Eriugena and the Re-enchantment of Nature

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ABSTRACT

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This work is an attempt to show the similarities between the concept of nature held by Eriugena and Heidegger. This similarity provides the basis for both a criticism of the view of nature held by recent epistemology and a criticism of recent epistemology's view of medieval thought. These criticisms open the way for a modern understanding of nature in terms of the Good, that is, a re-enchantment of nature. This re-enchantment centers upon the development of the modern sciences, both natural and historical, and the effect that these have had upon metaphysics. The re-enchantment of nature discussed in this work is not an attempt to dismiss modern science in favour of medieval science. Instead, it is an attempt to re-capture the notion that human nature or the self can only be understood in relation to the Good and, in so far as human nature is a part of nature itself, an understanding of the self in terms of the Good is also an understanding of nature in terms of the Good.

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Chapter 1

The Disenchantment of Nature

In this chapter I shall examine recent epistemology and its characterization of nature as disenchanted. After Weber it has become a commonplace to describe modernity in terms of the disenchantment of nature[1]. Recent epistemology has, however, given the disenchantment of nature a more specific meaning. For them the disenchantment of nature signifies the rise of natural science and the consequent view of nature as the subject matter of natural science. This view of the disenchantment of nature presents nature in an *ontic* manner, i.e. it presents nature in a positive manner as the subject matter of natural science[2]. There are, I believe, two problems with this view of nature: first, it ignores and obscures metaphysics and, second, it distorts the relation between modern and medieval thought.

In what follows I shall examine the work of two recent epistemologists, namely Sellars and McDowell. Both of these therapeutic philosophers attempt to alleviate the philosophical anxieties surrounding nature and its relation to the self. Sellars is concerned with showing the inappropriateness of natural science in regards to an understanding of the self. He seeks to establish epistemology as a discipline separated from that of natural science. McDowell takes over this separation but finds that Sellars' formulation of it renders the self unnatural. While McDowell's major concern is with experience he uses his treatment of experience as a basis for bringing the self back into nature.

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[1] See Taylor Hegel Ch. 1.
[2] See Heidegger *Introduction* to Being and Time.

While I find the work of these two thinkers interesting I believe that they have misunderstood the problem which faces them. They have taken natural science to be the only science and have endeavoured to distinguish it from epistemology, thus finding a place for the self. This separation between natural science and epistemology is, I believe, genuine but it does not rest upon the difference between nature and the self, rather it rests upon the difference between natural and historical science.

My discussion of historical science shall not occur until the third chapter. I shall spend my time in this chapter merely laying out the positions of Sellars and McDowell. This shall provide a context against which to discuss the medieval view of nature and the manner in which that view can be retrieved by modernity.

1. Sellars

In the last fifty years or so there has been a pronounced movement in epistemology away from a correspondence theory of truth and toward a coherence theory of truth. In general, the correspondence theory of truth holds truth to be due to the correspondence of a belief with its object. Correspondence offers a way of explaining the truth of a belief independent from its justification. This explanation allows one to establish the truth of certain beliefs, i.e. empirical beliefs, independently of other beliefs thus rendering them as foundations of knowledge. The validity of knowledge, especially natural science, can then be shown by tracing its justifications back to these foundational beliefs.

The coherence theory of truth, on the other hand, rejects the assumption that the truth of a belief can be determined independently of other beliefs. The truth of a belief, it

is held, can only be shown through justification, that is, by setting a belief in relation to other beliefs. The coherence theory of truth, however, does not seek to replace correspondence with coherence in explaining truth. Truth is for the coherentist a thin concept, i.e. a concept capable of receiving only the most trivial of explications, and is, in relation to coherence and belief, so thin as to be transparent. It is upon coherence and belief that an exploration of truth focuses for the coherence of belief, as exploited by justification, gives weight to the presumption that most of one's beliefs are true and it is upon this presumption that the validity of knowledge rests[3].

Sellars is an important figure in this epistemological movement[4]. In his Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind Sellars is attempting to overturn the Myth of the Given, the myth which embodies the presumption of correspondence by conflating the epistemic with the non-epistemic or, as it is now referred to, the conceptual and the non-conceptual. The conflation of the epistemic with the non-epistemic is, according to Sellars, "a mistake of a piece with the so-called 'naturalistic fallacy' in ethics" (19).

> The idea that observation "strictly and properly so-called" is constituted by certain self-authenticating nonverbal episodes, the authority of which is transmitted to verbal and quasi-verbal performances when these performances are made "in conformity with the semantical rules of language" is, of course, the heart of the Myth of the Given. For the *given*, in the epistemological tradition, is what is *taken* by these self-authenticating episodes (Sellars 77).

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[3] This synopsis is drawn from Davidson *A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge.*
[4] See Rorty's *Introduction* to Empricism and the Philosophy of Mind.

This Myth is seen at work in the sense-datum theories of his time so Sellars begins his work with an examination of these theories. He finds that these theories rely upon an ambiguous treatment of sensation, in that sensation is treated as both the sensing of particulars and the sensing of facts (Sellars 16). This is problematic for sensation is supposed to provide the sense-data which furnish the foundations of knowledge. In the first case, the sensing of particulars, the sense-content could not constitute knowledge for the sensing of the sense-content would be non-epistemic. Particularas stand in causal relations to perceivers so that the sensing of particulars would be the same as one's being affected by particulars. Sellars does not deny these causal relations between particulars and perceivers but he does deny the equation of causal relations with justificatory relations.

In the second case, the sensing of facts or *that things are thus-and-so*, the sense-content would count as a sense-datum because facts are epistemic and could provide non-inferential knowledge. This is so because facts are beliefs and thus are able to stand in justificatory relations to other beliefs. Sense-datum theorists have, however, taken sensation to be both the sensing of particulars and of facts. This ambiguity has opened the way for the suggestion that epistemic facts can be reduced to non-epistemic facts, a reduction which is wanted by sense-data theorists so that epistemology might be rendered more conducive to the natural scientific understanding.

There is a second issue beyond that of the ambiguity for sense-data theorists have also tended to equate sensing with being conscious (Sellars 20). In the first place sense-data theorists hold that sensing a sense-content entails non-inferential knowledge of that sense-content. If the ability to sense is unacquired, if it is the same as being conscious,

then it would follow that the ability to know that the sense-content is of a certain sort, i.e. red, would itself be unacquired. This conclusion, however, goes against the usual claim of sense-data theorists that the ability to know *that something is thus-and-so* is acquired. The sense-data theorist then seems to hold three inconsistent propositions: (1) sensing a sense-content entails the non-inferential knowledge that this sense-content is of a certain sort, (2) the ability to sense is unacquired and (3) the ability to know that something is of a certain sort is acquired (*Ibid.*). While these propositions are inconsistent with each other they can not be dropped by the sense-data theorist being, as it were, part and parcel of the theory.

This inconsistent triad arises, according to Sellars, from the fact that sense-data theories are a result of the attempt to cross-breed two ideas. On the one hand is the "idea that there are certain inner episodes ... which can occur to human beings (and brutes) without any prior process of learning or concept formation" (Sellars 21) and that without these episodes it would be impossible to see or hear. On the other hand is the idea that there are inner episodes which are non-inferential knowings that things are of a certain sort (Sellars 22). These non-inferential knowings form the basis or foundation for empirical knowledge. The first idea, according to Sellars, arises from an attempt to explain *looks* in the style of natural science. Sellars does believe that there is a place for the idea that humans and animals are affected by particulars but it can only be found by separating it and keeping it separate from the second idea, the idea that there are non-inferential knowings.

The second idea is expressive of the Myth of the Given for, on the face of it, these episodes of non-inferential knowing seem similar to the first episodes and encourage the

conflation of the epistemic with the non-epistemic. It is this second idea, the idea of non-inferential knowing, which Sellars wishes to be rid of. This idea, however, has become caught up with an analysis of language. For many sense-data theorists a sentence like "A looks F to S" indicates that a triadic relation, looking, obtains amongst an object, a person and a quality and that this relationship is analyzable in terms of sense-data (Sellars 34). Sellars wishes to provide an analysis of language which neither supposes sense-data nor treats looking as a relation.

Sellars' analysis is as follows. To say of someone that they *see that something is thus-and-so* is to ascribe to them both the proposition *that something is thus-and-so* and their endorsement of that proposition. Thus, to characterize an episode as seeing is to apply to that episode the semantical concept of truth (Sellars 40). In the case of "A *looks* F to S" the proposition remains, according to Sellars, but is only partially endorsed and in the case of "A *merely looks* F to S" the proposition is not endorsed at all[5]. The concept then of, for instance, *looking green* is secondary to the concept of *being green* which involves the knowledge of the conditions in which something looks green (Sellars 43)[6]. When one *reports* to another that "the necktie looks green" one is not reporting that a certain relation obtains. Rather, one is reporting upon an inner episode characterized as 'the necktie is green' for which one has reasons to only partially endorse. The straight forward report of "I see that the necktie is green" is, as well, a report of an inner episode characterized as the 'the necktie is green' for which one has reason to endorse.

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[5] See Ch. IV of Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind for Sellars fuller discussion of *qualitative* and *existential lookings*.

[6] There are many similarities between this line of argument and Davidsons's use of Tarski's disquotationalism in *A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge*. See also Rorty *Davidson, Pragmatism and Truth*.

> The essential point is that in characterizing an episode or state as that of *knowing*, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says (Sellars 76).

Sellars' analysis of language is a criticism of non-inferential knowledge which assumes that certain beliefs correspond to objects and that this correspondence provides a means of explaining the truth of these beliefs independently of other beliefs. Knowledge involves movement in the space of reasons so that no belief could be shown true unless it is placed in relation to other beliefs. While this dismisses the idea that knowledge has foundations it does not dismiss the idea that knowledge is rational for knowledge remains "a self-correcting enterprise which can put *any* claim in jeopardy, though not *all* at once" (Sellars 79). We can not put all beliefs in jeopardy for we would then have no beliefs to justify and thus no means for falsification. In short, we have no reason to assume that all our beliefs are false which lends weight to the presumption that most of our beliefs are true.

