

UC Berkeley

UC Berkeley Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Political Theory After the Interpretive Turn: Charles Taylor on Knowledge, Values, and Politics

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7mk6k6d8>

Author

Choi, Naomi

Publication Date

2010

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

Political Theory after the Interpretive Turn:
Charles Taylor on Knowledge, Values, and Politics

By

Naomi Elin Choi

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Political Science
in the
Graduate Division
of the
University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Mark Bevir, Chair
Professor Sarah Song
Professor Shannon Stimson
Professor Christopher Kutz

Spring 2010

Political Theory After the Interpretive Turn:
Charles Taylor on Knowledge, Values, and Politics

Copyright 2010

By Naomi Elin Choi

Abstract

Political Theory after the Interpretive Turn:
Charles Taylor on Knowledge, Values, and Politics

by

Naomi Elin Choi

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Mark Bevir, Chair

Many stories of the development of political theory in the Anglo-American world in the 20th C could be told to involve many different actors, events, and ideas. This dissertation tells a story that centers on the development of modern liberalism by locating within it the development of the ideas of Charles Taylor (1931-). Taylor's writings on the study of human behavior, the relationship between selfhood and morality, the contemporary relevance of German Romantic philosophy, and the need for advocating multiculturalism and democracy in politics have earned him wide recognition as a leading philosopher of our times. By making clear how Taylor's arguments about human agency and knowledge form the basis of how social practices should be understood for the strong values they embody, this project shows how the connections between his philosophy of social sciences and his writings on morality and politics constitute a highly salient defense of interpretivism and humanist liberalism for our times.

This project brings to light a range of problems, themes, and arguments that mark an "interpretive turn" in philosophy and across the sciences that helped to shape political theory in the Anglo-American context in the 20th C, and it explains the ways in which some of those 20th C concerns continue to be of especial importance for political theorists today. Like all "turns" in philosophy such as the "analytic turn", or the "linguistic turn", to name just two, that retrospectively ascribes a distinctive character to the emergence of concerns and ideas thought to have significantly altered the course of intellectual development through time, the "interpretive turn" does not refer to a precise time, event, or set of figures. Although questions asking precisely what it was, when it occurred, or what its implications are have answers that are open to debate, several important themes can nonetheless be discerned.

The last century saw key shifts in ways of thinking where previous philosophical concerns about the possibility, nature, and foundations of knowledge, and preoccupations with the structure of language and the analysis of meaning gave way to greater interest in and new controversies over questions about interpretation: the role of interpretation in human life, the kinds of knowledge to which interpretation gives rise, what interpretative practices presuppose about the knowing subject and the subject matter, and how to judge between interpretive successes and failures. Such questions not only augured epistemological problems for the human sciences, but doubts about established notions of science, truth, and objectivity also bespoke of impediments to comprehensive reflection across cultural, traditional, or linguistic lines, and to the pursuit of rational debate over values. Perceived failures within philosophy combined with lessons drawn from the hermeneutic tradition as well as developments in the interpretive disciplines of historiography, philosophy of science, jurisprudence, cultural studies, and literary criticism served to challenge all forms of foundationalism - epistemological, moral, and cultural - and have redrawn traditional boundaries of knowledge across disciplinary lines.

Taylor is a major figure in this historical and philosophical context. His responses to the dilemmas facing both logical positivism and ordinary language philosophy were pivotal to the development of analytic philosophy's relationship to continental thought, also helping to shape the shift to post-analytic forms of thought in the wake of "analysis" in the late 20th century. This project shows how Taylor's engagements in the flight from positivism in the philosophy of social sciences, his interventions in the rise of post-foundationalist challenges to modern moral philosophy, and his confrontations with the problem of justification for liberal political theories all serve to define the distinct yet related implications of a turn to interpretation in the triplicate areas of knowledge, values, and politics.

Taylor's interpretivism shows us that defending an anti-naturalist philosophy of human sciences after the fall of logical empiricism and the demise of positivism requires a sophisticated, post-linguistic turn, positive case for moral realism that is based on an interpretive understanding of human beings necessarily and always engaged in social practices. As such, his arguments continue to capture the major internal debates in each of the areas of philosophy of social sciences, moral philosophy, and political theory today. His defense of anti-naturalism pertains to the major issues in the debate over naturalism and the use of scientific techniques in the human sciences. By further probing on what grounds anti-naturalism is right - if it is - Taylor's arguments pierce through much of the controversy within moral philosophy over the grounds for normative theory, refashioning a version of moral realism that learns from each the emotivist, rhetorical, and historicist alternatives, while eschewing their pitfalls. By taking an interpretive approach to both theory and practice, Taylor's humanist liberalism also attempts to break the impasses within political theory between moral philosophers, critical theorists, and intellectual historians. The view of politics that arises from Taylor's philosophy of social sciences is neither one derived from moral philosophy, nor one focused solely on structures or power. Nor is the practice of political theory meant to be an apolitical, antiquarian exercise in uncovering the meanings of past texts. Taylor's is a vision of politics that urges recognizing, grasping, and debating the intersubjective meanings that make up collective life, a view that enables social and political criticism while circumventing the strongest arguments both about the practical contradictions of deconstruction, and those against moral realism.

Chapter 1 broadly summarizes Taylor's interpretivism and humanist liberalism and traces their roots to several similar themes found in an earlier generation when the legacy of British Idealism encountered various modes of "analysis" during the rise of logical positivism and 'ordinary language philosophy' at Oxford in the '30s and '40s. The chapter begins by explaining how an idealist inheritance persisted through the rise of logical positivism and ordinary language philosophy particularly through figures like Isaiah Berlin and Stuart Hampshire. Berlin and Hampshire's many-sided oppositions to the growing reductivist empiricism of logical positivism throughout the '40s and '50s reflect similar idealist themes that also came to define the approach of many of their students, including Taylor. Taylor shares their affirmation of strong, indivisible connections between epistemological issues and moral and political issues based on the view that such concerns are unified in human experience. They hold an interpretive view of philosophy and social inquiry in their insistence on anti-naturalism in the human sciences, which requires a cultural understanding of human life, and a "thick" conception of persons that only a "vitalist" account of human behavior can adequately make sense of. What is humanist about their liberalism can be seen in how their individualism in emphasizing the importance and priority of individual people as moral subjects is joined with their recognition of the social aspects of identity and selfhood. As humanist liberals, they also insist on the uniqueness and historically specific nature of particular human phenomena and they each maintain an anti-utopian belief in the plurality of values in human life. Together these convictions support their suspicions about deductive philosophical abstractions, their opposition to utilitarian moral and political philosophy and other forms of ethical monism, and their aversion to and fear of the possibly despotic effects of totalitarian forms of politics that attempt to unify and harmonize human values.

Examining the arguments of Berlin and Hampshire alongside their contemporaries, furthermore, forces us to challenge a commonplace about the recent history of modern liberalism. The "death" of political philosophy in the Anglo-American, broadly analytic liberal tradition, is widely assumed to have occurred in the early 20th C when certain movements in philosophy like the rise of logical positivism and related shifts in the social sciences undermined the basis for normative theorizing, until the American political philosopher John Rawls reinvigorated political theory in the '70s. Berlin's and Hampshire's engagements with various modes of analysis reveals, however, that moral and political philosophy lay not moribund, but continued to develop in the heyday of analytic philosophy from the late '30s to the '50s and onward. By highlighting the themes found in Berlin and Hampshire the chapter also details the legacy of an enduring idealist philosophy that had to be revised and reinvented against the new empiricist challenges, and reveals how philosophy on ethics and politics nonetheless remained broadly humanistic and interpretive until the '60s and '70s when G.A. Cohen and Rawls came to exemplify the kind of deductive analysis that most people today associate with analytic philosophy writ large.

Chapter 2 examines Taylor's engagements with epistemological issues beginning with his early writings on the philosophy of social sciences in his doctoral dissertation against the intellectual context of positivism and modern empiricism at Oxford of the late 1950s-60s. Like Berlin and Hampshire, Taylor was also initially drawn to empiricist modes of thinking, and made his critique of behaviorism first on empirical grounds. Although Taylor's commitment to anti-naturalism in the human sciences has remained constant, he didn't always hold the same ideas or the same interpretivism always. In fact, the grounds for his commitment to anti-naturalism have changed significantly over time into the position described in the first chapter. What began in his earliest writings as his descriptive phenomenological defense of anti-naturalism on empirical grounds was refashioned into a commitment to hermeneutic realism on ontological grounds. Taylor turned his

attention away from the failures of specific scientific discourses such as positivism, cognitivism, and behaviorism and took on a much broader target, an empirical epistemological outlook he saw widely suffusing our intellectual culture and underpinning all naturalist approaches in the human sciences. His defense of anti-naturalism rested on convincing us that an empiricist requirement of absoluteness has direct bearing on how human agency and social life get conceived. He argued that when we try to reduce understanding in the human sciences by employing language appropriate to the natural sciences, by neutralizing the moral features of human agency, we effectively distort, and thereby overlook, the essential nature of personhood. Taylor's arguments for the essential place of meanings in the characterization of human behavior is based on the ontology of persons as self-interpretive strong evaluative beings, as agents for whom things 'matter' and have significance, in contrast to the empiricist picture of a disengaged and punctual view of subjects. Drawing on his perceptions of the failures of empiricism, logical positivism, and ordinary language philosophy as well as his interest in phenomenology, he attacked the ontological commitments of an empiricist epistemology as specious, as misunderstanding the interpretive nature of subjects, and for its contradictory aims of trying to separate human agency from moral ontology, which he argues is itself a moral position.

Taylor's ontological basis for the necessity of a hermeneutic approach in the human sciences whose subject matter are interpretive creatures faces a key challenge of its own. Taylor's hermeneutic realist claim that the phenomena of the human sciences requires the distinction between the human and the natural sciences runs out against not just the logical - but also the practical - possibility that human phenomena can become other than it is, precisely for the reason that we are creatures that can interpret, articulate, reflect on, and in part remake ourselves. His own position that the issue of the very notion of a human science cannot be detached from a view of human and social ontology - which he takes to be deeply moral in nature - means that Taylor needs to show why the picture of human agency that emerges through the empiricist epistemological outlook is not only false but something we *should want* to resist. Taylor's philosophy of human sciences requires a strong moral argument. His defense of anti-naturalism, even in its most fully developed stage, cannot survive without a moral argument for why the atomistic instrumental disengaged view of selfhood is shallow and undesirable compared to the embedded and situated view of selfhood.

Chapter 3 makes clear the particular details of how Taylor's interest in the philosophy of Hegel comes to shape the terms in which Taylor himself thinks. Turning to Hegel gave Taylor a way of historically situating many of his own views in favor of retrieving more Aristotelian forms of thought against Cartesian-empiricist dualism and its related modernist drives to mechanism. Taylor's shift toward a broader critique of an epistemology that accepts no divisions between epistemological, moral, or political concerns is based on his reading of Hegel's comprehensive conception of reason against the atomistic tendencies of erstwhile enlightenment conceptions. The chapter explains the strong continuities between Hegel's stance against the absolute separation between consciousness and body - subject from external world, mind from nature - and Taylor's own related claims about human agency as always embedded, never disengaged, constituted in social practices, and intertwined with language, articulation, and conceptions of the good. Taylor's turn to Hegel thus exemplifies the continuation of his desire to see the unity of knowledge, morals, and politics, rather than disengagement for one over the others, and to find a basis in reason for overcoming untenable dichotomies that impede our thinking.

Moreover, in Hegel, Taylor finds the resources he needs to formulate a strong moral conception that can reconcile the impasse threatening to collapse his arguments for anti-naturalism in the human sciences, discussed at the end of chapter 2. Taylor's recapitulation of the importance of Hegel for modern societies rejects the political implications of Hegel's views on modernity, but retrieves, in an important way, the mode of philosophical reasoning he finds in Hegel, the *kind* of argument that Hegel employed to overcome the dualism between mind and nature, by which he sought to *demonstrate* their unity in reason. Chapter 4 explains the main features of this Hegelian style of argumentation that Taylor adopts, and unpacks the immediate implications that Taylor's latter anti-naturalism has on debates within moral philosophy. Taylor's writings on the ontology of human agency aim to show how the conventionally separate areas of inquiry – the scientific, the moral and the political – are inextricably joined. At the center of his arguments towards a philosophical anthropology is his notion of “strong evaluation,” which as a claim about the object of moral philosophy says that there are “background languages” or “inescapable frameworks” in which human beings as moral creatures live, reflect on, and debate morality, such that all of our moral descriptions, reactions, questions, issues (in short, our sense of morality) involves discriminations of right or wrong, better or worse, higher or lower, that are not rendered valid by our own desires, inclinations, or choices, but rather stand independent of these, offering standards by which they themselves are judged.

Taylor's ontological claim of strong evaluation supports a mode of theorizing that rejects the autonomy of ethics, and takes moral ontology that depends on a social ontology of human life, to be essential. As such, his views have several highly critical implications for modern moral philosophy. Against Kantian forms of moral and political philosophy that buy in to the notion of the autonomy of ethics, and proceed by deduction from logical categories of being to ground a deontic concept of the right, Taylor argues that our understanding of what counts as moral needs to be broadened to include not only what it is right to do, purely as a guide to right action, but to include a notion of the good as an object of our love or allegiance, considerations about what it is good to be. The reductivism of moral theories that Taylor opposes in both the utilitarian and Kantian traditions has to do with their lack of concern with the qualitative discriminations that people in a society actually make, which leads to a failure to grasp what their perceptions of the good are, which are likely to be multiple, plural, and so irreducible to a single metric of good or a simple procedure. Modern moral philosophy, having shifted its emphasis from substantive to procedural justification with its attendant abstract theories of obligation, takes values to be merely projections onto a neutral world of facts and cannot come clean about the values the theories do rely on, such as the strong commitment to the ideal of rationality and benevolence. Against existentialist varieties of moral relativism, moreover, which attacks procedural ethics for masking implicit moral motives and discredits values as domination, Taylor argues that Neo-Nietzschean and Foucaultian brands of critical theory can't admit to the value they no doubt hold in unmasking the pretensions of moral philosophy.

Taylor's argument for strong evaluation incorporates his claim for the existence of plural values, and is deployed against both naturalistic and subjectivist theories that seek to dissolve conflict in the modern world and refuse to judge between incommensurable values within or across human cultures, which is ultimately to attribute to all values equal weight, and so no weight at all. Taylor argues that the fact that human beings are strong evaluators means that values must be real and in some sense independent, because when individuals experience some goods as inherently more worthy than others, what they are doing is responding to their sense that the good is valuable independently of their choice of it; the good is seen as normative for desire, not constituted as good

by the fact that individuals do so desire them. This claim that strongly valued goods make demands upon us because of their intrinsic value has put Taylor in strong accord with other moral realist positions, but Taylor's view is a tempered realism that says that the moral demands we make and the goods which command our respect are inseparable.

In trying to demonstrate the moral ontology of human agency, Taylor's strategy is to narrate the development of the modern notion of selfhood and the historically contingent ways in which naturalism's particular presumptions to deny our ontology arose, arguing that even naturalism's explicit spurning of moral ontology actually presupposes a moral ontology of its own. In other words, if he can show how the tendency to try to deny the essentially moral nature of our ontology is merely a historically contingent fact about our modern notion of the self, then his claim of the general ontological structure of selfhood as strongly evaluative still holds. Two features of Taylor's argumentation – comparative assessment and a historicist mode of reasoning – exhibit an Hegelian style of reasoning that proceeds through comparisons between rival historical narratives where the better account is judged as such because it can narrate the other(s), but not the other way around. With Taylor, epistemology is interpretive and practical, a matter of comparing rival narrative accounts, and of using history in this comparison. Taylor has put forward an alternative standard of correctness that requires employing practical reasoning in arguing about rival interpretations, including those about ontology. Knowledge is the goal in practical reasoning, but this knowledge only comes about through reasoning in transitions, with the aim not to establish that one position is correct or superior to all others, but rather to choose between comparative propositions on the grounds of the epistemic gain attained from a move in one direction rather than another. Taylor's model of practical reasoning through epistemic gain is his invitation for us to consider and choose for ourselves which picture makes the best sense of our being: denying moral topography and frameworks, or finding it essential to living and living well.

The two features of Taylor's argumentation – comparative assessment and a historicist mode of reasoning – make his interpretive, humanist liberalism strongly opposed to what is regularly thought of as “analytic” liberal theory today not only in its mode of argumentation, but quite starkly also in the direct implications that this mode of argumentation has for politics. Taylor's ontological claim about the interpretive nature of subjects is the basis for his arguments for multiculturalism and the political importance of recognition of different identities and conceptions of the good against the minimalist conception of agency required by procedural theories of distributive justice. Taylor's immanent critique of liberal theories maintains that most contemporary liberal theories that aim to prioritize the right over the good are incapable of admitting the very notions of good on which they stand, and that such endorsements of reductivist abstractions are distortive of human life and self-defeating as a politics. Rather than try to justify bracketing off diverse conceptions of the good from public consideration, which he thinks is misguided (not as a matter of choice, but precisely because to do so ever is impossible), Taylor urges a politics based on a more acute examination of our social practices, a greater engagement with the multiplicity of voices and pluralities of conceptions of the good embodied in them. When difference and plurality in the modern world lead to serious political dilemmas and conflict as they inevitably do, Taylor appeals to the existence of intersubjective meanings that can enable reconciliation - through greater cross-difference dialogue and exchange - toward deeper understanding and careful re-negotiation of the particular goals that underlie our particular practices. Taylor's responses to the challenges to modern liberalism from postmodernism to issues of religion and secularity and the challenge of multiculturalism and issues of minority accommodation in democratic societies exhibit a view of politics that stands against the autonomy of ethics and show what moving towards a politics of the good might look like.

As such, my project serves not only to clarify Taylor's positions as they relate to current debates in political theory, but also to inquire into the relationship between political theory and the broader movements in philosophy in the 20th C that have called the former into question. Since the demise of logical positivism and the rise of critical forms of thought that render suspect the means for rational debate over normative claims or for discourse without domination, the central project of political theory in the 20th C has been to grapple with what makes for satisfactory ways of understanding social actions and meanings. As we grapple with how best to understand human practices and social meanings, political theorists also face a variety of reasons to doubt what intelligible loci exists for understanding texts, what means we have for rational debate over substantive goods, or whether normativity without domination is ever possible. In spite of the growing consensus on the essential role of interpretation in human life in the last 60 years, moreover, the proliferation of theories of interpretation has given multiple – and often incompatible – answers to what positive form and constructive direction that role should take. Thus, the impact of the “interpretive turn” on contemporary political theory continues to be debated today.

This dissertation project makes clear how Taylor's particular brand of interpretivism might open up the possibility, after the demise of logical positivism, for a philosophy of social sciences to be more than strictly a knowledge enterprise but itself a critique and a politics. It shows how Taylor makes it possible to bring moral argument back in to the study of politics without choosing between a fixed foundation for knowledge and the practical contradictions of deconstructivism, by reconciling what appear to be incommensurable opposites. By rejecting the autonomy of ethics and combining ethical individualism with ontological communitarianism, Taylor has reformulated what seems antithetical and dichotomous in such contests as *Moralitat* vs. *Sittlichkeit*, the Right vs. the Good, deontic theories vs. virtue ethics, ethical monism vs. value pluralism, and a politics of redistribution vs. the politics of redistribution. He has argued that rejecting representationalist theories of knowing, objectivist explanations of human conduct, and essentialist notions of the good need not entail a radical “epistemology without a subject”, or render theory as mere conversation, or values simply as whatever happens to be preferred.

As a project on the history of contemporary political thought, to begin with a study of Taylor's earliest influences is to contribute to the growing interest among scholars today to examine the development of analytic philosophy as a matter of history, which reverses long-standing assumptions of an ineluctable development of the purportedly essential features of analytic philosophy in the 20th C. Tracing the historical roots and philosophical contours of the interpretivism and humanist liberalism found in Taylor in the arguments of Berlin and Hampshire against the intellectual context of positivism and modern empiricism, moreover, shows the development of an alternative strand of thinking within the analytic tradition that strongly opposes what is regularly thought of as “analytic” theory today, especially in the liberal tradition. This project's reading of Taylor as a humanist liberal, therefore, provides a corrective to the erroneous interpretations of his political theory as opposed to liberalism that still persists due to many commentators who remain in the long shadow of the liberal-communitarian debate of the '80s. And calling attention to this alternative interpretive and humanist liberal mode of inquiry that despite undergoing changes, nonetheless persisted through the rise and fall of logical positivism thereby unseats the commonplace notion that Anglo-American political theory post-WWII lay moribund until Rawls reinvented it in the 1970s.

This project is philosophical in tenor but was undertaken historically, through accounts of how Taylor's positions arose against the multiple intellectual traditions in which he was situated, and by showing how he helped to shape and modify those traditions in turn. The following pages, therefore, serve not only to clarify Taylor's positions as they relate to current debates in political theory, but also to narrate the competing intellectual traditions from which contemporary political theories in the Anglo-American context have arisen by locating Taylor's place in it. This project makes a sustained inquiry into the relationship between political theory and the broader movements in philosophy in the 20th C that have called the former into question and simultaneously bridges the study of modern liberal theories with key issues of justification and meta-methodology in the philosophy of social sciences.

To my family

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	iii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vi
<i>Curriculum Vitae</i>	vii
1.0 Interpretivism and Humanist Liberalism	1
1.1 Idealism through Analysis	
1.2 Post-analytic Roots of Modern Liberalism	
2.0 Interpretation and the Human Sciences	22
2.1 Scientific Language and Anti-naturalism	
2.2 Overcoming Epistemology	
3.0 Hegel's Philosophy of Reason in History	54
3.1 The Ontology of Reason	
3.2 Hegelianism and Modern Societies	
4.0 Moral Philosophy and the Good	77
4.1 Historicizing Moral Ontology	
4.2 Value Pluralism and Normative Practices	
<i>Endnotes</i>	102
<i>Selected References</i>	118

Introduction

Political Theory and the Interpretive Turn

Many stories of the development of political theory in the Anglo-American world in the 20th C could be told to involve many different actors, events, and ideas. This dissertation tells a story that centers on the development of modern liberalism by locating within it the development of the ideas of Charles Taylor (1931-). Taylor's writings on the study of human behavior, the relationship between selfhood and morality, the contemporary relevance of German Romantic philosophy, and the need for advocating multiculturalism and democracy in politics have captured the major debates internal to these fields and have earned him wide recognition as a leading philosopher of our times. By making clear how his arguments about human agency and knowledge form the basis of how social practices should be understood for the strong values they embody, this project shows how the connections between his philosophy of social sciences and his writings on morality and politics constitute a highly salient defense of interpretivism and humanist liberalism for our times.

This dissertation brings to light a range of problems, themes, and arguments that mark an "interpretive turn" in philosophy and across the sciences that helped to shape political theory in the Anglo-American context in the 20th C, and explains the ways in which some of those 20th C concerns continue to be of especial importance for political theorists today. Since the demise of logical positivism and the rise of critical forms of thought that render suspect the means for rational debate over normative claims or for discourse without domination, the central project of political theory in the 20th C has been to grapple with what makes for satisfactory ways of understanding social actions and meanings. The last century saw key shifts in ways of thinking where previous philosophical concerns about the possibility, nature, and foundations of knowledge, and preoccupations with the structure of language and the analysis of meaning gave way to greater interest in and new controversies over questions about interpretation: the role of interpretation in human life, the kinds of knowledge to which interpretation gives rise, what interpretative practices presuppose about the knowing subject and the subject matter, and how to judge between interpretive successes and failures.¹ Such questions not only augured epistemological problems for the human sciences, but doubts about established notions of science, truth, and objectivity also bespoke of impediments to comprehensive reflection across cultural, traditional, or linguistic lines, and to the pursuit of rational debate over values. Perceived failures within philosophy combined with lessons drawn from the hermeneutic tradition as well as developments in the interpretive disciplines of historiography, philosophy of science, jurisprudence, cultural studies, and literary criticism served to challenge all forms of foundationalism - epistemological, moral, and cultural, and have redrawn traditional boundaries of knowledge across disciplinary lines. As we grapple with how best to understand human practices and social meanings, political theorists also face a variety of reasons to doubt what intelligible loci exists for understanding texts, what means we have for rational debate over substantive goods, or whether normativity without domination is ever possible.

¹ See Richard Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978; David R. Hiley, James F. Bohman, and Richard Shusterman (eds.) *The Interpretive Turn: Philosophy, Science, and Culture*, (Ithaca, 1991); and Paul Rabinow and William Sullivan, *Interpretive Social Science: A Second Look*. University of California Press, 1978.

This dissertation shows how Taylor is a major figure in this historical and philosophical context by explaining how his arguments continue to capture the major internal debates in each of the areas of philosophy of social sciences, moral philosophy, and political theory today. His defense of anti-naturalism pertains to the major issues in the debate over naturalism and the use of scientific techniques in the human sciences. By further probing on what grounds anti-naturalism is right - if it is - Taylor's arguments pierce through much of the controversy within moral philosophy over the grounds for normative theory, refashioning a version of moral realism that learns from each the emotivist, rhetorical, and historicist alternatives, while eschewing their pitfalls. By taking an interpretive approach to both theory and practice, Taylor's humanist liberalism also attempts to break the impasses within political theory between moral philosophers, critical theorists, and intellectual historians. The view of politics that arises from Taylor's philosophy of social sciences is neither one derived from moral philosophy, nor one focused solely on structures or power. Nor is the practice of political theory meant to be an apolitical, antiquarian exercise in uncovering the meanings of past texts. Taylor's is a vision of politics that urges recognizing, grasping, and debating the intersubjective meanings that make up collective life, a view that enables social and political criticism while circumventing the strongest arguments both about the practical contradictions of deconstruction, and those against moral realism.

As a project on the history of contemporary political thought that begins with a study of Taylor's earliest influences, this dissertation contributes to the growing interest among scholars today to examine the development of analytic philosophy as a matter of history, which reverses long-standing assumptions of an ineluctable development of the purportedly essential features of analytic philosophy in the 20th C.² Tracing the historical roots and philosophical contours of Taylor's interpretivism and humanist liberalism in the arguments of Berlin and Hampshire against the intellectual context of positivism and modern empiricism, moreover, shows the development of an alternative strand of thinking within the analytic tradition that strongly opposes what is regularly thought of as "analytic" theory today, especially in the liberal tradition. Reading Taylor as a humanist liberal, therefore, provides a corrective to the erroneous interpretations of his political theory as opposing liberalism that still persists due to the many commentators who remain in the long shadow of the liberal-communitarian debate of the '80s. And calling attention to this alternative interpretive and humanist liberal mode of inquiry that despite undergoing changes, nonetheless persisted through the rise and fall of logical positivism thereby unseats the commonplace notion that Anglo-American political theory post-WWII lay moribund until Rawls reinvigorated it in the 1970s.

This dissertation shows how Taylor's engagements in the flight from positivism in the philosophy of social sciences, his interventions in the rise of post-foundationalist challenges to modern moral philosophy, and his confrontations with the problem of justification for liberal political theories all serve to define the distinct yet related implications of a turn to interpretation in the triplicate areas of knowledge, values, and politics. Taylor's interpretivism shows us that defending anti-naturalism in the human sciences after the fall of logical empiricism and the demise of positivism requires a sophisticated, post-linguistic turn, positive case for moral realism that is based on an interpretive understanding of human beings necessarily and always engaged in social

² For a sense of recent debates about the origins of analytic philosophy see Ray Monk and Anthony Palmer (eds.) *Bertrand Russell and the Origins of Analytical Philosophy*, (Bristol, 1996); also see Peter Hylton, *Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford, 1990); compare also with Anthony O'Hear (ed.) *German Philosophy Since Kant* (Cambridge, 1999).

practices. Taylor's particular brand of interpretivism, moreover, opens up the possibility, after the demise of logical positivism, for a philosophy of social sciences to be more than strictly a knowledge enterprise but itself a critique and a politics. Taylor makes it possible to bring moral argument back in to the study of politics without choosing between a fixed foundation for knowledge and the practical contradictions of deconstructivism, by reconciling what appear to be incommensurable opposites. By rejecting the autonomy of ethics and combining ethical individualism with ontological communitarianism, Taylor has reformulated what seems antithetical about dichotomies and has shown how rejecting representationalist theories of knowing, objectivist explanations of human conduct, and essentialist notions of the good need not entail a radical "epistemology without a subject", render theory as mere conversation, or values simply as whatever happens to be preferred.

The following pages, therefore, serve not only to clarify Taylor's positions as they relate to current debates in political theory, but also to narrate the multiple and competing intellectual traditions from which contemporary political theories in the Anglo-American context have arisen by locating Taylor's place in it. This project makes a sustained inquiry into the relationship between political theory and the broader movements in philosophy in the 20th C that have called the former into question that simultaneously bridges the study of modern liberal theories with key issues of justification and meta-methodology in the philosophy of social sciences.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the people who have made this work possible, beginning where I began, with my mother and father. My parents have provided the steadfast love, guidance, and support that have enabled me to cultivate and pursue my interests. Without their courage to make roots in a new country and their tireless pursuit of what today some would deign to call the “American dream,” I could not have had the options or made the choices that have come to define my life thus far.

The most pivotal of those choices, in retrospect, was to attend college, and to do so close to home, at Barnard College, Columbia University. It was there that I met Colin Bird, who first introduced me to something called “political theory.” Much of how I’ve come to understand what political theory “is” developed from my earliest exposure to Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Mill, Marx, and Rawls in his intensive *Intro to Political Thought* course in the summer of ’95. I still find myself recalling, now and again, some of our discussions of the thinkers and texts that first caught my attention there. David Johnston, Taylor Carman, Wolfgang Mann, Peter Juviler, Robert Amdur, and Alan Gabbey subsequently ensured that my undergraduate education provided me with top-notch training in the history of philosophy and contemporary political science. Morningside Heights and the city of New York in the mid to late ‘90s helped to make me a more well-rounded human being than I otherwise would have been.

After several years of indecision and my growing belief that I would never become a well-rounded person by never leaving home, I left New York City to begin the graduate program at Berkeley. I was more fortunate than I could have known then in finding the intellectual resources here that I have. My greatest debt of gratitude goes to my dissertation advisor, Mark Bevir, whose support and confidence in me over many years did the most to help me persevere and at times single-handedly kept me from giving up the enterprise. That support and confidence came with the price of having to learn an extraordinary standard of intellectual acumen, of which I can only hope the pages herein demonstrate some signs, however pale. My dissertation committee at large - including Shannon Stimson, Sarah Song, Chris Kutz, and in an unofficial capacity but at key moments, Ruth Abbey from the University of Notre Dame - all allowed me the space to pursue my intellectual curiosities while never failing to provide their guidance and encouragement when it was needed, and needed it was, often and many times over.

Aside from the countless people I’ve benefited from meeting whom I could thank individually, I have also benefited from the support of various institutions, first and foremost, UC Berkeley and the department of political science. The Center for British Studies and the Mellon Foundation awarded me the Anglo-California Fellowship, which made crucial research opportunities possible as a visitor at Cambridge University. The Townsend Center supported the working group I led on *Contemporary Histories of Political Theory*, and allowed me to benefit from discussions with other Berkeley theorists including Jason Blakely, Andrius Galisanka, and Toby Reiner.

To my fellow travelers, past and present - James Harney, Jordan Branch, Jessica Rich - thanks for making graduate school much more fun and much less painful than it could have been; and thanks to my dear friend Esther Ahn for helping me through the unavoidably painful of times. The debts of friendship that I cannot one day repay go to Shirley Yoon (1977-1998), and Jefferson Joo (1979-2008) whose memories I continue to carry with me wherever I go.

This work is dedicated to my whole family, but a couple of them warrant special mention. My first niece, Tyla Parham, was the hardest for me to leave in New York when I first left, and each and every single time thereafter never did get easier. No accomplishment, including this work, was worth the time we’ve spent apart. Finally, to ZZ, whose strength and determination astonish and inspire me. Learning the world through your eyes has been a rewarding challenge, and above all, your good humor continues to make life worth living each day.

Naomi Choi
Curriculum Vitae
May 2010

Email:
nchoi@berkeley.edu

Fax:
+1 (510) 642-9515

Mailing address:
210 Barrows Hall #1950
Berkeley, CA 94720-1950
U.S.A.

Home address:
2437 Shattuck Ave, Apt. 22
Berkeley, CA 94704
U.S.A.

EDUCATION

University of California – Berkeley

Ph.D., Political Science, May 2010

Dissertation: *Political Theory after the Interpretive Turn: Charles Taylor on Knowledge, Values, and Politics*

Committee: Mark Bevir, Sarah Song, Shannon Stimson, Christopher Kutz

Fields: Political Theory, Public Law, Comparative Politics

M.A., Political Science, 2003

Master's Thesis: *Legal Interpretation and Law's Normativity*

Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Exchange Scholar, 2005-2006

Barnard College, Columbia University

B.A. *cum laude*, May 1999

Political Science and Philosophy, double Departmental Honors

New York Public Schools

K-12

APPOINTMENTS

University of Alabama – Tuscaloosa

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, August 2010-present

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Single-Authored Journal Articles

1. "Defending Anti-Naturalism after the Interpretive Turn: Charles Taylor and the Human Sciences," *History of Political Thought*, 30:4, 2010, p. 693-718.
2. "Interpretivism in Jurisprudence: What Difference Does the Philosophy of History Make to the Philosophy of Law?" *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 1:3, 2007, p. 365-393.
3. "Crafting Explanatory Concepts," in *Qualitative Methods*, 3:2, Fall 2005 Vol. 3 Issue 2.

