to be involved in the 'pouring a libation from the jug' but Taylor goes on to say '[b]ut I doubt if the Christian, Black Forest peasantry of Swabia (as against ancient Greeks) actually did this kind of thing' (1997: 122) Nevertheless, libation or not, this brings out the point that the social practices that centre around an entity like Heidegger's jug take place against the background of *some* established and significant tradition. When an entity like a jug shows up not only as an object or entity that we use, but gathers a rich web of social practices or tradition, then the Thing makes vivid to us the ontological difference between entities and one element of the lived environment or surrounding world; that in which language and the entities disclosed through language have their origin and source.

Any entity formed for human use, like a jug, is made from some material or other. As discussed earlier, Taylor supposes that Heidegger's view is that if we are not closed to this aspect of the Thing the jug will 'speak of its history as a formed entity' (1997: 122) The significance of this thought for my present purposes is that when an entity like a jug shows up to us not just as an object for human use, but perhaps – because of its individuality and uniquely

crafted character – draws attention to and speaks of its history as a formed entity, the jug speaks of 'its emergence from unformed matter, of its continuing dependency on the unformed' (1997: 122) The jug, due to its standing 'on and emerge[nce] out of a vast domain of still unformed and unidentified reality' gathers and makes vivid the ontological difference between entities – either formed or spontaneously emerging as in the case of plants and animals – and the element of the lived environment or surrounding world in which language and the entities disclosed through language have their ground or origin and source. This region of the surrounding world Heidegger understands as the earth, 'a field of potential future forming' a reality which is 'limitless, inexhaustible' (1997: 122)

Taylor supposes that entities, as formed or emerging spontaneously from 'the earth', are 'open to greater cosmic forces' which, whilst 'beyond the domain of the formable' nevertheless 'provide the frame within which the earth can be partly shaped as our world.' (1997: 122-3). For this reason, entities, insofar as they draw attention to and speak of their history as formed entities gather the ontological difference between Things and that 'which can either permit them to flourish or sweep them away', that is the element of the lived environment or surrounding world that as agents we find ourselves always already placed in so far as entities meaningfully are given that Heidegger understands as the sky: 'the alternation of day and night, storms, floods, earthquakes, or their benign absence' (1997: 123).

This suggests that, although Taylor does not interpret Heidegger's philosophy of being as based on a form of historical and cultural relativism, but as depending on a de-onticised view of the clearing, Taylor's view of the clearing understood as the fourfold incorporates the idea of an ontological difference between meaning or meaningful entities and the lived environment or surrounding world in which entities have their origin and source and which *gives* them. The clearing can be understood in terms of an ontological distinction between entities and the cultural tradition, earth and sky that gives them. As I have attempted to illustrate in my discussion of Taylor's understanding of the ontological difference between entities and these environing elements, the ontological difference between entities and tradition, earth and sky is a difference between something made intelligible to us through language, the entities, and their ground or origin and source, elements of tradition, earth and sky that are not completely intelligible to us, but also involve dimensions of unintelligibility. Taylor's de-onticised approach to the clearing, whilst it is not ontically grounded in a reality external to itself, nevertheless makes room for an ontological difference between entities and the world in which entities have their origin and source. It is in this space that Taylor's de-onticised reading makes room for Young's sense that the fourfold must involve an intelligible *and* an unintelligible side, that it is simultaneously self-disclosing *and* self-concealing, and as such the fourfold involves the presencing of a world that involves the dimension of mystery.

As Scruton claims of his view of the world, understood as a lived environment or surrounding world of our agency, this view, that involves the dimension of an inherited cultural tradition and the natural world, invites the proto-religious. In Scruton's case, this is a response of 'piety' understood as arising out 'a sense of the sacred given-ness of these things, which are not our invention, and to which we owe an unfathomable debt of gratitude.' (2005: 117) As Scruton goes on to explain this idea, it connects with 'mystery':

> Put in simple terms, piety means the deep down recognition of our frailty and dependence, the acknowledgement that the burden we inherit cannot be sustained unaided, the disposition to give thanks for our existence and reverence to the world on which we depend, and the sense of the unfathomable mystery which surrounds our coming to be and passing away. All these things come together in our humility before the works of nature, and this humility is the fertile soil in which the seeds of morality are planted. (2005: 117)

In Taylor's de-onticised reading of the clearing what brings forth the proto-religious response is the coming to presence, in the sight of ordinary entities, of our lives always already being placed in a surrounding world and the ontological difference between Things and the not wholly intelligible elements of the surrounding world in which those entities have their origin and source. So, Young need not worry; though Taylor's de-onticised approach has a lot in common with McDowell's naturalism of second nature, as I have attempted to show, there is a space in Taylor's approach to Heidegger's later thought for ideas of mystery.