Sellars' dismissal of the idea that knowledge has foundations has ramifications upon the task of philosophy which he attempts to explicate in the latter portions of his work. Sellars believes that it is the task of philosophy to resolve those issues which concern the relation between ordinary and scientific discourse (Sellars 85). The view he has been criticizing would see these issues resolved by suggesting that the authority of the theoretical discourse of natural science is derived from the authority of the foundational beliefs which shape ordinary discourse. This suggestion, according to

Sellars, rests upon two mistakes. The first is the assumption of the Myth of the Given and the second is "a reification of the *methodological* distinction between theoretical and non-theoretical discourse into a *substantive* distinction" (Sellars 84). That is, the Myth of the Given has led to the assumption that the truths of ordinary discourse rest upon the causal relations between particulars and perceivers and that the truths of theoretical discourse are thus derived, through inference, from the foundational beliefs found in ordinary discourse. Sellars' dismissal of foundational beliefs leads him to advance a different understanding of theory.

> Informally, to construct a theory is, in its most developed or sophisticated form, to postulate a domain of entities which behave in certain ways set down by the fundamental principles of the theory, and to correlate – perhaps, in a certain sense identify – complexes of these theoretical entities with certain non-theoretical objects or situations … This "correlation" or "identification" of theoretical with observational states of affairs is a tentative one "until further notice" and amounts, so to speak, with erecting temporary bridges which permit the passage from sentences in observational discourse to sentences in the theory, and vice versa (Sellars 94-94).

There are two points which Sellars stresses in relation to theories. The first is that the fundamental principles of a theory are based upon an attempt to find a model, i.e. an analogy between a domain of familiar objects and the entities introduced by the theory, the most important feature of which is its commentary which limits the analogy (Sellars

96). The second point is that the formation of theories is a common activity of humanity and that natural science is a refinement of this (Sellars 97). Theoretical terms themselves can play two different roles, their primary role of explaining the phenomena of which the theory is the theory and their role as candidates for integration with other theories (Sellars 101).

This apparatus allows Sellars to offer an explanation of human behaviour independent from natural scientific explanations of the same. He presents his explanation through a bit of science fiction which he calls the Myth of Jones. The Myth of Jones is situated in a pre-historical time in which humans are limited to a Rylean language, that is, "a language of which the fundamental descriptive vocabulary speaks of the public properties of public objects located in Space and enduring through Time" (Sellars 91). In addition these humans have available to them the fundamental resources of semantical discourse so that they can say of each other's "verbal productions that they *mean* thus and so, that they say *that* such and such, that they are true, false, etc." (Sellars 92). At this time there arises a genius known as Jones who sets out to explain the behaviour of others. His first step is to explain how it is that others act intelligently even when not speaking. He develops a theory according to which overt utterances are the culmination of a process beginning with certain inner episodes, modeling these inner episodes upon overt verbal episodes (Sellars 103). He calls these inner episodes *thoughts*.

The first thing to note is that semantical categories are applicable to thoughts, i.e. thoughts *mean* or are *about* this and that, because thoughts are modeled upon overt verbal utterances. Secondly, while thoughts are modeled upon overt verbal episodes they are not identical with them and this is something which is contained in the commentary

developed by Jones. Thoughts are not the wagging of an inner tongue nor necessarily the operation of a substance. While some philosophers may have attempted to integrate thoughts into a cosmology through the concept of substance or into natural science through the concepts of neurophysiology this integration is secondary. Thought is primarily a theoretical entity used in the explanation of human behaviour and its introduction as an inner episode merely points to its theoretical status. Jones proceeds to teach the theory of thought to others and they begin to ascribe thought to others and eventually to report upon their own thoughts.

Having done this Jones has put his community in a position to report upon thoughts like seeing and looking. In the case of these observational thoughts there does seem to be something over and above the thought itself so Jones develops another theory. He "postulates a class of inner – theoretical – episodes which he calls, say, *impressions*, and which are the end result of the impingement of physical objects and processes on various parts of the body" (Sellars 109). The model for these impressions is "a domain of 'inner replicas' which, when brought about in standard conditions, share the perceptible characteristics of their physical source" (Sellars 110). While the model for impressions is a particular, i.e. a replica, the commentary notes that these impressions themselves are episodes or states of the perceiver. As with thoughts Jones teaches the theory of impressions to this community.

Through this bit of science fiction Sellars has attempted to show the manner in which the separation between the epistemic and non-epistemic is to be maintained. Thought is epistemic because semantical categories can be applied to it. It is thoughts which are justified and thus shown true or false. Impressions on the other hand are non-

epistemic for impressions are used merely to explain the state of the perceiver in relation to certain thoughts. Impressions are those episodes which can occur without any prior process of concept formation, while thought itself can only occur because of the process of learning. These distinctions are a part of the theories used in ordinary discourse and are distinct from the theories employed by natural science. Admittedly these theories, especially that of impressions, are open to integration with theories of natural science but never reduction.

In general Sellars has been concerned with distinguishing the philosophy of mind from natural science. Those thinkers who have attempted to explore the mind in terms of natural science have only done so by means of the Myth of the Given. The separation between natural science and the philosophy of mind allows us to give up the Myth of the Given and maintain the separation between the epistemic and non-epistemic. This separation between thought and impressions, however, worries McDowell for he feels that through this separation the self is rendered unnatural.

2. McDowell

McDowell, in his Mind and World, has set himself the task of defending a minimal empiricism, i.e. "the idea that experience must constitute a tribunal, mediating the way our thinking is answerable to how things are, as it must be if we are to make sense of it as thinking at all" (McDowell xii). This minimal empiricism is meant to end an oscillation which has occurred in recent epistemology. This is an oscillation between

> on the one side a coherentism that threatens to disconnect thought from reality, and on the other side a vain appeal to the Given, in the sense of bare presences that are supposed to constitute the ultimate grounds of empirical judgement (McDowell 24).

Those who appeal to the Given are called by McDowell bald naturalists and they are very much the inheritors of the sense-data theorists which Sellars has criticized. McDowell glosses Sellars' criticism saying that the

> idea of the Given is the idea that the space of reasons, the space of justifications or warrants, extends more widely than the conceptual sphere. The extra extent of the space of reasons is supposed to allow it to incorporate non-conceptual impacts from outside the realm of thought. But we cannot really understand the relations in virtue of which a judgement is warranted except as relations within the space of concepts … In effect, the idea of the Given offers exculpations where we wanted justifications (McDowell 7-8).

The problems implicit in the Myth of the Given have lead some philosophers to reject it in favour of a coherence theory of truth. These coherentists separate thought from experience so as to avoid the Myth but in so doing they make it difficult to see how it is that thought, especially empirical thought, could be constrained by the world. Under the position adopted by the coherentists thought becomes "a frictionless spinning in a void"

(McDowell 66) and pressure mounts , as it were, to recoil back into the Given so that thought might once again contact the world[7].

For the most part McDowell's thinking is in line with the coherentists rather than the bald naturalists but he wishes to avoid the coherentists' separation between thought and experience as much as the Given. His treatment of experience is meant to avoid the Given while at the same time re-establishing experience as a source of friction for thought. He believes this can be done by re-capturing the Kantian insight that experience is a co-operation of receptivity and spontaneity (McDowell 4). This co-operation has often been characterized in terms of conceptual scheme and content. Spontaneity characterizes the rational relations between concepts as employed in the space of reasons. Receptivity, however, has often been characterized as that faculty which takes in what is Given thus providing content for thought. McDowell disagrees with this characterization of receptivity as taking in what is Given for the content taken in is alien to the space of reasons and thus a result of the Myth of the Given. Instead, McDowell argues, receptivity should be understood as already involving conceptual capacities.

Experience, as a true co-operation of receptivity and spontaneity, should be understood as a state having conceptual content, that is, in "experience one takes in, for instance sees, *that things are thus and so*" (McDowell 9). Here McDowell is presenting a variation upon Sellars' thinking. For Sellars, as has been seen, observations like *seeing that things are thus and so* count as thoughts, while McDowell is attempting to move observations out of thought and into experience. Receptivity is a good fit for the passivity suggested by Sellars' theory of impressions in so far as the theory speaks of impressions

[7] While Davidson is cast in the role of the coherentist McDowell makes it clear in the *Afterword, Part 1* that Sellars and Davidson are interchangeable in relation to his criticisms.

as resulting form causal impacts. These impressions have been modeled by Sellars upon replicas and McDowell's move suggests that these "replicas" be understood in terms of providing conceptual content. Experience is then, according to McDowell, a co-operation of receptivity and spontaneity in that while experience is receptive to the world what this receptivity takes in is inseparable from the concepts of spontaneity. McDowell puts it thus:

> In a particular experience in which one is not misled, what one takes in is *that things are thus and so. That things are thus and so* is the content of the experience, and it can also be the content of a judgement: it becomes the content of a judgement if the subject decides to take the experience at face value. So it is conceptual content. But *that things are thus and so* is also, if one is not misled, an aspect of the layout of the world: it is how things are. Thus the idea of conceptually structured operations of receptivity puts us in a position to speak of experience as openness to the layout of reality. Experience enables the layout of reality itself to exert a rational influence on what a subject thinks (McDowell 26).

McDowell's treatment gives to experience propositional content which can be taken up by thought and endorsed. The truth of beliefs remains, as in Sellars, a matter of thought, of movement in the space of reasons, but, unlike Sellars, experience extends the involvement of the conceptual beyond the space of reasons. This extension of the conceptual allows the world to exert rational constraint upon our thinking. The issue with the Myth of the Given is that it allowed experience to provide a "justification" of a belief

independently of other beliefs. McDowell has avoided the Myth for his experience merely involves the conceptual with the world, that is, provides friction for thought. This friction is provided by the fact that experience is "outside" of thinking, as a movement in the space of reasons, but not outside of what is thinkable for the content of experience is conceptual and can be taken up by thought (McDowell 28).

I do not share McDowell's anxieties about coherentism and am not convinced that his treatment of experience is superior to that of Sellars or Davidson. With Sellars I believe that epistemology is better served through the recognition of non-conceptual impressions distinct from the conceptuality of thought. In many ways McDowell's views on experience seem a slide back towards the correspondence theory of truth[8]. Be this as it may, his treatment of experience does not stand alone but is further explicated by him in relation to nature. McDowell believes that his view of experience is justified in so far as it alleviates certain concerns regarding the relation between nature and the self.