PUBLICATIONS (CONTINUED)

Works in Progress

1. “The Post-Analytic Roots of Humanist Liberalism” under review at *History of European Ideas*.
2. “Arguing for Strong Evaluation: Must Human Agency be Moral?” *in progress*.
3. “Liberalism against the Autonomy of Ethics: Towards a Politics of the Good” *in progress*.

Single-Authored Reference Articles

1. “Charles Taylor” co-authored with Ruth Abbey, *Encyclopedia of Political Thought*, 8 Volumes, Wiley-Blackwell, forthcoming 2011.
2. “Egalitarianism”, “Rule of Law”, and “Interpretive Theory,” *Encyclopedia of Political Theory*, 3 Volumes. California: Sage, 2010.
3. “Tradition”, “Situated Agency”, “Rule of Law”, and Interpretive Theory” in *Encyclopedia of Governance*, 2 Volumes. California: Sage, 2007.
4. “Equality” and “Egalitarianism” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Social Theory*, ed. Austin Harrington, Barbara Marshall, and Hans-Peter Müller. Oxford, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2005.

Edited Volumes

1. *Encyclopedia of Political Theory*, 3 Volumes. Edited by Mark Bevir, Naomi Choi, Jacob T. Levy, Simon Caney, Colin Bird, Paul Patton, Robert Adcock, Caroline Humfress. California: Sage, 2010.
2. *Encyclopedia of Governance*, 2 Volumes. Edited by Mark Bevir, Naomi Choi, Rorden Wilkinson, Colin Hay, Chris Ansell. California: Sage, 2007. *Winner* *Library Journal's Best Reference 2007*.
3. “Symposium: Conceptualizing Concepts,” Edited by Naomi Choi, special issue of *Qualitative Methods*. Fall 2005 Vol. 3 No. 2.

COMPETITIVE GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2010 Democracy and Diversity Postdoctoral Fellowship, Queen’s University (CA \$34,000) *declined*
- 2009 Departmental Finishing Fellowship, UC Berkeley (US \$8000)
- 2009 Abigail Reynolds Hodgen Publications Fund, University of California (US \$1710)
- 2009 Working Group, Townsend Center for the Humanities, UC Berkeley (US \$500)
- 2008 President’s Dissertation Fellowship, University of California (US \$20,000)
- 2008 Alternate, Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship
- 2007 Conference Grant, University of California, Berkeley, (US \$500)
- 2006 Travel Grant, Center for British Studies (US \$250)
- 2006 Visiting Scholar, Mellon Foundation, Cambridge University-Pembroke, UK (GBP 7,000)
- 2006 Honorable Mention, Ford Foundation Pre-doctoral Fellowship
- 2006 Alternate, Association of Alumnae Barnard College Fellowship
- 2006 Dean’s Normative Time Fellowship, UC Berkeley (US \$7,500)
- 2005 Dean’s Normative Time Fellowship, UC Berkeley (US \$7,500)
- 2005 Center for British Studies Pre-Dissertation Grant, UC Berkeley (US \$3,200)
- 2004 Summer Research Grant, University of California, Berkeley (US \$3,200)
- 2003 Mentored Research Award, University of California, Berkeley, (US \$20,000)

ACADEMIC AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2010 Mark Rozance Political Theory Dissertation Award, UC Berkeley (US \$800)
- 2008 Departmental Nomination, Political Science, UC President's Dissertation Fellowship
- 2004 Outstanding Teacher Award, Distinguished Graduate Student Instructor, UC Berkeley
- 1999 William Pepperell Montague Prize for Best Paper in Philosophy, Barnard College (US\$600)
- 1999 Departmental Honors, Political Science, Barnard College, Columbia University
- 1999 Departmental Honors, Philosophy, Barnard College, Columbia University

INVITED TALKS AND LECTURES

1. "Liberalism against the Autonomy of Ethics: Towards a Politics of the Good" paper presentation, on a panel called "The Politics of Interpretation: Defining Norms, Engaging Multiplicities", *American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting* in Washington DC, September 2010.
2. "Interpretation and Interpretive Theory," taught a one-week graduate seminar on *Approaches to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, University of California Berkeley, April 2010.
3. "The Post-Analytic Roots of Humanist Liberalism: From Isaiah Berlin and Stuart Hampshire to Bernard Williams and Charles Taylor," paper presentation, *Post-Analytic Political Theory: Traditions and Dilemmas Conference*, University of California, Berkeley, February 2010.
4. "Strong Evaluation: Liberalism, Ethics, and Social Science," faculty presentation, University of Richmond, December 2009; University of Alabama, February 2010; University of Alaska, Fairbanks, March 2010.
5. "Democratic Ideals and Democratic Rule," guest lecture, University of Richmond, December 2009; University of Alabama, February 2010.
6. "Arguing for Strong Evaluation: Must Human Agency be Moral?," paper presentation, panel called "Critical Standards," *Association for Political Theory (APT)*, Texas A&M University, October 2009.
7. "Is Moral Ontology Necessary for Moral Philosophy?: Evaluating 'Strong Evaluation,'" paper presentation, on a panel called "Evaluation and Social Theory," *Philosophy of Social Sciences Roundtable*, Emory University, March 2009.
8. "Overcoming Epistemology: Interpreting Modernity, Understanding Ourselves," paper presentation, on a panel called "Modalities of Modernity: Historicizing Epistemology," *Revisiting Modernity: A Conversation Across Disciplines Conference*, University of California, Berkeley, January 2009.
9. "After the Interpretive Turn: Charles Taylor on Knowledge, Values, and Politics," paper presentation, on a panel called "Politics and Philosophy of Science," Contemporary Political Theory Section, *Midwestern Political Science Association (MPSA) Annual Meeting* in Chicago, IL, April 2008.
10. "Taylor on Interpretation and the Sciences of Man," workshop presentation, *University of California Berkeley Political Theory Colloquium*, December 2007.
11. "Meaning and Explanation," paper presentation, on a panel called "Interpretivism and Political Theory," Political Theory Specialists Group, *Political Studies Association (PSA) Annual Meeting* in Bath, UK, April 2007.
12. "Crafting Explanatory Concepts," paper presentation, on a panel called "Do Concepts Travel?" Qualitative Methods Section, *American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting* in Washington DC, September 2005.

INVITED TALKS AND LECTURES (CONTINUED)

13. “Crafting Aggregate Concepts,” paper presentation, on a panel called “Meanings, Concepts, and Ideal-types”, Interpretation and Method Section *Western Political Science Association* (WPSA) Annual Meeting in Oakland, CA, March 2005.
14. “Crafting Aggregate Historical Concepts,” paper presentation, *American Philosophical Association* (APA) Pacific Division Meeting in San Francisco, CA, March 2005.
15. “Legal Interpretation and Law’s Normativity,” paper presentation, *American Philosophical Association* (APA) Pacific Division Meeting in Pasadena, CA, March 2004.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

1. Manuscript Reviewer, *Journal of the History of European Ideas*, 2010-present.
2. President, Society for Philosophy of History, American Philosophical Association (APA) Eastern Division, 2010-present.
3. Panel Organizer, “The Politics of Interpretation: Defining Norms, Engaging Multiplicities,” American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting, Washington DC, 2010.
4. Chair and Discussant, on a panel, “Meaning in History,” American Philosophical Association (APA) Pacific Division, Annual Meeting, San Francisco, 2010.
5. Conference Organizer, *Post-Analytic Political Theory: Traditions and Dilemmas*, University of California, Berkeley, February 2010.
6. Founder, *Contemporary Histories of Political Theory* working group, Townsend Center for the Humanities, University of California, Berkeley, since February 2009.
7. Associate Editor, *Encyclopedia of Political Theory*, 3 Volumes. California: Sage Publications, 2010.
8. Managing Editor, *Encyclopedia of Governance*, 2 Volumes. California: Sage Publications, 2007. Compiled “Normative Theory” section. *Winner* *Library Journal’s Best Reference* 2007.
9. Editor, “Symposium: Conceptualizing Concepts,” special issue of *Qualitative Methods*, Newsletter for the American Political Science Association (APSA), Fall 2005.
10. Panel Organizer, “Understanding Individuals and Collectivities,” American Philosophical Association (APA) Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, 2005.
11. Panel Organizer, “Historical Interpretation and the Human Sciences,” American Philosophical Association (APA) Annual Meeting, Pasadena, CA, 2004.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

UC Berkeley – Graduate Student Instructor

Approaches to Contemporary Political Philosophy, April 2010

Modern Political Thought, Fall 2007

American Legal System, Fall 2006

Theories of Justice, Spring 2005

Politics, Ethics, and Leadership, Summer 2004, Fall 2004, Summer 2006

Theories of Governance: Neo-Liberalism, Marxism, Post-structuralism, Fall 2003, Fall 2002

Constitutional Law of the United States, Summer 2003

Columbia University – Teaching Assistant

Political Theory II, Spring 2006

Political Theory I, Fall 2005

TEACHING COMPETENCE:

History of Political Theory: Ancient, Medieval, Early Modern, Modern
Contemporary Political Theory: History, Major Topics
Philosophy of Social Sciences
Moral Philosophy and Ethics
Legal Philosophy
Methods
American Political Theory
Constitutional Law
Comparative Political Theory

LANGUAGE SKILLS:

Korean: Fluent speaking, reading, writing
Latin: Intermediate reading, translating

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

American Political Science Association (APSA)
American Philosophical Association (APA)
Association for Political Theory (APT)
Philosophy of Social Sciences Roundtable (PSSR)
Townsend Center for the Humanities, UC Berkeley
Center for British Studies, UC Berkeley

LIST OF REFERENCES:

Mark Bevir, Professor of Political Science	University of California, Berkeley
Sarah Song, Assistant Professor of Law and Political Science	University of California, Berkeley
Shannon Stimson, Professor of Political Science	University of California, Berkeley
Christopher Kutz, Professor of Law	University of California, Berkeley
Ruth Abbey, Associate Professor of Political Science	University of Notre Dame
Colin Bird, Associate Professor of Government	University of Virginia
Wolfgang Mann, Professor of Philosophy	Columbia University
David Johnston, Professor of Political Science	Columbia University
Taylor Carman, Professor of Philosophy	Barnard College, Columbia University

1.0 Interpretivism and Humanist Liberalism

1.1 Idealism through Analysis

- 1.1.1 *What was the intellectual climate of Oxford like in the early 20th C?*
- 1.1.2 *What Idealist inheritance persisted through the rise of logical positivism?*
- 1.1.3 *How do Berlin and Hampshire reveal the post-analytic roots of Taylor's interpretivism and humanist liberalism?*

1.2 Post-analytic Roots of Modern Liberalism

- 1.2.1 *How do Williams and Taylor exhibit the Idealist legacy of Berlin and Hampshire?*
- 1.2.2 *What difference does this Idealist legacy make to how we should understand the development of modern liberalism in the 20th C?*
- 1.2.3 *What kind of political theory does interpretivism and humanist liberalism imply?*

1.1 Idealism through Analysis

The development of analytic philosophy in the 20th C can be traced through the logicism, empiricism, and positivism associated with thinkers of the Vienna Circle, Cambridge, and Oxford - in addition to the linguistic analysis characteristic of the last - and the piecemeal grafting of these ideas onto pragmatism in America, which helped to bring about North American analytical philosophy. Such different styles of analysis as found in Frege, Schlick, Carnap, Moore, Russell, Wittgenstein, Ryle, A.J. Ayer, and J.L. Austin – by no means a comprehensive list – for all their differences, nonetheless shaped the tradition of analytic philosophy as it has come to be understood today. And what is widely thought today is that analytic philosophy was (i) nihilistic and wholly anti-humanistic; (ii) an insularly British movement autonomous from the so-called “continental” tradition; and that (iii) the drive for analysis so systematically undermined normative theory that moral and political philosophy thoroughly languished in the Anglophone world until John Rawls reinvigorated it in the 1970s. This characterization is not terribly surprising. While the initial British attack on Idealism at the turn of the century claimed to undertake the analysis of phenomena (as the Platonic realism of Moore and Russell didⁱ), the arguments they laid down were readily adaptable for logical positivists like Ayer and for “ordinary language philosophers” like Austin, each of whom systematically challenged the meaningfulness of statements about morality and the philosophical import of normative theory.

The logical positivist drive to purge philosophy of meaningless ‘metaphysical’ speculation and *Weltanschauung* – or, recommendations of a moral, political, or religious order – and to take philosophy out of the mind, did much to inaugurate the new empiricist drive to analysis in the 20th C. Motivated by what they took to be the excessive metaphysical perspective of an earlier generation of Absolute Idealists, logical positivists sought to break from the German tradition of Idealist philosophy by reconstructing Humean empiricism, defining what philosophy could legitimately aim to say by the ‘principle of verification’. In *Language, Truth, and Logic*, the principal account of the logical positivist approach in its time, Ayer lays out how all genuine philosophical propositions were of two types: either a logical tautology, the truth of which could be ascertained through the meanings of its constituent terms; or a statement displaying a potential for verification by ‘sense-data’ derived from actual or possible experience.ⁱⁱ Logical positivism’s answer to normative concerns, thus, or to questions of morality was simply to advocate a deflationary emotivism, according to which claims of ethics, aesthetics, and theology were pseudo-statements, neither true

nor false but meaningless, or at best merely statements of like and dislike.ⁱⁱⁱ The surge of “ordinary language philosophy,” moreover, further jeopardized the prospects for normative theory as a serious philosophical enterprise in its drive to recast the task of philosophy solely as linguistic analysis. J.L. Austin and T.D. Weldon - two thinkers most notably associated with the earlier and far more analytical beginnings of what came to be known mid-century as the ‘linguistic turn’^{iv} – sought, at bottom, to replace normative theorizing with linguistic analysis of how people actually used concepts in everyday life, uncomplicated by the trappings of highfalutin philosophical constructions.

The aim of this chapter is to show why the philosophical ideas of Isaiah Berlin (1909-1997) and Stuart Hampshire (1914-2004) need to be examined in this context alongside their contemporaries Ayer and Austin. Berlin and his fellow young radical philosopher friend at Oxford, Hampshire, showed unprecedented openness to philosophical influences from outside British circles, let alone outside Oxford, and were very much part of the younger generation of Ayer and Austin, through whom Oxford philosophy emerged from the isolated and insular shadows of the previous generation.^v These early beginnings often get eclipsed in the literature by the overwhelming interest in Berlin’s and Hampshire’s later works, which grew out of but could not have been without, those very early engagements. If, however, we examine Berlin and Hampshire’s philosophical contributions in their intellectual and historical context we can see how they represent the important development of an alternative, interpretive and humanistic, mode of inquiry that should challenge and transform our view of Oxford philosophy as formalistic or rational choice, famously epitomized by G.A. Cohen and John Rawls. What emerges is a clear picture of Oxford social and political philosophy that belies the major stereotypes about analytic philosophy at Oxford as a period of an insularly British mode of thinking with a nihilistic emphasis on the analysis of logic, mathematics, and ordinary language that left no place for moral and political theory to be pursued as legitimate modes of philosophical inquiry. Surely, this chapter’s aim is not to deny that nihilistic and anti-humanistic modes of thinking grew in prominence; nor to ignore the self-conscious opposition to Continental philosophy that many exhibited in the development of what came to be a characteristically British analytic style of philosophizing. Moreover, the turmoil and indeterminacy that came with the remarkable transitions in how moral and political concerns appeared could legitimately be addressed surely cannot be discounted.

What examining the ideas of Berlin and Hampshire does force us to reject, this chapter argues, is any sense of an ineluctable development of the purportedly essential features of Oxford analytic philosophy in the 20th C. The particular historical circumstances and specific concerns and debates that constitute the developmental story of philosophy at Oxford shows that philosophy on ethics remained broadly humanistic and interpretive until the ‘60’s and ‘70s when G.A. Cohen and Rawls came to exemplify the kind of straight deductive analysis based on pure reason that most people today associate with analytic philosophy writ large. Not only is this developmental story, therefore, important for understanding analytical philosophy for its own sake, but the impact that these intellectual shifts and reinventions in philosophy had on the continued development of Anglo-American political theory was significant and so needs to be better understood. For one, examining Berlin’s and Hampshire’s engagement with various modes of analysis reveals how moral and political philosophy lay not moribund but continued to develop in the heyday of analytic philosophy from the late ‘30s to the ‘50s and onward, thereby forcing us to challenge the commonplace of the ensuing “death” of normative political theorizing until Rawls reinvigorated it in the ‘70s.^{vi} Much of the interpretive and humanist themes found in Berlin and Hampshire shows the legacy of an enduring Idealist philosophy that nonetheless had to be revised and reinvented against the new empiricist challenges. Moreover, it is the primarily humanistic and interpretive tradition of Berlin

and Hampshire that continues to have strong echoes in the development of post-analytic political theory in the latter half of the 20th century through today, as evinced in the ideas of Bernard Williams (1929-2003) and Charles Taylor (1931-).

Part 1.1 of this chapter situates Berlin and Hampshire within the intellectual context at Oxford beginning in the late '30s and explains their many-sided opposition to the growing reductivist empiricism of logical positivism throughout the '40 and '50s. While both Berlin and Hampshire undoubtedly supported the empiricist insistence on grounding philosophy in experience, they were staunchly opposed to applying the narrowly "scientific" view of knowledge endemic to the natural sciences to human experience. The idealist themes that they expounded can be seen in their affirmation of strong, indivisible connections between epistemological issues and moral and political issues, most clearly evident in their arguments for anti-naturalism where philosophy and inquiry into human life are concerned. This section first expounds Berlin's arguments for rejecting the "principle of verification" and other such limitations on what philosophy can legitimately say for distorting the complexities of human life that philosophy should be employed to illuminate. Particular emphasis is placed on the humanistic bases of his advocacy of *verstehen*, or imaginative interpretation, which employs the study of history and even personality, and calls for an 'inside-view' approach in order to understand human life. Hampshire's arguments for anti-naturalism are then examined in juxtaposition, focusing on his arguments for an intentional and embodied conception of human agency that can recognize the unity of mind and body in human action. His interpretive view of knowledge lies in his opposition to what he sees are the marks of an empiricist inheritance from Hume and the long shadow of Cartesian epistemological conceptions on modern philosophy, according to which our experience consists of a succession of impressions and ideas, so that thought, sensation, sense-perception, emotion, and will are given in logical independence of knowledge of ourselves as active animals in a world of material things.

Part 1.2 begins by showing how Berlin's and Hampshire's defense of an interpretive view of knowledge is inseparable from the humanist liberalism they also expounded. The connections they see between epistemological questions and moral and political ones have to do with the fact that these are unified in human experience. According to their cultural understanding of human life and their "thick" conception of persons, only a "vitalist" account of human behavior makes sense for acquiring knowledge about human subjects. And yet, both were clearly liberal in their nominalism, that is, their individualism in emphasizing the importance and priority of particular things, especially of individual people as moral subjects. What was humanist about their liberalism can be seen in their recognition of the social aspects of identity and selfhood; of the uniqueness and historically specific nature of particular human phenomena; and their anti-utopian belief in the plurality of values in human life, which made them suspicious of deductive abstractions, led them to oppose utilitarian moral and political philosophy and other forms of ethical monism, and to fear what could be construed as the disastrous despotic and totalitarian effects in politics of attempting to unify and harmonize human values. The strong echoes of their interpretive and humanist liberalism are then traced out in the political philosophies of Bernard Williams and Charles Taylor to show how idealist themes have undergone changes but nonetheless persisted through the rise of analytic, and post-analytic, philosophy in the 20th C.

1.1.1 *What was the intellectual climate of Oxford like in the early 20th C?*

Although Berlin is most famously known for his post-WWII writings in political theory and the history of ideas, he was quite deeply involved in the development of analytic philosophy throughout the 1930s and 1940s, about which there is far less discussion despite its having had such formative impact on his later writings on liberalism outside of traditional philosophy.^{vii} In the words of Williams, Berlin “was never a positivist but he was seriously interested in philosophy at a time when philosophy’s most pressing questions came from positivist directions.”^{viii} In his own words, Berlin recalls Ayer’s 1932 paper on Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* as “the opening shot in the great positivist campaign in revolt against the entire traditional conception of philosophy as a source of knowledge.”^{ix} When Berlin began his studies at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, he studied the classics and ancient philosophy (Greats) and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE) and was earliest influenced by British Idealism - expounded by T. H. Green, Bosanquet, and Bradley - which dominated British philosophy since the 1860s although by the 1920s was already on the wane. In step with the changing intellectual culture of his time, Berlin was then steeped in the Realism of G.E. Moore and John Cook Wilson, both of whom attacked Idealism head on.^x And by the time he began teaching philosophy as lecturer at New College in 1932, the same year he was elected to a Prize Fellowship at All Souls, Berlin joined a new generation of rebellious empiricists at Oxford. His daily conversations with friends and colleagues included the young Ayer, Austin, MacNabb, Wozzley, and Stuart Hampshire. Hampshire, who was educated at Repton, read *Literae Humaniores* at Balliol College and graduated in 1936 at which time he was elected to a prize fellowship at All Souls. There, he joined Austin and Berlin’s weekly meeting group on Thursday afternoons in Berlin’s rooms, which Berlin later recounted, “in retrospect they seem to me the most fruitful discussions of philosophy at which I was ever present.”^{xi} These meetings were carried on through the summer of 1939, and although their discursive philosophical activity resisted publication at the time, their conversations became a veritable cauldron for philosophical ideas out of which each of the participants, in many ways, defined themselves and came to be defined.^{xii}

The philosophical agenda of Berlin’s pre-WWII group was largely set by logical positivism led by Ayer, in conjunction with phenomenalism, thanks to the popular lectures of Henry Price, a most admired teacher who was responsible for putting the problem of perception in the center of Oxford philosophy in the 1930s and whose work on the epistemological problems of perception continues to remain influential in contemporary debates in epistemology.^{xiii} The group, therefore, was mainly concerned with the conditions of sentences having a meaning; the connections between meaning and verification construed in terms of sense perception; and an empiricist view of science that regarded natural science as the paradigm of knowledge and scientific theory as a mere compendium and generator of actual and possible observations. It is imperative to note here that all of the accounts of these meetings tell how moral philosophy was hardly ever discussed, and when it was, served only to provide a brief respite before resuming their usual concerns.

Ayer led the new generation of Oxford philosophy to mount the revolt against an entire traditional conception of philosophy as a source of knowledge about the universe. He did so along with Austin even though they were protagonists of two ultimately irreconcilable points of view. Ayer took a strict logical positivist approach and became one of its leading exponents, the central tenets of which he helped to develop as: (i) the principle of verification according to which meaningfulness is solely identified with verifiability; (ii) the dismissal of metaphysics as nonsense; (iii) the reduction of all empirical propositions to subjective experience; (iv) and ethical non-cognitivism or emotivism when it came to issues of morality. Ayer synthesized the Cambridge analysis of

Russell, Moore, Ramsey and the early Wittgenstein with Vienna Circle positivists, and recast the classical British empiricism of Hume in logical and linguistic materials.^{xiv} He was more interested in traditional epistemological issues than the Vienna Circle's concern with logic of science and the foundation of mathematics, but like the latter, he rejected the metaphysics of logical atomism and argued that philosophical analysis is essentially linguistic, that philosophically problematic propositions needed to be paraphrased to display their ultimate verification in experience. Austin, and Berlin on similar grounds, remained skeptical of the logical positivist's, and Ayer's, tendency of drawing correspondence between words and some basic unit of analysis such as sense-data or 'atomic facts'.^{xv} The disagreements between Ayer and Austin were central to the intellectual environment in which Berlin and Hampshire were situated.^{xvi}

Berlin was initially drawn to the vigorous anti-metaphysical empiricism of the logical positivists that tried to deflate what he thought was Idealism's overly exalted view of philosophy as the 'queen of the sciences' capable of establishing fundamental, necessary, absolute, and abstract truths.^{xvii} He was impressed with their rejection of what he took to be the excesses of Hegelian speculation and obscurity. Like Berlin and many young philosophers of this generation, Hampshire was also attracted to logical positivism, which, he later wrote, "seemed to me to be starting philosophy all over again in the clear light of a rational day, and outside the dusty, dark and bookish rooms of the established professor."^{xviii} Logical positivism imposed upon philosophy a discipline that curbed the flights of philosophical pretension, a method of logico-linguistic analysis that promised to ensure sober piecemeal progress, and a commitment to clarity of argument and reasoning.^{xix} Their preoccupation with the nature and authority of knowledge, moreover, strongly influenced Berlin's, as well as Hampshire's, early philosophical inquiries as they both shared the suspicion of metaphysical claims and was very much on board with the empiricist insistence on grounding philosophy in experience. But they became frustrated with the narrowly scientific version of empiricism that Ayer and the logical positivists propounded, and it is their disagreements with the positivistic agenda on humanistic grounds that warrants our close attention.

1.1.2 *What Idealist inheritance persisted through the rise of logical positivism?*

The interpretive bases for critiquing logical positivism are present in Berlin's earliest philosophical writings, although characteristic of the intellectual context in which he was situated, his programmatic rejection is expressed in terms of the logical positivist agenda that he opposed. In an essay called "Verification" published in 1939, Berlin fundamentally took issue with the philosophical endeavor to reduce all explanation to a privileged category of basic propositions.^{xx} For Berlin, Ayer's standard of meaning, premised on the translation, or reduction "without residue", of any genuine philosophical sentence to a set of propositions describing the individual sense-data of actual or possible experience presented far too excessive a restriction on the scope of what could be considered legitimate philosophical inquiry.^{xxi} The principle of verification was tantamount to attempting to define what philosophy could legitimately aim to say, and it also had the unwarranted consequence of turning any potential philosophical disagreement into a mere procedural problem.^{xxii} Thus, the drive for clarity and precision, which Berlin acknowledges had "a decisive role in the history of modern philosophy, by clearing up confusions, exposing major errors," nevertheless needed "to be abandoned or else considerably revised if it is to be prevented from breeding *new fallacies* in place of those which it eradicates."^{xxiii} Later essays after "Verification" further express Berlin's deep resistance to the operational idea of positivism, not only out of fear that it could become intellectually oppressive, but because he thought it fundamentally misguided in principle.^{xxiv}

In “Logical Translation” (what is widely thought of as his final contribution to the specific field of analytic philosophy), Berlin already made clear his critique of certain forms of analysis on interpretive and humanist grounds. He thought the assumption that the meaning of our statements about reality can be given directly by our procedures for finding it out was plain illusory and misleading. Our understanding of reality already includes the conception of it existing independently of us and our understanding, so that our reflection on what we mean when we characterize that reality cannot accommodate the positivist idea that truths about reality should be equivalent to truths about us – “this is an unacceptable idealist equivalence that categorical truths about reality are treated as equivalent to hypothetical truths about us”.^{xxv} What Berlin saw driving the logical positivist’s claim that a statement must be capable of being translated into a single “good” or proper type of proposition to be correct or genuinely meaningful was in truth not the desire for a true perception of reality, but rather a reductivist drive, what he calls the “Ionian Fallacy”, that is, the erroneous assumption that everything is made out of, or can be reduced to, or understood in terms of one and the same substance or type in conjunction with a psychological need for certainty. Berlin identified two different, yet equally erroneous, approaches to forcibly assimilating all propositions: (i) the “deflationary” approach, which sought to assimilate all propositions to one true type (e.g. phenomenalism, which sought to reduce all statements to statements about immediately perceived sense-data), and (ii) the “inflationary” approach which posited entities corresponding to all statements, thus ‘creating’ or asserting the existence of things that Berlin believed didn’t exist at all. Berlin argued that given the awesome variety and complexity in human reality, and the fact that no absolutely incorrigible type of knowledge exists in the human world, the assumption of a single criterion of meaningfulness simply cannot hold, and the demand for certainty is itself self-defeating.

The new empiricism’s view that no proposition had meaning unless it was verifiable by observation or deduction^{xxvi} meant that the only route to knowledge was through the natural sciences, which reduced philosophy to a “handmaiden to the natural sciences” at best, and at worst, amounted to intellectual immaturity bred of confusion and credulity. To reduce meaning to what could be verified in terms of propositions constructed solely on the basis of real or possible sense-data – that is, to restrict philosophy to only what can be said without doubt or fear of being mistaken – was to condemn it to silence, since to say anything about the world inevitably requires invoking things other than immediate sense-data experience. Unlike Ayer, Austin fully appreciated this as he led the opposition to logical positivism’s sense-datum terminology.^{xxvii} Berlin thus had an early affinity for Austin’s view of linguistic meaning, according to which the meaning of an utterance or proposition was a matter best viewed in terms of how it was understood in the context of ordinary discourse. According to Austin, Ayer’s sense-datum language in philosophy was just one sub-language, an artificial usage carved out of ordinary language, but which had no special ability to express truth or convey reality. The way such logically perfect languages depended on clear-cut dichotomies was unacceptable since the drive for clarity and precision served to obliterate rather than to elucidate the important distinctions in the subject matter that language was used to describe in the first place.^{xxviii} Analysis in terms of ordinary language usage, though not an infallible guide, would not mislead in this way, and insofar as ordinary language was sufficient for most everyday purposes, so too should it constitute philosophy’s main concern. As such, the conception of philosophy that Austin and post-positivist linguistic philosophy held was much more generous, since its task was understood to be open-ended, through the careful and imaginative charting of the uses and implications of ordinary language. Berlin, however, rejected even the less exacting conception of philosophy of Austin and the “ordinary language analysis” movement as insufficiently grasping the point and purpose of philosophy.

Berlin was troubled by the extent to which the new empiricism construed experience in abstract and ahistorical terms that ultimately distort, rather than convey, human reality. Regarding scientific theory in purely operationalist terms afforded no room for historical imagination or for insight in philosophy. Despite the excesses he saw in Hegelianism, Berlin saw at least its appreciation for historical perspective and more broadly the role of personal and cultural purposes in human conduct to recommend it. These convictions would eventually draw him away from traditional philosophy to the history of ideas and to social and political theory.^{xxxix} However, the interest in a more historical approach to philosophy, as well as social and political theory, which would come to dominate the rest of Berlin's career was already apparent early on when he began to read 18th and 19th C thinkers while researching his 1st book on Marx which appeared in 1939.^{xxx} This penchant for historical and contextual analysis also led Berlin back to the study of earlier British empiricists, particularly Berkeley and Hume, on both of whom he lectured in the 1930s and 1940s.^{xxxi}

1.1.3 *How do Berlin and Hampshire reveal the post-analytic roots of Taylor's interpretivism and humanist liberalism?*

Berlin was keenly aware of the complexity of the human world, of the many strands that make up human experience that are “too many, too minute, too fleeting, too blurred at the edges” to be testable by isolation.^{xxxii} He understood that absolute certainty is an impossible ideal because most of the certainties on which the unfolding of human lives depends, and the types of reasoning on which our beliefs rest, are not reducible to formal deductive or inductive schemata, or to some combination thereof. His opposition to verificationism, his claim of a larger task for philosophy, and in many ways the tenor of the entire body of his work all conveys an Idealist sense of the importance of history, imagination, and insight. The roots of Berlin's Idealism can be seen in the way that he was much more deeply influenced by R.G. Collingwood than by any other philosophical figure at Oxford. With his own brand of historicist idealism, Collingwood was contemptuous of the Cook-Wilsonians' attacks on idealism and never showed interest in the new style of analytic philosophy. Collingwood reinforced Berlin's Kantian belief in the importance of the basic concepts and categories by which human beings organize and analyze their experience to human life, which implied a much broader view of philosophy than any analytical philosopher's models and presuppositions about experience would allow. Collingwood was also the one who fostered Berlin's interest in the history of ideas and introduced him to founders like the Italian historian, philosopher, and jurist, Giambattista Vico and the German philosopher, theologian, and literary critic, Johann Herder. It was in the spirit of Collingwood that Berlin disdained the modest role that logical positivism attributed to philosophy as “secretary to science” and “obituarist of metaphysics.” According to Berlin, philosophy as the means to understanding the concepts and categories of human experience must entail a broader range of tasks that are more historical and more culturally rich than logical positivism could ever allow. And for this reason Berlin ultimately remained skeptical even of ordinary language analysis, which systematically neglected the importance of history, and questions about the objectivity of what is regarded as knowledge, as well as questions about the constitution of human experience in different eras and cultural situations.