Although Taylor's reading of Heidegger is not based on the relativist reading that Young gives, it can nevertheless provides *a way* of accommodating the distinctions that are important to Young. Taylor's understanding of the world understood as the fourfold involves an intelligible and unintelligible dimension a self-disclosed and a self-concealed dimension and an element of mystery. For this reason, Taylor's reading, as involving a dimension of mystery, provides a way of accommodating the idea that the world is an object of proto-religious 'wonder', of 'awe' and 'reverence'. It finds a space for the sense in which when the world is understood in the way that Heidegger presents it, as 'nature's *poiesis*', things are understood as '*given* to us…something "granted"' (2002: 60) Young explains this sense of givenness by suggesting that it involves the thought that far from the 'things' that compose the world for human beings 'being *of course* there', when understood in their worldly context it is appreciated that 'things' '*might not have existed at all*.' (2002: 60). It is because things depend upon such a worldly context that Young thinks as a result, 'we experience a profound sense of "gratitude"…gratitude that there is something rather than nothing.' (2003: 207) But as I have attempted to show this has a place in the perspective that Taylor provides too.

Conclusion: Drawing Things Together – From Second Nature to the Mystery of Being?

In my introduction I presented a particular way in which the problem of disenchantment and re-enchantment can be understood provided by Charles Taylor (2011). Taylor supposes that it is possible to respond to the disenchanted view of the world on the basis of an understanding of our agency-in-the-world. The question that he thinks should animate those that seek re-enchantment through an understanding of our agency-in-the-world is

> when we have left the "enchanted" world of spirits, and no longer believe in the Great Chain, what sense can be made of the notion that nature or the universe which surrounds us is the locus of human meanings which are "objective," in the sense that they are not just arbitrarily projected through choice or contingent desire? (2011: 294)

In Chapter One I looked at the possibility that John McDowell might provide a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world that answers this question. I concluded that McDowell's re-enchanted naturalism of second nature provides one way of giving sense to this idea but argued that this re-enchantment can seem limited from Taylor's point of view as McDowell does not address the 'proto-religious' dimension to Taylor's understanding of re-enchantment.

For this reason in Chapter Two I looked at Scruton's re-enchantment and attempted to show the way in which he provides a re-enchantment from the point of view of our agency-in-the-world that does encompass the proto-religious. I concluded that Scruton does but argued that Scruton does so by suggesting a form of supernaturalism, or what McDowell calls rampant platonism, only to revoke the implied supernaturalism, raising serious worries about the status of the proto-religious re-enchantment that Scruton articulates.

I then, in Chapter Three, looked at the later Heidegger in order to explore the possibility that he provides a more convincing basis for a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world that incorporates the proto-religious dimension. I looked at Julian Young's reading in which the proto-religious dimension forms the core of later Heidegger's outlook but raised a number of questions about how this re-enchantment is to be understood. For this reason I explored Taylor's reading of the later Heidegger which suggests that Heidegger can be read by appreciating his later views on language. In response to a worry suggested by Young, I argued that Charles Taylor's interpretation can indeed accommodate a proto-religious dimension.

However, given the element of similarity and continuity between McDowell's re-enchanted naturalism of second nature and Taylor's Aristotelian approach to later Heidegger

which make sense of certain proto-religious responses to the world, I am led to the conclusion that there is nothing inherently limited about the framework of second nature when it comes to accommodating the proto-religious into its re-enchantment. The world disclosed through our initiation in language and culture, is not nature or the universe as it is understood by the natural sciences; rather it can be understood, from within our agency-in-the-world, as a lived environment or surrounding world that, due to the manner in which meaning and Things are given, is a world that can appropriately elicit responses of wonder, awe, respect and reverence.

McDowell, through his naturalism of second nature, arrives at the idea that 'the world' can be understood to include more than is intelligible from the disenchanted view from nowhere provided by the modern natural sciences. But Taylor's later Heidegger shows how it is possible to extend the idea of the world that is intelligible from within this framework of second nature in such a way that it includes the proto-religious.