According to McDowell modernity is marked by the rise of natural science (McDowell 70). Natural science opened the world to us as a space of law distinct from the "space of reasons"[9]. In so doing natural science also opened those philosophic dilemmas which revolve around the relation between the self and the subject matter of natural science. Previous to the rise of natural science, i.e. in the medieval age, there was

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[8] See, for instance, Rorty *The Very Idea of Human Answerability to the World: John McDowell's Version of Empiricism.*

[9] The "space of reasons" and the "space of law" are terms of art that I have taken over from Sellars and McDowell. The space of reasons is found in both Sellars and McDowell and in Sellars is that space in which justification is understood to occur, a space which has been glossed by McDowell as the space of concepts. The space of law, on the other hand, is peculiar to McDowell and has two important features: first, it stands in opposition to the space of reasons and, second, is nature as conceived of by natural science (McDowell 71 nt. 2). The space of reasons has usually been contrasted with the "space of causes" but McDowell believes that causes are not an appropriate characterization of what it is that natural science conceives. Instead McDowell holds that nature, as conceived of by natural science, is more appropriately characterized in terms of law. McDowell thus contrasts the space of reasons with the space of law, a space constituted by the idea of mathematical law.

available only the space of reasons. This led, according to McDowell, to a view of nature "as filled with meaning, as if all of nature were a book of lessons for us" (McDowell 71). For McDowell the image of nature as a book is a literal description of the medieval view for, having available only the space of reasons, the medievals approached things like "the movement of the planets or the fall of a sparrow" (McDowell 72) in the same way that they approached human action, i.e. as a potential movement within the space of reasons. Modern natural science, in opening the space of law, has limited the space of reasons to human action and, with its explanatory success, threatens to eliminate the space of reasons altogether.

For McDowell, and for contemporary epistemology in general, the demarcation of the disenchanted space of law is of primary significance to modernity and its relation to the space of reasons must be dealt with. One manner of so doing is that of bald naturalism which, while noting the distinction between the space of law and of reasons, believes that the modern naturalized epistemology requires a reduction of the space of reasons to the space of law. The issue with this approach is that it truly disenchants nature. Nature is, in other words, simply taken as the space of law and the space of reasons has no place in it save through reduction.

A second manner of dealing with the relation between these spaces is that of coherentism. Coherentism not only notes the distinction between the space of law and of reasons but also believes that this distinction is genuine. The two spaces are differentiated because they are constituted by two different ideas, i.e. the idea of law and the idea of rationality, and thus one can not be reduced to the other. This establishes an epistemological dualism but meets the requirements of a naturalized epistemology

through the maintenance of an ontological monism of events or dated particulars. Even though concepts in the space of law are distinct form concepts in the space of reasons both kinds of concepts are applied to events. These events can be described in two distinct manners but the events themselves are casual and thus potentially open to investigation by natural science[10].

McDowell's concern is not with the ontological claim but with the claim of both bald naturalists and coherentists that a modern naturalized epistemology requires the equation of nature with the space of law. McDowell believes that epistemology requires a more relaxed naturalism, a naturalism which will avoid the oscillation between bald naturalism and coherentism. McDowell acknowledges that "what became available at the time of the modern scientific revolution is a clear-cut understanding of the realm of law, [but] we can refuse to equate that with a new clarity *about nature*" (McDowell 78).

McDowell's treatment of experience involves conceptual capacities in episodes of perception. If nature is equated with the space of law then this involvement seems to blur the line between nature and the space of reasons for conceptual capacities are being drawn into those happenings which we share with animals. McDowell denies this by maintaining the distinction between the two spaces and suggesting that the human is such that its nature, i.e. the manner in which it actualizes itself as an animal, is captured by the space of reasons without need for reduction of any sort to the space of law. McDowell is suggesting that epistemology should relax its understanding of nature so that it might include, alongside the space of law, something like the Aristotelian notion of *second nature*.

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[10] See Davidson *Mental Events*. Compare also Sellars' comments in Empriricism and the Phhilosophy of Mind 114.

McDowell's attempt to re-capture the Aristotelian notion of second nature is an attempt to move the space of reasons into our understanding of nature. This is not an attempt to return to a medieval or enchanted view of nature where nature is likened to the space of reasons. Neither is this an attempt at a supernaturalism where the space of reasons is placed over and above the merely natural space of law for this would suggest that the human is bifurcated and that its movement in the space of reasons takes it outside its animal nature. Instead McDowell wishes to suggest that while nature is primarily understood as the space of law this understanding does not fully encompass nature and in the case of the human animal nature must also include our conceptual capacities[11].

It must, according to McDowell, simply be recognized that humans move in the space of reasons and while this can not be explained in terms of the space of law this movement is not unnatural for it is a part of what it is for the human animal to come to maturity. Humans have conceptual capacities through birth and these capacities are actualized through one's initiation into a community. By means of this initiation one's thought acquires a determinate shape and one is able to move in the space of reasons, a movement which becomes second nature. This process of initiation is called by McDowell *Bildung* (84).

McDowell's relaxed naturalism leaves nature disenchanted. Nature is primarily understood in terms of the space of law, thus the human animal terminology, but this view of nature need not exclude the space of reasons. Instead we can understand the acquisition of second nature to be a part of the normal growth of the human animal. In this way room is made to accept McDowell's argument that concepts are involved in our experience and thus end the oscillation which worries him. McDowell's naturalized

[11] See Mind and World *Lecture IV* esp. §7.

epistemology begins with the recognition of epistemological dualism, i.e. the distinction between the space of law and of reasons, but maintains a kind of ontological monism by suggesting that both can be understood to be unified in nature. Experience stands as an example of this unification for in *seeing that things are thus and so* one both employs conceptual capacities and has the world revealed.

McDowell's treatment of nature also involves a treatment of the self[12]. In the case of bald naturalism the self is reduced to the space of law and in this way loses its character as a nexus of spontaneity. The coherentists, on the other hand, render the self as something alien to nature, a rendering on a par with the transcendental self of Kant, and this leaves the impression that the self must somehow break out of the conceptual in order to have any bearing upon the world. McDowell's treatment of nature allows him to equate the self with our bodily presence in the world. This equation is not a reduction of the self to the space of law nor does it suggest that one is always aware of one's bodily presence. This equation of the self with one's bodily presence is, for McDowell, simply an extension of the notion of second nature for second nature allows us to understand the self as both a nexus of spontaneity and as a part of nature.

3. Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown that modern epistemology views the disenchantment of nature as a result of the rise of modern natural science and as requiring nature to be viewed as the subject matter of natural science. McDowell's work has brought this ontic view of nature to light in both the epistemology of the bald naturalists and of the

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[12] See Mind and World *Lecture V.*

coherentists. I, however, believe that this same view is still operative in McDowell's own treatment of nature.

As has been seen McDowell does hold that nature should be *primarily* understood in terms of the space of law. This view is suspended only in relation to the conceptual capacities of the human animal because, as the coherentists have argued, human thought can not be understood by natural science it can only be understood in relation to the space of reasons. McDowell's relaxed view of nature is supposed to provide an understanding of nature which includes both the space of law and the space of reasons but he never fills out what this conception of nature itself involves or how it is that this inclusion occurs. We are left then with the ontological views of either the bald naturalists or the coherentists, views which rely upon an ontic understanding of nature.

This failure of McDowell's to fill out his concept of nature is, I believe, due to his view of philosophy as therapeutic. His concept of nature is meant to alleviate the anxieties surrounding the problems of the relation between the self and nature, rather than solving these problems. If McDowell was serious in looking for a solution to these problems which avoided the ontic view of nature then I believe his only recourse would be to Heideggerian metaphysics. For McDowell, however, "metaphysics" seems to be a part of medieval thought, engaged in only because the medievals lacked a proper understanding of physics. Modernity, on the other hand, need not engage in such speculation because it has developed natural science and this provides a guide to thinking about nature.

In what follows I shall attempt to show that the difference between medieval and modern thought lay not in their conceptions of nature but in their understanding of

science. As well and more importantly, I shall attempt to show that there are similarities between medieval and modern metaphysics which make possible the sort of re-enchantment of nature that I seek.

Chapter 2

The Enchantment of Nature

In this chapter I wish to examine the medieval, enchanted view of nature as found in the ninth-century thinker John Scottus Eriugena. It is my contention that Eriugena's conception of nature is on a par with that of Heidegger, i.e. Eriugena conceptualizes nature in terms of appearing and concealing. In An Introduction to Metaphysics Heidegger presents the view of nature (*physis*) held by the Pre-Socratic Greek philosophers, especially Heraclitus and Parmenides[1]. Heidegger presents this ancient view of nature in relation to two distinctions: the distinction between being and appearance and between being and becoming. These distinctions reveal nature as appearing and concealing, i.e. nature is understood as a relation between Being and the particular essents. The essents, which are mutable, are appearances of Being and as such both conceal and point towards Being while Being itself remains immutable and hidden.

The similarity between Eriugena and Heidegger is not meant to show that medieval philosophy is immune to the criticisms which modernity and Heidegger have launched against it but is rather meant to show that medieval thought does have a view of nature which is compatible with modernity, i.e. medieval thought is not, contra McDowell, constrained to viewing nature as filled with propositional meaning.

There are, however, two important elements of medieval thought which are rightly distinguished from modernity. In the first place, medieval thought tends to characterize the relation between nature and the self in terms of the Good, a characterization which arises from the theocentric anthropology of medieval thought and

[1] See Heidegger An Introduction to Metaphysics Ch. 4 esp. §1 and §2.

which has disappeared in recent times. This characterization is a common feature of medieval thought and is, more properly, referred to as the enchantment of nature. In seeking a re-enchantment of nature I am seeking to retrieve this view of the Good as a characterization of the relation between nature and the self. However, the Good is available to medieval thought as an eternal idea or, as Eriugena prefers, a primordial cause and this forms the second difference for modernity has, in the development of its sciences, set the eternal ideas aside. In seeking a re-enchantment of nature I am not interested in retrieving the eternal ideas or the medieval sciences.

I shall begin by providing some background on Eriugena then move into a discussion of his concepts of God and nature and end with a discussion of the primordial causes.

1. Eriugena

Eriugena's floruit lay between 850 and 870 C.E. Beyond this no particular date can be given to his birth or death. Eriugena was born in Hibernia, i.e. Ireland, and there received an education at one of the monastery schools as is attested to by the knowledge of Greek and Latin shown in his works. These monastery schools provided an ecclesiastical education, although not all students entered into the clergy, and stand out from the Continental schools in proving an education in both Latin and Greek. The Greek taught at these schools is not, however, the Greek of pagan Attica but the Greek of Byzantinium, the Gospels and the Greek Fathers. The exact extent of the Irish knowledge of Greek can not be determined but it was such that when students "came to the

Continent, they had the kind of advantage that allowed Eriugena to become the best translator from Greek of his time" (J.J. O'Meara 8).