The broader humanist view of philosophy that Berlin held can be found distilled in two essays that appeared in the early 1960s, “The Purpose of Philosophy” and “Does Political Theory Still Exist,” albeit his account of science and the division of questions into those that are and are not determinately answerable still bear a positivist stamp.^{xxxiii} Philosophy, for Berlin, the purpose of which is “to assist men to understand themselves, and thus operate in the open, and not wildly, in the dark,” can never be the object of strictly empirical knowledge. He held that philosophy is

tentative, abstract, even esoteric and indirect, but that it is nonetheless an important and essential human activity since it responds to the vital and ineradicable human need to describe and explain the world of experience. Berlin insisted on the social usefulness of philosophy for scrutinizing the validity of subconscious presuppositions and for bringing to light errors and confusions that lead to misunderstanding, distort experience, and even do real harm. Philosophy may seem subversive and troubling because it is opposed to orthodoxy and calls commonly accepted assumptions into question, but that is precisely what makes it valuable, and indispensable, and potentially liberating. Berlin's approach to philosophy combined a skeptical empiricism with neo-Kantianism. He took seriously Kant's distinction between matters of fact and the structures or categories in terms of which facts are made sense of, but rather than take categories to be prior to or independent of experience, Berlin held the interpretive view that the ideas through which we make sense of the world are closely tied up with our experiences, shaping and being shaped by them, and are thus logically prior to both the acquisition of empirical information and from deductive reasoning. And since experience varies from one time and place to another, so, for Berlin, do basic concepts.

Berlin classed philosophy as part of the human sciences, apart from the natural sciences, but as having a unique status in that not only are the answers to philosophical questions in question but also the means for arriving at answers, and the standards by which to evaluate and judge whether an answer is plausible, are not – nor can they be - known in advance.^{xxxiv} Like neo-Kantians Heinrich Rickert and Wilhem Windelband, Berlin insisted on the fundamental difference between the natural and human sciences. To understand human actions we should follow the empiricist commitment to lived experience, bearing in mind that access to that experience is available not through the natural sciences alone but, for Berlin, through the 'inside view' of people's goals, beliefs, and values, which requires a 'thick' conception of persons, in addition to the study of history and of personality. The natural sciences are distinctly unsuited for this and thus Berlin remained staunchly opposed to the positivist belief that the natural sciences are the paradigmatic form of knowledge that the human sciences should seek to emulate. Following Vico and Dilthey, Berlin thought that the natural and the human sciences fundamentally differed in the very nature of the subject matter that they studied, in kind; and echoing Rickert Berlin insisted that the sort of knowledge each sought made different methods, standards, and goals appropriate to one and not the other. In "The Concept of Scientific History" Berlin argued that the natural and the human worlds must be studied differently because of the relationship between the observer or thinker and the object of study.^{xxxv} The peculiarity of the human sciences consists in its having a subject matter that is of the same nature as the investigator. Natural science studies the physical world of nature dispassionately and objectively from without, while the human sciences study the world that human beings create for themselves and inhabit from within culture, which permits and requires an insightful kind of understanding and a vitalist account of behavior. To study human life, Berlin thought we cannot divest ourselves entirely of our experience which bases our judgments, but rather that we must begin from our understanding of other human beings in the 'thick' sense, of what it is like to have motives and feelings.

Berlin thought the human sciences could not be conducted in the same way as the natural sciences, since the latter seek to establish general laws based on similarities and regularities that, by categorizing into types, can explain whole classes of phenomena. In contrast, the whole point of the human sciences is to understand the particulars of human life in and of themselves. Precisely what Berlin saw necessary for such a task is *Verstehen*, or imaginative understanding, which is based on a knowledge of humanity that can only be derived from direct experience, by interaction with others and not merely from introspection.^{xxxvi} This meant that to be a good historian, for example, the

concern, for Berlin, should be with individuals, to understand the uniqueness of particular human phenomena by stepping into the mental world of a thinker and presenting it in its own terms. Berlin's notion of a historical "sense of reality" was about the importance of an intuitive feel for the way particular observations and ideas fit within a plausible overall picture. No fixed method that could be set in advance could accomplish the transmission of a historical sensibility that would set ideas within their context, but also look beyond the immediate context to connect the past with the present. In keeping with his general 'inside-view' approach to the explanation of human conduct, which eschewed the detached and impersonal methods of the natural sciences, Berlin favored an empathetic stress on the values, the purposes and world-views of the actors themselves. His preferred approach in philosophy was therefore decidedly not the conventional analytical technique of constructing arguments and counter-arguments, but a Collingwoodian historical style that traced ideas to their origins in the work of key thinkers whose personalities were shown to be as important as their logic. And it was this capacity to recapture the view of past cultures and past ages that Berlin salutes in Vico and Herder's powerful sense of the reality of the past.

Alongside Berlin, Hampshire's equally strong and early conviction that not everything can or should be reduced to a single model, theory, standard, or ideal made for a strong humanist voice amidst the reductivist drive of logical positivism's view of meaning and knowledge from the late 1930's onward. Hampshire fervidly opposed the way the new empiricist wave in the philosophy of mind, redolent of Hume, understood experience as a succession of impressions and ideas, which rendered persons as passive observers instead of the self-willed, space-occupying experimenting agents in the world that they are. Hume's notion of experience was incoherent because it relied on the notion of impressions and ideas that were somehow obtainable independently of a notion of oneself as a self-moving agent in a world of independent objects which was simply untenable. Our concept of a voluntary, intentional agent is embedded in a network of concepts of space and time, of material object and of motion, of the perceiving agent and of perceptual faculties. So tightly woven are these concepts that the idea of an observer who is not also an active agent, of a thinker who is not also an actor, is precluded as nonsensical.^{xxxvii} Hampshire believed that the sense-datum philosophers who failed to see the conceptual connections involved in perception inherited the empiricist mistake. The error Hampshire saw running through empiricist philosophy was the assumption of the possibility of Cartesian statements of immediate experience that relied on a mind body distinction, and on a conception of human consciousness primarily as mental states of passive awareness, independent of bodily conditions.

Hampshire sought to disabuse the conceptual commitments of logical positivism by arguing for the primacy of intentional action that is unified in mind and body in our conceptual scheme. Hampshire insisted that the philosophy of mind was distorted by the mistaken understanding of persons only as passive observers and not as self-willed agents. Moreover, in focusing on the unity of cogitative and active powers of man against the Cartesian dualism of mind and body, and on the ramifying role of intention in our conceptual scheme, Hampshire sought to bring moral argument closer to the philosophy of mind. The interconnectedness of our concepts – of our perceptions and their objects, of our intentions and their execution in action, of our beliefs and their truth or falsity – forms such seamless a web that questions of knowledge must be seen as related to moral philosophy. Hampshire sought to shift moral philosophy's focus away from the logical properties of moral statements to the moral problems as they presented themselves to people as practical human agents. This meant that we had to take seriously both the social bases of human intentionality as well as the embodied nature of human agency. As can be seen in his "The Analogy of Feeling," Hampshire emphasized the necessity of communication with other persons for self-

knowledge.^{xxxviii} And in *Thought and Action*, he elaborated the interpretive view of how self-knowledge depends also on the embodied subject's sense of its own identity and on its being a physical agent in a physical environment. Clearly these interpretive features of Hampshire's thought exhibit the influence of Jean-Paul Sartre as well as Maurice Merleau-Ponty. In "Self Knowledge and the Will" and "On Referring and Intending," and subsequently reiterated in *Thought and Action*, Hampshire stressed the connections between mental concepts and physical agency, and sought to give the notion of introspection and the possibility of incorrigible declarations by a speaker of his own intentions an intelligible place in philosophy.^{xxxix} Similar emphases on the social bases of intentional action, the importance of recognition, the embodied nature of agency, and interpretive nature of selfhood and identity are echoed in the writings of his student Charles Taylor.

Even before Taylor's strong critique of behaviorism appeared,^{xi} it was Hampshire's rejection of behaviorist analyses of psychological concepts^{xli} that fleshed out a clear defense of anti-naturalism in the human sciences. Hampshire insisted on distinguishing between human actions and mere events, based on his theory of freedom and the fundamental difference between decision and prediction. His claim was that there is an ineliminable human power of "standing back" from any prediction of one's future actions, which changes the situation, and thus troubles the aim of making predictions in the human sciences.^{xlii} Hampshire's anti-naturalism developed through his account of the special notion of a disposition applied to human character, which must be historical and genetical, and thus distinct from "dispositional properties" that may be possessed by material objects.^{xliii} Hampshire's emphasis on the psychoanalytical account of dispositions is just one particular application of his wider view that human activities must be understood historically, not abstractly as behaviorist psychology sought to do. His view of the historicity of human identity and selfhood is an idea that is further borne out in his outlook on ethics, namely that any comprehensible system of ethics must be grounded in a view of human nature, and that all views of human nature are historically conditioned and essentially revisable.

1.2 Post-analytic Roots of Modern Liberalism

Berlin and Hampshire's arguments in defense of anti-naturalism make clear their conception of human beings and human action. The connections they see between epistemological questions and moral and political ones have to do with their understanding that such concerns are unified in human experience. The interpretive and humanist bases of their views are the same, whether their concern was epistemological or practical. In many ways this idea only needed to be advanced as a claim because of the new empiricism's epistemology that implicitly - if not explicitly - divorced what is true (i.e. what could be validly deduced from discrete premises) from interpretation, which necessarily makes reference to and relies on further interpretations. It is useful, therefore, to see Berlin's and Hampshire's complaints about scientism as part of their views on the contest between the enlightenment and its critics. Hampshire and Berlin make strong criticisms of both the excesses of the enlightenment as well as those of its critics, and each teaches that because the legacy of the enlightenment and its critics is mixed, we should not favor one side over the other. Through their qualified views on the contest between the enlightenment and its critics, we can see how the bases of Berlin's and Hampshire's interpretive view of knowledge are further upheld and substantiated in what we might call their humanist liberalism when it comes to their moral and political philosophy, namely a modified but nonetheless adamant moral realism in opposition to relativism, and a deep concern for the political implications of the irreducible plurality of values in human life.

As previously noted, Hampshire contended that the failure to apprehend the unity of thought and action was indicative of the enlightenment heritage that continued to vitiate a great deal of philosophy in the modern era.^{xliv} At the same time, although Hampshire did not want to present his observations as empirical truths that would be no less dubious as some of the empiricist claims of learning theory or scientific phenomenology he was targeting, his concern to draw our attention to “necessities of thought” by way of conceptual truths that express the internal relations among the entities that they invoke conveys his clear intentions to secure strong epistemological claims. As a life-long liberal, Berlin certainly saw himself as a man of the enlightenment. He defended the faith of the French *philosophes* in reason, personal liberty, and toleration. But he thought that certain strains of enlightenment thinking extended the claims of reason and science to utopian extremes and thus played a significant part in the genesis of the totalitarianism of the left, one of his principal targets.^{xlv} Berlin sees the roots of 20th C totalitarianism in the complex relationships he finds between the enlightenment on one side and counter enlightenment and romanticism on the other. He saw the scientism and utopian side of the enlightenment as a whole as tantamount to the modern instance of the deep-seated tendency to ethical monism that he opposed.^{xlvi} And he found some of the earliest, albeit tentative, hints of the value pluralism he supported in counter-enlightenment thinkers such as Vico, Hamann, and Herder. And while his endorsement of the inside view as essential to historical understanding clearly shows his affinity for aspects of the Counter-Enlightenment as a potent source of opposition to the tyranny of scientism, he nevertheless associated the counter-enlightenment, by way of romanticism, with the birth of modern nationalism as making possible the anti-humanist and irrationalist rise of fascism.^{xlvii}

1.2.1 *How do Williams and Taylor exhibit the Idealist legacy of Berlin and Hampshire?*

This qualified view of the enlightenment and its critics is the backdrop against which we find the concern to defend anti-naturalism in the human sciences, the insistence upon the intrinsic force and importance of human values, and the recognition of the political significance of the plurality of human values. Together these concerns constitute the main contours of the interpretive and humanist liberal tradition of Berlin and Hampshire that Williams and Taylor came to embrace and further shape. Taylor’s interest in philosophers in the so-called continental tradition began as a graduate student at Oxford in the mid-50’s.^{xlviii} He rebuked some of his teachers for their long-standing “cultural solipsism” and sought to bring much needed clarity and refinement to the ideas of Herder, Hegel, von Humboldt, Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, among others. Taylor quite explicitly praised some other teachers. In the preface to his first book on Hegel, Taylor attributes his interest in the philosopher to his Oxford teachers Berlin, Hampshire, and A.J. Ayer, who set him on the enterprise “many years ago, more than I can remember or would like to recall.”^{xlix} He especially thanks Berlin with whom he comes to share a key interest in other German thinkers such as Herder, as well as Humboldt.¹ In reformulating the ideas of these thinkers into analytic-style arguments Taylor came to stir the course and reception of Oxford-style analytic philosophy for years to come, even assuming the paradoxical role of the leading analytic exponent of Continental philosophy from the 60’s onward. But when examined in the context of the legacy of Berlin and Hampshire that he shares with others like Bernard Williams, and to a lesser extent Richard Rorty, Taylor’s achievements, while in no way unremarkable, are in many ways unsurprising. Williams received early training in both classics and the philosophical methods of Ryle and Austin. Certainly the latter background inclined him to the piecemeal treatment of philosophical problems. But unlike some of the Oxford philosophers he studied Williams was never a systematic philosopher, which is evident in his strong rejection of ethical doctrines that posit a single principle as the basis of morality. Nonetheless, a consistent set of theses emerge in Williams’s work that show how ethics

are inseparably interwoven with culture and history, showing shared concerns with Berlin and Hampshire, as well as Taylor.

Like Berlin and Hampshire, Taylor and Williams try to mediate the virtues and insights of both enlightenment and counter-enlightenment thinking, by opposing the scientific and reductivist tendencies of the first, but also eschewing the metaphysical esotericisms and totalitarian overtones of the latter. Taylor and Williams both defend anti-naturalism in the humanistic disciplines in favor of an interpretive view of knowledge but also maintain broadly empiricist assumptions when inquiring into the natural world.^{li} The defense of anti-naturalism found in Williams largely hinges on his arguments about the misplaced aim of “absolute knowledge” in philosophy and other humanistic disciplines which is appropriate to and for the most part possible in the natural sciences.^{lii} He opposes various forms of scientism in philosophy by painstakingly tracing what he sees are the fundamental limitations of the “morality system” he finds characteristic of most contemporary moral philosophy,^{liii} and yet rescuing the notion of truth and authority in philosophy remained central to Berlin’s work.^{liii}

As well, for Taylor, the distinction between the natural and the human sciences hinges on the claim that the natural world exists independently of people’s perceptions or the meanings it may have for humans.^{liv} He thinks it is appropriate, even necessary, to require “absoluteness” in the natural sciences because a world “that exists independently of us human percipients should be understood in terms that reflect this”, in terms that are absolute. He holds that while the traditional empiricist epistemology of the 17th and 18th centuries was fundamentally mistaken to try to separate observables from theoretical entities, he plainly attributes “the spectacular progress in our knowledge of nature”^{liv} to approaches that eschew subject-related properties and aim to give “an account of the world as it is, independently of the meanings it might have for human subjects, or of how it figures in the experience of humans.”^{lvi}

Taylor’s anti-naturalism, redolent of arguments from both Berlin and Hampshire, also picks up on a theme that echoes widely in the late twentieth century, in particular from Heidegger, in advancing the view that interpretation is essential to human existence. Taylor adopts the notion of *Dasein*, that is, of human beings as self-interpreting beings, and claims that our interpretation of ourselves and our experiences is so constitutive of what we are that they cannot be considered as merely a view on reality or separable from it or be by-passed in the way that the natural science goal to achieve objectivity demands.^{lvii} Taylor’s anti-naturalism therefore involves multiple related claims about how human agency is intertwined with language and morality, which he thinks is precisely what is lost when we neutralize the moral nature of human agency and try to reduce the human to the natural sciences.

The similarities between Berlin and Hampshire on the one hand and Taylor and Williams on the other are further brought out by their shared understandings about the independent force and weight of values, which serves to display a qualified moral realism against relativism much like their predecessors. Hampshire fundamentally opposed the notion of moral relativism with his neo-intuitionist critique of utilitarianism.^{lviii} He staunchly maintained that anything appropriately called moral must consist in the last analysis of certain unconditional prohibitions. “The notion of morality requires that there be some strong barriers against the taking of life, against some varieties of sexual and family relations, against some forms of trial and punishment, some taking of property, and against some distributions of rewards and benefits.”^{lix} While the content of the prohibitions, or for Hampshire, “intuitions” will vary from society to society and over time, there must be some such

set of “moral impossibilities.”^{lx} Berlin offers no general theoretical critique of relativism but all of his writings show he is resistant to it. The kind of moral realism associated with Berlin and Hampshire’s interpretive and humanist liberalism can be seen most clearly by examining their opposition to ethical monism and their arguments for value pluralism.

Hampshire advanced the claim of the irreducible plurality of values against utilitarianism, especially attacking the reductivist idea that all intuitions could be brought under the authority of one principle, namely, of utility. He acknowledged that utilitarians do recognize a variety of “absolute” intuitions at the primitive, pre-rational stages of moral experience, but he opposed their insistence that by rational reflection our several intuitions could be “systematically connected” and rendered not absolute but conditional toward the ultimate single principle of utility. What Hampshire sees in utilitarianism is a craving for the subordination and unity of values. But he argues that rational reflection shows virtues and vices to be logically irreducible to, and incompatible with, the mere fulfillment or non-fulfillment of the utility principle, which are nonetheless essential to the concept of morality. The interpretive basis of his argument for the plurality of values is made clear in his view that different ‘ways of life’ in different people are differing “mixes” of the intuitive prohibitions, as a “set” of virtues or vices, which are rich and subtle in variety and so cannot be construed as variations upon one theme of impartial benevolence. In his *Public and Private Morality*, he writes, “Each society, each generation within it, and, in the last resort, each reflective individual, accepts, and amends, an established morality expressed in rituals and manners, and in explicit prohibitions; and he will do this in determining what kind of person he aspires to be and what are the necessary features of a desirable and admirable way of life as he conceives it.”^{lxi}

Moreover, Hampshire opposed the ethical monism of utilitarianism because he maintained that the very essence of morality is conflict. The plurality of intuitions means that it can never be guaranteed that they will not clash, and no amount of reflection can resolve the conflict when they do. When they clash the “moral agent has to make a choice, and to bring himself to do one of the normally forbidden things, in order to avoid doing the other.”^{lxii} Hampshire is not merely asserting the incontrovertible claim that moral conflicts occur, rather that we cannot even conceive of what is normally meant by morality without conceiving of the inherent conflict that defines it.

As much as and even more so than Hampshire, Berlin is perhaps most famous for his arguments for the plurality of values against the supposition of ethical monism, utilitarian or otherwise, which he, like Hampshire, thinks is deeply in error about the nature of morality and human experience. The error is in supposing that all goods, virtues, and ideals are compatible, and that all desirable human ends can be united into a harmonious whole without loss or conflict. Moral monism is simply false to human experience since goods, by their very nature, conflict. There are many human values that exist and can be known objectively. Some of them are universal – such as liberty and equality, but values are sometimes “incommensurable” in that they are so distinct that each has its own character and force that cannot be translated into the terms of any other. Berlin extolled the rightness as well as the prudence of value pluralism as both the truer and safer view of the deep nature of morality. We are frequently faced with choices among competing goods, to which no clear answers can be gained from simple rules. We can have no coherent conception of an incontestable scheme for harmonizing human ends. When incommensurable values come into conflict, we experience the choices between them as difficult, in part because in choosing one good we must necessarily forgo another, since we cannot apply a simple rule that reduces rival goods to a common denominator or arranges them in a single hierarchy that can apply in all cases.

1.2.2 *What difference does this Idealist legacy make to how we should understand the development of modern liberalism in the 20th C?*

Like Berlin and Hampshire, Taylor and Williams argue for the importance of recognizing value pluralism against utilitarianism and other moral monist views, because they, too, oppose the supposition that all genuine moral values can somehow fit together into a single formula capable of yielding a correct answer to any moral problem. Preceding Taylor's argument about strong evaluation which explains the experience of human agents who, as strong evaluators, find themselves in a dilemma when moral issues arise to which there is "no rational solution", Hampshire argued that "conflict of moral claims is natural to us" and that "unavoidable conflict of principles of conduct, and not a harmony of purposes, is the stuff of morality, as we ordinarily experience it," since conflict is "a condition of continuing moral development."^{lxiii} Williams also targeted the systematized nature of moral discourse, which assumes that moral obligations are always practicable, allowing no possibility of real moral conflict.^{lxiv} He argued that in real human life we experience being under ethical demands that conflict, conflicts that are not eliminable in the way that much of moral philosophy would seek to resolve them, by arguments that determine that one or another obligation we experience was contingent, prima facie, or in some other way "not real".^{lxv}

Taylor's line of argument for both the priority and the plurality of values can be seen most clearly in his conception of strong evaluation as the necessary moral ontology of human agency.^{lxvi} According to Taylor, to be human is to be a strong evaluator, to possess and exercise the capacity to value the desires we have differently, to rank some of our desires as qualitatively higher or more worthy than others.^{lxvii} We engage in weak evaluation of our desires when we recognize which of our desires pulls most strongly and our concern is with what follows from their pursuit. On this account, for something to be judged as good, it is sufficient that it be desired. When we engage in strong evaluation, on the other hand, what is desirable is based on the qualitative characterizations of our desires as to their worth. When we engage in strong evaluation our concern is not as much with the outcomes and the calculation of consequences but with the quality of our motivations. As strong evaluators we assess our desires as higher or lower, noble or base, as integrative or fragmented, and our interpretations essentially speak to how we see ourselves. In this way, our motivations, desires, and interpretations are not merely given to us, or fixed truths that we discover about ourselves, which we then employ language to express. According to his constitutive view of language, we interpret ourselves and our self-interpretations are constituted by the articulations we come to accept of them. Articulations are interpretive attempts at formulating the experiences we have and our relationship to those experiences so formulated. He writes, "our attempts to formulate what we hold important must, like descriptions, strive to be faithful to something. But what they strive to be faithful to is not an independent object with a fixed degree and manner of evidence, but rather a largely inarticulate sense of what is of decisive importance. And articulation of this "object" tends to make it something different from what it was before."^{lxviii} And therefore, where there is articulacy, Taylor is conscious to point out, there will be a plurality of visions. There will be a plurality of ways of viewing a predicament where the choice is not only between what is higher or lower but between incommensurable ways of looking at the choice.^{lxix} The modern identity is faced with an irreducible plurality of values and must contend with the disunity and diversity of goods in the modern world, and echoing the reasoning of both Berlin and Hampshire, he argues contemporary moral philosophy, in all of its dominant strands, have failed to come to terms with in any adequate manner. Indeed Taylor's criticisms of Benthamite utilitarianism is precisely for not

allowing a plurality of visions about the good but instead reducing all evaluations to one metric of goodness, pleasure - however specified.

The interpretive basis of Taylor's argument for strong evaluation further suggests the influence of Berlin and Hampshire in its moral realist implications for how values ought to be understood. If human beings are strong evaluators then values must be real and in some sense independent, and not just our subjectivistic projections onto a neutral world.^{lxx} Taylor's belief that individuals are strong evaluators says that when individuals experience some goods as inherently more worthy than others, what they are doing is responding to their sense that the good is valuable independently of their choice of it; that is, that the good is seen as normative for desire, not constituted as good by the fact that individuals do so desire them.^{lxxi} Taylor's claim that strongly valued goods command our respect and make demands upon us because of their intrinsic value has put him in strong accord with other moral realist positions, including the version of moral realism advanced by Williams that is based on the inseparability of descriptive and evaluative meaning, and his claim that it is meaningless to assume that moral agents can have "external" reasons to act, i.e. reasons external to their inner mental states. Williams famously argued that only "internal reasons" can operate as reasons to act for moral agents. Similar to Taylor's views about the importance of strong evaluation, Williams maintained that reasons for action are always internal to the agent in question, based on a desire, whether to act in accordance with upbringing, peer pressure, self-image, etc, but that desire at bottom moves people to action since a person must feel before they are moved to act.^{lxxii}

This is a way of stating another criticism that Williams shares with Taylor – namely that contemporary moral philosophy with its canons of moral obligation fail to speak to the deeper and more genuinely explanatory standard of what makes life meaningful. Taylor also took issue with how our attempts at moral reflection and moral description in the contemporary age are "cramped". Echoing Iris Murdoch, he saw narrowness in how morality gets conceived, focused only on what it is right to do, purely as a guide to action, to the exclusion of what it is good to be.^{lxxiii} The result has been a severely truncated construal of morality, defined solely as the content of obligation where too much has been excluded by moral philosophy's narrow focus. Left out are considerations about what it is good to do even though we are not obliged; what it may be good to be and to love; the nature of the good life itself; and what can be the object of our love and allegiance. Taylor and Williams both sought in their own ways to move moral philosophy away from the Kantian question of "what is my duty?" back to the humanist issue that mattered to the Greeks, "how ought we to live?"

Taylor takes issue with a variety of views that seek to deny moral frameworks and the weight or burden, so to speak, of values. His point is that modern philosophy has moral sources, but they have been ignored by moral philosophy, primarily obligatory theories that are unable to admit their own moral sources, making them deeply flawed theories for moral description as well as guides to action. The widespread assumptions in moral philosophy that Taylor wants to overturn are threefold: (i) that moral reaction can be assimilated to visceral reaction, (ii) that our notions of the good on an issue are optional, and (iii) that value terms have descriptive equivalents. There are two strands of moral philosophy that Taylor is concerned to curtail. The first is against naturalism or empiricism, which tempts us to deny that ontology is essential to moral argument, and takes values to be merely projections onto a neutral world of facts. Against both procedural and obligatory theories, Taylor implores us to see that the existence of values is inescapable in our moral language. The second strand of moral philosophy that he deprecates is a Neo-Nietzschean/Foucaultian brand

of critical theory.^{lxxiv} These theories attack procedural ethics for masking implicit moral motives, and seek to unmask the pretensions of moral philosophy; they use a meta-doctrine of moral orders as imposed orders to discredit values as domination. Yet they fail to avow the value they no doubt implicitly hold in articulation itself. They do not come clean about their own moral motivations, and actually deny having any of their own. And if all positions and “regimes of truth” are based on fiat, and none are more justified than another, then the projection theory they themselves espouse also must fail. Both the naturalistic and subjectivist stances, for all of their differences, actually share crucial features for Taylor. They both share the assumption that there is a neutral world in which ‘goods’ and ‘values’ are merely what we project onto it, and that a neutral descriptive language separate from prescriptive force is even possible.

Williams has spent most of his career describing and criticizing what he saw were the problems with what amounts to the “morality system” characteristic of most contemporary moral philosophy.^{lxxv} Like Taylor, Williams’s writings throughout the 1970’s and 1980’s showed his targets to be the twin pillars of utilitarianism (and consequentialist theories more generally) and Kantianism.^{lxxvi} Williams similarly took issue with the presumption that we could fix rules for determining rightness in the abstract that could carry any real moral weight. His opposition to utilitarianism can be summed up by the fact that it is an “ism”, a systematization that tries to establish how people *should* feel or react.^{lxxvii} But as a normative system it all too briskly and simple-mindedly reduces our ethical thinking down to intolerable distortions because, he insists, “in truth, almost all worthwhile human life lies between the extremes that morality puts before us.”^{lxxviii} He called this pressure towards generalization the “obligation out-obligation in principle”, according to which every particular moral obligation needs the logical backing of being an instance of a general moral obligation.^{lxxix} This requirement of moral philosophy changes the moral deliberation of the agent to make it something it is not, insisting on a generality that obscures the particular way in which an action is actually justified for the agent. The impersonal and impartial standards of morality, he argued, fail to be associated with the real justification of the action to the agent in any meaningful way. Williams describes his problem with utilitarianism, and the morality system more generally, as follows: “My own view is that no ethical theory can render a coherent account of its own relation to practice: it will always run into some version of the fundamental difficulty that the practice of life, and hence also an adequate theory of that practice, will require the recognition of what I have called deep dispositions; but at the same time the abstract and impersonal view that is required if the theory is to be genuinely a theory cannot be satisfactorily understood in relation to the depth and necessity of those dispositions. Thus the theory will remain, in one way or another, in an incoherent relation to practice. But if ethical theory is anything, then it must stand in close and explicable relation to practice, because that is the kind of theory it would have to be. It thus follows that there is no coherent ethical theory.”^{lxxx}

The skepticism that both Williams and Taylor had about establishing a foundation to moral philosophy was already well articulated by Berlin in 1953 in the contrast he made famous in his essay “The Hedgehog and the Fox” quoting the 7th Century Greek poet Archilochus who wrote that the fox knows many things but the hedgehog knows one big thing.^{lxxxi} Two opposing kinds of intellectual disposition are described: that of the systematizing hedgehogs who seek to relate everything to a single vision (e.g. Plato and Hegel); and that of the unsystematic foxes who celebrate “a vast variety of experiences and objects for what they are in themselves” (e.g. Shakespeare and Montaigne). Berlin sees himself as a fox, standing in favor of flexibility against the single issue fanaticism of the hedgehog. But Berlin’s defense of multiplicity and variety can itself paradoxically be seen as single-minded, in that his insistence on value pluralism is a persistent, if sometimes

implicit, theme underlying nearly everything he wrote.^{lxxxii} But certainly his avowed self-description cannot be ignored. And his belief that moral theories can never reflect the complexities of human life, particularly given their tendency to systematize and abstract from human life as human agents experience cannot be overstated.

1.2.3 *What kind of political theory does interpretivism and humanist liberalism imply?*

Like Berlin, neither Taylor nor Williams offers a systematic philosophical defense of the alternative to modern philosophy they would like to see. Rather, they try to convey their manifold reasons for why our attempts to speak to our condition must be historicized, practical, even personal – why it should not require that human agents take an impartial view of the world, or act as though they are not who they are in the circumstances they find themselves. According to Williams, trying to transcend one’s own point of view in moral reflection, by focusing on external reasons divorced from internal reasons for action only leads to self-deception and distortion. The notion of authenticity, of learning to be oneself and to act with integrity, rather than conforming to any external moral system is the central theme in Williams’s work, to spell out the notion of inner necessity.^{lxxxiii} The notion of authenticity is also a major theme in Taylor’s work on conceptions of the self.^{lxxxiv} For both Taylor and Williams, the values, commitments, and desires of human agents make a difference to how they see the world and act in it, and moral and political philosophy should rightly be about people and their real lives, in many ways recapitulating Hampshire’s strong intentionalist thesis, and Berlin’s arguments for the importance of history and personality. The strong humanist strain running through both of their contemporary critiques of moral philosophy is that ultimately what is of utmost importance is whatever humans need to make it possible to lead what can reasonably be recognized as meaningful lives. Williams ultimately grounded the importance of ethics and ethical life in its ability to recognize “that each person has a life to lead” and thus to guide “what we can understand men as needing and wanting.”^{lxxxv}

An interpretive and intentionalist understanding of selfhood and human agency together with a view of the radical pluralism of modern societies make clear Williams’s and Taylor’s stance of how ethics are inseparably interwoven with culture and history, and therefore politics. Yet, this line of reasoning could suggest a greater degree of relativism in their views than either of them would ever subscribe to, so it would be a mistake to suggest anything but an overarching concern they had with the notion of truth with objectivity. And to go back to the context of Berlin and Hampshire, it is worth pointing out that compared to the logical empiricist foundation of moral objectivism in Ayer, the ordinary language approach of Austin left morality more vulnerable to relativistic worries. And Berlin and Hampshire certainly took issue with how the linguistic approach failed to deal with the question of authority – the question of why, even if the analysis of our moral language were correct, that should license us to think that it has jurisdiction in our society, let alone how the moral language of one society could have any kind of jurisdiction over another society.

While it seems that for Williams, the absence of external reasons for action means that an agent’s reasons can always be relativized to their particular lives, their internal reasons, and that that would make it impossible to argue that the same set of moral reasons applies to all agents equally, it would be a mistake to give the impression that the question of authority, which asks by what right moral sentiments can be legislated, wasn’t somehow central to every aspect of his critique of contemporary moral philosophy.^{lxxxvi} While one of William’s main objectives was to demonstrate the frivolity and often stupidity of too much contemporary moral theory, all of his criticisms are rooted in constructive positions that aim to get the story right, or better, where the story has to do with the

nature of motivation and reasons for human action. Likewise, for Taylor, whether a question lies in political science or in philosophy, the problem of objectivity and the issue of getting it right have their roots in how selfhood is conceived, and so have without a question been central to all of his concerns. Recall Taylor's view that giving a certain articulation actually shapes our sense of what we desire or find important. He argues that our self interpretations are partly constitutive of our experiences such that an altered description of our motivations and what we hold to be important is inseparable from a change in the motivation itself and our sense of what is important.^{lxxxvii} But this does not mean, for Taylor, that they are arbitrary, or that our self interpretations make themselves true, which would entail that they are necessarily true, simply by fiat. Taylor argues that our self-interpretations can be more or less adequate, truthful, clairvoyant, or deluded. There is a getting it right and getting it wrong in articulation.^{lxxxviii} Our self-understandings shape what we feel so even when they are wrong they can shape what it is they are wrong about.