McDowell presents second nature as involving the view that human beings are born as animals possessed with the potential to grow into 'thinkers and intentional agents in the *course* of coming to maturity' (1994: 125). Through initiation in language and culture, '[h]uman beings mature into being at home in the space of reasons, or what comes to the same thing, living their lives in the world' (1994: 125). McDowell argues that our second nature is constituted by language and cannot be reductively understood in terms of a conception of human nature which views that nature only in modern disenchanted terms. Nevertheless McDowell argues that this position is still a form of naturalism. He maintains this on the grounds that acquiring a language cannot be understood as coming to understand meanings that are purely 'formal', intelligible independently of perceiving, acting and living. According to McDowell, acquiring language and culture involves having one's perceptions, actions and life shaped and this is something that goes on in nature, albeit our second nature. For McDowell 'second nature acts in a world in which it finds more than what is open to view from the dehumanized stance [of] the natural sciences' (1998a: 192). In Chapter One I focused on the way McDowell thought this allowed him, in contrast to the neo-Humean view, to offer a non-projectvist view of value, but also raised the point that, whilst this is a re-enchantment from within our agency-in-the-world, McDowell really only extends it to aesthetic and moral value: his re-enchantment does not encompass the proto-religious dimension.

In Chapter Three, I examined Taylor's perspective on the later Heidegger and drew attention to the similarity between McDowell's re-enchanted naturalism of second nature and Taylor's Aristotelian approach to understanding the later Heidegger. According to Taylor's perspective on Heidegger, to be human is to be a 'rational animal' and human rationality is constituted by language: the human is the animal that 'in its nature is given to speech'. Taylor thinks this provides a way of understanding the human essence or human nature, 'not through the examination of a particular species of hairless ape, which happens to use language' but as

'derived from the way of being of the clearing, by being attentive to the way that language opens a clearing.' (1997: 121) Another way of putting this point in McDowellian terms is to say that human nature is not understood in a view of life reductively understood in terms of a conception of human nature which views that nature only in modern disenchanted terms but from the point of view of our second nature as it has been formed by acquiring language and our placing in a world 'in which more is found than…what is open to view from the dehumanized stance [of] the natural sciences' (1998a: 192). Understanding the way that the acquisition of language places human beings in a world will give you the '*areté* of human beings, what life is proper for them.' (1997: 113)

Taylor locates the later Heidegger as giving a radical twist to the constitutive tradition of thinking about language with a de-onticised view of the clearing. Heidegger does this by raising the issue of the 'ontological difference'. What results is Heidegger's de-onticised view of the clearing. The view that whilst the clearing cannot be understood as *ontically* grounded in a metaphysical reality beyond the subject it cannot be understood as ontically grounded in an understanding of subjectivity prior to being already placed in the clearing. For this reason although the clearing is not grounded in a metaphysical reality external to itself, the clearing cannot be understood as 'in our heads' or as something that *we* do, as any thought or doing of ours requires the disclosure of entities in the clearing. Hence, meaning, and the entities disclosed through language, depend on a given world that is itself not one of the entities disclosed through language, but in which language and the entities have their ground or origin and source.

This difference between entities and their world is what Taylor attempts to articulate in his description of the Thing-fourfold relation. Expanding on a McDowellian view of the background against which the world shows up as meaningful to creatures of second nature, not only does Taylor's Heidegger draw upon tradition as one of the environing elements of the surrounding world, but also earth and sky.[76] It is this space – the ontological difference between objects as they meaningfully show up to us through language and their ground in a surrounding world of tradition, earth and sky – which *gives* Things. In this way, Taylor's de-onticised reading makes room for the sense that the world involves the dimension of the intelligible *and* the unintelligible, the self-disclosing *and* the self-concealing, and as such the world to which creatures of second nature 'owe our being what we are.' (McDowell, 1994: 184) involves the presencing of a world that is 'mysterious'.

[76] It is interesting to note that when outlining the form of 'particularism' that he advocates McDowell – almost despite himself – borders on the proto-religious. McDowell writes that '[i]t seems plausible that Plato's ethical Forms are, in part, at least, a response to uncodifiability…though Plato's Forms are a myth, they are not a consolation…[t]he point of the metaphor is the colossal difficulty of attaining a capacity to cope clear-sightedly with the ethical reality that *is* part of our world.' (1998a: 73) McDowell goes on to say '[u]nlike other philosophical responses to uncodifiability, this one may actually work towards moral improvement; negatively, by inducing humility, and positively, by inspiring an effect akin to that of a religious conversion.' (1998a: 73)

On this reading the life that is proper to a creature of second nature encompasses the proto-religious response; it is a life that involves a sense of wonder, awe and humility out of an awareness of our lives as placed in a world that is mysteriously given.

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