At some time in the forties of the ninth-century Eriugena came to the kingdom of Francia, which roughly corresponds to modern France. The rulers of this kingdom, the Carolingians, are noted for both their military exploits and for the two renaissances which occurred first under Charlemagne and then under his grandson Charles the Bald who was the ruler at the time of Eriugena's immigration. These Carolingian Renaissances focused upon a revival of the liberal arts in relation to Christian learning and, in the time of Charles the Bald, centered upon the palatial schools[2]. At the dawn of Eriugena's floruit he is to be found at the palace of Charles the Bald most likely as a teacher.

Eriugena's role at the palace as a teacher is based upon the fact that many other Irish scholars were employed as teachers during the Carolingian Renaissances and upon the fact that Eriugena produced a gloss of the most popular text book on the liberal arts. Eriugena's *Annotationes in Martianum Capellam* provides his commentary upon Martianus' *The Wedding of Philology and Mercury*. Martianus provides the source for Eriugena's knowledge of the liberal arts and is his only direct contact with pagan thought[3]. Already in this gloss we encounter Eriugena's equation of reason and (religious) authority, a theme which latter appears in his main work the Periphyseon. The liberal arts are, according to Eriugena, inherent in the soul, i.e. placed there by God, and as such provide the means by which God is understood and salvation achieved. It is reason then which confirms authority, authority itself being a guide for those not yet

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[2] See Moran Ch. 1.

[3] See Sheldon-Williams *Eriugena's Greek Sources* and Liebeshütz *The Place of the Martianus Glossae in the Development of Eriugena's Thought.*

advanced in reason, and in this Eriugena's thought displays far more "rationalism" than others of his period[4].

During the ninth-century there was in Francia much debate over the issue of predestination[5]. Eriugena was invited to give his opinions on the matter by Hincmar, archbishop of Reims, and between 850 and 851 C.E. he produced his *De praedestinatione*. In opposition to the view that there is a predestination to both eternal life and death, Eriugena argues that there is only one predestination which is to eternal life. This single predestination is based upon the unity and simplicity of God. God, being one, has established but one law, one predestination, which is good. Sin and death come not from God but are a result of the Fall and humanity's consequent loss of vigour[6]. Not only does God not predestine to death but God also does not foreknow those who shall die for death, like sin, is a privation of God's law and thus unknown to him. Eriugena attempts to support his arguments with reference to Augustine and interpretations of him but the work itself was poorly received. The two aspects which met with the least sympathy were his rational approach to the problem and his treatment of sin and death as privations[7]. Despite the reaction of his contemporaries these themes are carried through by Eriugena into his Periphyseon.

Eriugena also produced translations of some of the Greek Fathers into Latin. At the behest of Charles the Bald Eriugena translated the entirety of the works of the Pseudo-Dionysius. Eriugena also produced translations of the *Ambigua ad Johannem* and *Quaestiones ad Thalassium* of Maximus the Confessor and the *De opifico hominis* (which

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[4] See J.J. O'Meara Ch. 2 esp. 27-29. See also Copleston Ch. 13.
[5] See Moran Ch. 2.
[6] See Otten *Eriugena's Periphyseon: A Carolingian Contribution to the Theological Tradition* which examines the Periphyseon in relation to *De praedestinatione.*
[7] See J.J. O'Meara Ch. 3.

Eriugena refers to as *De imagine*) of Gregory of Nyssa. Eriugean did not simply translate these Greek Fathers, he also reflected upon them. There are two things then which distinguish Eriugena's thought from that of his contemporaries: first, his rational approach to theology and, second, his appreciation and knowledge of Greek Patristic thought.

Between 860 and 866 C.E. Eriugena produced his magnum opus the Periphyseon or *The Division of Nature*. This

> is a long work, filling nearly six hundred columns of the Patrologia Latina volume and containing approximately 217, 450 words, written in the form of an extended dialogue between two anonymous philosophers who are known only Nutritor and Alumnus … The work is divided into five books; and in some latter manuscripts these books are divided into chapters, though this was never completely achieved (Moran p58).

In general the Periphyseon is an attempt to show the unity of Augustine and Latin Patristic thought with the Pseudo-Dionysius and Greek Patristic thought. Eriugena's rationalism provides him with a basis upon which he builds an interpretive method that allows him to treat both Scripture and the Fathers as speaking of the same thing[8]. This interpretive method reflects Eriugena's rational view of God as simple and unitary, a view which has surfaced in his earliest works.

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[8] See for instance Marler *Dialectical Use of Authority in the Periphyseon* and *Scriptural Truth in the Periphyseon.*

In specific the Periphyseon is an investigation influenced by the Pseudo-Dionysius' teachings that apophatic (negative) theology is superior to cataphatic (positive) theology and that the universe is a procession from and return to God. Although the fundamental division of nature is into being and non-being, Eriugena also provides a fourfold division of nature which is the subject of each of the Periphyseon's books. Thus, the first book concerns God as first cause, the second the primordial causes, the third the effects of these causes and the fourth God as end. The fifth book concerns the return of all things to God.

It is upon this work that I shall focus in my examination of Eriugena's thought. The Periphyseon stands out from other metaphysical works of the time in that the conception of nature presented owes its origin more to Greek Patristic thought than to Latin. Heidegger's criticisms of medieval metaphysics are focused upon the Latin tradition but, in his later years, he "admitted that the Greek Christian tradition might not suffer from the forgetfulness of being to the same extent as Latin Christian metaphysics did" (Moran 243 nt5). Eriugena's contact with Greek Patristic thought suggests that his conception of nature may be, and I shall argue is, on a par with Heidegger's, i.e. Eriugena conceives of nature as being and non-being or appearing and concealing. Eriugena's concept of nature does not, however, totally isolate his thought from the Latin tradition for on many other matters the Periphyseon displays Eriugena's indebtedness to Augustine[9]. Additionally the Periphyseon displays many features which are to be found in both Greek and Latin traditions, such as the primordial causes and a theocentric anthropology.

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[9] See Russel *Some Augustinian Influences in Eriugena's De divisione naturae.*

Eriugena's concept of God coincides with his concept of nature so I shall begin my examination by first looking at Eriugena's treatment of God.

2. God

Within in the first book of the Periphyseon the Nutritor and Alumnus encounter a difficulty concerning the manner in which the angels can know the primordial causes in God before they are unfolded in their effects. Augustine, on the one hand, maintains that the angels do know the primordial causes first in God and then in their effects while Scripture, on the other hand, teaches that God, and thus the causes within it, is unknowable (**P** 446A)[10]. The Nutritor provides a solution which he maintains preserves the truth of both positions. He tells the Alumnus that

> it is not only the divine essence that is indicated by the word "God", but also that mode by which God reveals Himself in a certain way to the intellectual and rational creature, according to the capacity of each, is often called "God" in Holy Scripture. This mode the Greeks are accustomed to call theophany, that is, self-manifestation of God (**P** 446D).

As can be seen the Nutritor maintains the truth of both positions by noting that the term "God" has two significations. On the one hand the term signifies the divine essence which is unknowable and, on the other, signifies the manifestation of this unknowable. The angels then know the primordial causes in God as theophany, that is, they know the primordial causes through the manifestation of God (**P** 447A).

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[10] For the purpose of citation I shall abbreviate the Periphyseon as **P**.

The basis for the double significance of the term "God" is found in the division of theology into two branches: the positive or cataphatic and the negative or apophatic. Apophatic theology

> denies that the Divine Essence or Substance *is* any one of the things that are, that is, of the things which can be discussed or understood; but the other … predicates of it all things that are, and for that reason is called affirmative – not that it affirms that it is any of the things that are, but (because) it teaches that all things which take their being from it can be predicted of it (**P** 458B).

Cataphatic theology presents God in a positive manner, as a subject to which predicates might be applied, but it does not affirm the truth of these names. Instead, cataphatic theology makes clear that it produces the positive names through a transference of the creature upon the creator, i.e. through metaphor, and in this way cataphatic theology "clothes" the divine essence (**P** 461C). Apophatic theology, on the other hand, negates the positive names. In so doing it does not deny that God is but rather denies the propriety of the positive names. Apophatic theology "unclothes" God, stripping away the positive names in order to indicate the incomprehensibility of God (**P** 461D).

The issue faced when naming, or more generally speaking of God, is that one is attempting to name that which is incomprehensible. Metaphor must then be employed so that one has something to speak of. These metaphors are, however, imprecise and improper allowing for the production of names which oppose each other. The two

branches of theology work together in making it clear that while opposition may be found in the names it is not found in God. Opposition occurs only in creation and the opposition of the names is due to the use of metaphor and the attempt of creatures to understand God. God itself is a unity, albeit incomprehensible through language, and the two branches of theology confirm this through their interaction.

While the two branches of theology strip away the apparent opposition found in the names they reveal another deeper opposition, i.e. the opposition between the two branches themselves. Apophatic theology alleviates the apparent opposition between the positive names but it does so by producing names in direct opposition to them. For instance, cataphatic theology says that "God is essence" while apophatic theology says that "God is not essence". Eriugena denies that there is any opposition between the two branches of theology for both affirm God's incomprehensibility and neither denies that God is. The harmony of the two branches is, for Eriugena, shown in the production of those names of God which employ the "super" or "more-than" prefix, such as "God is super-essential" or "God is more-than-truth". These names encompass both branches of theology for "in outward expression they possess the form of the affirmative, but in meaning the force of the negative" (**P** 462C). In saying of God that it is "super-essential" one produces a positive name in so far as one is predicating of God but the predication is negative for it indicates that God is not essence and in no way defines what more-than-essence is. The unity of the two branches of theology in the production of these names shows, for Eriugena, the basic unity of theology's "object", i.e. God.

This discussion by the Nutritor and Alumnus of the limitations of language in respect to God has more than merely exegetical import. Apophatic theology not only

limits the propriety of the cataphatic names, it also limits the applicability of the categories to God. The categories, like the predicates of the positive names, can only be applied to God through metaphor (**P** 463B). Eriugena's limitations upon language, as expressed by the two branches of theology, reflect his deeper limitations upon thought for the categories themselves, the very basis of logic, are just as inapplicable as the positive names. God is not only unspeakable but also unthinkable.