Epistemology for Taylor is a matter of comparing rival narrative accounts to determine which is comparatively better, and of using history in this comparison.^{lxxxix} His argumentation proceeds through comparisons between rival historical narratives where the better account is the one that can narrate the other(s), but not the other way around. Where there is an asymmetry between rival interpretations, the concern, in Taylor's view, ought to be with the best story, rather than the right story by means of deduction. For Taylor, the "right" story is the best story, and the best story is the one that can make better sense of what is being explained as well as the contrary positions that has generated even as the alternatives cannot make sense of it in turn, or, for that matter, its own explanatory outlook. In the case of the contest between the empiricist and hermeneutic approaches in the human sciences, Taylor argued that the hermeneutic standpoint possessed the further asymmetrical explanatory capacity to narrate the history of empiricist approaches, where the reverse is not the case.^{xc} Williams's way of similarly calling attention to the provisional nature of the knowledge about the world is brought out in his views on what philosophy can and cannot contribute to the project of making sense of things, which ultimately, for Williams, is the project of making sense of *being human*. Importantly, for him, such contribution cannot be made by abstracting from "the local perspectives of idiosyncrasies of human beings", and therefore the project of making sense of being human requires recognizing that our thick ethical concepts are contingent phenomena, whose histories may or may not vindicate them, whose affects on human lives are continually being modified by all sorts of shifting social forces, and whose very futures may be open to question.^{xcii}

This openness to learning and modification while possessing a basis for confidence, commitment, and even conviction, is characteristic of both Taylor and Williams, as seen in their view of the relationship between reflection and practice. Williams constantly revisits the theme of the tension between philosophy and practice, the gap between the disengagement that makes possible our philosophical thought and the engagement in practices that become the objects of inquiry and reflection.^{xciii} Such views about the role of philosophy, in the realm of politics, are bound to have deep implications, but exactly what they are in practice or what they should be on any particular political issue would have to be specific to the people involved. What Williams has done is locate the tension between self-consciousness and conviction in the domain of the social and set it in the context of a pluralism of values. Williams thinks we need to balance the good that is philosophical reflection with the good that is confidence, without which there couldn't be life in any meaningful non-biological sense, but how to balance them is itself a practical question which requires proper balancing of goods to address. Answers to such questions are not something that could be spelled out in the abstract with any degree of adequacy, except to say that each "has a price

and the price should not be set too high.”^{xciii} Taylor also has pointed our attention to the multiple ways in which moral argument necessarily enters into our study of social and political practices.^{xciv} His interpretive view of the human sciences shows us that our self-understanding and our inter-subjective meanings is what defines and constitutes our collective life, such that there can be no separate realm or set of issues that demarcate themselves as “political”. To say this is to reiterate their acute sense of both the possibilities and limitations of philosophy, because all of our practices, including the human sciences as knowledge practices, and philosophy as the practice of theorizing, can only be interpretive, and thereby political by nature. Taylor and Williams clearly saw its benefits but equally its dangers.

This brings us back to the Berlin, who at bottom saw ethical monism to be utopian, and therefore something to be feared. The political implications of holding out a true moral system thought to make possible a perfect social order in which there is universal agreement on a single best way of life was infeasible. The dangers of supposing that moral and political perfection is possible is that it all too easily invites its pursuit by any means, at whatever cost. Berlin’s defense of value pluralism can be read as supporting his defense of liberal society, as upholding the notion that the political system that fits best with pluralism is liberalism. This relationship has been fiercely debated, however, and the liberal reading of Berlin’s pluralism was subject to especially criticism in the 1990s. If basic values are incommensurable, the question of why we ought to privilege liberal values such as individual liberty and toleration over rival values or packages of values such as socialism or conservatism arises. John Gray has famously argued that the plurality of values means that many different rankings of basic goods are equally valid, which rules out all but the ‘thinnest’ of universalist value-systems.^{xcv} He challenged Berlin’s connection between pluralism and a more robust liberal project by suggesting that liberalism can only possess the ‘agonistic’ status of one locally valid ranking of goods among others, rather than universal moral authority. In contrast, William Galston has argued that value pluralism implies a generous form of multiculturalism that is best facilitated by an accommodating, more tolerant form of liberalism. And George Crowder has sought to link pluralism with liberalism by appealing to principles of value diversity and reasonable disagreement, in terms that are less accommodating of cultural minorities that are hostile to personal autonomy.^{xcvi}

We need not decide this issue in order to see what is so significant about the affinities between Berlin and Hampshire’s views on the one hand with Taylor’s and Williams’s. The interpretive and humanist liberal themes they share can be seen in each of their views of the inescapability of choice and conflict in human experience as implying an argument for freedom of choice; and their understanding of the anti-utopian aspects of value pluralism as suggesting quite a strong case for liberalism as a realistic, human, form of politics that seeks to contain and manage conflict rather than transcend it. In no way can their beliefs in the *bestness* of liberal values be disputed. What is of special significance in their ideas collectively is the interpretive and humanist justification for liberal principles, a strong commitment to the view that reflection and theory not only can not, but also ought never be, divorced from the meanings held by a given people in a given society. For instance, the two features of Taylor’s argumentation – comparative assessment and a historicist mode of reasoning – exhibits a Hegelian style of argumentation that stands in stark contrast to Kantian forms of moral and liberal theorizing that proceed by deduction from logical categories of being. Epistemology for Taylor is a matter of comparing rival narrative accounts to determine which is comparatively better, and of using history in this comparison. Williams appears to make the case for the importance of history slightly differently. His views on truth show the debt is clearly to Nietzsche, most obviously in his adoption of a genealogical method as a tool of explanation and critique.^{xcvii} But in terms of the justification of political values, Williams clearly

makes the case that people need to live in some social world, but that history demonstrates there is no one such social world in which people must live.

As such the interpretive and humanist liberal views about the interconnections between questions of knowledge, morality, and politics found in Berlin, Hampshire, Williams, and Taylor collectively stand in stark contrast to liberal theories that seek to establish liberal claims upon us from a standpoint that lies outside and apart from the particulars of lived history and culture. Following Rawls, political philosophy in the liberal tradition in the Anglo-American context has rapidly developed in the form of intellectual exercises that help make the ideology of liberalism more plausible, more systematic, and rhetorically effective. All too often new research on a liberal theory of x , or a feminist liberal theory of y , or a political liberal defense of z fill the pages of political theory journals, falsely suggesting that political theory's role must be in service to some ideology. Of course, the tendency toward abstraction is not unique to Rawls and the liberal project of *A Theory of Justice*, since the same can be said for "libertarianism," "socialism," "conservatism," or these days "feminism," and even "environmentalism." What these four interpretive and humanist liberal thinkers show in contrast is that such particular ideological worldviews reflect highly parochial divisions that only hold in the abstract so that there can be no intrinsic value to any particular one in and of itself. Political theorists therefore need not be loyal to a particular ideological position or movement and define their activities in those terms. Instead of encouraging the false view that such ideological fixtures are natural kinds, they should rather seek to recognize how the most interesting arguments that are of value to real people may too often flow between these various positions.

Conclusion

Examining the ideas of Berlin and Hampshire alongside their contemporaries forces us to reject some common misperceptions about analytic philosophy as an insularly British, anti-humanist, formalistic style of deductive analysis based on pure reason that automatically came to be in the early 20th C the way it is widely perceived today, as leaving no place for moral and political theory to be pursued as legitimate modes of philosophical inquiry. Berlin and Hampshire both read more widely in history, politics, and literature than their empiricist colleagues; and their interest in philosophy (more broadly construed than their counterparts did) included "Continental" thinkers, which lay well outside the mainstream of philosophy as it was then practiced at Oxford. While Hampshire did consider most continental philosophy to be vulgar and fraudulent, he was very much influenced by Merleau-Ponty, an influence clearly adopted also by his student, Taylor. Berlin had strong and early interests in German thinkers and he was also one of the first of the founding generation of "Oxford philosophers" to make regular visits to American universities, playing an important part in spreading "Oxford philosophy" to the US.

Berlin and Hampshire challenged the arguments of their contemporaries Ayer and Austin in ways that reinvented and redefined how moral and political concerns might legitimately be addressed. As participants in this golden age of Oxford philosophy, Berlin and Hampshire were not only exposed to but they largely rejected, on the one hand, the rich historicist Hegelianism that was dominant in the previous generation of British philosophers; and, on the other, the logical positivism and linguistic analysis that preoccupied their friends and colleagues. By navigating between the opposed extremes of Idealism and empiricism, the two managed to reclaim many of the interpretive and humanist tenets of Idealism without its full vision of the 'absolute'; thus modifying it to meet some of the exigencies of the new empiricism.

Hampshire acknowledged how although the piecemeal analysis of philosophy characteristic of the 1940s and 1950s had its rewards, we ought to keep in mind that “it is possible that there are purposes and interests which require that accurate and step-by-step analysis should not always be preferred to a more general survey and more tentative opinions, even in philosophy.”^{xviii} Hampshire’s own writings, like Berlin’s, are remarkably free of technical jargon, illustrating his view that philosophy is the civilized reflection on the human condition and our conception of our condition; and as such should and can be made intelligible to any educated civilized reader. Berlin’s early resistance to reductionist trends in epistemology and the philosophy of language in many ways prefigured the objections he was later to raise against influential doctrines in political and social theory.

As such, a closer examination of the intellectual development of Berlin and Hampshire reveals a more complicated picture of the rise of analytic philosophy as a rejection of idealism and brings forth a far more complex story of the relationship between analytic and continental philosophy than most commentators are wont to take notice of, in particular in connections with the continued legacy of their interpretivism and humanist liberalism in the political philosophies of Williams and Taylor. Surely the similarities between them, as with Williams and Taylor, also, can be exaggerated. Williams and Taylor didn’t agree on everything and some key differences between them need pointing out. Williams writes from a far more secular humanist tradition^{xix}, and his idea that makes no appeal to the external moral authority of a god strikes at the foundation of conventional morality to bring it down to the level of humans; and it is possible to read Taylor’s arguments about our moral ontology as in many ways trying to argue for the necessity of higher moral sources.^c Yet, the themes they do share evince a similar eschewal of the empiricist demand for certainty, a similar explanation of our “thick” ethical concepts, which are nonetheless frail in the context of the existence of alternatives, since our concepts can be unsettled in practice if we lose our grip on them.

When Williams and Taylor are taken together in the context of Berlin and Hampshire, then, a clear interpretivist and humanistic understanding of politics as practice emerges. Berlin and Hampshire both opposed the reductivism of the new empiricism and defended an anti-naturalist approach to inquiring into human life. They sought to recognize the social aspects of agency, and saw human life to entail a broader view of philosophy that would recognize the importance of history, of personality, and of insight. What is interpretive about their philosophy of knowledge is inseparable from their humanism, since what they took to be philosophy’s subject matter is the human world of ideas and lived experience that demands a far broader view of philosophy than was justifiable according to the new empiricism.

2.0 Interpretation and the Human Sciences

2.1 Scientific Language and Anti-naturalism

- 2.1.1 *Who did Taylor see the dispute about the distinction between the natural and human sciences to be between?*
- 2.1.2 *What did Taylor think the dispute between the two sides turns on?*
- 2.1.3 *By what criteria did Taylor think the dispute is resolved?*
- 2.1.4 *Why have mechanistic explanations been preferred in the human sciences?*
- 2.1.5 *What kind of critique is Taylor launching against his opponents?*
- 2.1.6 *Does Taylor's early critique of naturalism succeed?*

2.2 Overcoming Epistemology

- 2.2.1 *Why does the target of Taylor's anti-naturalism change?*
- 2.2.2 *What does Taylor now think the dispute between the two sides turns on?*
- 2.2.3 *What are the ontological presuppositions of the scientific language Taylor thinks is appropriate to the human sciences?*
- 2.2.4 *What kind of critique is Taylor now making against his opponents?*
- 2.2.5 *Is there a change in the criteria by which Taylor thinks the dispute is resolved?*
- 2.2.6 *Does Taylor's new critique of naturalism succeed?*

2.1 Natural vs. Human Sciences Distinction

Historically, Taylor's views about knowledge and human scientific inquiry arose as a reaction, in the form of specific responses, to various scientific discourses in the human sciences, particularly empiricism, positivism, and behaviorism. Taylor has stood for maintaining a distinction between the natural and human sciences on grounds that the latter is concerned with the 'purposiveness', 'intentionality', or 'value-laden nature' of human action and the former is not.^{ci} Echoing Dilthey's thesis on the fundamental distinction between the natural and human sciences, Taylor has long been concerned to stake out a clear, if multifaceted, anti-naturalist position regarding the latter, eventually drawing out its myriad implications for the study of politics. When he first began working on these issues for his doctoral dissertation at Oxford, however, his concern was comparatively limited in scope. Initially, Taylor interrogated the question of the form of the explanatory laws that are appropriate to studying phenomena that the human sciences in particular are concerned with. He couched the dispute between naturalists and anti-naturalists as one that turned on whether there was any legitimate role for teleological explanations to play in giving accounts of human behavior, whether there was any merit in explaining behavior by reference to purpose and intentions. Throughout his early writings, Taylor asserts that the only legitimate criteria by which we should judge the issue was empirical, consistently referring back in a sense to the phenomena itself. He thought that no a priori argument for invoking one or another kind of language for scientific inquiry could guarantee the right answer to which was better or worse for explaining a given empirical phenomenon. Appealing to the human behavior of learning, Taylor sought to demonstrate how behaviorism's assumption of naturalistic modes of inquiry that automatically ruled out the validity of non-mechanistic teleological explanation could not be warranted across the board.

2.1.1 *Who did Taylor see the dispute about the distinction between the natural and human sciences to be between?*

Taylor's first book, the publication of his dissertation, titled *The Explanation of Behavior*, opens by clearly stating the dispute he sees between two sides: those who deem the purposes, meanings, or values intrinsic to human action as disqualifying natural scientific means for their examination on one side; and varieties of naturalistic views, on the other, that assume there is "no difference in principle between the behavior of animate organisms and any other processes in nature, that the former can be accounted for in the same way as the latter, by laws relating physical events."^{cii} Taylor took issue with the latter's a priori assumption of the unity of science, according to which animate behavior is viewed as equally able to be accounted for in the way that occurrences in nature are, by mechanistic laws that eschew all forms of intentionality associated with purposive subjects. According to Taylor, such "peripheralist" accounts of human and animate behavior – defined by its eschewal of explanation by purpose – rely on what might as well be called processes of "blind accident", in that they attribute the order seen to result in a system of behavior to principles that are only *contingently* related with bringing about and maintaining that order.^{ciii} In particular Taylor sought to tackle the claims of behaviorism head on. The behaviourist movement in psychology, pioneered in the 20th century by J. B. Watson and later by psychologists including C.L. Hull and B. F. Skinner, set out along positivist lines to apply strictly mechanistic terms to the study of human action. According to these psychologists, a mature science of human behavior should be mechanistic at its most basic level of explanation, accounting for all behavior in terms of laws that share the same form as those employed to explain occurrences and processes in nature.

Behaviorists assumed from the outset that explaining human action requires formulating correlations between behavior and environment or stimuli. They attempted to link the environment, characterized as the "stimulus", and behavior characterized as the "response" in a series of law-like correlations. Both stimulus and response were described in strictly non-intentional terms, as one or another kind of movement. Human behavior was seen as a function of laws holding between a kind of stimulus and a kind of effect. The aim of human science according to behaviourism was to identify various kinds of S-R (stimulus-response) connections on the basis of which any behavior could be explained. Not only did behaviourist and other "neo-behaviourist" strands in psychology fall under Taylor's criticism, but so did varieties of social functionalism insofar as they assumed we should discount the notion of purpose and intentionality in the sciences of man.^{civ} Taylor wanted to show how mechanistic principles are incompatible with teleological ones and that insofar as studies of behavior eschewed the latter in favor of mechanistic principles this was something that had to be argued for and justified, not simply assumed.

The central claim of Taylor's early work is this 'incompatibility thesis', according to which the terms we use to explicate the laws governing behavior that are classifiable as action are fundamentally incompatible with those used to explicate laws governing movement. According to Taylor, to explain human and animate behavior in terms of laws that govern movement is to rule out another kind of explanation, namely of a teleological form, which might "better fit" the phenomena studied. Moreover, for Taylor, insofar as the studied phenomena are action, as such, they presuppose teleological explanation. He wrote, "our accounting for behavior by a law governing movement is incompatible with its being brought about by the intention or purpose concerned, and therefore with its being action in the usual sense of the term."^{cv} Human behavior cannot at the same time be subject to laws governing action and to those governing movement. If a piece of behavior is explicable in terms of laws governing movement it would not be a case of action at all,

and so it must be subject to laws that possess a different form from those that govern action. Taylor argues that even according to ordinary language it is a defining characteristic of the concept of action that we apply it to cases of behavior explicable in terms of intentionality and purpose. In contrast to what we understand as mere movement, an action is behavior that is intended or desired by an agent because it involves an orientation towards, as well as intent to realize, an end-state or goal. Surely actions need not succeed in bringing about the end state for the sake of which they occur. The goal towards which an action is directed may not always be achieved, nor might an action always be fully consciously intended. Nonetheless, Taylor wants to point out that we ordinarily associate concepts like “achieve” and “intend” with actions, in a way that we simply do not do with behavior that we characterize as mere movement. Insofar as we speak of a piece of behavior as action, then, we seem to be committed to explaining it in terms of purpose or an intention for the sake of which it occurs. The distinction we draw in ordinary language between action and non-action suggests an incompatibility between actions and the determination of behavior by mechanistic laws.

Taylor writes, however, that the standards implicit in the ordinary concept of action in no way *guarantees* that mechanistic laws of explanation are inappropriate there. “The fact that we make the distinction we do between action and non-action offers no guarantee that the type of explanation it presupposes is the correct one.”^{cvi} Taylor thought linguistic philosophers were too quick to dismiss mechanistic, and behaviorist theory by implication, as conceptually confused. His view was that our conceptual scheme, according to which intention provides the criterion for distinguishing action from non-action, may itself very well turn out to be false. He argues that just as we now know that the pre-eighteenth century Aristotelian science mischaracterized the distinction between natural and violent motion we might one day come to see that we have mischaracterized the distinction between action and non-action in our ordinary language.^{cvi} Taylor’s claim is that there can be no *a priori* assurance against such possibility. He thought that linguistic philosophers were just as misguided in ruling out mechanistic explanations for not meeting the standards implicit in the ordinary concept of action as positivists were too quick to rule out teleological explanation for not meeting the standards of mechanistic science. Taylor’s study proceeds to elaborate what he thinks are the far more egregious and deep-seated ways in which naturalists in the human sciences have failed to see this. But his point was intended to apply to both sides in the dispute over naturalism in the human sciences. Taylor’s chief concern was to investigate the relative superiority between the incompatible terms on which scientific inquiry into human behavior might be pursued.^{cvi}

2.1.2 *What did Taylor think the dispute between the two sides turns on?*

Early in his career, Taylor thought that the dispute between naturalists and anti-naturalists turned on deciding whether there was a place at all in the human sciences for teleological explanation. The question he raised at the outset of his dissertation was “can we do away with the notion of ‘purpose’ altogether in explanation; or is it essential?”, and the corollary question of whether the teleological model of inquiry and explanation is legitimately ruled out by mechanistic ones. If it is, then naturalism - such as behaviorism exemplified - gains ground in the debate. Before we can answer how Taylor thought we should go about determining the appropriateness of teleological explanation for the human sciences, we first need to get clear on what exactly he thought invoking teleology and purpose in explanation entails. He writes that to invoke purpose in explanation giving “is to explain by the goal or result aimed at, “for the sake of” which the event is said to occur.”^{cix} To offer a teleological explanation of some animate behavior is to explain its

occurring as being dependent on its being required for some end.^{cx} Teleological explanation, as such, assumes that non-contingent connections hold, for instance between desires and actions, situations and the emotions they arouse.

In contrast, behaviorists thought that explaining human action requires formulating a series of law-like correlations where various aspects of the environment operating as stimuli interact with subjects to produce responses in the form of observable behavior. The idea that human behavior was a function of laws holding between movements of a kind of stimulus and a kind of effective response manifested the empiricist assumption of ‘efficient’ causation as the *only* relevant kind of causation to speak of. According to this basic Humean notion of the necessary characteristic of a causal sequence, a cause must be contingently linked with the effect, in other words, the cause must be separately identifiable from, and thus correlateable with, the effect. Taylor concludes that teleological explanation, which accounts for behavior in terms of intentionality and the goals of purposive subjects, has automatically been ruled out in the human sciences by our prejudicial preference for the mechanistic, atomistic model.^{cxii} He argues that the hegemonic appeal of an “empiricist epistemology” has led us to discount teleological explanation for human scientific inquiry because the purpose in teleological explanations gets misinterpreted as a causal antecedent that follows, rather than precedes, the consequent.^{cxiii} For Taylor, atomistic assumptions lead us to misrepresent what it disallows, rendering teleological explanation in such a way as to be obviously unsuitable for scientific explanation in the human sciences. “The peculiarity of teleological explanation, that it accounts for the events by final causes, by that for the sake of which they happen, is then construed as a reversal of the usual time order. The goal or final cause is cast as an ordinary antecedent causal condition which happens to come after what it brings about. The whole thing has a most bizarre air, and the temptation to reject it out of hand becomes overwhelming.”^{cxiii}

Taylor sees no a priori grounds for privileging the atomistic model and its mechanistic form of explanation. In fact, he thinks it is wholly unwarranted to rely on a priori arguments at all to determine, either for or against, the place of teleological explanation in the human sciences. According to Taylor, even successfully establishing the incompatibility between mechanistic and teleological explanations through logical deduction does not itself rule out the *possibility* of a valid mechanistic science of behavior. Likewise, showing that teleological explanations are not necessarily ruled out does not establish that it is *de rigueur* for human scientific inquiry. Taylor thinks we need to start afresh and undertake proper inquiry into the matter, and proper inquiry for him is to examine the empirical evidence. According to Taylor, we must look to the empirical sciences themselves to see whether behavior is better explained in teleological or mechanistic terms. He writes that the question of the role of teleological explanation “cannot be decided by epistemological fiat, by a rule to the effect that the evidence for teleological laws must be such that it can be stated by means of non-teleological laws.”^{cxiv} Trying to account for the regularities cited in teleological explanation in terms of non-teleological laws is merely “to close an empirical question with a logical clasp.”^{cxv} For Taylor, deciding whether teleological explanation is ruled out for the human sciences, whether the atomist requirement holds for explaining human phenomena in the way that he thinks it does for natural phenomena, is strictly an empirical matter.^{cxvi}

2.1.3 *By what criteria did Taylor think the dispute is resolved?*

Taylor thinks that the dispute between teleological and non-teleological or “peripheralist” explanation can be mediated by straightforward empiricist validity criteria, by “testing” both approaches against the phenomena.^{cxvii} Having clarified the types of correlations that each theory

posits, we should “test whether the regularities which hold of the phenomena are such that correlations of these [the peripheralist] types can be found or whether they are rather of the kind consonant with an explanation in terms of purpose.”^{cxviii} Taylor’s contention is that when we examine certain empirical phenomenon, we see that the scientific evidence provided by behaviourist research fails to support the hypothesis that the laws governing behavior are, in fact, mechanistic. He identifies and studies a field of phenomena, namely learning behavior, which he argues provides the empirical evidence that demonstrates the superiority of teleological explanation. The phenomenon of human and animal learning is one that any account of behavior would have to account for, which even behaviorists agree needs explaining. Taylor’s contention is that a teleological form of explanation can account for this phenomenon more adequately than peripheralist accounts can, exhibiting an asymmetrical capacity to explain the behavior at hand. Taylor pressed that when we seek to explain human behavior it is far more fruitful to do so by reference to desires, intentions, and other mental states, and the situations in which they arise, as ‘final’ causes of the behavior we are concerned with. As such, he argued that a teleological form of explanation is often incontrovertibly more adequate than peripheralist ones for explaining behavior in the human sciences. But of course the merit of Taylor’s claim will turn entirely on what exactly counts as “more adequate.”

Why can we not account for learning behavior in the way that behaviorists hope to do, by linking environment and behavior, stimuli and response, and establish correlations between learning history and post-learning behavior? According to Taylor, no rule or formulation can account for the relation between learning history and post-learning behavior because “no finite list of directions can express what is learned” due to insight, improvisation, orientation, and other such non-linear, non-contingent elements inherent to the phenomenon.^{cxix} He thought that the behavior and actions observable in human and animate beings exhibited purpose, intentionality, improvisation, orientation, and insight quite unlike movements defined by efficient causation between contingently related factors. Moreover, Taylor thinks that if, as required by peripheralist accounts, correlations between environment and behavior are such that the response must be defined in terms of goals or achievement, then “a notion like ‘action’ seems to be indispensable here.”^{cxx} What behaviorists need but fail to do in order to explain learning behavior is introduce a range of notions “connected with the way the animals see the situation or some analogous range.”^{cxxi} Thus, although peripheralist accounts do attempt to offer explanations of phenomena like learning, Taylor’s claim is that their accounts rely on concepts which are incompatible with their own strictly peripheralist outlook. For Taylor, certain phenomena like learning behavior illustrate how peripheralist accounts end up being self-contradictory and ad hoc. The superiority of teleological explanation rests on this, its asymmetrical capacity to explain far more adequately, a range of phenomena that both sides agree must be explained. Taylor’s claim is that the order visible in animate behavior is better accounted for in terms of teleological explanations, in terms of final causes, because that is the most basic. To account for the order visible in animate behavior by teleological explanation requires no other laws to explain the phenomenon in question, unlike the way Taylor argues peripheralist accounts do. The critical aspect of Taylor’s claim is that even if he grants behaviorists some rudimentary empiricist criteria and agrees on the phenomena that needs explaining, behaviorist theories fall short of meeting their very own validity criteria and fail to account for the phenomenon on their own terms.

It is important to note that Taylor was not explicitly addressing some intrinsic character or given ontological ‘status’ of animate behavior on which to argue for the distinctive place of teleology in the human sciences and decide the debate in favor of anti-naturalists. While his claim about the “better fit” of teleological explanation is undeniably a gesture toward appealing to the nature of the

phenomenon itself, he clearly stops short of advancing express ontological claims about the distinctiveness of the subject matter in the human sciences. He writes, somewhat enigmatically, that this ‘principle of asymmetry’^{cxiii} also tells us what kind of subject matter is in question, by defining the type of event that requires explanation, and by inference which type of explanation is more appropriate to it. His view of the principle of asymmetry as the relevant criterion to judge between the two sides makes clear that Taylor is far more interested, at this early stage, to try to engage his peripheralist opponents from within their own territory, on grounds of empirical phenomena that are more or less internal to their empiricist view. [*** “more or less” because how his own validity criteria for phenomena compares with behaviorists’ remains to be seen, see 2.1.6.] We can see how Taylor avoids directly appealing to ontological claims, which his naturalist opponents would either reject outright or simply not engage with. He focuses on phenomena to show only that peripheralist accounts cannot explain them using their own mechanistic explanatory laws without self-contradiction and inconsistency. Throughout his early writings on the variety of scientific languages Taylor perseverates that even on their own empiricist terms behaviorist and other peripheralist approaches fail to produce adequate accounts of the phenomena they study. It is unclear, however, to what extent, even at this early stage, Taylor’s critique can remain entirely agnostic on the question of what the subject matter of the human sciences is like. In particular, when Taylor further charges that behaviorists fail to make sense of the relevant phenomena, he is already suggesting that something more is wrong with peripheralist accounts of behavior than mere inconsistency in their scientific language.

2.1.4 *Why have mechanistic explanations been preferred in the human sciences?*

If mechanistic models are so misleading for research in the human sciences then how have behaviorism and cognate approaches in the human sciences managed to retain their currency in spite of all of their shortcomings? To explain the glaring paradox Taylor finds in the unwarranted prominence of mechanistic theories he calls our attention to a powerful view of epistemology, an empiricist theory of knowledge and experience and its positivistic theory of knowledge, as standing behind the behaviorist project, to which he attributes its steadfast grip over the human sciences. Taylor charges that behaviorism has neither argued for its empiricist and positivist premises nor established their truth. And to the extent that its epistemology goes unargued for, behaviorism, for him, rests on a dogma. In fact, no argument in favor of empiricist epistemology or logical positivism will suffice for Taylor since he finds its various inroads from the natural to the human sciences on the whole indefensible. Section 2.2 of this chapter examines in greater detail how exactly Taylor thinks this empiricist epistemological outlook has continued to underwrite the major modernist scientific projects of our day. But what needs mentioning here, in short, is how Taylor early on saw the grand epistemological tradition to be defective for human scientific inquiry: He took issue with the positivist view of knowledge exclusively as verification through procedures, which was necessary because of the empiricist drive toward objectivity and neutrality in scientific explanation.

Taylor views the scientific methods and approaches in the natural sciences as a “purged” language, purged so as to consist of the employment of causal relations between atomized units for law-like uniformities. He sees this purge as having been tremendously useful in the natural sciences, as fostering our extended knowledge of and power to change our environment. In a separate article published before the publication of his dissertation Taylor writes, “But we can say that scientific language has made possible a knowledge about our world which goes way beyond what we can understand by “analogy” with our own behaviour, i.e. basically the kind of thing we describe in

statements of causal relation.”^{cxviii} What is problematic for Taylor, what he accuses behaviorists of, is failing to understand that there has been this purge in the domain of natural sciences, the “purification of ordinary language which results in scientific language.”^{cxviii} This problem arises when a purged scientific language stratum is misapplied to an everyday or ordinary language stratum, or vice versa. The aim of Taylor’s dissertation was to show how the misapplication of an empiricist theory of knowledge has categorically, but illegitimately, ruled out teleological explanation within the human sciences because the latter simply could not be verifiable in the way that an empiricist epistemology requires. Taylor examines behaviorist attempts at reformulating teleological correlations into non-teleological terms and finds them necessarily reductivist and thus fatally flawed. Purposes, goals - the sake of which something happens – are not observable as antecedent entities, what behaviorism in effect requires. And of course if what behaviorism purports to be antecedent entities are not actually observable as such, it would be impossible on the empiricist view to verify explanations that allege to identify them. Only on the assumption that purposes feature as efficient causes of mechanistic explanations do they take on occult non-observable characteristics. And as we already saw Taylor thinks that this objection to teleological explanation for human scientific inquiry rests on a fundamental misunderstanding of ‘final’ for ‘efficient’ causation because the purpose invoked in a teleological explanation is not a distinct entity that functions as a contingently related antecedent.^{cxv} For Taylor, the purpose is the end, the final cause, which does explanatory work precisely because of the way it captures the inherent tendency of the system in question towards it.

2.1.5 *What kind of critique is Taylor launching against his opponents?*

Regarding the place of teleological explanation in human scientific inquiry, Taylor’s arguments imply that even if behaviorism had been explicit about its epistemological motivation, more than an appeal to empiricist epistemology was necessary to justify the abandonment of teleological explanation in human scientific inquiry. That he thought so follows from his own aim to direct attention to empirical phenomena that decidedly calls empiricist approaches into question. By pointing to phenomena such as learning Taylor believed to have successfully provided empirical evidence that demonstrates there is good reason to challenge the well-established assumption that *all* inquiry in the human sciences should be modeled on that of the natural sciences. And yet, Taylor’s charge that behaviorists fail to make sense of the relevant phenomena is already to suggest that much more is wrong with peripheralist accounts of behavior than mere inconsistency in their scientific language. Implicit in this line of criticism that Taylor employs is the claim that the phenomena itself somehow eludes peripheralist scientific languages, but is in fact captured by teleological ones. Even if in his early days Taylor wanted to make his stance against naturalism strictly on empirical grounds, his claim about the empirical phenomena itself is to point to something more. Taylor views his own success as having marshaled the empirical evidence to show that animate organisms actually do exhibit some special properties, regardless of formulation, that non-purposive explanations cannot account for. As such, this seems to suggest that much more may be at stake in Taylor’s critique than was initially stated in his analysis.

What *is* stated and thus evident is the extremely tentative nature of Taylor’s own conclusions about the place of teleological explanation in the human sciences. Strategically or not, Taylor is cautious not to jump from the weaker, only negative, claim that mechanistic explanation cannot account for all empirical phenomena in the human and animal world to a much stronger, positive claim that “animate beings must be given a different status from inanimate things such that their behavior can only be explained in terms of purpose.”^{cxvii} He explicitly pulls away from the stronger

ontological claim about human behavior, and refrains from claiming any special status of animate behavior on which to decide the debate between naturalists and anti-naturalists. Taylor concludes his study by acknowledging that he has not blocked the question present all along from the outset—whether animate beings have a different status from inanimate objects – but he thinks, in fact, that no conclusive affirmative answer can ever be given about the ontological status of subjects of inquiry. He writes that such definitive “final positive answer” would require demonstrating the “negative existential statement; that there is no mode of explanation which eschews concepts involving intentionality which will be adequate to that range of behavior which we now account for by such concepts as ‘action’ and ‘desire’.”^{cxxvii} Thus, in his first book, while Taylor is confident that he has successfully established the inadequacy of a certain range of theories for their own explanatory aims, he does not view his work to have decided the issue because the theories he has examined do not exhaust the range of *possible* non-teleological explanations.^{cxxviii} He even explicitly makes reference to the other kinds of “more complex” theories, e.g. “centralist neurophysiological theories, and ...the biochemical” that remain to be considered, explicitly leaving open the possibility that we might find some non-teleological explanation that can and does adequately account for animate phenomena on empirical grounds.