This limitation upon thought raises a very serious question as to how an inquiry into the incomprehensible is even possible. The first part of Eriugena's answer to this problem has already been seen in his treatment of the term "God". This term was said to signify not only the incomprehensible but also its manifestation. The unity of theology shows that these two significances are not opposed but reflect, instead, the two manners in which God is spoken of and this opens the way to understanding the manner in which God can be thought about.

In the first book the Nutritor treats nature as a genus and produces a fourfold division of it. This results in four species, being divided

> first into that which creates and is not created, secondly into that which is created and also creates, thirdly into that which is created and does not create and the fourth neither creates nor is created (**P** 441B).

The first division is identified as God as Beginning, the second as the primordial causes, the third as their effects and the fourth as God as End.

Book two begins with the Nutritor noting that nature is not properly a genus to be divided into species but is instead a kind of intellectual contemplation which includes both God and creature (**P** 523D). Nature is not properly a genus or species because God, which is included within it, is not. God and thus nature can be treated as a genus only through metaphor. In so doing one can subject God to the art of dialectic, the art of dividing genera into species, and it is through this transference of genus upon God that the fourfold division of nature is produced. Division has its dialectical counterpart in analysis or regression and in book two the Nutritor engages in a regressive collection of the division presented in book one.

The first and fourth divisions are resolved into God for both are predicated of it. These divisions are not to be found in God, which is simple and unitary, but are a result of the double direction of our contemplation which Beierwaltes refers to as *duplex theoria*[11]. *Duplex theoria* produces a division of God into Beginning and End which it then resolves back into unity (**P** 527D). *Duplex theoria* also applies to the second and third divisions for these divisions are unified in the creature (**P** 528A). The fourfold division has regressed to a twofold division between God and creature. God, however, as the source of being for the creature stands as a genus in relation to it so the division between God and creature is itself resolved into the simple unity of God.

While division and regression are applied to God metaphorically this application reflects the basic relation between God and thought. Regression reflects the transcendence of God as expressed by apophatic theology. Division, on the other hand, reflects the immanence of God. The comprehensible is created by God and as such can be

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[11] *Language and Object: Reflections on Eriugena's Valuation of the Function and Capacities of Language* 219.

viewed as a theophany or manifestation of God. This view of the comprehensible as theophany is expressed by cataphatic theology which produces its names through transference.

Eriugena overcomes the gnosiological limitations upon the inquiry into God by relying upon God's ontological unity. This unity is manifest in creation and forms the basis of division or cataphatic theology. To get at the unity itself, however, these diverse manifestations must be gathered back together through regression or apophatic theology. The unification of the *duplex theoria* through regression does not, however, reveal God as it is in-and-for-itself but instead forms a sort of "meta-dialects" which can be employed when inquiring into God. This "meta-dialectics" is employed by Eriugena not just in the inquiry into God but also in his inquiry into nature.

3. Nature

The Periphyseon begins with this statement from the Nutritor:

> As I frequently ponder and, so far as my talents allow, ever more carefully investigate the fact that the first and fundamental division of all things which either can be grasped by the mind or lie beyond its grasp is into those that are and those that are not, there comes to mind as a general term for them all what in Greek is called F ?s ?? and in Latin Natura (P 441A).

Of this first and fundamental division the Nutritor offers five modes of interpretation. The first mode is

> that by means of which reason convinces us that all things which fall within the perception of bodily sense or (within the grasp) of intelligence are truly and reasonable said to be, but that those which because of the excellence of their nature elude not only all sense but also all intellect and reason rightly seem not to be (**P** 443A).

This mode is attributed to the teaching of the Pseudo-Dionysius and of Gregory that of God and of the essence of creatures it can be known *that* they are but not *what* they are (**P** 443B). This mode of interpretation, the first and fundamental of such, deals with "those that are not" and according to this mode "those that are not" are not privations but expressions of gnosiological limitation (**P** 443A).

The second mode treats of the orders of created nature so that an affirmation of a lower order is a negation of a higher order and vice versa (**P** 443C). The third mode treats of the primordial causes and their effects so that the effects which are known through generation are said to be while those effects still hidden in their causes are said not to be (**P** 444D). The fourth mode declares that those which are contemplated by the intellect are said to be while those which suffer generation and dissolution are said not to be (**P** 445B). The fifth mode deals exclusively with human nature which because of the Fall is said not to be but through grace is said to be (**P** 445C).

The first mode of interpretation is the fundamental mode for it interprets nature as including both God and creature while the other modes deal only with what is seen in creatures. The first and fundamental mode of division of "those that are" and "those that

are not" according to the mind's grasp and called nature is another expression of the *duplex theoria*. Eriugena is not presenting nature in a positive or categorical manner. Instead he is presenting nature in terms of the appearance of the incomprehensible, an appearance which at the same time conceals the incomprehensible which lies beyond it. Eriugena conceives of nature as appearing and concealing, a concept which is on a par with Heidegger's concept of nature[12]. Despite this similarity there are, of course, major differences between the thought of Eriugena and Heidegger.

Heidegger's concept of nature as appearing and concealing includes the relation between being and becoming so that the concept of existence is embedded in his concept of nature. In Eriugena it has been seen that nature is also conceived of as appearing and concealing but it is, for the moment, unclear as to whether or not this concept of nature also includes the concept of existence. In what follows I shall show, in two stages, that Eriugena's concept of nature does include the concept of existence. In the remainder of this section I shall show that Eriugena's use of *duplex theoria*, i.e. division and regression, allows him to treat nature as a procession from God to the particular mutable effects and a return of these effects back to God. This procession and return will then be used, in the next section, to show that reality as presented by Eriugena centers upon the relation between God and the particulars and not upon the relation between God and primordial causes or eternal ideas.

The first and fundamental division of nature presents a unity, nature, which is divided into positive and negative. The first and fundamental mode of interpretation instructs the reader that this first division of nature is to be understood

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[12] See especially Moran Ch. 12. See also D.J. O'Meara *The Concept of Nature in John Scotus Eriugena (De divisione naturae Book I)* and Heidegger An Introduction to Metaphysics Ch. 4.

theologically. Nature, then, includes God in the negative and creation in the positive. Creation, however, is theophany and nature thus includes God both apophatically and cataphatically. From this perspective nature as unity has been replaced by God as "super-nature", i.e. God as the unity of the *duplex theoria*.

This complexity, which is inherent in Eriugena's first division of nature, is made explicit by Eriugena in his fourfold division of nature, i.e. the division of nature into God as beginning, the primordial causes, the effects of the causes and God as end. Of this fourfold division, however, it must be noted that the first three divisions are cataphatic and the question arises as to what the relationship is between these three positive and presumably real divisions. In order to get at this relationship Eriugena's treatment of ousia must be examined.

During the discussion of the categories in book one the Nutritor points out to the Alumnus that "??s ?a is in no way defined as to what it is, but is defined only that it is" (**P** 487B). At first it would seem that Eriugena is dealing with ousia as one of the ten categories but it quickly becomes clear through the dialogue of book one that ousia is being used to refer to the reality of a thing. Definition is, for Eriugena, a matter of place and time and this is so in two ways (**P** 481C-483D). First a thing, i.e. an effect of the primordial causes, is defined through generation in place and time and, secondly, a thing is put in its place or defined by reason in accordance with the art of dialectic.

In either case it is the quiddity of a thing which is defined and not its ousia. These definitions form circumstances around ousia which allow one to know that ousia is but not what it is. Ousia has been placed by Eriugena outside of its comprehensible circumstances but, in being the ousia of a thing, it remains involved with its

circumstances. Eriugena characterizes the relation between ousia and its circumstances in terms of a trinity of ousia, power and operation which is to be found inseparably and incorruptibly in every creature (**P** 490B). Creatures include more than just the effects of the primordial causes, creatures also include the primordial causes as was seen in the previous section. There being then two divisions of creatures there is as well two types of trinities and thus two types of ousia.

The first type of ousia is incorruptible while the second type of ousia is corruptible. This second type of ousia is understood to be an effect of the first eternal trinity of ousia, power and operation (**P** 506B). The second ousia, the ousia of the effects, is mutable but because it is an effect of the eternal ousia it is also a manifestation of that ousia (**P** 506D). The effects of the primordial causes while mutable also manifest the eternal ousia of the primordial causes. The ousia of the primordial causes is not, however, diminished by this manifestation because this manifestation is a participant in the operation and power of the eternal ousia.

Unity and trinity are inseparable in Eriugena's treatment of ousia. Each ousia is a "tri-unity" of ousia, power and operation. This "tri-unity" is not a division of whole into parts, for each element of the trinity is understood to also be in the other two elements so that ousia is in its power and operation, power in its ousia and operation and operation in its ousia and power (**P** 568A). Rather, the trinity of ousia, power and operation expresses self-relation and because this trinity is found in every ousia, ousia itself is to be understood as self-relation.

The primordial causes are distinguished from their effects, as eternal ousia is distinguished from mutable ousia. Ousia as self-relation, however, unifies these two

created ousia as moments in the process of ousia's self-manifestation, a process which Allard refers to as "ousiophany" (93). The process of self-manifestation is not limited to the relation between the primordial causes and their effects but is also used by Eriugena to explicate the relation between God and the primordial causes.

Ostensibly book two of the Periphyseon concerns the primordial causes but the majority of the book is taken up with a discussion of the Holy Trinity. Through transference the Holy Trinity is understood in terms of the trinity of ousia, power and operation, such that the Father is likened to ousia, the Son to power and the Holy Spirit to operation (**P** 568B). This transference is used by Eriugena to show that the three Persons of the Holy Trinity are not distinct but are a part of God's self-relation. This self-relation is also causal for the divine ousia in its self-manifestation also creates the eternal and mutable ousia. In book two the inter-relation of these divisions is given in terms of the Father creating the primordial causes in the Son and dividing them into their effects through the Holy Spirit (**P** 616C)[13]. God, the primordial causes and their effects then stand to each other as ousia, power and operation in the universal process of divine "ousiophany". The primordial causes and their effects, i.e. creation, are not less than God for they are a part of its power and operation and thus inseparable from it. Creation does not establish anything outside of or less than God for all creation is a part of the Holy Trinity. Creation is then a matter of God's self-creation and all of nature can be understood as theophany (**P** 633A).