That Taylor persisted, early on, in avoiding ontological issues is also apparent from his other writings around the same time. In his 1959 article called “Ontology”, he elaborates what he specifically took to be the *unanswerability* of ontological questions. He saw such questions as arising when having made the distinction between different language strata - having clarified the logic of the different terms, scientific or ordinary language – we find that each presupposes a “world” such that the things and events presupposed by one language stratum cannot find a place in the other. He elaborates the presuppositions of the language we use when we talk about the meaning-laden behavior of sentient beings as opposed to natural processes and the movements of inanimate objects. The trouble, as Taylor sees it, is that although persons and animate beings are also material objects that move, act, and take part in events in the world, “our behavior or talk cannot be construed as dealing with natural processes or events, or natural processes and events plus something “more”, but that it presupposes a different kind of thing, or event, heterogeneous to the kind of thing or event spoken of in M-language. And this is at the root of our ontological problem.”^{cxxix} For Taylor, the ontological commitments of each language stratum are distinct, which can make them clash with those of others, thereby creating a ‘*gap*’ that has to do with the relation of different language strata to each other. Taylor thinks that although we in our advanced civilization can not help but experience such gaps, the ontological problems we face are not really problems at all. They only arise because we pose them as such to ourselves when we reflect on our language from the vantage point of one or another stratum.^{cxxxx}

But what is it about the distinct presuppositions of our language that make them appear unable to be joined? And what does it mean to say that questions addressing such gaps are unanswerable? Taylor simply asserts their unanswerability by stating how they arise but says nothing further to tell us what he thinks we should make of such ontological gaps. Should we view them to imply that our language, no matter which stratum we are concerned with, is always limited in some sense, and thus capable of delivering to us only an indecipherably partial fragment of what it refers to independently of the way it “captures” them? Or should we view such gaps as nothing more than the excess bewitching affect that our language necessarily has on us, when otherwise and for the most part our languages usefully work and make fine sense in their relative domains? Indeed in the absence of elaboration, it seems possible to read Taylor both ways here. In several places throughout this article, as already alluded to above, what he seems to be trying to get at is the

difference in kind of the things our language is about, quite prior to language, as if there are language-independent entities somehow *behind* them, which the human and the natural sciences, respectively, study through different languages. For instance he writes, “the usual sense of the word “behavior” carries this force, we are talking about the kind of thing which has meaning, and this is one of the points that differentiated it from natural processes and events.”^{cxxxix} And yet, Taylor says that the character of each language stratum is a contingent matter, that is, there is no necessary reason why each stratum is the way it is. Taylor wants to diffuse the status of so-called “metaphysical” statements about ontology by claiming that we literally cannot return to a unity of our language strata, a kind of “pre-objective world”, which is to imply that we are always inside our language, with the caveat that he thinks we do manage to make non-logical leaps and “catch-on” to new languages.^{cxxxii} Taylor himself gives a nod to these two ways of reading the issue when he writes, “in particular much of what has been called materialism and idealism has arisen in part from a search for the “real” language in which to talk about man, or from a choice and justification of one of the existing languages as the “real” language.”^{cxxxiii} While his statement of the unanswerability of such questions seems to signal his ambivalence between the two readings, what becomes evident is his leaning toward the first view, that there is a sense in which our language can get it wrong, not merely fail to be useful, but fail in a far deeper sense to get it *right*. Even his statement of the contingency of our language strata, which he repeatedly calls our attention to, is couched in terms of there being something pushing back on them, something about which we might find one or another language can “teach us more.”^{cxxxiv}

In line with the argument of his dissertation, however, Taylor remains decidedly agnostic about the a priori correct, real, or true language to invoke in the human sciences. His stated thesis is that certain empirical phenomena do appear to be more adequately made sense of through a certain language stratum along with the particular ontological commitments of that language, but we would do well to keep a distinction between them rather than try to run them together, or seek to find the “real language”, which only leads to ontological questions that can not be answered. He explicitly attacks both Logical Positivism and ordinary language theory for doing just this.^{cxxxv} In fact he attributes most of the problems each has had with the other to a basic failure to recognize the ontological gap. Even while Taylor does not offer an account of what this gap is, or any reasons as to why we should accept it, he faults both sides for wrongly attempting to do away with it.^{cxxxvi} Elsewhere, in another article published around the same time, called “Mind-Body Identity, A Side Issue?”, Taylor puts the same point slightly differently. “For a range of phenomena which can be described at more than one level and in more than one mode of classification, it cannot be determined a priori which level will yield explanations of the phenomena which will enable us to predict and control them, or which level will yield the most fruitful explanations. Indeed, a large part of the slow and difficult progress of science in all domains has consisted in the discovery of the key concepts in which explanatory laws can be couched. To leap over this stage of inquiry by a priori fiat is no more possible in the sciences of behavior than it is in natural science.”^{cxxxvii} Taylor is insisting in yet another way on there being only empirical grounds for judging the appropriateness between different kinds of languages for explaining a phenomenon. In a discussion about materialism he writes that “we can talk usefully about a given set of phenomena in concepts of different ranges, belonging to different modes of classification, between which there may be no exact correspondence, without denying that one range yields laws which are far richer in explanatory force than the others... Even granting the case of materialism in both (1) and (2), granting thus that we can discover a complete explanation for behavior on the physiological level, and that mental events are not independent of the physiological but susceptible of explanation themselves in physiological terms, it still may be that we can discover no correlations linking given mental events

to the occurrence of even a finite disjunction of physiological states. Whether this is so or not is a matter for detailed empirical discovery, even granting the materialist framework.”^{cxviii}

Thus, Taylor’s early anti-naturalist stance has to strain to keep a critique of an immanent kind with respect to naturalist approaches in the human sciences such as behaviorism. Taylor’s early inability to make the stronger ontological thesis speaks to a genuine unwillingness on his part at that time to engage in a deeper dispute with naturalists about the specific ontological commitments of their scientific views. Hence in his dissertation, Taylor instead challenged behaviorism’s epistemological assumptions by claiming that their view of the science of behavior – as one whose propositions can be inter-subjectively verified – itself rests on certain propositions in epistemology and the philosophy of mind that are far from self-evident, which make the conclusions drawn from them about “data language” highly dubious. Taylor never himself claimed to be rejecting behaviorism’s drive toward defending the very possibility of a science of behavior, in particular one that would actually be capable of adequately accounting for the range of empirical phenomena it purports to be concerned with. He wanted only to clarify and defend which direction we should proceed in in order to develop such a science.^{cxviii}

2.1.6 *Does Taylor’s early critique of naturalism succeed?*

The success of Taylor’s early critique of naturalism turns, of course, on what he then took “more adequate” to mean when it came to teleological explanations and their capacity to explain animate behavior. Throughout his early writings, the criteria by which Taylor thought we should come to see the validity of non-mechanistic, teleological explanations of human behavior was consistently empirical, challenging behaviorism’s ability to explain the empirical phenomena that they too believed their mechanistic science to be accounting for. His stance against behaviorism’s assumptions of natural science-style explanatory laws in the human sciences was justified strictly on grounds of empirical evidence, that is, on the kinds of explanatory laws we should invoke to explain certain phenomena that both sides in the dispute can agree on. This led him to argue that as a form of explanation, teleological kinds need not be ruled out for the human sciences – especially when empirical phenomena in fact press their necessity – simply because they are, he clearly espouses, inadequate and unsuitable for explaining occurrences in the natural world.

As already alluded to above at the end of 2.1.3, Taylor’s pointing to empirical evidence such as the phenomenon of learning is on the one hand, an appeal to empiricist criteria about the object of study that are *shared* with his behaviorist opponents. On the other hand, it is also a claim about how his opponents’ criteria keep them from properly making sense of the relevant phenomena, in contrast to the asymmetrical capacity of teleological explanation to mediate better or “fit” more adequately the phenomenon. As such, it is unclear to what extent Taylor’s early critique of behaviorism was compatible with empiricist style approaches to explanation giving, in some sense, even while it was meant to undermine the wholesale assumption of logical empiricist and positivistic approaches. It is one thing to say that empirical phenomena like learning somehow elude scientific formulation. And it is quite another claim altogether to assert that the phenomenon eludes scientific formulation of a peripheralist kind. Taylor can be read as invoking some empiricist criteria, perhaps even implicitly employing correspondence criteria concerning the phenomenon under study, in arguing that the superiority of teleological explanation lay in the fact that phenomena like learning itself actually points toward an explanation in terms of purpose. Had Taylor followed through his empirical defense of the need for a distinction between the natural and human sciences by offering a constructive elaboration of how exactly we should go about securing the relevant categories of

“purpose” or “intentionality”, we might be able to judge to what extent, if at all, there is a tension between Taylor’s own arguments about empirical phenomena and the empiricist approaches he targets.

Alas, Taylor’s strategy at this stage was not to elaborate what the scientific implications would be for proceeding in the human sciences along the alternative model of explanation he has in mind for such phenomena. He moved instead to try to show why behaviorism could only misread, and thereby misunderstand, its subject matter. Thus, the worry remains, whether Taylor’s early arguments can withstand his own charge against behaviorism’s way of characterizing positive phenomena. Without further elaboration from Taylor of the distinct ontological categories that he thinks various phenomena can be said to fall into and how we might know the difference, it is yet unclear whether he can fully carry off his rejection of the encroachment of an empiricist epistemological outlook on the human sciences as an internal critique. As such, a more profound shortcoming might be alleged against Taylor’s early critique of naturalism in that it is rather incomplete on its own terms. To show naturalism’s ruling out of teleological explanation for the human sciences as unfounded due to its asymmetrical capacity better to explain the empirical phenomena we are concerned with it seems Taylor would have to explicate how this more appropriate alternative manner of inquiry into such phenomena might be carried out. The conclusions reached in the *Explanation of Behavior*, however, appear quite limited in that its implications for a constructive philosophical anthropology, which would secure the category of ‘purpose’ or ‘intentionality’ for the human sciences, are left entirely undeveloped there.

As almost no one now subscribes to behaviorism in the human sciences, much of Taylor’s early scientific critique might seem to be of antiquated interest. Yet, the structure of Taylor’s initial argument is still worth getting into focus for a couple of reasons: First, while behaviorism has largely been widely discounted, the belief that the laws governing human behavior *must* be mechanistic in form has very much remained alive in the study of politics. As such, not only has it been a key concern for Taylor but one that has grown in intensity and evolved in scope throughout his career. Second, as much as Taylor’s doctoral thesis was about behaviorism narrowly defined, it was also about the relationship between scientific explanation and conceptual analysis, which becomes of principal interest to Taylor throughout his later writings.

2.2 Overcoming Epistemology

In order to understand Taylor’s full thesis about why the natural and the human sciences should be viewed as distinct, we can not stop with his initial arguments justifying the comparative superiority of teleological explanations for human scientific inquiry. What began as Taylor’s internal critique of behaviorism, against the claims of peripheralist approaches to explain adequately the phenomena they themselves are concerned with, in fact, already suggests the direction in which he subsequently goes to develop his challenge of the legitimacy of naturalist modes of inquiry in the human sciences across the board. Taylor’s early claim was that even as behaviorists purported to offer explanatory accounts of empirical phenomena, the asymmetrical capacity to explain phenomena the human sciences are concerned with lay squarely in favor of teleological explanations. Following the publication of his doctoral dissertation, his writings reveal a marked shift in the way he views the disagreement between naturalists and anti-naturalists on the human sciences. What makes for the apparent shift in Taylor’s defense of anti-naturalism is the subsequent move in his target away from the *particular* naturalistic modes in the human sciences towards a deeper

epistemological motivation he came to see as underpinning them all. In fact, all discussion of “teleological explanation” or empirical phenomena that secure the role of explanation by purpose has quickly and entirely dropped out of his later writings. Both volumes of his *Philosophical Papers*, entitled “*Human Agency and Language*” and “*Philosophy and the Human Sciences*”, which include only essays penned after his dissertation, evidence a move in his thinking towards making explicit claims about ontology, appeals to the nature of what the human sciences study as distinct from that which the natural sciences do. In the introductory note to the volumes he openly propounds the position that naturalism has to be more than just a view about scientific language. He recounts the admittedly diverse list of theories he once bagged under the umbrella category of naturalist approaches as being inappropriate for the human sciences, but adumbrates how it is their shared “metaphysical motivation” that he is now most interested to trace out.

He writes, “in fact the motivation is many-faceted, but one way of defining it is via the paradigm status accorded to the natural sciences as the model for the sciences of man.”^{cxl} Taylor sees the dominant modernist perspectives that have emerged in the academy, both scientific and ethical, to be underwritten by the same theory of knowledge, ideas traceable back to the philosophy of Descartes and also Hume and Locke, as well as “canons which emerged in the seventeenth-century revolution in natural science.”^{cxli} Descartes articulated a view whereby we can come to grips first with the problem of knowledge from which we can then proceed to determine what we can legitimately say about other things, such as God and the world. Taylor takes modern philosophy’s overwhelming preoccupation with the problem of knowledge as evidenced in the assumptions of logical empiricism to accord epistemology pride of place. As he sees it logical empiricism and its theory of knowledge was not only a powerful movement in philosophy in the 20th century, but one that was immensely influential in the social sciences as well. Particularly in the Anglo-American tradition, the dominant view of scientific culture was that science gathered knowledge and philosophy contributed by its reflections concerning the validity of claims to knowledge.

2.2.1 *Why does the target of Taylor’s anti-naturalism change?*

Why has Taylor unmistakably turned his attention away from engaging the particular scientific approaches he finds defective? It seems naturalists such as behaviorists were not buying Taylor’s story about human phenomena and the poverty of their explanatory laws to give account of their subject matter. What he therefore thought necessary was explicitly to address what was keeping them from seeing both the phenomena and the merits of his empirical justification for his anti-naturalist stance. Taylor already began critiquing what he took to be the powerful empiricist persuasions in the human sciences. We have already met some of the ways that Taylor has characterized the wrongheadedness of the influence of the ‘metaphysical motivation’ that has been carried over from the natural to the human sciences. In line with his interrogation of the form of explanation that the behavioral sciences have taken, however, Taylor’s early views about why empiricist thinking was indefensible in the human sciences centered on the issue of the kinds of scientific language, the kinds of explanatory laws that empiricist assumptions generate. According to an empiricist epistemology a statement or doctrine must be empirically verifiable if it is to count as genuine knowledge. Scientific concepts and the research they underwrite should avoid reference to anything non-observable or that which cannot be verified through procedures that secure the conditions of truthfulness. In other words, the data that is studied should be describable in a language that is neutral with regard to the theories under observational test. Indeed, only if there is such a language will differing and perhaps competing “theory-languages” be testable for truthfulness. What Taylor initially found so problematic with the influence of an empiricist

epistemology in the human sciences was that it pre-judged the issue and *a priori* ruled out intentional or purposive explanation as having no explanatory purchase. In a 1970 article called “Explaining Action”, which grew out of his dissertation work, he again wrote that “the issue can never be satisfactorily decided because the alternatives are unjustifiably restricted.”^{cxlii}

Taylor has maintained from the beginning that an empiricist scientific orientation has worked remarkably well in the natural sciences precisely because what is needed to investigate into natural phenomena – events and processes that are indifferent to and wholly independent of how they are being perceived or studied – is scientific language involving only such bits of data that are verifiable and built upon incontestable facts. Applied to human behavior, however, an empiricist orientation about knowledge and an unthinking acceptance of positivistic standards of scientific discovery went seriously wrong according to Taylor. If a scientific language should not allow any room for disagreement on the meaning of the terms that make it up, where the subject matter is human behavior and the concepts involved do not directly designate observables, they would have to be “operationalized”, that is, translated through rules of “correspondence” to give them definite and unambiguous empirical content. To meet the empiricist requirement of a maximally clear and unambiguous observation language, behaviorism had to attempt to standardize psychological or emotion concepts like “believe”, “desire”, or “expect”, which are intentional or purposive and so are not incontestably verifiable, to *make* them amenable to empiricist standards of what could be verified as true. The standardizing of definitions was only necessary because of its mechanistic requirement that scientific research be conducted along S-R reinforcement theory lines which went hand in hand with its atomistic assumption of ‘efficient causation’ operating between variables. Thus, a major task of behaviorism was to show how psychological or emotion concepts ordinarily used to identify behavior can be translated into what Taylor calls a “physical thing” language with precise and unambiguous empirical content. Whether a given state of affairs is a case of believing, desiring, or expecting, is neither given by nor is it self-evident from observable facts, however, without some degree of interpretative input from the observer. But according to an empiricist theory of knowledge, genuine evidential data should not allow such input or ambiguity, because the whole point of scientific evidence is that it can decide between the different interpretations that scientists or observers might give to phenomena.

Behaviorism’s translation of psychological purpose terms into such standardized definitions revealed, for Taylor, a deeper problem with the influence of an empiricist epistemology for the human sciences because it necessarily involved revising the empirical content of the purpose concept and distorting its meaning. He writes that a “physical thing” definition has to “cut off the empirical implications of the concept at a certain point, and thus to alter its meaning.”^{cxliii} It had to, he argues, because there is no neutral, non-question-begging or interpretation-free, way of testing propositions that contain such concepts. We can already see that Taylor’s explicit challenge of the legitimacy of the form of the explanatory laws that the empiricist outlook motivated is intrinsically related to his further claim that behaviorists therefore failed properly to see the empirical phenomena they purported to be dealing with; and thus failed to see the greater explanatory force of teleological modes of explanation for explaining human phenomena. Modern behaviorism’s aim to identify various kinds of S-R connections on the basis of which any behavior could be explained presupposed the operation of only ‘efficient’ causal linkages crossing between mental states, objects of perception, and overt actions. But this efficient causation, in turn, only makes sense in the human sciences if we accept a form of Cartesian mind body dualism, what Taylor calls an “old-style empiricist picture of the subject and his behavior”^{cxliv}, according to which we interpret human behavior as a causal interaction between mind and body. Thus, in calling our attention to see the

provenance of a deeper motivation behind naturalistic approaches in the human sciences like behaviorism, Taylor argued that an empiricist epistemological outlook was essentially responsible for the inadequate and distorted accounts of phenomena that behaviorist research yielded.

As was already pointed out in section 2.1.6, the critical edge of Taylor's analysis here could not help but touch on what he clearly saw were deeper problems with behaviorism than mere inconsistency alone. Analogous to his treatment of behaviorism, Taylor saw that he could not restrict his treatment of the influences of the epistemological tradition he was targeting merely to questions of approaches to human scientific inquiry. Taylor articulates the shift in his own anti-naturalism this way, "the long experience of polemic against naturalist views on the epistemological level of the philosophy of science, the sense of futility when one fails to carry conviction against what seem ultimately absurd views, convinces me that the real issue lies elsewhere."^{cxlv} He attributed both what he saw as the tendency of naturalist approaches to distort human phenomena they study as well as the widespread acceptance that behaviorist and other naturalist approaches enjoyed in the human sciences, to the powerful sway of an empiricist epistemology which he saw as both giving rise to and legitimating the drive toward mechanistic accounts in the human sciences. To narrate fully the paradox he saw between behaviorism's mistakes and its unflinching appeal in the human sciences, Taylor decisively turned his attention away from particular naturalistic approaches in the human sciences to this broader empiricist epistemological outlook, which makes no division between epistemological and ontological commitments. To show how the orthodox view of the sciences of man in our academy has erroneously succumbed to empiricist thinking, Taylor saw that he needed further to probe the deeper ontological commitments attached to holding empiricist epistemological beliefs in the context of the human sciences.

While Taylor continues to find a variety of natural science-style approaches for explaining human action inadequate, his critique of naturalism strictly in terms of scientific language becomes almost wholly subsumed by his anti-naturalism more broadly concerning the ontology of human agency. For Taylor, the upshot of the first two empiricist persuasions in the human sciences - first, the requirement of "absoluteness", that we must give account of things in absolute terms and avoid 'anthropocentric properties' or subjectivity in the phenomena; and second, an atomistic reliance on "brute facts" or "brute data" on which to build an inter-subjectively verifiable science - is undeniably a third assumption, of a 'punctual' or instrumental view of human agency, a view of subjects as disengaged from the natural and social world. Taylor writes, "it [naturalism] ramifies also into an understanding of agency,"^{cxlvi} acknowledging in 1985, almost twenty years after the publication of his dissertation, that what started as a polemic against behaviorism all along could not but have direct implications for how we understand the distinctive ontological commitments presupposed by the sciences of man.

2.2.2 *What does Taylor now think the dispute between the two sides turns on?*

In his highly influential 1971 article "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man", first published less than 7 years after his dissertation, Taylor states plainly his view that epistemological questions are inextricably linked to ontological claims.^{cxlvii} He states that the dominant view of knowledge in the human sciences, based on a natural science standard of clarity and objectivity for an accurate representative account of what things objectively are, has resulted in assumptions and methods that are "hostile to a conduct of enquiry which is based on interpretation."^{cxlviii} Against this he argues for the essential role of hermeneutics in the human sciences on grounds of an ineliminable role of interpretation in human life. Taylor's anti-naturalism is now based on his view that the empiricist

requirement of absoluteness in the human sciences has direct and immediate bearing on how human agency and social life are conceived. He sees approaches in the human sciences that have attempted to ground scientific knowledge either by explicitly or implicitly ruling interpretation out of the sciences of man to have failed to grasp some of the most important features of human beings.^{cxlix} The empiricist direction to get beyond the hermeneutical circle was toward an ideal of a science of verification, relying on independent sense data and atomized brute facts that could then be taken unproblematically as objects of general laws. Verification gets grounded on the acquisition of brute-data whose validity cannot be questioned by offering a further interpretation.^{cl} Judgment, in turn, was to be grounded on inter-subjective criteria of falsification and non-arbitrary verification. Making fully explicit procedures on the input, in the form of neutral brute data, was to assure against appeals to intuition or interpretation. What makes this empiricist attempt to find an appeal beyond interpretation - which has been met and is appropriate in the natural sciences - so inappropriate for the human sciences, Taylor argues, is that in the latter area of inquiry the subject matter are themselves interpretations.

Taylor wants to demonstrate the centrality of interpretation to the human sciences. He defines interpretation as an attempt to make clear, to make sense of, an object of study. It presupposes sense, distinguishable from its expression, which is for or by a subject.^{cli} Having defined what interpretation is and what it presupposes, Taylor is in a position to ask whether it is central to the human sciences in such a way that a hermeneutical approach would be appropriate. At stake for Taylor in answering whether the sciences of man is hermeneutical or not is grasping the appropriate epistemology for the study of man, but this issue of the very notion of science is clearly now inseparable from a view of human and social ontology. Before proceeding, he pauses to ask “Why should we even pose the question whether the sciences of man are hermeneutical? What gives us the idea in the first place that men and their actions constitute an object or a series of objects which meet the conditions outlined above?” His response is that “on the phenomenological level or that of ordinary speech (and the two converge for the purposes of this argument) a certain notion of meaning has an essential place in the characterization of human behavior. This is the sense in which we speak of a situation, an action, a demand, a prospect having a certain meaning for a person.”^{clii} Taylor has now set up the debate between naturalists and anti-naturalists to turn on the proper view of human agency and the role that meanings ought to play in the human sciences.

In his 1980 article “Understanding in Human Science”^{cliii} Taylor continues in this vein, further clarifying the distinction between hermeneutic interpretation and scientific explanation. In reflecting on the historical trends in debates about the unity of scientific inquiry, he points out an intellectual shift starting in the 60’s and 70’s when logical empiricism came under attack from all directions.^{cliv} For many of Taylor’s contemporaries, the fall of logical empiricism and the positivist view of natural science it sustained entailed a radical reversal of the relationship between human and natural sciences. Previously, naturalists who advocated a continuity of explanation across object domains advanced a unity of science view under the “deductive-nomological” model of the natural sciences. Logical empiricists, namely positivists, took the “deductive-nomological” theory as the only legitimate method of proceeding in science, one that should hold without discrimination as to the object studied. On this account, to give a scientific explanation of any phenomenon meant showing that a statement describing it could be deduced from some true general law together with some statement of initial conditions. Naturalists stood in contrast to hermeneutic realists who saw a need for interpretive methods ontologically dependent on their subject matter. For hermeneutic realists, the special nature of the sciences of man meant that inquiry into them could proceed only by interpretation. With the fall of logical empiricism, Taylor views a radical shift in arguments for

the non-duality of scientific inquiry from the positivist outlook to a new thesis that stresses the way in which all science is entirely and equally hermeneutic. He writes, “This is an extraordinary reversal. Old-guard Diltheyans, their shoulders hunched from years-long resistance against the encroaching pressure of positivist natural science, suddenly pitch forward on their faces as all opposition ceases to the reign of universal hermeneutics.”^{clv} Taylor suggests that the demise of logical empiricism leaves untouched the more fundamental issue of dispute among naturalists and anti-naturalists. Thus, Taylor points the way towards an anti-naturalist position that maintains a distinction between human and natural sciences after the fall of logical empiricism.

While Taylor has long been critical of logical empiricism and the deductive-nomological model and has famously insisted on the central place of hermeneutics in the human sciences, he nonetheless thinks it wrong to equate all scientific inquiry under the single banner of hermeneutics. Taylor’s claim is that both varieties of the unity of science view, both physicalist and hermeneutic, are mistaken. He argues that the kind of understanding that has developed within the natural sciences, while apropos to understanding phenomena that occur in the natural world, is fundamentally different, in kind, from that which is required in the human sciences, where the aim is to understand human behavior and social action. Taylor’s claim about the different kinds of understanding appropriate to the natural and human sciences rests on a prior claim about the specialness of the latter’s subject matter, which “forbids us simply to carry over the method elaborated in natural science to the study of man.”^{clvi}

The distinction, for Taylor, hinges on the claim that the natural world exists independently of people’s perceptions or the meanings it may have for humans. As such, Taylor thinks it is appropriate, even necessary, to eschew all subject-related properties when investigating into natural phenomena.^{clvii} While Taylor argues that the traditional empiricist epistemology of the 17th and 18th centuries was fundamentally mistaken to try to separate observables from theoretical entities, he accepts that the requirement of “absoluteness” must be made in the natural sciences because a world “that exists independently of us human percipients should be understood in terms that reflect this”^{clviii}, in terms that are absolute. He attributes “the spectacular progress in our knowledge of nature”^{clix} to approaches in the natural sciences that aim to give “an account of the world as it is, independently of the meanings it might have for human subjects, or of how it figures in the experience of humans”^{clx} Taylor sees the social world, in contrast, what humans are and what they do to be thoroughly imbued with meanings such that no subject-independent account of them could possibly constitute an adequate explanation. Understanding in the human sciences, for Taylor, requires the exact opposite of what is required for the natural sciences in that it depends on grasping the subjective views of those studied. For Taylor, the subject-dependent nature of understanding in the human sciences, the need to grasp subjective viewpoints and articulate them in subject-related terms, is what carries the distinction between the natural and human sciences.^{clxi} What this means is that understanding in the human sciences takes applying to subjects the right “desirability characterizations,” that is, how a subject deems a relevant action, event, or thing desirable or not.^{clxii} Being able to apply desirability characterizations in the right way takes grasping how something is significant for the subject, how the subject perceives and qualitatively evaluates it. Taylor is careful to point out, however, that understanding doesn’t necessarily mean “sharing these emotions, aspirations, loathings, etc., but it does mean seeing the point of them, seeing what is here which could be aspired to, loathed, etc.”^{clxiii} As judgments of value, thus, desirability characterizations precisely violate the requirement of absoluteness and, for Taylor, “belong to a range of descriptors which lie outside what has been considered the limits of natural science.”^{clxiv} Thus, Taylor thinks

that the demise of logical empiricism as a philosophy of science still leaves the distinction between the natural and human sciences untouched.^{clxv}

Taylor defines the requirement of absoluteness as “the requirement to avoid subject-related terms.”^{clxvi} He tries to show why it is wrong-headed to insist on this requirement for the human sciences by describing what insisting on it would look like. In the human sciences we seek to understand people in their world “at least in part by reference to their interests, desires, aversions, aspirations, what they admire and despise, and so on.”^{clxvii} An absolute science of man would require us to use a language that avoided “characterizing the things that surround us in terms of experience-related properties.”^{clxviii} If we wanted to avoid subject-related terms in explaining their behavior, Taylor writes that we would have to “operate a split” between subjects as sites of experience and all of those things of the subject-independent world that subjects react and respond to. We would characterize our experience of things that impinge on us in absolute terms and identify our experience or reactions to them independently. The resulting explanation would give a neutral account of a thing, action, event, occurrence, and join it with the subject’s attitude toward it and thereby segregate reality and experience when, in fact, Taylor argues, the subject’s experience of things and the language through which he experiences them are essential to the object he experiences. So rather than properly couching our experience in terms of “the subject-related properties of the things desired, feared, admired, condemned, or whatever” when we employ the “canonical” split^{clxix} our experiences of things get couched in terms that are “intrinsic” to the subject.^{clxx} In other words, the subject-related properties of the things we experience get re-described as inherent to the subject, “purely in terms of their general direction, as pro-attitudes or con-attitudes to some state of affairs described in absolute terms.”^{clxxi} Taylor writes that this attempt to split our desirability description into absolute descriptions and “colorless reaction terms is very widespread in the sciences of man.”^{clxxii} From sociology to political science, the dominant trends in various disciplines have been to try to study the world in terms of neutral institutions and behavior on the one hand and on the other hand “culture” as a set of cognitive, or affective, or evaluative “orientations” of individuals to them.^{clxxiii} Wherever the ambition is for a value-free science, for neutrality, such split between reality and experience is being erroneously assumed or employed. Taylor recognizes the motivations scientists have toward neutrality – namely that it allows for “intersubjective agreement free from interpretive dispute.”^{clxxiv} The kind of naturalism Taylor is targeting here is misguided because it effectively leaves out the fuller, moral, concept of personhood that for him enables and supports genuine understanding of human practices.

2.2.3 *What are the ontological presuppositions of the scientific language Taylor thinks is appropriate to the human sciences?*

The focus of Taylor’s arguments about the unsuitableness of natural science techniques in the human sciences has decidedly shifted to attempts at articulating the nature of subjectivity and selfhood, what human beings are as essentially interpretive beings. In the same way as the reach of the empiricist outlook that Taylor sees bearing on the question of the ontology of personhood, the latter also, for Taylor, incorporates two orders of question that are intrinsically inseparable. One dimension is scientific in that it asks how human behavior might be explained. Taylor’s antinaturalist position, according to which there is a necessary distinction to be made between the natural and human sciences, now hinges on this very aspect. But this order of question is inextricably tied, he argues, to the other, the practical or ethical dimension, which asks what form a good human life might be [which is examined more closely in chapter 4].^{clxxv} Taylor’s preoccupation

has been with a metaphysical motivation whose pervasive reach, he thinks, renders futile the attempt to separate issues about human science from those about human agency, and thus for him, morality.

The view of selfhood that Taylor takes to be dominant in our modern culture is the “epistemologically grounded notion of the subject,” based loosely on 17th century British empiricist philosophy.^{clxxvi} This is a view of selfhood, particularly in the reification of the disengaged first-person singular self, which Taylor attributes to the founding figures of the modern epistemological tradition, i.e. Descartes and Locke.^{clxxvii} A Cartesian worldview assumes a stark distinction between the mind and body, a separation of inner consciousness from the external world. On this view, what marks out persons is consciousness as the power to frame representations of things out in the world clearly. Representation is assumed to be of independent objects, objects that exist in the world that do not depend in any way on someone’s consciousness or perception of it. The epistemological view assumes a *de rigueur* split between the subjective and objective. The objective world is independent of its being perceived and subjective awareness occurs separately in the mental realm of consciousness where the subject responds to sensations that impinge on it from the independent world outside. The subject comes to frame a depiction of something because the thing itself is taken to guide the framing, by providing the very standard for the depiction. This “representation” view takes a person to be a being that acts, who has goals that he or she endeavors to fulfill, whether those are ultimately given or arbitrarily chosen. Taylor writes that on the epistemological account, the superiority of man is taken to lie in the power to plan, to strategize, evaluate, and choose according to the goals possessed. The particularly human powers of evaluating and choosing involve instrumental reason, the value of which is tied to the clarity and complexity of computation in light of the given goals.^{clxxviii} Inasmuch as the representation account of personhood privileges the range of human features that is identified merely by a performance based criterion, Taylor thinks this is a rarified and skewed view of human agency. It insufficiently distinguishes the specialness of human beings from other animals, and machines for that matter, and ultimately fails to capture the most important aspects of what it means to be distinctively human. With his conception of man as self-interpreting beings Taylor wants to resist the reduction of experience to a merely subjective view on reality or an epiphenomenon. Taylor’s claim is that our interpretation of ourselves and our experiences is constitutive of what we are, and therefore cannot be considered as merely a view on reality, separable from it, which can be by-passed to understand reality.^{clxxix}

That interpretation is essential to human beings, for Taylor, involves multiple related claims about how human agency is intertwined with morality [which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4]. But it is worth noting in brief here what exactly he argues are certain essentially human capacities and capabilities such that despite how damaged they may be in any particular life, a life without them could not be judged to be human. These distinctively human qualities include, for Taylor, the possession of a sense of self, a notion of the future and the past, the ability to hold values, adopt life plans, and make choices.^{clxxx} What he thinks is special and distinctive about persons is that unlike any other form of life found in nature, as human beings we are self interpreting linguistic beings. Taylor’s view that human beings are self-interpreting animals is a theme that echoes widely in the late twentieth century, particularly with Heidegger’s view that interpretation is essential to human existence.^{clxxxi} Language also plays an essential role in personhood for Taylor since the activity of self-interpretation, the main distinctive quality that he attributes to human beings, is inextricable from the constitutive role that language plays in enabling us both to have and to express our self-interpretations. To call humans self-interpreting beings is, for Taylor, to see them as linguistic beings. More importantly, for Taylor, is his idea of “strong evaluation,” from which none of the essential features of personhood is separable.

Taylor sees strong evaluation as underlying all of those features that, when taken together, are what separates humans from machines or other inanimate objects and from mere animals, which he thinks also possess a kind of agency. Simply stated, strong evaluation is the ability to value the desires we have differently, to rank some of our desires as qualitatively higher or more worthy than others.^{clxxxii} Taylor takes the idea from Harry Frankfurt, who argued that what is essential to humans is not just the capacity to have desires of the 1st order, but the ability to form 2nd order desires, that is, the capacity to form desires about our desires. The essential feature of humans is the capacity for self-evaluation; it is the power to regard some of our desires as desirable and undesirable.^{clxxxiii} Taylor goes further than Frankfurt, however, to distinguish and contrast two broad kinds of evaluating when it comes to our desires: strong and weak evaluation. We engage in weak evaluation of our desires when we recognize which of our desires pulls most strongly and our concern is with what follows from their pursuit. On this account, for something to be judged as good, it is sufficient that it be desired. What is desirable is simply what is desired most strongly in relative terms, given the calculation of consequences, with no distinctions made between desires as to their worth. I engage in weak evaluation when I prefer taking the bus to work rather than driving my car for the money saved in gas and tolls over the convenience of getting there and back in less time. When we engage in strong evaluation, on the other hand, what is desirable is based on qualitative characterizations of our desires as to their worth. Taylor thinks that when we engage in strong evaluation our concern is not as much with the outcomes and the calculation of consequences as with the quality of our motivations. We assess our desires as higher or lower, noble or base, as integrative or fragmented, and our interpretations speak to how we see ourselves. To characterize desires in strong evaluation is to speak of them in terms of the kinds of quality of life they express and sustain. Taylor thinks that strong evaluation necessarily makes reference to a mode of life, a certain quality of personhood. A conflict between desires will, therefore, be deep, not merely contingent, because it will mean choosing between incommensurable kinds of life we might want to live and persons we think we are and want to be. I engage in strong evaluation when I weigh my desire to take public transportation to work rather than to drive my car because of the good I believe I am doing the environment by supporting mass transit and putting one fewer car on the road.

Taylor thinks that the main way in which we experience what is significant, meaningful, valuable, or important to us is through our feelings and emotions. Taylor thinks what it is to be human is brought out to us in the way that we hold and experience certain emotions. He says that our subject-referring emotions open us up to the domain of what it is to be human. Taylor makes three related claims about the character of self-interpretation and its necessity for personhood. The first is that many of our feelings, emotions, desires, and experienced motivations are essentially related to the objects or situations about which they are. Saying properly what they are like involves, he thinks, expressing or making explicit a judgment about the object they bear on.^{clxxxiv} He writes that describing properly what these emotions are like involves making explicit the sense of the situation they essentially incorporate. In other words, experiencing a given emotion involves experiencing our situation as being of a certain kind or having a certain property, a certain import. The second claim is that import terms are subject-referring. What Taylor is referring to as “import” is the relevance and importance something has to the desires or purposes or aspirations or feelings we have. And the third is that our subject-referring feelings are the basis of our understanding what it is to be human, because they incorporate a sense of what it is to be human, of what matters to us as human subjects.

For Taylor, picking out the import of a situation is not just to pick out *that* we experience a certain feeling in a situation but it is to take in what in a situation gives the grounds or basis for our feelings.^{clxxxv} Experiencing a given emotion involves experiencing our situation as bearing a certain import. The key point Taylor is making here is that it is not sufficient for the ascription of the import that I feel a particular way but rather the import is what gives the grounds or basis for the feeling. Thus Taylor thinks that we can, at times, be mistaken about experiencing emotions like shame or fear. We can experience such emotions irrationally, and can realize we've done so in a way that we cannot when it comes to other emotions like pain. Taylor's point is that saying what an emotion is like involves making explicit the import-ascription, a judgment which is experienced as holding the sense of the situation which it incorporates.^{clxxxvi} Taken together, these 3 claims show that Taylor takes self-interpretations to be neither strictly in the mind nor independent of it but rather quite inseparable from reality.

As linguistic animals, Taylor thinks that our motivations, desires, evaluations are not merely given to us, or fixed truths that we discover about ourselves, which we then employ language to express. Taylor's view of the relationship that human beings have to language is not merely instrumental. He views language as constitutive of human beings. We interpret ourselves and our self-interpretations are constituted by the articulations we come to accept of them. Taylor sees articulation here as self-interpretation, as attempts to formulate the experiences we have and our relationship to those experiences, formulated as such. He says that our feelings are intimately bound up with a process of articulation.^{clxxxvii} Our subject-referring feelings are constituted by the articulations we come to accept of them. We can describe our emotions by describing our situation only because we describe our situation in its significance for us.^{clxxxviii} He writes, "our attempts to formulate what we hold important must, like descriptions, strive to be faithful to something. But what they strive to be faithful to is not an independent object with a fixed degree and manner of evidence, but rather a largely inarticulate sense of what is of decisive importance. And articulation of this "object" tends to make it something different from what it was before."^{clxxxix} Taylor's view is that giving a certain articulation actually shapes our sense of what we desire or find important. He argues that our self-interpretations are partly constitutive of our experiences such that an altered description of our motivations and what we hold to be important is inseparable from a change in the motivation itself and our sense of what is important.^{cx} But this does not mean, for Taylor, that they are arbitrary, or that our self-interpretations make themselves true, which would entail that they are necessarily true, simply by fiat. Taylor argues that our self-interpretations can be more or less adequate, truthful, clairvoyant, or deluded. There is a getting it right and getting it wrong in articulation.^{cxci} Our self-understandings shape what we feel so even when they are wrong they can shape what it is they are wrong about. Thus, for Taylor, "what a given human life is an interpretation of cannot exist uninterpreted; for human emotion is only what it is refracted as in human language."^{cxcii} And human emotion is always an interpreted emotion, which is nevertheless seeking its adequate form. The self that is to be interpreted is essentially that of a being who self-interprets.

In this way, reflection, for Taylor, is not just a matter of registering the conclusion that something is more attractive to me. Rather, reflection and articulation is made possible by strong evaluation which provides a language of higher and lower, a vocabulary of worth. In strong evaluation we deploy a language of evaluative distinctions that are characterized contrastively. To express what is really desirable in the favored alternative we characterize it as better in some sense than the others. Taylor writes, "For in strong evaluation where we deploy a language of evaluative distinctions, the rejected desire is not so rejected because of some mere contingent or circumstantial conflict with another goal."^{cxci} As strong evaluators, humans have depth. Humans envisage their

alternatives through a richer language of worth, not simply defined by what they desire plus the calculation of consequences but defined for them also by contrastive qualitative characterizations as to their worth, by assessing which desires are worthier ones to have. Humans engage in reflection that is not just a matter of registering the conclusion that something is more attractive to us than another, but where we can articulate the higher desirability of something because we have a vocabulary of worth that enables us to articulate the superiority of one over the other. To develop a strongly evaluative language is to become more articulate about one's preferences. It also means being able to have a much deeper, more intense, experience of one's experiences and about oneself, which goes hand in hand with being able to characterize one's motivations and desires at greater depth. We can characterize our desires and motivations at greater depth by reflecting and articulating ourselves because strong evaluation is a condition for both.

The relevant bearing of Taylor's view of the nature of human agency for human scientific inquiry can be summarized in three aspects of his view of meanings, which I will call subjectivity, 2nd ordered-ness, and a kind of meaning holism. First is Taylor's view that meaning is for a subject, "it is not the meaning of the situation *in vacuo*, but its meaning for a subject, a specific subject, a group of subjects, or perhaps what its meaning is for a human subject as such (even though particular humans might be reproached with not admitting or realizing this)."^{cxiv} Taylor is pointing out that import terms presuppose there being subjects who can experience them as such. Insofar as import terms define a way in which our situation is of relevance to our purposes or desires, or aspirations, no sense can be given to an import term except in a world in which there are beings that are taken to have purposes. Taylor argues that properties that are subject-referring can only exist in a world in which there are subjects of experience.^{cxv} Taylor's second claim is that meaning is of something, "we can distinguish between a given element – situation, action, or whatever – and its meaning. But this is not to say that they are physically separable. Rather we are dealing with two descriptions of the element, in one of which it is characterized in terms of its meaning for the subject..."^{cxvi} Third, which is also regulative of each of the first two as well as the relationship between them, is Taylor's view of meaning holism, that things only have meaning in a field, that is, in relation to the meanings of other things, in that "there is no such thing as a single, unrelated meaningful element; and it means that changes in the other meanings in the field can involve changes in the given element."^{cxvii}

These three points about meanings can be illustrated by examining what Taylor, throughout his works, has referred to as 'experiential meanings', 'import terms,' 'emotion concepts,' 'desirability characterizations,' and elsewhere even as an aspect of 'strong evaluation'.^{cxviii} To say that human beings are interpretive, for Taylor, means that "already to be a living agent is to experience one's situation in terms of certain meanings; and this in a sense can be thought of as a sort of proto-interpretation".^{cxix} But importantly for him, our interpretive nature also means that our experiences and the language we use to describe them are also related. An agent's proto-interpretation is in turn interpreted and shaped by the language in which the agent lives meanings. In ordinary consciousness and speech about our actions what we do is characterized by the purposes we seek and we explain our actions and behavior by reference to our desires, feelings, and emotions. The vocabulary used to define the meanings things have for us is linked to both the vocabulary used to describe our feeling and that used to describe our goals. He uses an example of an emotion word like shame, to show that our understanding of these terms move in a hermeneutical circle.^{cc} Taylor argues that the meanings people hold, the situations or events they encounter, the feelings and emotions they experience, and the language used to describe these are inextricably tied together.^{cci}

Taylor sees experiential meanings as comprised of a complex relationship between language, experience, and situation or event. He finds both the “representative”, and its opposite the “subjectivist”, models of the relationship between language, experience, and situation to be inadequate because they are overly simplistic, failing to appreciate the way these are actually thoroughly interdependent in human consciousness and action. It follows from the representation view of knowledge, and by extension personhood, which is meant to capture things as they are in themselves, that what is meant to be captured does not change in its formulation. Since the representation view is incapable of accounting for the range of formulations that do undergo change in their articulation Taylor thinks that as a view about personhood it is incapable of accounting for the ways that things have significance for agents, where things matter to a human subject in an original way. This representative or ‘correspondence’ model takes our vocabulary as simply describing pre-existing feelings. Taylor wants us to see that in contrast we often find that achieving a more sophisticated vocabulary of emotions makes not just our descriptions of our emotional life but our actual experience of the emotions more sophisticated. The representative model is incapable of explaining how an increased ability to identify our emotions actually alters our ability to feel emotions.

The problem that Taylor sees with the representative view of human consciousness is that precisely what he takes to be the “peculiarly human” ends, motivations, and emotions are the very kinds of things that he argues are in part constituted in their formulation or articulation. Taylor’s view of essentially human feelings and emotions holds that their formulation and articulation cannot leave them unchanged, something the correspondence view disallows. The representation view is incapable of recognizing subject-dependent claims involving judgments of value, which for Taylor, constitute that range of formulations most crucial to human consciousness. Unlike emotions like danger, fear, or hunger, such reflexive formulations include feelings of shame, guilt, pride, remorse, in short, a sense of morality. The other inadequate model Taylor calls our attention to is the subjectivist one, or what he refers to as the view that “thinking makes it so.” This model is the direct opposite of the representative one in that it takes our emotions to be the result of the definitions we come up with and project outward. Taylor thinks we should see that this is easily dismissed if we agree with him that we cannot force just any definition on our emotions, but that when we strive to be clear about our feelings, we often judge some of the definitions we give to be delusional and in some sense, inauthentic. Taylor repeatedly states how our way of speaking is at least in part dictated, if not influenced, by what it is we are speaking of, both the kind of situation and the feelings involved. He wants us to see that a more complex combination of the two views is the proper way of thinking about the relationship: “There is such a thing as self-lucidity, which points us to a correspondence view; but the achievement of such lucidity means moral change, that is, it changes the object known.”^{ccii}

Taylor points our attention to the related issue of the philosophy of language he views as fundamental to the question of what is required of the human sciences. He wants to trace how divergent philosophies of language and the theories of meaning related to them are inseparable from the ways in which he sees the human sciences have come to be conceived and practiced. In particular, he contrasts a more hermeneutical view of language with the earlier epistemological views he attributes to Hobbes and Locke whereby language was seen instrumentally and meanings were understood in terms of depiction and representation of the world. “By contrast a hermeneutical view requires a very different conception. If we are partly constituted by our self-understanding, and this in turn can be very different according to the various languages which articulate for us a background of distinctions of worth, then language does not only serve to *depict* ourselves and the

world, it also helps *constitute* our lives.”^{cciii} To this end Taylor studies Herder and Humboldt in their critique of subjectivism, as well as Structuralist and post-Structuralist theories in their critique of “designative” views. Taylor’s theory of interpretation is such that an articulation of something does not leave it unchanged. Language is not merely used by us instrumentally to depict but it also “articulates and makes things manifest, and in so doing helps shape our form of life.”^{cciv}

Taylor is insisting that for all these reasons there has to be a double hermeneutic at work in the study of human and social phenomena unlike in the natural sciences, due directly to the ontological features he ascribes to persons as self-interpreting beings. Humans are self-interpreting animals, such that the self he interprets is itself an interpretation embedded in a stream of action.^{ccv} If humans are essentially interpretive creatures then, what must be interpreted in order to be understood and explained – their actions, behavior, and practices – are themselves interpretations. Attempts to explain the human world cannot but take such meanings into account.

2.2.4 *What kind of critique is Taylor now making against his opponents?*

In criticizing the epistemological model of personhood in favor of the significance one, Taylor’s own arguments about the proper sciences of man becomes apparent. We saw at length in Taylor’s earlier work what he thought of various trends in behavioral psychology that modeled themselves to fit the empiricist paradigm.^{ccvi} In his 1971 article, Taylor focuses on trends in the study of politics that seem to him to exhibit this kind of misguided empiricist thinking, as a specific case to convince us that what is needed is an alternative, hermeneutical, sciences of man. Taylor addresses how he sees the study of politics following in the empiricist tradition in the various ways it aims to build a science of politics on “brute data” verifiable facts that are beyond interpretive dispute. He thinks the dominant trends in political science distort the meanings that agents understand, hold, and which motivate their political action – what no one, least of all political scientists, dispute is important for the study of political behavior – in redescribing them into its own categorical principles. These categories typically work to separate brute data identifiable facts and structures, i.e. correlations between certain institutions, procedures, and actions, from the psychological properties of individuals, these being beliefs, affective reactions, and evaluations. This allows for further correlations to be made between the two orders of reality: “for example, that certain beliefs go along with certain acts, certain values with certain institutions, and so on.”^{ccvii} In this way, a science of politics is built by treating meanings as a subjective reality that agents make or have in relation to a social reality that can only be made up of brute data. Moreover, that an agent holds a belief, opinion, or attitude is also treated as a brute datum. Thus actions and beliefs get identified and correlated so that both reality and the subjective meanings that it has for agents are treated as to be free from interpretation, and thus seemingly free from interpretive dispute.

The major problem Taylor sees with employing such categorical principles was that it leads to the exclusion of “intersubjective meanings” from political analysis, by disallowing the validity of descriptions of social reality in terms of meanings, rather than strictly in terms of brute data. Taylor extends his analysis of the constitutive relationship of language to social reality in this context, where social reality is the common interpretive meanings and languages that are embedded in social practices. His view of the intrinsic relationship between language and meanings is that they are also constitutive of social practices, even in areas where there are no clearly defined rules governing what is or is not appropriate action.^{ccviii} Taylor’s claim is that there are constitutive distinctions, constitutive ranges of language which are inseparable from certain practices and commonly held meanings. Social realities are practices, which cannot be identified in abstraction from the language

we use to describe them, or invoke them, or carry them out. As Taylor sees it, social reality and the language of description of that social reality are more than mutually interdependent – the language is constitutive of the reality, essential to its being the kind of reality it is. Thus to treat meanings as residing strictly in the subjective realm, of what is occurring in the mind of the agent, separated from that which the meaning is about, is to misunderstand social reality and the inter-subjective meanings that constitute that reality. Intersubjective meanings, for Taylor, are more than held in the minds of subjects, they are the common property of the society, and they are the background to all social action, because they are constitutive of the social matrix in which all individuals find themselves and act.^{ccix} Because they are rooted in the social practice and not the property of individual minds, intersubjective meanings are not a matter of convergence of beliefs but rather the condition for such convergence or lack thereof; it is the shared language, common terms of reference and meanings needed for both convergence and a profound cleavage of opinions.

Therefore, the dominant empiricist mode in political science to re-describe intersubjective meanings in terms that would make them brute data identifiable is to treat them as subjectivist views which are in causal interaction with a social reality made up of brute data, rather than as meanings that actually constitute the social practices. But Taylor's critique of political science goes further than this. Taylor's ontological view of social reality as social practices allows him to speak of intersubjective meanings in two ways: meanings that are shared between individuals as in a convergence of individual preferences and opinions, but meanings also as values and "notions of what is significant" which are in the "common reference world" not just that they are held by everyone but that its being shared is a collective act. He sees this exclusion of the communal values as another manifestation of an empiricist epistemology that can only understand the common world as what is in all the individual worlds.^{ccx} Taylor thinks that because the categorical principles of mainstream political science are rooted in the tradition of empiricist epistemology which limits it to a science based on verification, it ultimately prevents us from being able to come to grips with the "important problems of our day which should be the object of political science."^{ccxi}

What is needed, Taylor argues, is an interpretive science of man to match the interpretive nature of its subject matter.^{ccxii} For Taylor, human action and social practices are thoroughly imbued with meanings that cannot be divorced from the subjective views of those who hold them. Taylor says of a science based on hermeneutics that "it would not be founded on brute data; its most primitive data would be readings of meanings, and its object would have the three properties mentioned above: the meanings are for a subject in a field or fields; they are moreover meanings which are partially constituted by self-definitions, which are in this sense already interpretations, and which can thus be re-expressed or made explicit by a science of politics. In our case, the subject may be a society or community; but the inter-subjective meanings, as we saw, embody a certain self-definition, a vision of the agent and his society, which is that of the society or community."^{ccxiii} But skeptics of the very notion of a hermeneutic science would rightly ask, 'what are the criteria of judgment in such a science?' The force of Taylor's view as a wholesale alternative is in his claim that the justification for an interpretation, and all claims to knowledge, move within a 'hermeneutic circle'. One interpretation is justified by reference to other interpretations. "The case could be put in these terms: what are the criteria of judgment in a hermeneutical science? A successful interpretation is one which makes clear the meaning originally present in a confused, fragmentary, cloudy form. ... The interpretation appeals throughout to our understanding of the 'language' of expression, which understanding allows us to see that this expression is puzzling, that it is in contradiction to that other, and so on, and that these difficulties are cleared up when the meaning is expressed in a new way."^{ccxiv}

Taylor thinks that whether we believe an interpretation “makes sense” of an action or situation is contingent on our reading of action and situation. But no interpretation can be justified except by reference to other interpretations, and their relation to the whole. “If an interlocutor does not understand this kind of reading, or will not accept it as valid, there is nowhere else the argument can go. Ultimately, a good explanation is one which makes sense of the behavior; but then to appreciate a good explanation, one has to agree on what makes good sense; what makes good sense is a function of one’s readings’ and these in turn are based on the kind of sense one understands.”^{ccxv} Taylor explains that what the proponents of the verification model foresee and fear about a hermeneutical science is inevitable. There can be no verification procedure to rely on in judging a particular reading of the inter-subjective meanings of a society, a given institution, or practices. Insight, while useful in discovery, plays no part in establishing the truth of findings according to an empiricist science. The example Taylor gives is in physics where “we might argue that if someone does not accept a true theory, then either he has not been shown enough (brute data) evidence (perhaps not enough is yet available), or he cannot understand and apply some formalized language.”^{ccxvi} The opposite is the case for a hermeneutical science, which is what Taylor believes the sciences of man properly should be. Insight is indispensable to a hermeneutical science of man, and this insight is unformalizable. “But a hermeneutic science cannot but rely on insight. It requires that one have the sensibility and understanding necessary to be able to make and comprehend the readings by which we can explain the reality concerned... in the sciences of man conceived as hermeneutical, the non-acceptance of a true or illuminating theory... [comes] from a failure to grasp the meaning field in question, an inability to make and understand readings of this field.”^{ccxvii} He writes that “this insight cannot be communicated by the gathering of brute data, or initiation of in modes of formal reasoning or some combination of these.”^{ccxviii}

Taylor has already invoked the hermeneutic circle in several ways, as we have already seen in his discussion of subjects as living agents experiencing the world and their situation through meanings, the constitutive relationship between experience and language, as well as meanings and social practices. All of this, as we saw, stands in stark contrast to widely accepted naturalistic standards and approaches, which seek to ground truth beyond ‘our understanding’. Taylor’s interpretive approach to the human sciences raises the specter of an epistemology and ontology that is fundamentally threatening to the prevailing views he is critiquing. Perhaps the most radical aspect of the break that Taylor’s interpretive view is suggesting is in the way he invokes the hermeneutic circle also to give us this validity criterion for judging interpretations. A science without brute data that relies on other readings, other interpretations cannot but move in a hermeneutic circle. “We cannot escape an ultimate appeal to a common understanding of the expressions, of the ‘language’ involved.”^{ccxix} We are always in such an interpretative or hermeneutical circle and are never warranted in making appeals that reach beyond differences of interpretation. He writes, “... each side can only make appeal to deeper insight on the part of the other. The superiority of one position over another will thus consist in this, that from the more adequate position one can understand one’s own stand and that of one’s opponent, but not the other way around.”^{ccxx} The apparent puzzle of the hermeneutic circle is that it is precisely what enables a multiplicity of interpretations. But Taylor also sees another side to the hermeneutic circle, which is that the gap in intuitions reveals the superiority of one interpretation over another. But importantly, for Taylor, this gap is not merely a theoretical one, that is, strictly a matter of the kind of description we give of a situation. The gap in intuitions is bound up with our divergent options in politics and life. “The gap in intuitions doesn’t just divide different theoretical positions, it also tends to divide different fundamental options in life. The practical and the theoretical are inextricably joined here.”^{ccxxi} Taylor

argues that a study of the science of man is inseparable from an examination of the options between which men must choose.^{cxxii}

Thus there is no place for the aspiration toward neutrality, toward a value-free or ideology-free science in the study of human behavior. Nor can it ever be appropriate to proffer exact predictions in the science of man. Taylor gives us 3 reasons for why he thinks it would be radically impossible: First, he thinks that it would be impossible to delineate a closed system of human life from external influence. No certain domain of human events, the psychological, economic, political, can be shielded from external influence. We are in what Taylor calls an “open system” predicament. Second, because different interpretations can’t be judged according to brute data, we cannot ever achieve the degree of exactitude of science that we might if we had such brute data. Thirdly, and most importantly for Taylor, is his view of man as a self-defining animal. Because man is self-interpreting being, along with changes in his self-definition go changes in what he is and thus how he must be understood. What makes human science a largely ex post understanding for Taylor is in the way that cultures innovate and transform through conceptual innovation which in turn alters human reality. Unlike in the natural sciences, in the human sciences there is always an asymmetry between the vocabulary we have to make clear what has happened and the vocabulary we lack to make clear what lies in the future. In the natural sciences all states of the system, past and future, can be described in the same range of concepts, as values of the same variables. The same conceptual net captures what will happen in the future as a function of past states, and so it is reasonable and possible to make predictions. In the human sciences, however, according to Taylor, “the very terms in which the future will have to be characterized if we are to understand it properly are not all available to us at present.”^{cxxiii}

2.2.5 *Is there a change in the criteria by which Taylor thinks the dispute is resolved?*

Taylor sets out to establish what is required of a hermeneutical science and why he thinks human behavior are amenable to scientific explanations of only this kind. A hermeneutical science is concerned with meanings and the subjects to and for whom they exist. How meanings operate within social practices is what hermeneutics seeks to make explicit. Taylor thinks that whether a hermeneutic science of interpretation is appropriate to explaining behavior in the human sciences will be answered by seeing if the conditions required of a hermeneutical science apply to the way meanings operate in human life.^{cxxiv} He wants to convince us of the essential role that meanings play in human life and to demonstrate how such meanings are best treated as objects of a hermeneutical science. Trying to narrate the contours of the ontological commitments of the empiricist epistemological outlook has brought him squarely to the question of selfhood. His arguments for the essential place of meanings in the characterization of human behavior is based on a view of persons as self-interpretive beings, as agents for whom things ‘matter’ and have significance, in contrast to the empiricist view of a disengaged and punctual view of subjects. What Taylor finds unwarranted about such empiricist assumptions concerning selfhood extends to and includes the various radically opposed ‘universal hermeneuticist’, subjectivist, projectivist, or ‘Romanticist’ views of selfhood that have developed in stark reactions against them. Of course Taylor’s aim is not simply to elaborate these ontological commitments for the sake of getting them more clearly in view. He tries to clarify what an empiricist epistemology is like so that we might better understand our modern intellectual culture - both the viewpoints of and those in radical opposition to - so as to ultimately show why we go wrong to assume the naturalness of empiricist thinking in the human sciences.

In this sense, Taylor's audience has significantly changed from that of his earlier writings. He is no longer talking to the behaviorists, logical positivists, ordinary language theorists or materialists he was critiquing but has begun writing, in some sense, to everyone; it is to all of his readers that he wants to make a convincing articulation of the phenomena of personhood and human experience. Taylor's wager, once we lay bare the ontological assumptions of an empiricist epistemology in the human sciences, is twofold: First, we will realize how far off it is from what we ordinarily take to be true of ourselves and the way we experience the world. Human beings and social phenomena are simply not like the picture presupposed by an empiricist outlook, nor are we anything like the opposite conclusions arrived at, Taylor argues, from the same assumptions. Second, Taylor wants us to see that the empiricist epistemological outlook doesn't just get things wrong for the human sciences but is itself dependent on the alternative view being the case. Only on the basis of the alternative view of knowing and experience does the empiricist epistemology's arrival make sense, or can its particular influences in the human sciences even be sustained. As a matter of scientific explanation, therefore, since such influences can only lead us to mistake and misunderstand our subject matter, and what appears to be given or natural about this epistemological outlook is nothing more than a powerful illusion of our modern intellectual culture, Taylor argues that an alternative view of human scientific knowledge that is more appropriate to studying such subjects will be required.

There is an undeniable shift in Taylor's anti-naturalism in that he is now specifically calling for a clear cut and distinct alternative, a rival outlook that challenges the multiple facets of its target, in all of its ontological commitments, ways of knowing, and ability to justify itself. This later Taylor of the "Interpretation and sciences of man" article is now wrestling against an enormous adversary. Taylor argues that what is needed is a hermeneutical science of man to overcome naturalism in the human sciences. But in what sense does Taylor think we can or should overcome this epistemological outlook? Taylor says that he now sees more clearly than in the past what the dispute between naturalism and anti-naturalism turns on. He writes that he sees no need to try to bring down or attack head on the scientific outlook and the disengaged identity that he has long targeted with much ire. Rather, he says that his own concern has developed into being much more with making clear the relationship between scientific and moral outlooks. Taylor seeks to elucidate the connection between ontological commitments and patterns of explanation, to show that certain forms of explanation are intrinsically related to certain ontological commitments. He attempts to explain the history of naturalistic approaches in the human sciences by narrating the history of these approaches and the patterns of anomalies they generate in light of their underlying commitments about human agency and conceptions of selfhood. Taylor repeatedly asserts how he thinks the question of the distinction between the natural and human sciences cannot be examined fruitfully outside of this wider context of selfhood.

On a rudimentary level, we can see how just as in his early writings, Taylor's wager here is again the principle of asymmetry, according to which he argues that an interpretive science of man is far more adequate for explaining phenomena that the human sciences are concerned with than empiricist influenced theories, as his case study of dominant trends in political science is meant to demonstrate. Much like his earlier arguments about human learning, Taylor is still in some sense pointing to the phenomena, in this case, ontological commitments about the nature of subjectivity and selfhood, to show that we should not rush to apply naturalistic empiricist standards of knowledge in the human sciences, and instead be open to seeing if another, i.e. hermeneutic, kind of science would be more appropriate. In this sense, Taylor's anti-naturalistic stance has not changed very much, in spite of his new broader target in the empiricist epistemological motivation. What is

again the source of his anti-naturalism is his view of the phenomena in question, as the basis for rejecting or at least challenging the epistemological outlook and the human scientific theories it has generated.

What is striking, however, is how much farther Taylor's anti-naturalism now must go than ever before, given the wider implications of his broader target on the phenomena that the human sciences are concerned with. Taylor himself acknowledges that more is needed than simply showing that naturalism is an inadequate philosophy of human sciences, which he thinks has already been powerfully done. He sees that he must go farther than merely show that his has the greater capacity to explain human phenomena, which he clearly argues is the case. Taylor writes that it is not enough to make the negative point that naturalism cannot cope with our understanding of the self. "A critic of naturalism from a hermeneutical standpoint, like myself, owes his opponent more. He has to give an account of his adversary's motivation in hermeneutical terms. It is not just that the final challenge that this account ought to meet is to explain the opponent's error, that is, to explain why people are attracted by naturalism. It is also that the very nature of the claim I am putting forward, that we all as human agents define ourselves against a background of distinctions of worth, requires that we explain in these terms what people are doing who espouse a naturalist outlook."^{ccxxv}

The aim of consistency leads Taylor not simply to reject his adversaries' views but to explain them in terms of what draws them to espouse their naturalist outlook. Taylor thinks that if he is right about how human action and social practices should be explained, namely that people act out of a background of values, then naturalists are no exception to this. They too must be understood hermeneutically, as acting out of their distinctions of worth, Taylor says, if his critique of his opponents is going to support the view he is advancing, even if his opponents "do not *recognize* that they are constituted by strongly evaluative self-interpretations."^{ccxxvi} Where Taylor wants to go with this, of course, is to explain scientific outlooks in terms of the appeal of a particular moral self-understanding. Thus, the fuller critique of naturalism depends on offering a convincing interpretation of the values and particular "background of worth" he thinks support it. For this reason Taylor's discussion of the broad and particular influences of an empiricist epistemology has throughout, tried to incorporate both aspects: an analysis of how naturalistic theories fall short of explaining their subject matter, along with a description of the kind of agent that motivates and inspires the outlook. He refers to how in modern consciousness we are deeply attached to a vision of a thin theory of the self, one that "shows us as capable of achieving a kind of disengagement from our world by objectifying it."^{ccxxvii} Taylor wants to show how the ideal of the disengaged image of the self, with its attendant ideals of freedom - as the ability to act on one's own unencumbered by outside authority, along with "ideals of efficacy, power, unperturbability"^{ccxxviii} lend crucial support to the naturalist world-view.

Taylor also extends the scope of his principle of asymmetrical explanatory capacity to further claim that not only can his description make better sense of the phenomena the human sciences studies but it can also make better sense of the empiricist outlook itself, along with the contrary positions it has generated in a way that these alternatives cannot make sense of their own or his. Taylor argues that there is this further asymmetrical explanatory capacity of the hermeneutic standpoint to narrate the history of empiricist approaches, where the reverse is not the case.^{ccxxix} His own characterization of empiricist theories as an account of the appeal of naturalism within the terms of the hermeneutical theory is a far better interpretation than the one naturalism would offer of itself.^{ccxxx} The naturalist requirement to avoid terms of identity and self-interpretation rules out the hermeneutic explanation Taylor gives. Thus it cannot make sense of his hermeneutic

explanation of the hold of the moral and ontological commitments of the empiricist epistemological outlook, which makes separating between issues of human science and human agency impossible, and which lead people to espouse what he thinks are rather implausible epistemological doctrines.

2.2.6 *Does Taylor's new critique of naturalism succeed?*

Taylor decisively does not give us a grand Theory of Meaning, or an abstract Theory of Subjectivity, to hold up as an epistemological guide or scientific tool with which to engage in human scientific tasks. Rather, his views about the need for an alternative interpretive science develop through a series of potted arguments on an array of issues about which he theorizes the particular ontological commitments that an empiricist orientation to knowledge presupposes. Taylor hopes that by bringing into focus the particular and several commitments of an empiricist outlook concerning human agency, selfhood, language, interpretation, and varieties of understanding and in drawing out his own positions against them we might see that his justification of anti-naturalism in the human sciences is in fact warranted. By exposing the deeper commitments of naturalism, not only in its view of knowledge accumulation, but also in the way it has influenced conceptualizations of the subject matter in the human sciences about which knowledge is sought, Taylor hopes that we, his readers, would come to see how far the ontological commitments of an empiricist epistemology in the human sciences actually run afoul of what we ordinarily take to be true of ourselves. Taylor also wants us to see that such a distorted empiricist picture of our nature and being is possible only as an estrangement from what we ordinarily take to be true of ourselves, in other words, that the very possibility of the ontological commitments of an empiricist epistemology depends on our being meaning-laden interpretive creatures.