These divisions of nature resolve themselves in the unity of (divine) ousia or nature. This unity can not, however, be grasped as it is in-and-for-itself thus the mind must approach it through *duplex theoria* which first divides nature into "those that are"

[13] See Beierwaltes *Unity and Trinity in East and West.*

and "those that are not" and ends by resolving them into the "super-unity" of (divine) nature. The trinity of ousia, power and operation allows Eriugena to treat nature as a procession from and return to God[14]. This procession however includes the primordial causes which are usually thought to distort the concept of existence.

4. The Primordial Causes

Heidegger provides a general criticism of the primordial causes or eternal ideas. He says that:

> It was in the Sophists and in Plato that appearance was declared to be mere appearing and thus degraded. At the same time being, as *idea*, was exalted to a supersensory realm. A chasm, *chorismos*, was created between the merely apparent essent here below and real being somewhere on high. In that chasm Christianity settled down, at the same time reinterpreting the lower as created and the higher as the creator (Heidegger An Introduction to Metaphysics 106).

Clarke, in his *The Problem of the Reality and Multiplicity of Divine Ideas in Christian Neoplatonism*, provides a more particular version of this criticism in regards to Eriugena and the relation of Neoplatonism and Christianity in his thought. Given the chasm which Neoplatonism inherited from Plato, it was faced with a difficulty as regards the relation between the ideas and the One. The ideas as the "really real" are also really multiple and distinct whereas the One, the source of the ideas, admits of no multiplicity.

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[14] See Sheldon-Williams *The Greek Christian Platonist Tradition form the Cappadocians to Maximus and Eriugena.*

The solution to this problem was to establish the ideas outside of the One in a lesser level of reality (Clarke 111).

When Christians began explicating their faith philosophically they took over the vocabulary of Neoplatonism and modified it to fit their concerns. The principle modification concerns the One. For Christian thinkers the One is understood as a unity in trinity and this understanding requires that the levels or Persons of the trinity be treated as equal rather than higher and lower (Clarke 113-116). This change no longer allows one to treat the ideas as "really real", or the most significant level of reality outside of the One, for ideas are now found in the One and if they remained "really real" they would bring actual multiplicity into the One. The ramifications of this would be to drop the premise that the ideas are "really real". This ramification, according to Clarke, would not be explicitly worked out until the thirteenth century (Clarke 121-125).

Admittedly, Heidegger and Clarke differ on the value of Christian thought but both agree that early medieval Latin thought fosters the chasm. Heidegger's general criticism is mitigated in relation to Eriugena because of Eriugena's relation to Greek Patristic thought. Clarke on the other hand criticizes Eriugena's thought as holding the ideas to be the "really real" as seen in his treatment of the primordial causes[15]. I do not believe that Clarke's criticism is correct for he has failed to place Eriugena's thought in the context of Greek Patristic thought and has thus misrepresented it. In what follows I shall show that the primordial causes are for Eriugena *theoria* used to provide a characterization of the relation between God and humanity.

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[15] A similar criticism is also found in Bett 135-136. Bett's criticism is, however, given within the context of an Idealistic reading of Eriugena, the problems of which are enumerated by Beierwaltes in *The Revaluation of John Scottus Eriugena in German Idealism*.

Clarke attributes to the primordial causes the status of the "really real" based upon Eriugena's discussion of them as "those which are created and create" for, as Clarke says:

> what is created by God and which, itself, has causal power must certainly be real, and because immutable, also eternal, and spiritual, that is, authentic being, of which the changing world of bodies is but a shadowy image or participation (Clarke 116).

As was previously seen creation is for Eriugena understood in terms of nature's relation to itself and not as the establishment of lower orders of ousia. The attribution to the primordial causes of the status of the really real can not be based upon their creative power. Additionally, the primordial causes are not created in mulitiplicity but are instead created one and simple in the Word or the Son (**P** 624B). Nor are the primordial causes on the other side of a chasm from their effects for as power and operation the primordial causes are unified with their effects in (divine) ousia. The effects are not shadowy participations, they are the very manifestions of ousia.

These elements of Eriugena's thought have led Allard to conclude that Eriugena in fact

> reversed the order of Neoplatonic values without all the same abandoning them, and was well in advance of Thomas Aquinas and his Arab and Latin predecessors in introducing the concept of existence into the field of Western consciousness (Allard 96).

Eriugena's introduction of the concept of existence can already be found in his presentation of the first and fundamental division of nature. As seen before "those that are not" is understood of (divine) ousia and of the primordial causes as its power. The effects or "those that are" are comprehended either by sense or by reason. In either case these effects are the operation or manifestations of ousia, the theophanies, and equal with it. Multiplicity is not found in the primordial causes but is a result of our contemplation of them through their effects. Eriugena's primordial causes should not be understood in the same way as the Neoplatonic ideas, i.e. the primordial causes should not be understood as the most significant positive level of reality. Instead the primordial causes should be understood as *theoria*[16]. The primordial causes are, in themselves, incomprehensible and indistinguishable from God but within the human contemplation of nature, the *duplex theoria*, the primordial causes receive a positive treatment as intermediaries between God and the effects.

The Nutritor does offer the Alumnus an order of the primordial causes as: (1) goodness, (2) essence, (3) life, (4) reason, (5) intellect, (6) wisdom, (7) power, (8) blessedness, (9) truth and (10) eternity (**P** 622B-623C). This ordering is, however, on a par with cataphatic theology and division, i.e. it is presented so that something might be taught about the incomprehensible. With this in mind the Nutritor goes on to defend his ordering indicating that goodness can be understood as a more general "genus" than essence (**P** 627D). Goodness is then, according to Eriugena, the best, if not the only way, to characterize the relation between God and creation.

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[16] See Moran 262-268.

Creation does not just include humanity, creation is humanity. In book four Eriugena engages in an exegesis of Genesis and through this presents his theocentric anthropology. For Eriugena humanity is the Image of God as shown by the fact that our nature, like the divine nature, is incomprehensible (P 771B). In regards to the six days of creation it must, Eriugena argues, be understood that God created all things in its image, thus human nature is understood to contain all of creation (P 782D)[17]. Because humanity contains creation it can be understood that goodness provides for Eriugena a means of characterizing the relation between God and humanity. This relation can also be referred to as *agape* which is God's love for creation and the creature's love for God.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown that Eriugena has a concept of nature which is on a par with that of Heidegger. Moreover, this concept of nature is not peculiar to Eriugena but reflects, instead, the metaphysics of Greek Patristic thought. While Eriugena's own work may not have had a great influence on later medieval thought his translations of the Greek fathers were widely disseminated[18]. Given this it would seem inappropriate to distinguish medieval thought from modern thought in terms of nature for there is to be found a continuity between their respective metaphysics. Better, it would seem, to distinguish the two ages in terms of science.

As has been seen it is the art of dialectic which takes center stage in Eriugena. Dialectic is used by Eriugena in its proper sense to deal with species and genera but it is

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[17] See Gracia *Ontological Characterization of the Relation Between Man and Created Nature in Eriugena* and Otten *In the Shadow of the Divine: Negative Theology and Negative Anthropology in Augustine, Psuedo-Dionysius and Eriugena.*

[18] See Moran Ch. 13 were Eriugena's influences are given.

also used allegorically in his "meta-dialectics" through which he explicates nature and characterizes the relation between nature and the self in terms of the Good. In the next chapter I shall show that Eriugena's "meta-dialectical" or metaphysical conclusions can be accepted by modernity without the need to displace the modern sciences.

Chapter 3

The Re-enchantment of Nature

In this chapter I shall present my conclusions concerning the re-enchantment of nature. This re-enchantment of nature has three main steps. First, it must be noted that modern epistemology has been shaped by the development of the modern sciences, both natural and historical. In recent epistemology the influence of these two sciences has brought about the dichotomy between the epistemic and the non-epistemic. The influence of historical science has not, however, been properly noted so, in what follows, I shall lay out Collingwood's views upon historical science and its influence upon epistemology.

The failure to recognize historical science has led to the unfortunate confusion of the epistemological distinction between the space of law and of reasons with the metaphysical distinction between nature and the self, as seen in the thought of McDowell. The second step of the re-enchantment of nature then requires that epistemology be separated from metaphysics. The third step is the metaphysical inquiry into the relation between nature and the self. From the position of science or epistemology nature and the self are distinct and the problem of their unification arises. This unification can, I believe, be effected by adopting the proper concept of nature. Even with this concept of nature the question concerning the manner in which the relation between nature and the self is to be understood remains open. As Taylor has suggested in his Sources of the Self this relation should be understood in terms of the Good. Such an understanding would constitute the re-enchantment of nature which I have sought and shall be discussed in the third section of this chapter.

1. Historical Science

In the first chapter it was seen that recent epistemology has, in light of certain reflections upon truth, distinguished itself from natural science and within itself has developed the distinction between the epistemic and the non-epistemic. The non-epistemic or non-conceptual, i.e. impressions or experiences, is a part of epistemological theory and is also that portion of the mind which falls within the study of both epistemology and natural science, not that epistemology and natural science study it in the same way. The epistemic, on the other hand, i.e. thoughts or beliefs, is that portion of the mind which, supposedly, epistemology studies alone.

In moving away from the correspondence theory of truth toward the coherence theory of truth epistemology has altered its method. Rather than approaching truth from the "outside", as the method of natural science adopted by the correspondence theory would have it, epistemology, or the coherentists at least, approach truth from the "inside", i.e. from within the space of reasons. This inside method has not sprung fully formed from the heads of recent epistemologists but is, I wish to argue, a result of the influence of historical science.

In The Idea of History Collingwood lays out the development of history from ancient Greek to modern times and, in the *Epilegomena*, sets forth the philosophical implications of this science. In this last section of his work Collingwood defends the thesis that the method of historical science is also the proper method for the philosophy of mind (Collingwood 209).

Collingwood opens his work with a definition of history as:

> (*a*) a science, or an answering of questions; (*b*) concerned with human actions in the past; (*c*) pursued by interpretation of evidence; and (*d*) for the sake of human self-knowledge (Collingwood 110-111).

This definition is the definition of history as it is now viewed, a view which has arisen in the modern age but not become clear until more recent times. Some, however, like Whitehead, may object to this definition of history as a science distinct from natural science, for natural science like historical science is concerned with understanding the sequence of events[1]. Collingwood disagrees with this identification of historical with natural science.