It seems that on one level, Taylor is saying that the particular ontological view of persons as self-interpretive and meaning-laden agents that he is espousing is simply a better view of selfhood than the one presupposed by an empiricist epistemological outlook. Thus, the story he wants to tell of what really drives naturalist theories and gives them their force is of a particular image of agency that arose with what he sees as the great shift in cosmology in the 17th century, from a picture of "world-order" based on the Ideas to one of the universe as mechanism."^{ccxxxii} He thinks that in spite of the blatantly impoverished science of behavior it gives rise to, the picture of the disengaged self can be credited with the overwhelming appeal of naturalist theories in the modern age. Many critics [like Clifford Geertz]^{ccxxxiii} have pointed out that Taylor's treatment of modernist sciences is problematic in that it is an historically insensitive monolithic account, and decisively not interpretivist, but we might still grant, on the whole, the connections that Taylor has drawn between the development of modernist human sciences and the particular ontological and moral commitments. Taylor wants to show how the image of the disengaged self, with its attendant ideals of freedom - as the ability to act on one's own unencumbered by outside authority, along with its "ideals of efficacy, power, unperturbability"^{ccxxxiii} have lent crucial support to the naturalist world-view. On another level, however, Taylor seems to be saying that even this view, and in fact, all alternative views about personhood, actually have to presuppose the interpretive, meaning-laden one he is advancing.

The point can be put in another way, as follows: Taylor starts by asking what a hermeneutic science would look like, by asking what the object of such a science would be like. Then he asks if we, the readers, think that we are like this? Does it strike us as a convincing way that we experience ourselves? If so - if the phenomena that are studied in the human sciences are like this - then they are appropriately studied by a hermeneutic science, and the human sciences must, therefore, be

interpretive. Taylor's hope is that we will agree with him that we are interpretive creatures, which are best made sense of by hermeneutics. So long as we are interpretive, strong evaluative creatures, then, Taylor's anti-naturalism in the human sciences seems thoroughly warranted. But our interpretive nature also means that we can through articulation, reflection, etc. get to be other than we are. But if Taylor is arguing for the ontological, essential, attributes of personhood, then it seems, not that we should not, but that we cannot interpret ourselves away from being interpretive.

For this reason, Taylor needs to say much more than that the phenomena of the human sciences require a distinction between the human and natural sciences. Taylor needs to defend his anti-naturalism against the logical possibility that our phenomena can become other than it is, in particular, if it were to move toward becoming more like the instrumental, disengaged, epistemological model. The problem with Taylor's argument about the empiricist persuasion is that the power he attributes to such ideas, together with his claim of our interpretive and strong evaluative nature means we may all too easily become more like the subjects presupposed by naturalism, and thus render groundless his own attempt to maintain an anti-naturalism in the philosophy of human sciences. He certainly seems to acknowledge that this can happen and even hints that it already has come to pass. "More specifically, the claim is that the more we are led to interpret ourselves in the light of the disengaged picture, to define our identity by this, the more the connected epistemology of naturalism will seem right and proper to us... in short, its epistemological weaknesses are more than made up for by its moral appeal."^{ccxxxiv} In discussing the disengaged identity he writes, "the disengaged identity is far from being simply wrong and misguided, and besides, **we are all too deeply imbued with it to be able really and authentically to repudiate it.** The kind of critique we need is one that can free it of its illusory pretensions to define the totality of our lives as agents, without attempting the futile and ultimately self-destructive task of rejecting it altogether" [my emphasis].^{ccxxxv}

So we would want to ask again: Is Taylor claiming the distinction between anti-naturalism and naturalism to hinge on showing that his theory of personhood and strong evaluation is a more adequate and convincing description of what we are? Or does Taylor want us to come to see and be convinced that his theory of personhood and strong evaluation is what we should *strive* to be, in part, through maintaining an anti-naturalistic philosophy of science? How can Taylor continue to defend his anti-naturalism if through our practices we will (or have already) come to be phenomenologically instrumental and rational creatures, away from being strong evaluative interpretive creatures? It seems that only on moral grounds can Taylor argue that the rarified picture that emerges through the instrumental, empiricist outlook is impoverished, shallow, and undesirable, that it is something to want to resist against, as a matter of morality. He needs to make an affective argument as to why the atomistic disengaged view of selfhood is morally repugnant and impoverished in comparison to the view of the self as embedded and situated. Taylor wants to go further than offer his interpretation of the various connections between scientific outlook and moral commitments as one among a number of equally plausible accounts. Taylor acknowledges that he needs to show that *one* form of moral outlook attached to its particular form of explanation is somehow better, more authentic.

Taylor may be showing us that anti-naturalism in the human sciences may only be grounded in moral argument. And he maintains that we can rationally arbitrate between interpretations to distinguish better from worse ones. "If, as I said above, the ultimate basis of naturalism turns out to be a certain definition of agency and the background of worth, does the critique terminate with the proof that this is so (supposing I finally bring it off), or is there a way we can go on and rationally

assess this and other definitions of worth? This is, in fact, a particular way of putting the general question: what are the capacities of practical reason? Is it quite helpless before such basic differences in spiritual outlook, like that between the disengaged identity and its opponents? Or is there, at least in principle, a way in which this kind of question can be rationally arbitrated? I am fiercely committed to the latter view, and I recognize that the onus is on me to come up with a good argument.”^{ccxxxvi} Taylor repeatedly frames this dilemma and gestures towards the types of arguments that would be needed to decisively refute the background of worth underlying empiricism. But Taylor, at this stage, defers explicating the fuller moral position. Thus, in light of this deferral, we must take Taylor’s commitment to anti-naturalism to be based on the assortment of views he has offered as to what this empiricist epistemology is comprised of and in what sense he thought it ultimately needed overcoming.

Taylor’s interest to distinguish the approaches, methods, and assumptions of the natural sciences from those appropriate to the social or human sciences has developed both over time and outward from some of his earliest published work on the requirement of scientific explanation of human behavior to a much wider range of concerns about selfhood, morality, and language. Ten years after the publication of the 2 volumes of *Philosophical Papers*, with the publication of his third collection of essays, entitled *Philosophical Arguments*, he again stresses that the ‘Hydra’ of epistemology is the oldest of the themes that have been occupying him for decades, “whose serpentine heads wreak havoc throughout the intellectual culture of modernity – in science, in criticism, in ethics, in political thinking, almost anywhere you look.”^{ccxxxvii} Taylor’s arguments against the influences of an empiricist epistemology in the human sciences form the basis of his thinking on how we should understand social life and thus how social practices are to be explained. Furthermore, as we will see in chapters 3 and 4, his conception of the ontology of human action and social practices together with his arguments for an interpretative science of man also underlie his normative theory about the goods and values that ought to define us.

Conclusion

Taylor began by arguing that it is unwarranted to rule out teleological explanation for the human sciences on grounds that it is unsuitable for explaining occurrences in the natural world. He framed the rest of his dissertation work as an exposition of what teleological explanation consists in and tried to reclaim it for the human sciences by showing that there are no grounds for rejecting it there. “The inadequacy of Aristotelian physics [teleological explanation] lay not in any inherent absurdity, but in its gross inadequacy in accounting for natural events. But to assume from the superiority of Galilean principles in the sciences of inanimate nature that they *must* provide the model for the sciences of animate behavior is to make a speculative leap, not to enunciate a necessary conclusion.”^{ccxxxviii} Taylor has viewed the persistent confidence of not only behaviorists but all scholars across the human sciences who continue to share the conviction that action *must* be explicable in mechanistic terms, a conviction he sees as driving nearly all contemporary human scientific inquiry, as explicable in terms of the same epistemological motivation underpinning them. In defending anti-naturalism in the human sciences Taylor thought it necessary, therefore, to explain the empiricist and positivistic approaches in the human sciences by probing their deeper moral and ontological commitments on an array of topics, which taken together, could not at once but have direct implications beyond the human sciences to issues of morality and the ethical sciences.

What exactly Taylor has understood to be derivative of the canons of 17th century philosophy or what he calls an empiricist epistemology is no straightforward matter, as we have

seen. Taylor has ended up narrating quite literally every facet of the assumptions, outlooks, and approaches held in the human sciences that he stands against as associated with this deeper object of his derision in one way or another. The difficulty of pinning down what Taylor has been after has mainly to do with the exceedingly manifold ways in which he has understood this broad epistemological outlook to continue to influence our assumptions and expectations about inquiry and understanding. But it also has to do with the fact that Taylor has not given us a grand philosophical theory of meaning or built some abstract theoretical framework of his own with which to hammer away at his opponents or which could be imposed on other viewpoints with categorical force by fiat. Taylor's anti-naturalism has subsequently developed as he points to various phenomena, and enjoins his readers to see that they are as he describes them, in contrast to what is presupposed by an empiricist epistemology. Thus, what we get as the basis for his anti-naturalism are his several potted arguments about selfhood, agency, meaning, interpretation, and language, etc. as he narrates what we, the subjects of the human sciences, are like against the picture that emerges out of the undue influences of an empiricist epistemology.

What Taylor needs to make is a sophisticated, post-linguistic turn, post-interpretive turn, positive case for moral realism, which in the introduction to his collected papers in 1985 he makes only "promissory notes" about, indicating several directions he wants to go in pursuing this issue. "[T]he positive thesis can only be established in an historical account. This would have to show how, through the whole course of the development of the modern identity, the moral motivation has been intertwined with the epistemological, how the latter has never been a sufficient motive force but has always been seconded by the former, but how paradoxically the very nature of this modern identity has tended to make us reluctant to acknowledge this moral dimension. The very ideal of disengagement militates against it. This would mean placing the history of our scientific and philosophical consciousness in relation to the whole development of modern culture, and particularly of the underlying interpretations of agency and the self. What would ultimately carry conviction would be an account of this development which illuminated it and made more sense of it than its rivals, and particularly than naturalistic ones. As for any hermeneutic explanation, interpretive plausibility is the ultimate criterion."^{ccxxxix} Taylor believes that the proper account of the spiritual basis of modern naturalism will not only convince us as a good, plausible interpretation but, as he believes all hermeneutic explanations should, but should also allow us to discriminate sensitively what we want to affirm and what we want to reject.^{ccxl} As hermeneutic explanations try to make clear the distinctions of worth that are in play in the explanandum, the explanation will not leave the object of interpretation untouched.

3.0 Hegel's Philosophy of Reason in History

3.1 The Ontology of Reason

3.1.1 *Why is Taylor drawn to Hegel?*

3.1.2 *How does Taylor's reading of Hegel provide historical context for his own views?*

3.1.3 *What does Taylor think was pivotal about Hegel's philosophy in its time?*

3.2 Hegelianism and Modern Societies

3.2.1 *Does Taylor think that Hegel's Dialectic was successful?*

3.2.2 *How does Taylor think Hegel continues to be relevant today?*

3.0 Hegel's Philosophy of Reason in History

The previous chapter traced the development of Taylor's views on knowledge and the human sciences by narrating his engagement in debates between various naturalist and anti-naturalist positions. There, we saw how Taylor's interpretivism emerged through a shift in the basis for his defense of anti-naturalism, from descriptive phenomenological to hermeneutic realist grounds. Taylor's initial approach was to interrogate what kinds of scientific language, or forms of explanatory laws are most appropriate for understanding phenomena the human sciences are concerned with. His immanent critique of particular scientific discourses in the human sciences showed the asymmetrical capacity of teleological explanations to give far more adequate accounts of human phenomena over its rival, mechanistic explanations. A major shift in Taylor's thinking occurred as he saw the need to cast a much broader indictment of an epistemological outlook he saw widely suffusing our intellectual culture. Taylor's subsequent defense of anti-naturalism hinged on convincing us that the influence of an empiricist epistemological outlook is not only widespread in the human sciences but goes deeper than we moderns tend to think. According to Taylor, our modernist desire for certainty in objective knowledge and our commitment to a derivative view of human freedom and disengaged selfhood that masquerades as given, and therefore beyond dispute, have kept the issue from even properly being raised.

In answering whether the human sciences should be hermeneutical or not Taylor's subsequent hermeneutic realist claim was that the hold of an empiricist epistemology has kept the human sciences from noticing the interpretive nature of human and social life, according to which the human sciences - unlike the natural sciences - must be hermeneutic. His defense of anti-naturalism ultimately rests on convincing us that an empiricist requirement of absoluteness has direct bearing on how human agency and social life get conceived. He argued that when we try to reduce understanding in the human sciences by employing language appropriate to the natural sciences, by neutralizing the moral features of human agency, we effectively distort, and thereby overlook, the essential nature of personhood. Taylor wanted us to see the speciousness of the ontological commitments of an empiricist epistemological outlook that tries to separate human agency from moral ontology, which he points out is itself a moral position.

In short, as a defense of anti-naturalism, Taylor's arguments ended up getting stuck and in danger of collapsing from within. If, as according to Taylor, the human sciences must be hermeneutic based on our being interpretive, strong evaluative, creatures, then it is more than just logically possible that human phenomena can become other than it is - precisely for the reason that we are creatures that can interpret, articulate, reflect on, and in part remake ourselves. Taylor's hermeneutic realist claim that the phenomena of the human sciences requires a distinction between

the human and the natural sciences can only get us so far. His own position that the issue of the very notion of a human science cannot be detached from a view of human and social ontology – which he takes to be deeply moral in nature – means that Taylor needs to show why the picture of human agency that emerges through the empiricist epistemological outlook is not only false but something we *should want* to resist. Taylor’s philosophy of human sciences requires a strong moral argument. His defense of anti-naturalism, even in its most fully developed stage, cannot survive without a moral argument for why the atomistic instrumental disengaged view of selfhood is shallow and undesirable compared to the embedded and situated view of selfhood.

Where might Taylor find the resources for formulating a strong moral argument, or otherwise reconciling this impasse? If we go back to the development of his philosophy of human sciences, we see that what has remained constant throughout the stages of Taylor’s anti-naturalism is his opposition to “mentalist” constructions of experience, that is, conceptions of human experience as a property of “the mind”, as something that could be understood independently of human embodiment or practical concerns. Taylor’s concern with “putting the mind back into nature”^{ccxli} led him, quite early on in his career, to take interest in Merleau-Ponty and thinkers of what is commonly considered ‘the Continental’ tradition in philosophy. Most notable among them and on whom Taylor undoubtedly focused the most attention is Hegel. This may not be surprising, for scarcely has there ever been a philosopher more systematic in his reflections on knowledge, reason, subjectivity, and their place in nature than Hegel.^{ccxlii}

3.1 Understanding Hegel’s Philosophy in History

After the publication of his dissertation in 1964 Taylor spent over a decade immersing himself in Hegel and his interlocutors, publishing two volumes, the first, *Hegel*, in 1975 and then *Hegel and Modern Society*, in 1979. The first is an expository book of Hegel’s philosophy in which Taylor tries to make clear the central lines of Hegel’s conception without confining himself to Hegel’s own terms. Since Taylor takes Hegel’s vision to have been acutely intended to address the main aspirations of the author’s generation, his approach was to contextualize the development of Hegel’s philosophy by reading him in relation to the young Romantics of the 1790s, from which he sprang but against which he clearly defined himself. Starting with the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Taylor outlines Hegel’s central ideas and reads the major phases of his work through it, attempting also to explain the *Logic*, how Hegel’s philosophy was authenticated in his own eyes. Explicating Hegel’s very own concern for the inseparable nature of philosophy and authentication makes for the longest and most difficult part of the book. Although he looks briefly at Hegel’s philosophies of art and religion, Taylor’s main interest is in Hegel’s philosophy of history and politics, particularly in the insight that he thinks Hegel had into the dilemmas of modern societies. This is the central theme that Taylor continues and develops in his second book, a condensed and revised version of the first (leaving out large parts of his previously rendered accounts of some of the most difficult parts of Hegel’s system of logic, his detailed interpretation of the *Phenomenology*, and his writings on art and religion). Although far shorter in length, the second book goes beyond the first in offering a view of how Hegel continues to provide the terms in which we reflect on modern and contemporary issues and dilemmas. Taylor believes that Hegel has contributed importantly to the formation of concepts and modes of thought that are indispensable for understanding key problems in our philosophy of language, our conceptions of the human subject, and our much beset understandings of freedom. Most importantly, for Taylor, is the resounding lesson from Hegel that each of these areas of concerns is inherently tied to and cannot be separated from the others.

Aside from whether or not Taylor's writings successfully demonstrate the relevance of Hegel to contemporary thought, what they undeniably do show is the extent to which Hegel's philosophy has helped shape the terms in which Taylor himself thinks. It is no exaggeration to say that everything Taylor has since written testifies to the immense influence of Hegel's ideas on his thinking, more so than his own earliest work on the human sciences preceding it, from which his later writings evidence a clear and decisive break (see section 2.1 to 2.2). What needs careful unpacking, therefore, is the specific nature of Taylor's turn to Hegel and the particular ways in which he made sense of what he found, which is this chapter's point of departure. This chapter narrates the continuities between Taylor's own concerns about knowledge in the human sciences and the issues he took Hegel to be addressing in his time. The shift in Taylor's philosophy of human sciences toward a broader critique of epistemology that accepts no divisions between epistemological, moral, or political concerns is based on his reading of Hegel's comprehensive conception of reason against the atomistic tendencies of erstwhile enlightenment conceptions. Taylor is particularly taken by the mode of philosophical reasoning he finds in Hegel, the *kind* of argument that Hegel employed to overcome the dualism between mind and nature, by which he sought to *demonstrate* their unity in reason. The interpretive account of human agency that Taylor articulated as the justification for his anti-naturalism in the human sciences is comprised of multiple related claims about how human agency is always embedded, never disengaged, constituted in social practices, and intertwined with language, articulation, and conceptions of the good – all of which, for Taylor, strongly recommends the lasting relevance of Hegelian thought for the contemporary age. Taylor's turn to Hegel exemplifies the continuation of his desire to see unity rather than disengagement and to find a basis in reason for overcoming untenable dichotomies. Thus, his explication of Hegel's philosophy as it emerged in the discourses in his time, as well as what he takes Hegel's legacy to be for contemporary thinkers, serves to put many of the issues he himself was raising about knowledge and subjectivity in historical context.

3.1.1 *Why is Taylor drawn to Hegel?*

Taylor's engagement with interlocutors in the continental tradition, especially Hegel, has had lasting influence on his thinking, so if we want to understand Taylor's ideas properly, we need to understand what drew him to Hegel in the first place. This section makes clear what Taylor found so appealing about Hegel's philosophy. On a very basic level, Taylor's intense and protracted focus on Continental thinkers throughout the mid '60's to the early '80's is simply a continuation of the concerns he had about knowledge in the human sciences. Taylor's concern with "putting the mind back into nature,"^{ccxliii} initially inspired by Merleau-Ponty's work, led him decisively to Hegel. He wrote, "The ambition to overcome the dualism of mind and nature, the attempt to achieve this by a conception of the mind which is inseparable from its incarnation in matter, the resultant preoccupation with problems of genesis, these are all Hegelian ideas. Indeed, we might consider them as *the* Hegelian bequest to philosophy."^{ccxliv} Recall how Taylor rejected empiricist scientific discourses such as positivism, cognitivism, and behaviorism for relying on a misguided assumption of the absolute separation between consciousness and body, subject and external world, mind from nature. Turning to Hegel gave Taylor a way of historically situating many of his own views in favor of more Aristotelian forms of thought against Cartesian-empiricist dualism and its related modernist drives to mechanism.

The rejection of mentalist conceptions of human experience was first and in many ways paradigmatically formulated in the late 18th - early 19th century by philosophers of the German Idealist and Romanticist movements in their challenge to many of the ideas inherited from French

Enlightenment thinking. As Taylor sees it, Hegel is a pivotal figure in a long line of critique of Enlightenment views because he attempted to rethink and synthesize both trends of thought that were prevalent in his day: various 'Expressivist' reactions, on the one hand, as they arose in protest against mainstream Enlightenment thought, on the other. To show how this is, Taylor goes back further into the history of philosophy to narrate Hegel's situation. He refers to late 18th C reactions in Germany in protest of 17th and 18th C enlightenment views of man as subject and object of an objectifying science, and as subject of egoistic desires for which nature and society provided merely the means to fulfillment. Taylor refers to the work of Herder as the founder of both modern nationalism and modern expressive individualism^{ccxlv}, who held that men reach their highest fulfillment in expressive activity in virtue of belonging to a culture, which is sustained, nourished, and handed down in a community. He is particularly drawn to Herder's view as an innovation of the Aristotelian notion of form in unity, particularly in his idea that each culture - and every individual within it - has its own form to realize, which unfolds as its life develops. Much in line with Taylor's own stance, Herder's image of man as an expressive subject was directed against the objectifying analytic stance of the enlightenment view of science, which merely compounded various different elements of man, such as the faculties of reason, sensibility, soul and body, reason and feeling, and which was thus seen to have lost sight of this living expressive unity.^{ccxlv}

According to the enlightenment scientific vision of man's relation to nature, individuals are isolated from society and cut off from nature, and both nature and society are looked upon as objects of potential human use. Opposite this was the view of man as an expressive unity englobing both body and mind as part of a greater current of life in nature as a reaction against the radical objectification of human nature in the name of moral freedom, à la the French enlightenment. The rejection of the utilitarian definition of morality had to follow, therefore, since the morally right could not be determined by happiness and so be desired. For philosophers like Rousseau, the morally free subject must be able to gather itself together to make a decision about its total commitment, rather than be dispersed throughout its diverse desires and inclinations. This idea brings Taylor squarely to Kant, whose appeal to formal laws was meant to bind the rational will, *qua* rational, and for whom freedom is defined precisely in contrast to inclination. Moral freedom was construed as not merely the freedom to be motivated by one's own desire but precisely the freedom to be able to decide against all inclinations for the sake of morally being. According to Kant's definition of the radical freedom of the autonomous moral subject, the moral agent was free in the radical sense of being self-determining, not as a natural being encumbered by his desires and inclinations, but as a pure, moral will, who follows the demands of morality which have an utterly different source, in pure reason. Kant's call to moral freedom was for the subject through self-clarity and self-possession in reason to overcome the natural boundaries in which it was set. His attempt to construct a bridge between the domain of epistemology whose concern is knowledge of nature, i.e. 'the faculties of understanding', and the domain of ethics whose concern is freedom, i.e. reason, was through the 'faculties of judgment', which would mediate between the realms of nature and freedom. In this sense, for many German Idealists like Fichte and Schelling, and the early German Romanticist thinkers like Schlegel and Novalis, the burning issue of Kant's philosophy became the plausibility of relating pure and practical reason, nature and freedom, and uniting theory with practice.

Taylor writes that the young generation that received Kant's critical writings experienced it as a culmination of the expressive theory of man, but faced the obvious clash between the radical freedom of the morally free, self-determining subject, which seemed possible only at too great a cost of diremption with nature. The autonomous moral subject was to strive to be independent from

external nature, and consequently it was divided within itself between reason and the natural or sensible, from whose causal laws it must be radically independent. It was successors of Kant and Herder in the 1790's, such as Fichte, Schelling, the Schlegels brothers, Holderlin, Novalis, Schleiermacher, and of course Hegel, who threw themselves into the task of uniting the two ideals of expressive unity and radical freedom.^{ccxlvii} Although they diverged in a number of ways over how to meet the problem, Taylor views idealist and romanticist thinkers in Germany both as having seen the basic problem as needing to bring about the recovery of man's unity with nature which was broken and lost by the illusory and distorted perspective of the enlightenment's utilitarian ethical outlook, atomistic social philosophy, and analytic sciences of man. Hegel was no Romantic, however, as Taylor makes clear, in the way that he wanted to overcome oppositions without giving up free rationality as the Romantics were willing to do. Taylor is careful to detail his view of Hegel's place in philosophy's history as taking up the twin aspirations of Romanticism but insisting on realizing them in a way fully transparent to reason.

Taylor sees that as an attempt to realize the synthesis between rational autonomy and expressive unity, the aim of Hegel's work is to overcome the oppositions in which these two terms stand over and against each other, i.e. the opposition in us between freedom and nature, or that between individual and society; between knowing subject and his world, or between finite and infinite spirit, man and God. In this we can see how Taylor's turn to Hegel exemplifies the continuation of his own desire to see unity rather than disengagement and to find a basis in reason for overcoming untenable dichotomies. Hegel's spiral view of history insists that ultimate synthesis between rational autonomy and expressive unity, freedom and nature, individual and society, knowing subject and his world, finite and infinite spirit, man and god, involves a clear consciousness of their division as well as their unity, such as between subject/object, self/other, rational/affective, or other such seemingly dichotomous distinctions. For Hegel, each of these oppositions initially becomes sharper as man develops but when they reach their fullest development the terms come to reconciliation of themselves. This Hegelian reconciliation is not simply an 'undoing' because there is no question of returning to our primitive condition before the separation of subject and nature. Rather, the aspiration is to retain the fruits of separation, free rational consciousness, while reconciling this with unity, e.g. with nature, society, god, and even with fate or the course of things. Hegel's answer to how these dichotomies are actually reconciled is his view that when examined more deeply and understood thoroughly, each term shows itself to be not only opposed to but identical with its opposite. For him, the very relations of opposition and identity are inseparably linked to each other, in a circular relation. They cannot be utterly distinguished because neither can exist on its own or maintain itself as the sole relation holding between a pair of terms. The apparent opposition between the two gives way to a higher variant of unity, where an identity breeds opposition of necessity, and the relation of each term to its opposite is a peculiarly intimate one, its particular other, and this hidden identity necessarily reasserts itself in a recovery of unity.

Taylor is quite taken by this mode of thinking, as captured by Hegel's distinction between understanding and reason where 'Understanding' (or *Verstand*) is analytic and divisive - "it distinguishes and divides" - and clashes with 'Reason' (or *Vernunft*), a higher mode of thought in line with the demands of expressive unity and sets all distinctions back in movement and brings us to an over-arching unity.^{ccxlviii} Hegel insists that ultimate synthesis must incorporate division as well as unity, such that opposition and unity are together in the Absolute. To see how this is, we need to understand Hegel's notion of Geist, or cosmic spirit, and the notion of 'the embodied subject', which the mature Hegel provided as the basic model for infinite spirit. His view of subject as embodied self-realization rejects the ordinary notion of identity in favor of a dialectical way of

thinking, which cannot be grasped by a single proposition or series of propositions that simply do not violate the principle of non-contradiction. Rather, for Hegel, the idea of the Absolute is as “the identity of identity and non-identity.” This basic notion characterizes all of Hegel’s ideas about the relation between Man and nature, between individual and community, and between finite and infinite spirit, that is to say, man’s relation to fate. It allows Hegel to keep both terms of the opposition in full force and yet to see them as coming into unity out of opposition. Taylor takes great pains to make sense of this somewhat paradoxical but important idea, which was developed most effusively in his concept of embodied subjectivity as the historical movement of Geist or Reason.

3.1.2 *How does Taylor’s reading of Hegel provide historical context for his own views?*

Hegel’s view of the necessary embodiment of subjectivity through his concept of reason is philosophically important to Taylor because the idea of reconciliation it makes possible stands quite parallel to his own views against dualism. To show this, Taylor situates Hegel’s concept of “reason” within important historical landmarks in the development of the tradition of practical reason. He points out how as a substantive concept Hegel’s view harks back to ancient as well as pre-modern notions of reason. With Plato, reason was understood as the power by which we see the true structure of things, the world of the Ideas. To act according to reason was to act according to this true structure, which was equivalent to acting according to nature. It was understood that there was a larger rational order to which man essentially belonged so that if man is to be rational then man can only be himself in being so connected to this larger order, in having a true vision of it. Hegel’s concept of the relation of man to society runs parallel in this sense to the pre-modern notion where men were induced to revere the monarchical or aristocratic structures of society, on the grounds that the given order of being reflected the will of God. But quite significantly with Hegel, the mode of thought where rationality is a substantive criterion returns much changed after the 17th C revolution by Descartes and Hobbes and the utilitarian thinkers of the 18th C, out of the most extreme expression of modern self-defining subjectivity and radical notion of autonomy.

Beginning with Descartes and Hobbes, and through Locke and other proto-liberal thinkers, the view of reason as the order in which man inheres was rejected in favor of the idea of man as a self-defining subject. Man came to be defined as a subject capable of rational thought and decision, and as the subject of certain desires, which were considered as given for moral reasoning, and which could not themselves be judged at the bar of reason. Taylor explains how with the Enlightenment reason instead came to mean ‘reckoning’ and practical reason the intelligent calculation of the means to encompassing ends that are beyond the arbitration of reason. Thus, departing sharply from both Plato and the Aristotelian tradition, man as a subject of desire had one great second-order goal, that the first-order desires be satisfied. And it was their satisfaction, which was meant by the utilitarian concept of ‘happiness’ or Hobbes’s ‘felicity’. In this way reason and nature were dethroned as ultimate criteria for morality and politics; no longer was there thought to be a normative order of things evident in nature of which man was a part, which grounded obligation. Rather, obligation could only be created by the will of a self-defining subject. As exemplified in the early social contract thinkers, political obligation, for instance, was grounded in a decision to submit to a sovereign dictated by prudence or calculating reason.

In the late 18th C, another conception of reason as the criterion of action arose, explains Taylor, to challenge the utilitarian view that certain natural facts about us, e.g. our desires and aversions, have a decisive part in what we ought to do. Against the utilitarian identification of good

with interest and of reason with calculation this was a view that culminated in the radical moral autonomy of Kant, but whose beginning Hegel actually ascribed to Rousseau. It too tried to found our obligation on the will, but in a much more radical sense than Hobbes, who grounded political obligation on a decision dictated by prudence. Kant's aim was to cut loose altogether from a reliance on nature, and to draw the content of obligation purely from the will. He proposed to apply a strictly formal criterion to prospective actions, which was binding on the will *qua* rational. This made rationality a matter of thinking consistently and in universal terms. The maxim underlying any proposed action must be such that we can universalize it without contradiction. And a rational will, which operates on this principle, would be truly free, free from any ground of determination (*bestimmungsgrund*) in nature. With Kant, the moral subject is thus autonomous in a radical sense, obeying only the dictates of his own will. Reason, as rational will, is again the criterion of right, but alas, according to Hegel, one that is radically opposed to nature.

Like Taylor, Hegel's view of reason as embodied subjectivity breaks with the dualism in the conception of the human subject that had become dominant in epistemology since Descartes. We see in Taylor's discussion of Hegel's theory of subject as self-realization a reflection of his own stance in opposition to the dualism of post-Cartesian philosophy, especially empiricism. Dualism held the subject to be at the center of consciousness, perceiving the outside world and itself, and consciousness was something wholly immaterial, and therefore heterogeneous from the rest of the world of body, including the subject's own body. Descartes attributed the 'spiritual' functions, i.e. thinking, perceiving, and understanding to a separate nonmaterial entity, and thought of the 'mind' as perfectly transparent, able to see clearly its own content or 'ideas'. The Cartesian-empiricist split between life and consciousness saw vital functions relegated to the world of extended – material – being. If mind is heterogeneous from body, matter then becomes something that is to be understood purely mechanistically. And in this way, Taylor argued there is an important link between mechanism and Cartesian-empiricist dualism. This dualism broke with the Aristotelian tradition where according to Aristotle's notion of 'hylomorphism', matter and form were intrinsically related, and the soul of living beings was inseparable from the body. Life was understood as a self-organizing, self-maintaining form, which could only operate in and therefore was inseparable from its material embodiment. Taylor thinks the modern temptation to dualism, however, arises in a very different philosophical climate from Aristotle's. Fed in part by the notion of the will from Judeo-Christian roots, and growing with the modern idea of a self-defining subject, Taylor sees modern dualism as bound up with modern preoccupations with pure rationality and radical freedom – something that Hegel would not necessarily desire to sweep away in a return to an earlier phase.

Taylor narrates how Hegel saw and built on the historical development of the concept of reason, which Hegel saw culminating with Kant. Like Plato, Hegel's reason involves principally the idea of cosmic order. And the full realization of freedom, for Hegel, requires a minimum self-sufficient human reality that is society, in much the same way as Aristotle had maintained. Hegel fully endorsed the rejection of the Medieval and Renaissance view of a meaningful order of nature that was ultimately given by God, and saw Kant's radical notion of autonomy as a necessary historical stage. Hegel's concept of rationality owes a great deal to Kant, it has to be said, since it too is built on the requirement of radical autonomy, that the will should obey nothing but itself, its own immanent rationality. And of course, Hegel's attempt to bridge the domain of epistemology whose concern is knowledge of nature with the domain of ethics whose concern is freedom was also a quintessentially Kantian aspiration. But while Hegel builds on Kant's theory of knowledge, he gives the principle of autonomy an entirely new dimension by reconstructing the notion of the greater order to which man belongs, which was revolutionary for epistemology (as well as moral and

political philosophy, which will be further examined in chapter 4). Not only did Hegel's epistemology present a fundamental challenge to dualism, but, as Taylor explains, only with Hegel do we see a return to a substantive concept of reason. And reason becomes a substantive concept again in a manner original with him, the implications of which were enormous not only for theories of knowledge, moral philosophy, and political theory, but, explains Taylor, especially in the way that Hegel shows these subject matters to be intrinsically inseparable from one another. And this is the theme he adopts from Hegel and which he spends the next several decades developing.