In the pursuit of historical science the historian must make a distinction between the inside and the outside of an event (Collingwood 213). In studying human action in the past the historian is, to some extent, studying the sequence of bodily movement (the outside of the event) but only in so far as this relates to thought (the inside of the event). The historian is interested in the thoughts which shape the actions of human agents. The natural scientist, on the other hand, is concerned with mere events and need not make this distinction in the pursuit of their science. It is natural science which is properly interested in the sequence of events for by studying these sequences the natural scientist can then attempt to formulate those laws which might explain them (Collingwood 214).

The historian is not interested in formulating laws. When the historian lays out the sequence of historical events, i.e. human actions, they do so not to discover the laws which govern these events but the particular thoughts which shape them. The laws of

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[1] See Collingwood *Part V §1 §§ii.*

natural science are ideally universal and thus applicable to all the events of a certain class or kind. Thoughts, on the other hand, are particular and can only be understood in relation to their time. In order to understand and thus explain the actions under scrutiny the historian must enter into the action and re-think it (Collingwood 215)[2]. It is this re-thinking of an action from the inside which constitutes historical knowledge just as the formulation of law constitutes natural science.

In the first chapter McDowell's distinction between the space of law and the space of reasons was encountered. Natural science was understood to operate within the space of law, a space constituted by the idea of law. Given what has been said above I think it acceptable to recast the space of reasons as the space of history, the space in which historical science operates and which is constituted by the idea of history. This recasting makes clear the fact that just as the non-epistemic is shared by natural science and epistemology, so too is the epistemic shared by historical science and epistemology. In moving from the correspondence to the coherence theory of truth epistemology has accepted the method of historical science.

In accepting the method of historical science, i.e. in investigating thought from the inside, epistemology has been able to distinguish itself from natural science. Moreover, in accepting the method of historical science epistemology has also drawn methodological distinctions similar to those of history. As historical science distinguishes the outside from the inside of an action so too does epistemology distinguish the non-epistemic from the epistemic. Epistemology is not, however, identical with historical science. Historical science studies human action in the past and in relation to a variety of social settings, thus we have histories of ages and periods, political and economic

[2] See also Collingwood *Part V §2 The Historical Imagination.*

systems, technologies, etc. Epistemology, on the other hand, studies truth and knowledge in relation to justification and engages in historical science only in so far as epistemologists engage in scholarly activity, i.e. critically examine the works of previous thinkers.

Epistemology's distinction between the non-epistemic and the epistemic while similar to that of history is not the same as the distinction between the outside and inside of an event. The epistemic encompasses those beliefs which through justification may be shown true while the non-epistemic encompasses the conditions entailed by the truth of a belief. Thus in Sellars the belief 'I see that the necktie is green', if true, entails an impression had under standard conditions. For McDowell this understanding of experience was unacceptable, needing to be replaced by a minimal empiricism which would extend the conceptual (epistemic) into the non-epistemic and, in effect, eliminate the distinction between the two. I am now in a position to show the error of McDowell's treatment of experience.

As Rorty has pointed out, in his *The Very Idea of Human Answerability to the World*, McDowell "treats perceptual judgements as a model for all judgements" (Rorty 138). Like Sellars, McDowell focuses upon *seeing that things are thus and so* but, unlike Sellars, McDowell wishes to take this as an example of experience and not belief. In this way McDowell involves our concepts in the very conditions of truth. So long as one limits their attention to empirical knowledge or, more broadly speaking, natural science no immediate problems arise from McDowell's treatment of experience. But if one shifts their attention to historical science then it becomes clear that McDowell's treatment is untenable.

Natural science, formulating as it does laws to explain events, seems to be guided by the world itself and McDowell's experience allows a way to understand this without falling into the Myth of the Given. When we shift to historical science, however, McDowell's experience is seen to suddenly fail in putting the mind in touch with the world. Admittedly, the historian does *see that things are thus and so* but what they see is artifacts and for them to "experience" that, say, 'the manuscript is brown' does not put them in touch with *their* world. The conditions of historical knowledge are different from the conditions of natural science and McDowell's treatment of experience is simply unable to accommodate this.

For some this might show that, perhaps, historical science is no science at all, but this would be to put the cart before the mule. The role of epistemology is to study science as it stands and not to dictate which sciences count and which do not. Not only are there justifications of history as science but these justifications have been accepted and historical science is and has been widely employed in a variety of academic disciplines, such as fine art, literature and philosophy. Nor is McDowell in any position to deny historical science for its very method has been shown to be operative in his own thought. History as science stands then and the onus is upon epistemology to deal with it, something which McDowell's treatment of experience fails to do.

When epistemology investigates natural science it differentiates the thoughts which properly constitute knowledge from the non-epistemic conditions of that knowledge, such as impressions. A similar distinction is made in relation to historical science. The historian re-thinks past thought and in so far as these thoughts are re-thought they constitute historical knowledge. Differentiated from this are those actions whose

sole purpose is the fulfillment of (animal) desire[3]. Like impressions, these desires are non-epistemic because they are outside of knowledge proper.

McDowell's experience would eliminate the difference between the epistemic and the non-epistemic. From the standpoint of historical science this would extend the conceptual into desire so that not only would thoughts be re-thought but desire would be re-desired. This simply does not clarify the manner in which one comes to knowledge. Epistemology must differentiate the epistemic from the non-epistemic but it must also differentiate between the space of law and the space of history. Admittedly, the space of law is that space in which the non-epistemic or animal nature of humanity is studied but this does not require an extension of our conceptual capacities into it. Our animal nature is in the space of law because it is the sort of thing which natural science studies. Likewise, knowledge and thought are in the space of history because knowledge is studied in the same way that history is studied. The epistemologist enters into knowledge the same way that the historian enters into history. The epistemologist, however, is faced with two different types of knowledge or science which they must distinguish.

The failure to appreciate historical science has led recent epistemology to consider natural science as the only science. Being the only science it was assumed to reveal the world and thus the ontic understanding of nature seen in the first chapter. When historical science is taken into account it becomes clear that there are two sciences revealing two distinct worlds. This may cause some concern to the epistemologist but they are in no position to deal with it. Despite the revelation of two worlds these worlds appear to the epistemologist as one for the worlds are a result of science and science is

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[3] See Collingwood 216.

understood in one way. Epistemology is simply not equipped to deal with metaphysics because epistemology studies science and not the limits of science.

2. Philosophic Anthropology

Science, and thus epistemology, is limited in two ways, historically and metaphysically, and I shall now deal with both in their turn. In his discussion of the difference between the modern and medieval ages McDowell treated the space of reasons as static, i.e. as holding between the two ages. Having shown that the space of reasons is, as it were, a sub-division of the space of history and that historical science is a product of the modern age, it can now be seen that McDowell's treatment of medieval thought is anachronistic.

In the previous chapter it was seen that for medieval thought science is encompassed by the liberal arts. Additionally, there was also seen to be a tension in medieval thought between the Neoplatonic conception of the eternal ideas as the "really real" and the Christian conception of the eternal ideas as ideas in the mind of God[4]. These ideas gave to medieval gnosiology a dimension which is wholly absent from modern thought. As the previous discussion has shown, modernity holds science to be encompassed by natural and historical science. These sciences developed in our age by dropping the notion of eternal ideas so that modern epistemology now views the ideas as ideas in the human mind. It is then, as I suggested at the end of the second chapter, better and more proper to distinguish medieval and modern thought from each other in relation to their views of science.

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[4] See also Collingwood *Part II §1The Leaven of Christian Ideas.*

Epistemology and its concerns are limited to the modern age and arise only in relation to the modern sciences. The conflict between nature and the self which McDowell sought to resolve is a conflict between the two sciences. This conflict is not resolved through an ill defined naturalism, relaxed or not, but through a recognition of science as science, i.e. the justification of belief.

The movement from the correspondence to coherence theory of truth is vital in regards to this point. From the standpoint of the correspondence theory, adopting as it does the method of natural science, the only way to distinguish between the two sciences would be in terms of the objects studied. These objects would establish which events are studied by the respective sciences. This method, however, would reduce all science to a study of outsides and thus obscure historical science. The coherence theory of truth, on the other hand, adopts the method of historical science and allows us to understand science as a human activity occurring within certain historical contexts. It is as a human activity that the two sciences or spaces are unified.

The development of the sciences themselves is a matter to be studied through historical science for the spaces have been established through various arguments within the span of the modern age. It is here that epistemology reaches its metaphysical limit. Epistemology is limited to the study of knowledge and the history of that knowledge. This knowledge, i.e. the sciences, reveals neither *nature* nor the *self* in their entirety. Instead knowledge presupposes or is built upon the relation between nature and the self. In order to get at nature and the self epistemology must go beyond itself and into metaphysics.

To paraphrase Rorty, science does not put us in touch with reality[5]. In order to get at reality or nature or Being one must engage in an activity other than science. It is metaphysics which inquires into Being and the first step in the metaphysical inquiry is an examination of the self[6]. In general this metaphysical inquiry into the self is referred to as philosophic anthropology and Taylor finds expressed in medieval metaphysics an important relation which is lacking in modern metaphysics, i.e. the notion of *agape* or the characterization of the relation between nature and the self in terms of the Good.

Taylor believes that this medieval notion of *agape* should be retrieved in order to remedy the modern tendency to examine the self in neutral terms. Rather than speak of the self in relation to frameworks of meaning, modern thought prefers to speak of the self in abstraction from these frameworks. To some extent this movement to exclude frameworks from philosophic anthropology is due to the disenchantment of nature. Previous to the modern age it was commonplace to treat one's framework as having as much reality as anything else. Eriugena, for instance, does not question Christianity; he takes it as given. His concern is not to understand Christianity *per se* but to understand its revelation through Scriptural and Patristic authority. The rise of the modern sciences, especially natural science, was far more shocking to the earlier periods of modernity than it is to us. Successful new sciences undermined that confidence in frameworks which previous ages had taken for granted. This shock was, to some extent, mitigated by the attempts of early modern thinkers to explicate the values of the previous frameworks, especially the Christian, in terms of the modern natural science[7]. These early attempts to

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[5] See for instance Rorty Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature.
[6] See Heidegger *Introduction* to Being and Time.
[7] Hobbes' Leviathan is an excellent example of this.

deal with the self in relation to modern natural science rather than frameworks set the stage for the more recent rejection of frameworks altogether.

McDowell's anthropology is an excellent example of this sort of neutral anthropology. As was seen in the first chapter, the importance of Aristotle's second nature is taken by McDowell to lie in its ability to explain how conceptual capacities become active. The acquisition of a second nature is of primary importance in understanding how one's eyes are opened to rational restraint, especially the rational restraint exerted by McDowell's experience. The ethical dimension of Aristotle's second nature falls into the background and is given second place in relation to the rational activity of the self. This neutral anthropology of McDowell is based upon his adoration of natural science, his ontic view of nature and his failure to appreciate historical science. For him the frameworks of meaning are of secondary importance in relation to natural science[8].

The appreciation of historical science allows us to take seriously these frameworks. In investigating the past the historian must take into account that framework of meaning in which the thoughts they are studying occur. The historian could not re-think those thoughts outside of their original framework. Admittedly, the historian need not agree with that framework but it must be taken into account if they are to pursue their science at all. Not only is the method of historical science the proper method for epistemology, or the philosophy of mind, but historical science itself presents the self as

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[8] McDowell gives a fuller treatment of the ethical dimension of his thought in his *Two Sorts of Naturalism*. While *Two Sorts of Naturalism* deals specifically with the ethics and the role that naturalism plays in our understanding of ethics, McDowell continues to present naturalism in terms of the distinction between first and second nature (§10). I do not necessarily disagree with McDowell's treatment of ethics but, in accordance with the argument I have been presenting, McDowell's use of primary nature undermines that philosophical anthropology which is the basis of ethics. Taylor, in his *Foundationalism and the Inner-Outer Distinction*, echoes this criticism of McDowell (110-115).

intimately bound up within various frameworks of meaning. Thought, in its broadest sense, can not be understood apart from its framework and thus the self can not be approached in abstraction from frameworks of meaning.

That the self can not be understood apart from frameworks of meaning is Taylor's essential point[9]. To ignore these frameworks in relation to the self is to fall into what Taylor has called the ethics of inarticulacy[10]. By ignoring the primacy of the frameworks of meaning in understanding the self one understands the self in a false or inauthentic way. Therapy would suggest, as it were, that these goods are of secondary importance and that they need not necessarily be dealt with because they can be dissolved by achieving the proper, neutral point of view. This point of view may alleviate anxiety but it does not overcome inauthenticity. In order to overcome inauthenticity one must acknowledge the importance of the Good in relation to the self.

Heidegger's philosophic anthropology is superior to most because his anthropology aims at revealing the fundamental structure of the self. Heidegger, however, will have nothing to do with values or frameworks of meaning[11]. For Heidegger the most important feature of the self is temporality and the relation between nature and the self is characterized in terms of truth (*aletheia*). In avoiding the frameworks of meaning and the Good in his investigation of the fundamental structure of the self Heidegger's anthropology can also be understood as a neutral anthropology. It is because of the prevalence of neutral anthropology that Taylor believes we must retrieve the medieval notion of *agape*, i.e. the love of the divine and the divine's love of creation

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[9] See Taylor Sources of the Self *Part I* Ch. I.
[10] See Taylor Sources of the Self *Part 1* Ch. I.
[11] See Heidegger An Introduction to Metaphysics Ch. 4 *§4.*

which underlies the characterization of the relation between nature and the self in terms of the Good[12].

I have been speaking of the medieval and modern ages in very broad terms and while this has helped move my argument forward it has also obscured the more particular context of my own thought. The medieval age is, of course, far more varied and exciting than my focus upon Eriugena and Greek Patristic thought would have it. Likewise, the modern age is far more varied and exciting than my limited treatment of it would have. Despite this my characterization of the two ages in terms of science is, I believe, correct but the ramifications of this difference need now be brought out. In general, it is correct to view the medieval age as unified in its acceptance of the Christian framework (or Abrahamic framework if one wishes to include medieval Jewish and Islamic thought). The rise of modernity and its sciences did not just occasion a change of frameworks, i.e. we did not merely replace the Christian framework with a modern framework, instead modernity has, over time, given birth to a variety of frameworks so that now in our more recent period we are faced not with a single overarching framework but with a variety of frameworks, which from the inside, as it were, all appear to be of equal value.

We face a serious fragmentation of our society in so far as that society contains heteronymous and apparently mutually exclusive frameworks of meaning[13]. One way of dealing with this situation is to view these frameworks as optional. This is the usual tactic employed by those of a scientistic or therapeutic bent, although this tactic is common to all forms of the neutral anthropology. As hinted above, however, this tactic avoids the problem rather than solving it. Despite the fact that some may view these frameworks as

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[12] See Taylor Sources of the Self *Part 1* Ch. 4.
[13] See Taylor *Conclusions* in Sources of the Self.

optional, these frameworks continue to shape the lives of others. Additionally, neutral anthropologies occur within a framework of their own. Despite the differences between Heidegger and McDowell both authors are prescribing a way to live one's life. Frameworks of meaning can not be avoided, they must be dealt with.

Historical science offers a means of understanding these frameworks, not just in terms of their expression but also in terms of their historical genesis. The importance of the re-enchantment of nature is not to specify an overarching framework but to make clear the fact that each framework is a result of the self's search for the Good. The goods which are specified or elevated by the various frameworks are different and may conflict with each other, but the frameworks themselves are each an attempt to achieve authenticity. The re-enchantment of nature is a retrieval then of the metaphysical claim that it is the Good which properly characterizes the relation between nature and the self.

3. The Re-enchantment of Nature

This work began with an examination of the disenchanted view of nature. This position views nature in an ontic or positive manner as the subject matter of natural science. My concern with this disenchanted view of nature is that it problematizes and, in cases like that of the bald naturalists, excludes human action as such, i.e. historical action, from nature. McDowell, in seeking a position between coherentists and bald naturalists, presented an interpretation of Aristotle's second nature which was supposed to re-integrate nature and human action.

In the first chapter I expressed dissatisfaction with McDowell's solution to the problem of nature and the self because it continued to hold that nature was, at root,

something to be studied in accordance with natural science. McDowell re-integrated nature and the self by arguing that exercises of conceptual capacities are a result of the actualization of the human animal's nature. Thought is not, according to McDowell, alien to nature. Instead, thought is a part of nature by virtue of being a part of the human animal's nature and while McDowell's argument is not an outright attempt to render thought natural by reducing the space of reasons to the space of law, the space of law remains ontologically significant because it is the way in which nature is known and thought is not other than natural.

I am dissatisfied with the significance that the disenchanted view of nature has given to natural science and to the space of law because it has obscured historical science. In this chapter I have attempted to show that historical science is just as significant as natural science is in shaping modernity. The ontological significance of the space of law has been given to it because natural science is often considered by modernity to be the only true science. By examining Collingwood I have hoped to show the error of this belief.

In his own work Collingwood has traced the development of historical science and I have used his work to trace the space of reasons back to the space of history. Epistemology's reliance upon historical science for its method shows the significance of historical science in shaping modernity and thus requires a recognition of historical science alongside natural science. This recognition however raises the problem of equal yet different worlds.

In the previous section I suggested that this problem of divergent worlds be resolved by treating both the space of law and the space of history in an ontic or positive

way. That is to say that both natural and historical science is limited for neither reveals nature nor the self in its entirety.

The limitation of science requires a different concept of nature and I have proposed that concept of nature found in Eriugena and Heidegger. This concept allows us to acknowledge that while some things are comprehended or known other things are not. Within the modern context both nature and human nature (the self) are to be counted amongst "those that are not". Like the primordial causes, however, things are said about both nature and the self thus a further synthetic step must be taken so that both might be included in the "super-unitary" nature.

It is this concept of nature as appearing and concealing that I wish to re-enchant. The benefit of this concept of nature is that it is a metaphysical concept which has been produced to illuminate fundamental relationships that escape the proper use of language. The positive concept of nature limits nature to those truths revealed by natural science. This limitation excludes historical science and the incomprehensible from nature. Nature as appearing and concealing provides a means of including the self and the incomprehensible in nature and of opening a context for the discussion of the relation between nature and the self.

It is important to note that the "truths" of metaphysics are not the same as the truths of science for metaphysics employs language in an improper way. Metaphysics must employ language in this way because its "object", nature, transcends both thought and language. As was seen in the case of Heidegger, however, a metaphysical concept of nature is not necessarily an enchanted concept of nature.

In attempting to include the self within nature one is seeking a similarity between nature and the self. Using an ontic view of nature this similarity is identified in terms of animality. In Heidegger the similarity is identified in terms of truth (*aletheia*) as process or projection[14]. In both of these cases, however, Taylor has found a neutral anthropology which has obscured the most important feature of the self, i.e. its relation to the Good.

In accepting that the self cannot be understood apart from frameworks of meaning and thus the Good, one cannot abandon this feature of the self when including the self in nature. I say then that the primary similarity between nature and the self is the Good. To view the similarity of nature and the self in terms of the Good and thus to view the self-manifestation of nature itself in terms of the Good is to re-enchant nature.

Having said this it must be immediately noted that this is a metaphysical claim and not a claim about that nature which is studied by natural science. The truths of natural science remain untouched by the re-enchantment of nature. Natural science reveals mathematical laws while historical science reveals thought and its place within a framework of meaning. Philosophical anthropology shows that the relation between the self and the Good is fundamental and metaphysics by re-integrating the self and nature transforms our view of nature. This transformation is twofold for metaphysics, in the first place, must move from the ontic concept of nature to the concept of nature as appearing and concealing and, in the second place, must also move from philosophical anthropology's view of the self as fundamentally related to the Good to the view of nature itself as fundamentally understood in terms of the Good.

4. Conclusion

[14] See Heidegger *On the Essence of Truth*.

In this work I have shown what is meant by the re-enchantment of nature. This re-enchantment is not a step back towards a naïve or pre-scientific understanding of the world. Instead it is, I believe, a step forward. The re-enchantment of nature takes the modern sciences seriously and does not wish to abandon them in favour of the medieval arts. Instead, the re-enchantment of nature wishes to push the understanding beyond the sciences. We unnecessarily limit ourselves when we favour the sciences to the exclusion of metaphysics for it is only within the context of metaphysics and philosophical anthropology that questions of authenticity arise and reveal themselves to inquiry.

The re-enchantment of nature is a step forward because it once again attempts to question that which has been forgotten. Questions concerning the self, its relation to the Good and the implications this has upon our understanding of nature have been avoided because they seem to contradict natural science and the modern point of view. Through this work I have shown that these questions can be raised within the context of modern thought and by raising them I have also hoped to show that these questions remain pertinent to the modern experience.

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