Taylor acknowledges the resistance that Hegel's notion of the culmination of reason in the super-individual community and the Hegelian state has faced. Especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, the speculation of the dangerous "Prussian" or "fascist" consequences of sacrificing the freedom of the individual on the altar of some "higher" communal deity has led to the frequent misreading of Hegel's notion of the "living" community as "self-consciousness". Taylor, however, finds Hegel's organicist view of the individual to provide a largely unproblematic systematic expression of some of his own views concerning the intersubjective nature of our experience. With his idea of Geist as something larger than individuals, Hegel rejected the Enlightenment utilitarian idea that the state has only an instrumental function, that the ends it must serve are those of the individual. But Taylor points out that the notion of Geist is a philosophical term for Hegel, and does not have the sinister implication that individuals only exist to serve the state. The state or the community has a higher life, and individuals as its parts are related to it and to others like the parts of an organism, such that individuals are only what they are by their inherence in their community. This idea of subjectivity goes beyond the opposition of self-goal to other-goal since the individual is not serving an end separate from himself but is serving a larger goal which is the ground of his identity; he only is the individual he is in this larger life. With Hegel, the instrumental notion of individuals in society as ends and means must give way to the image of all as an organic living being.

Taylor's explanation of Hegel is largely a restatement of his own views on human agency, which he is working out at the same time that he is writing on Hegel.^{ccxlix} He thinks that Hegel's idea of a subjective life beyond the individual only seems mysterious to us because of the powerful hold of atomistic prejudices in modern political thought and culture. His illustration of this alternative idea of subjectivity and human agency through the example of language was echoed throughout his writings on human agency and explanation in the human sciences throughout the '70s. In short, Taylor's argument is that when we think of a human being we do not simply mean a living organism, but a being who can think, feel, decide, be moved, respond, enter into relations with others. All this implies a language, a related set of ways of experiencing the world, of interpreting his feelings, understanding his relation to others, to the past, the future, and so on. What we would call someone's identity is the particular way that he situates himself within this cultural world.^{cc1} Taylor's view is that language is not only a medium of communication such that our experience could be entirely private, needing only a public medium to be communicated from one to another. Rather, our experience is what it is, and is shaped in part by the way we interpret it; which has everything to do with the terms that are available to us in our culture. A language and the related set of distinctions underlying our experience and interpretation is something that can only grow in and be sustained by a community, and in that sense, what we are as human beings we can only be in a cultural community. The life of a language and culture is one whose locus is in the community and thus larger than that of the individual. Only by participating in this larger life, and possessing this culture does the individual have his identity.

Taylor argues that many of our most important experiences and emotions would be impossible outside of society because they relate to objects which are essentially social and could not exist outside of a particular society. We can think of the institutions and practices of a society as a kind of language in which its fundamental ideas are expressed, but what is ‘said’ in this language is not ideas which could be in the minds of certain individuals only; they are rather common to a society, because they are embedded in its collective life, in practices and institutions which are of the society indivisibly. The object of public experience – a rite, festival, election – are not like facts of nature that could be entirely separable from the experiences they give rise to. They are partly constituted by the ideas and interpretations that underlie them. A given social practice is what it is because of a set of commonly understood ideas and meanings, by which the depositing of stones in an urn, or the marking of bits of paper, count as the making of a social decision. These ideas are not universally acceptable or even understandable because they involve a particular view of man, society, and decision. A certain view of man and his relation to society is therefore embedded in the practices and institutions of a society, such that they express certain ideas. Taylor explains how Hegel was saying even more than this. The inescapable relation of the individual to the culture of his society does not rule out the most extreme alienation, when the public experience of his society ceases to have any meaning for him. Hegel was one of the first to develop a theory of alienation.^{cdi}

3.1.3 *What does Taylor think was pivotal about Hegel’s philosophy in its time?*

What Taylor finds so appealing about Hegel is directly related to what he thinks was so pivotal about Hegel’s philosophy in its own time. Hegel’s theory of knowledge, which is based on the subjectivity of an embodied, self-realizing subject, synthesized the two models of Aristotelian form and modern expression in a way that provides historical context for Taylor’s own views in opposition to Cartesian-empiricist dualism. Much like his own arguments for anti-naturalism in the human sciences, Taylor notes how the new mode of philosophical reasoning Hegel developed went along with new conceptions of reason itself, which also went hand in hand with a changed understanding of what it means to say that a human being is a rational animal, and essentially with a transformed understanding of human subjectivity. Hegel’s theory of man departed from the more atomistic conceptions of his opponents, such as Rousseau and Kant, in a way that could not leave issues on any one of knowledge, or morals, or politics untouched from the others. While Rousseau and Kant, as revolutionary and proto-liberal protagonists of radical autonomy, defined freedom as human freedom and the will as human will, Hegel believed himself to have shown that man reaches his basic identity in seeing himself not as pure rational will, but as a vehicle of Geist. If, as according to Hegel, the will whose autonomy men must realize is not that of man alone but of Geist, everything must change along with this new theory of man.

Taylor writes that Hegel’s theory of subjectivity built on the expressivist theory of Herder, which brought back Aristotelian categories in which the subject, man, was seen as realizing a certain form. It also added the dimension whereby this realized form is seen as the expression, in the sense of clarification of what the subject is, something which could not be known in advance. Hegel’s anti-dualist notion of the subject was that the subject and all his functions, however ‘spiritual’, were inescapably embodied in two related dimensions: as a ‘rational animal’ – a living being who thinks; and as an ‘expressive being’ – a being whose thinking always and necessarily expresses itself in a medium. The subject is defined as a being with certain properties not in one dimension but in two: the subject has certain conditions of existence, those of embodiment but at the same time it is characterized teleologically, as tending towards a certain perfection in reason. The demands of this

perfection at first run counter to his conditions of existence, and this inner complexity makes possible the subject's relation to self and its other.

Not only does Hegel restore the continuity within man, between his vital and mental functions, between life and consciousness, but he also restores the continuity of man to other living things such as animals, which Taylor writes was previously damaged by Cartesianism. Along with Herder, Hegel thought that man cannot be understood as an animal with rationality added; he is not merely an animal plus reason. While man is not radically different from other animals, according to Hegel, the fact of reflective consciousness in man leaves nothing else unaltered, such that his different kind of totality has to be understood on a different principle. Hegel argued for a hierarchy of being, where the apex of the development of the living thing is conscious subjectivity, which the human subject comes to embody. From lower to higher forms of being, living things become more like agents exhibiting proto-forms of subjectivity. For Hegel, the living thing is not just a functioning unity, or concatenation of parts, but also something in the nature of an agent, showing a sort of proto-purpose, and even a proto-intelligence in self-maintenance and adapting to novel circumstances. The highest of these living beings, the human subject, has the power of expression to be selves; they are self-conscious beings that strive for goals, are able to take account of self and its surroundings, and can maintain a certain form through changing conditions. Not only is there a hierarchy of forms of life, which is something Hegel extends to all of creation, but there is also a hierarchy of modes of thought, according to Hegel - between art, religion, and philosophy, as modes of expression that are of different rank.

To show how this is, Taylor explains the contribution from Kantian idealism, as well as, paradoxically, from Cartesian dualism, in Hegel's view of the vocation of rational consciousness to divide man and oppose itself to life. Man as a rational conscious being aims at clarity and self-sufficiency of rational thought which he only attains by separating himself from nature within and without. But for Hegel, the thinking rational subject can only exist embodied, and consciousness is not only discontinuous with life but in a sense also 'negates' it so that reason in man struggles against his own embodiment. Taylor explains how for Hegel, the subject is both identical with and opposed to his embodiment.^{cclii} Man as an embodied subject is inescapably at odds with himself because rational consciousness induces man to separate and insulate rational thought from his desires, leanings, and affinities. Man does not start with but comes to develop rationality and hence discord. He starts as a primitive being that has to acquire culture and understanding painfully and slowly, as the exigencies of thinking carry him into opposition to life or the spontaneous and natural in him, such that he must divide himself, and create discord where originally there was unity. As man's rational consciousness of himself grows, so the mode of expression of this self-consciousness must be altered, for thought cannot change without a transformation of its medium. In this way, for Hegel, there must be a hierarchy of modes of expression from language to philosophy in which the higher makes possible a more exact, lucid, and coherent thought than the lower; and the same truths are expressed but at different levels of adequacy.

This brings us to another way in which Taylor found Hegel's philosophy to be pivotal in its time. Not only did Taylor's reading of Hegel provide historical context for his own views, but Taylor found remarkable Hegel's theory of the rational and necessary movement of Geist through history as an argument for the existence of hierarchies - of being, forms of reflection, and culture - from more impoverished to richer ones. For Hegel, there is not only continuity of living things but also a hierarchy of levels of being. Hegel's argument for the historical movement of Geist, not merely through different types but through a hierarchy of being might provide a resource for Taylor

to argue for a hierarchy of “higher” forms of being over lower ones, to show how the richer concept of selfhood, for instance, realizes to a greater degree what the impoverished ones embody imperfectly. Taylor is drawn to another feature of Hegel’s philosophy, a further possibility for multiplicity that lies with Hegel in an original way. The fact that man achieves rather than starts with rationality means, for Hegel, that man has a history. Realizing the potential of conscious life requires not only effort and internal division but for this transformation to occur over time. The subject is necessarily a sphere of inner conflict, even contradiction. Its identity and opposition holds together, but does so in a temporal pattern because one is founded on the unchanging conditions of existence while the other comes from requirements of the subject’s realization; something it achieves over time. In order to come to clarity, man has to struggle through various stages of lesser, more distorted consciousness, which requires more than an ascent up the hierarchy of modes of consciousness. According to Hegel, human history itself is also the ascent up a hierarchy or ladder of cultural forms. Because man must struggle with impulse and give shape to his life, he thereby molds it into a culture that can express the demands of rationality and freedom. In this sense, even the mere abstract dimension of Hegel’s historicizing effort is attractive to Taylor for just like himself, Hegel sees multiplicities. But this historicizing work of Hegel’s philosophy is particularly attractive to Taylor because of the way it attempts to demonstrate the existence of better and worse forms among multiplicities.

As already referred to above (see 3.1) Hegel’s theory of embodied subjectivity models the thesis that identity amounts to the relation of identity and opposition. The subject is both identical to and opposed to his essential embodiment and this dual relation must be expressed in a temporal pattern where opposition necessarily grows out of original identity and itself leads to a higher unity founded on the recognition of the rational necessity of the higher position. Essentially, Hegel’s theory of subjectivity applies not only to man but also to cosmic spirit, or Geist in that the Absolute is subject. Even Hegel’s resolution of opposition in man requires that we refer beyond man himself to a larger rational plan, which is that of Geist. Hegel’s entire philosophical system, his phenomenology and philosophy of history, hinges on demonstrating his theory of Geist. So to grasp fully what Taylor found to be pivotal about Hegel’s philosophy in its time we need to examine more closely how Taylor understood the mechanics of his full theory of Geist.

Hegel’s view is that the universe is at once the embodiment of Geist, the realization of the conditions of its existence, as well as its expression, a statement of what Geist is.^{ccliii} Since subjectivity is necessarily embodied, Geist too cannot exist separately from the universe he sustains, making the universe itself his embodiment. Geist as infinite spirit is necessarily embodied in finite spirits, living beings that are capable of expressive activity, deployed in the external medium of sound, gestures, marks in which meaning can be expressed. Therefore, if Geist is to be, the universe must contain a plurality of kinds of living things and finite beings including inanimate nature and rational selves. Hegel’s argument for the necessary existence of many species and inanimate nature is that Geist, in order to be embodied, requires externality – extension in space and time, life and conscious life, which all exist in man.^{ccliv} For Geist to realize itself, man has to develop which is why there is, for Hegel, also a hierarchy of cultural forms and modes of consciousness that succeed each other in time and make up human history. In this way, human history does not end with division, but moves beyond to a higher cultural form, in which our nature – individual and collective life in interchange with our surroundings – expresses a larger rational plan than that of the autonomous individual such that we come to see and identify ourselves with the larger plan. The life of Geist as the ‘infinite spirit’ is essentially a process, a movement in which it posits its own conditions of existence in finite spirits, and overcomes the contradiction in these same conditions to realize its

goal of self-knowledge. This, according to Hegel, is how opposition fully understood shows the recovery of unity. The opposition between thought/life or reason/nature are transformed to come to higher unity where the primitive raw nature or impulse in man is transformed to reflect a higher aspiration of man to be the expression of reason. And this unity from reconciliation is very different from the undifferentiated primal unity because it has been mediated. It preserves the consciousness of division that was a necessary stage in the cultivation of nature and development of reason toward fully conscious and quintessentially rational being. Geist essentially comes to be out of a process of self-loss and return, and ‘mediation’ - according to which being requires a relation to something else (as opposed to what is ‘immediate’ and exists on its own) - becomes a cosmic principle.^{cclv}

Quite crucially, for Hegel, we cannot just assume that Geist is to be and derive the structure of the world from it. We have also to prove that this thesis is valid. If we want to conclude that this world is posited by Geist as its embodiment, it is not enough to show that if Geist is to be, the world must have the design which it in fact has.^{cclvi} In examining the world, we need to be able to show that it is in fact posited by Geist and this is what Hegel himself claimed to do. The central thread of Hegel’s major works was to show that when we examine the furniture of the world, we must see that it cannot be except as an emanation of Geist. Taylor explains how Hegel argues from the notion of contradiction, that there is some inner complexity in the reality of things, a conflict between what it is and what it is meant to be. Starting from finite reality, Hegel claims to be able to demonstrate, by dialectical argument, the existence of a cosmic spirit who posits the world according to rational necessity. He thinks the ingenuity of Hegel’s argument, and the reason it took hold, is that Hegel finds this complexity in any and every starting point, no matter how simple or impoverished.

3.2 The relevance of Hegel for modernity

Taylor is quite taken by this mode of philosophical reasoning he finds in Hegel, the *kind* of argument Hegel employed to overcome the dualism between mind and nature, by which he sought to *demonstrate* their unity in reason.^{cclvii} Hegel’s argument that Geist cannot be without finite spirit is transcendental; it starts with a given and argues back to its necessary conditions. Hegel’s transcendental argument starts much like Kant’s transcendental deduction in which Kant began with the idea of experience as a given and argued back to its necessary conditions. But Hegel’s argument for the existence of Geist notably differs from Kant’s in that the necessary conditions are not derived by simple deduction from the terms used in the starting point, or by examining causal relations. Kant started from the fact of experience and pointed out that we could not have experience of the world unless we had a place for the distinction between what is objectively so and what is only so for us, and moved to argue that we could not have such a distinction unless the categories hold. Hegel’s argument is not simply deductive or based on causal reasoning. Instead, Taylor sees his argument as analytic in that it appeals to a conceptual limit, such that we could not form a coherent notion of experience as by a subject that did not incorporate the distinction. Geist embodied must be placed somewhere and hence be finite because we cannot make coherent sense of the notion that Geist is “embodied but nowhere in particular”. The whole structure of experience as by a subject and of something would collapse. Hegel’s transcendental argument “makes it so that no one can tamper with the concepts in question in the relevant way and go on saying something coherent.”^{cclviii} This kind of transcendental argument tells us more than the meaning of the terms that make it up. It also tells us about the structure of things. Exactly what it says is open to dispute, however, and Kant would argue that what it tells us is the limit of our minds. Hegel argued that what it tells us is that the world is posited according to rational necessity, a necessity dictated by conceptual limits, which, according to Hegel, trace the lineaments of the universe.

What Taylor took to be so pivotal about Hegel in his own time was that his dialectic directed a powerful polemic against the Kantian forever unknowable thing in itself in a way that had enormous consequences for philosophy across the board. Despite the legions of commentators' disputes over its success, what Hegel attempted was to show that there cannot be anything beyond knowledge, beyond mind or Geist, for Geist turns out ultimately to be identical with reality, with the whole. Hegel's answer to the Kantian doctrine of Ding-an-sich was to tear down the barrier between man and the world, in making the knowledge of finite subjects ultimate in the self-knowledge of infinite subject. Opposition is overcome in the fact that our knowledge of the world turns ultimately into Geist's self-knowledge. We overcome the dualism between subject and the world, between knowing man and nature, in seeing the world as the necessary expression of thought, as a manifestation of rational necessity. Although Kant also believed epistemology to be inseparable from moral philosophy as well as political theory, Hegel's theory of knowledge is a wholesale systematic rejection of Kant. Hegel's problem with Kant's criterion of rationality was that it purchased radical autonomy at the price of emptiness, with disastrous implications for morals and politics. In attempting to avoid any appeal to the way things are, either to an order of ideas or a constellation of de facto desires, Kant's purely formal criterion of the right could not rule some actions in and others out, and could thus allow anything as a morally possible action. Thus, the dilemma of radical freedom according to Hegel was that if freedom is to renounce all heteronomy, any determination of the will by particular desires be it traditional principle or external authority, then freedom seems incompatible with any rational action whatsoever.

Hegel's criticism that Kant achieves moral autonomy at the price of vacuity is related to his critique of Kant's politics. He thought that Kant's notion of moral freedom was incapable of generating a new substantive vision of the polity in which freedom would be realized, one founded on goals derived intrinsically from the nature of the will itself, which would thus be unconditionally valid for men. In political terms, Kant's formulation of rationality requires that man be treated as a rational subject, as an end, and not only as a means. This abstract proto-liberal requirement of how individuals ought to be treated provides only a formal characterization of the good society, that the state be ruled by law, not by arbitrary caprice, and that the law treat all alike, which means it must emanate from all alike. The state would have to recognize the rights of the autonomous individual, forbid slavery, and respect such goods as property, freedom of conscience, choice of career, or religious confession, etc. But with merely a formal notion of freedom, Kant's politics cannot take us very far beyond utilitarianism in that its main problem remains that of harmonizing the individual wills. A utilitarian or liberal individualist vision of society, broadly defined, is one where individuals each seek happiness and the problem of politics is to find a way of limiting the negative freedom (*Willkür*) of each so that it can coexist with that of all others under a universal law. Kant's political theory has to take its content from nature and ends up borrowing heavily from utilitarianism. It starts from men as individuals seeking particular goals, and the demands of morality and rationality - as universality - only enter as restrictions and limitations imposed on these individuals from outside. Even Rousseau's innovation of the 'general will' was no better, for Hegel, in that it still relied on the concept of individual will. Rather than embodying the 'absolutely rational element in the will' according to Hegel, the general will was merely the common element emerging from conscious individual wills, and thus in either case, the state was based on decisions and consent that were ultimately arbitrary.^{cclix}

Although like Kant, Hegel also distinguished will and freedom from nature, quite unlike him, Hegel maintained that the fulfillment of freedom emerges when nature (society, which started in a

raw, primitive form) is made over to the demands of reason, resulting in a wholly different moral and political philosophy. Hegel's free and rational will escapes the vacuity that he charged Kant's moral philosophy with because unlike Kant's it produces a particular content out of itself. Human rational will finds a content not by stripping itself of all particularity in the attempt to attain a universal freedom which can only be formal, but by discovering its links to cosmic reason, and hence coming to discern what aspects of our lives as particular beings reflect the truly concrete universal which is the Idea. In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel characterized the will as 'self-determining universality' and hence as freedom. Thought is essential to the will in that without it there can be no will, and it is the practical expression of thought that the will is destined to be free. Since the Hegelian notion of reason as freedom cannot accommodate - and must ultimately rebel against - anything merely given, everything must flow of necessity from the Idea, from Spirit or Reason itself. If the substance of the will is thought or reason, and if the will is only free when it follows nothing else but its own thought, the thought or reason in question turns out not to be that of man alone, but rather that of the cosmic spirit which posits the universe. So the very notion of will is bound up with that of freedom and autonomy expresses the demand of Spirit or Reason to deduce its whole content out of itself, not to accept as binding anything which is merely taken up from outside. Hegel resolves Kant's dilemma by showing how the concrete content of duty is deduced from the very idea of freedom itself. The resultant view of freedom overturns the enlightenment conception of the negative freedom to do what one likes. Hegel's view of freedom is the freedom that man has in following his own essence in reason, which is to participate in the larger life of the state. The arbitrary choice of the individual is precisely not freedom but caprice. Freedom is the will and its content is the Idea, which produces a differentiated world out of itself, so that there is no longer a lack of determining grounds of action. The will as 'self-determining universality' is designated the 'ground of right' and is the basic principle of the fully realized state.

The fulfillment of Hegel's idea of Spirit therefore requires the growth of a community that fully expresses and embodies reason (which has been the main object of the very ire discussed above in 3.2). Since Spirit posits the world of space and time in order to realize itself, this fulfillment and hence also the community of reason is the goal of history.^{cdlx} What is most important for man can only be attained in relation to the public life of a community, not in the private self-definition of the alienated individual. The community as the embodiment of Geist is more substantial and developed than the individual and so independent obligations are not the highest claims that can be made on us. Rather, for Hegel, the apex of moral life requires a notion of society as a larger community life in which man participates as a member. This community must not be a merely partial one, whose life is conditioned, controlled or limited by a larger society. It must be coterminous with the minimum self-sufficient human reality, which is the state. The public life of the state has crucial importance for men because the norms and ideas it expresses are not just human inventions. On the contrary, the state expresses the Idea, the ontological structure of things. And this is of vital importance because this real relation through the life of the community is one of the indispensable ways in which man recovers his essential relation to this ontological structure, the other being in the modes of consciousness which Hegel calls 'absolute spirit', both of which is essential to the completion of the return to conscious identity between man and the Absolute, i.e. the Absolute's self-identity.

Hegel's answer to the vacuity of Kant's moral theory was to deduce the content of duty out of the idea of freedom where moral obligation is to further and sustain the society founded on reason. Since by 'reason' Hegel was not talking about the idea of merely human freedom, but rather of the cosmic idea - the Idea, or Concept - he could derive from it the notion of the kind of society

that men should belong to, such that reason, which dictates a certain structure of society, also enables man to be morally free by it. Hegel supplanted Kant's abstract criterion of rationality by requiring that of political society realize and express the Idea, which in turn requires that man be part of a larger life in a society. For Hegel, the fulfillment of morality comes in what he calls 'Sittlichkeit', according to which moral life reaches its highest realization, its completion, in a community. Sittlichkeit enjoins people to bring about what already is and is therefore in stark contrast to the ethics of 'Moralitat' where the opposite holds and people have an obligation to realize something that does not exist. Hegel faulted Kant for identifying ethical obligation solely with Moralitat, with an abstract and formal notion of moral obligation that holds of man as an individual, not in virtue of being part of a larger community life, but as an individual rational will. Sittlichkeit, or 'ethical life,' 'objective ethics,' 'concrete ethics', refers specifically to the moral obligations one has to an ongoing community of which one is already a part, and is based on established norms and uses. One's fulfillment of these obligations is what sustains it and keeps it in being, so Sittlichkeit both gives obligation its definitive content and realizes it. The common life which is the basis of one's sittlich obligation is already in existence and it is in virtue of its being an ongoing affair that one has these obligations.

Thus while Kant's moral theory as 'Moralitat' remained at the edges of politics, as it were, setting limits beyond which states or individuals should not tread, Hegel's view of ethics as 'Sittlichkeit' enables the derivation of the actual shape society should take, according to reason. The demands of reason are that the various moments of immediate unity, separation, and mediated unity all reach full and compatible expression. Hegel gives concrete content to this seemingly obscure requirement by describing the grounds for the essential articulation of the state into 'estates' (Stände) and into levels of society (family, civil society, state).^{ccxi} Men live in a state articulated according to the Concept, but more importantly, they relate to it not just as individuals whose interests are served by this collectively established machinery, but essentially as participants in a larger life in which they are immersed. This larger life deserves their ultimate allegiance because it is the expression of the very foundation of things, the Concept. The society dictated by reason gives concrete content to moral obligation by enjoining men to further and sustain its structures and to live according to its precepts. Thus, for Hegel, morality can only have a concrete content in politics, via the notion of a whole society, in the design of the society we have to further and sustain.

3.2.1 *Does Taylor think that Hegel's Dialectic was successful?*

As Taylor sees it, Hegel attempted to resolve the dualisms that aroused the deepest concern in his time. The powerful motivation of his philosophizing effort was to answer the aspiration of his age to unite the greatest rational autonomy with the fullest expressive unity with nature. Rather than attempt this with Romantic abandonment in which subject and object are felt ultimately to coincide in a kind of ineffable intuition of unity, through his notion of reason, Hegel unites finite and infinite spirit without loss of freedom, a dilemma which none of his Romantic contemporaries were able to resolve, according to Taylor. But Hegel's claim to reconcile the major oppositions by reason itself cannot just be posited and presented; it must be demonstrated. Taylor describes the three major demonstrations of Hegel's philosophy, the structure of which exemplifies his conception of Dialectic: one, the demonstration of the hierarchical chain of being, of external matter; two, as the manifestation of a chain of rational necessity, or categories, until we come to the Idea; and third, a demonstration that starts neither from forms of being nor from categories, but from forms of consciousness, where we go from the lowest to highest form of consciousness as self-knowing Geist or absolute knowledge. Dialectic is not a method or approach for Hegel. Rather, it is meant to be

descriptive. Hegel's aim was simply to follow the movement in his object of study, and whatever reality considered - however seemingly independent - should manifest the inner articulation necessary for contradiction. In this inner articulation would be seen a clash between effective existence, what the thing effectively is, and the goal or standard it is aiming at or meant to be; and hence, the thing would be liable to dialectical contradiction. Hegel's phenomenology accounts for dialectical contradiction in things by starting with something that is intrinsically characterized by the purpose it is bent on realizing or the standard it must meet, and then showing that it cannot, of conceptual necessity, effectively fulfill this purpose or meet the standard. Hegel's philosophy of history and politics, too, accounts for the dialectical development of man in history towards the fully realized state, which is the goal of man as the vehicle of the self-comprehension of Spirit or Reason.

Taylor distinguishes between two kinds of dialectic that Hegel deploys in his arguments: *historical* and *ontological*. Historical dialectics is where the purpose is in fact unrealized in the thing as it is and the existing reality will necessarily go under or be transformed as the purpose in further pursuing itself cancels its inadequate fulfillment. Certain historical forms of life are prey to inner contradiction, either because they are doomed to frustrate the very purpose for which they exist (i.e., the master/slave relation), or because they are bound to generate an inner conflict between different conditions which are equally essential to the fulfillment of the purpose (as with the Greek polis). These forms are thus destined to go under and be replaced by others. Ontological dialectics does not deal primarily with historical change but rather with deepening our conception of a given standard and of the reality which meets it. Taylor thinks that the two kinds of dialectic are actually extremely closely related in Hegel's works because each one figures in the explanation of the other. Hegel's philosophy of history refers us to his ontology and his ontology requires historical development. For Hegel's most important ontological dialectic, the *Logic*, the contradictory conceptions whose dialectical movement we follow correspond to contradictory realities which, as such, show their dependence on a larger whole that the higher categories describe. Similarly, the dialectic of consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* takes us through a critique of inadequate conceptions of knowledge considered as a realized standard. The play of changing conceptions is as essential to historical dialectics as the change of historical reality, and indeed they are bound up with one another. In short, dialectical movement is a relation involving three terms, not two. The basic purpose or standard, the inadequate reality, and an adequate conception of the purpose, which is bound up with that reality. Taylor is especially keen on Hegel's view that if the argument follows a dialectical movement then this must be in the things themselves, not just in the way we reason about them.

According to Hegel, the dialectic of history is to be understood as reflecting the conceptually necessary stages of the self-unfolding of the Idea. Spirit in history is trying to come to an understanding, or knowledge, of self. But to do this it must bring into existence a reality, a spiritual community which must also be a real community which is adequate to its concept. History must therefore be understood teleologically, as directed in order to express and realize Geist. The march of history can be seen as the succession of communities, the earlier ones being very imperfect expressions of what the later ones will embody more adequately. The Idea is realized in history but through stages, and these stages are historical civilizations, *volkegeister*, which are the concrete historical communities or people that more or less adequately embody Spirit. The set of stages is itself necessary, according to the Concept, because it is necessary to its self-realization that Spirit move from the greatest outwardness to full self-consciousness. Each stage, set by necessity, must also work itself out, which means that the motor force of contradiction moves between the external reality and what it is meant to realize, eventually bringing any given form to dissolution. The

particular nature of the contradiction in each form determines its particular outcome, and hence the collapse of one form gives rise to its specific other. Hegel's claim is that history shows not only a dialectic this way, but a necessary teleology, since the beginning point, goal, and intermediate stages, are all set by the Idea.

The plan of history is that of the Idea, the philosophical understanding of which is presupposed by the philosophy of history. The transition from one stage to the next comes about through the fruition and natural death of each world-historical people or through the fruition and natural death of each world-historical people as well as an inner contradiction that drives it. Hegel represents Reason in this image as using the passions of men to fulfill her own purposes. Hegel's notion of the 'cunning of reason' helps to account for the transition from one stage to the next. What men are doing in history they may not grasp; and why they desert one standard and go to another may not be clear to them. Certainly men in earlier stages of history necessarily could not have understood the plan of Geist as the philosopher Hegel could. But all men are nonetheless vehicles of Geist, so they have some sense, however cloudy, of the demands of Spirit. Even the greatness of world-historical individuals lies not just in their being instruments of world-spirit but in being those who first sense and give articulation to what must be the next stage.

Until now, the thrust of this chapter has been to build the case for Taylor's strong interest in and affirmation of Hegel. It needs to be said, however, that Taylor's reading of Hegel is neither wholehearted veneration nor without some major objections, the ramifications of which become quite significant for his own work (especially on moral philosophy, see chapter 4). Taylor wants to show that Hegel has two ways of showing Reason at work in history, one by a strict conceptual proof of the *Logic* that builds from an undeniable starting point, and the other by drawing a thesis from an examination of the whole of history as the only conclusion that makes sense of this whole, as it is 'empirically'.^{cclxiii} In order to elaborate his assessment of Hegel, Taylor deploys a distinction, which he acknowledges Hegel would never agree or admit to but insists has a place in Hegel's philosophical system. He writes that we have to distinguish between two kinds of proof of a thesis, or ways in which a dialectical exposition can command our assent: "strict dialectics", whose starting point is or can reasonably claim to be undeniable; and "interpretive or hermeneutic dialectics", which convince us by the overall plausibility of the interpretations they give. Taylor thinks that Hegel's *Logic* falls into the category of strict dialectics, but that his historical dialectics falls into the latter category of interpretive or hermeneutic dialectics, which do not convince by strict argument but by the plausibility of their interpretation. Of course Hegel would never have agreed that any part of his system reposed on plausible interpretations as against strict argument, for this would be to abandon the conception of Geist as total rationality. But Taylor's claim is that Hegel starts with a strict dialectic with the *Logic*, in the final system of the *Encyclopedia*, which established that there is no independent finite being, but that all is held together in the Idea, or the formula of rational necessity which creates its own external manifestation. Taylor's claim is that Hegel then draws on these dialectics, the conclusion of which is thusly available for the succeeding dialectics of the philosophies of nature and of Spirit.

As such, Taylor is not entirely convinced by Hegel's dialectical arguments. Taylor's claim is that the interest of many of Hegel's historical interpretations lies just in that they illuminate the interconnection of events enough to induce us to take them seriously. In examining Hegel's most successful historical dialectics Taylor writes that the most illuminating and convincing ones do so in the way that any good historical account does, because they "fit" well as an interpretation. What we know about a given period can be made sense of with the least implausibility compared to other

rival interpretations. But these interpretive explanations have no absolutely certain starting point. On its own, the original imputation of any certain logic of the situation is quite ungrounded. It is only when it has been followed out, connected with all the other imputations which go with it, and when these have been seen to fit the facts with plausibility, and to make overall sense, that Taylor thinks we can feel confident about accepting it. There is a looseness of fit between history and logic. Taylor thinks that the conceptual relations in their general form permit of too many combinations to form a very rigorous a priori framework. And the historical events permit of too many interpretations in such high-level concepts as universal, particular, and individual not to allow for a great deal of contingency.

The problem Taylor sees besetting Hegel's dialectics generally is that the imputation of purpose can never be self-authenticating as a starting point. The ontological dialectics start with a realized goal or standard, where the initial task is to show that the object in question is to be understood in terms of the realization of a goal. Once this is secured, the dialectic can proceed to define the goal. Since we know that the standard is met, we can set aside any conception of the goal that shows itself to be unrealizable. We can start with any definition, and by showing how it conflicts with its own fulfillment move to more adequate conceptions until we reach the fully adequate one. But this cannot, Taylor thinks, be the case with historical dialectics. Prior to the total unfolding of history we have *ex hypothesi* no realized purpose before us. So we cannot treat any tract of history as a fulfillment whose operative standard we have to discover. Nor can we, argues Taylor, read from any tract of history even a general description of what man is ultimately aiming at with certainty. Hegel's view of the polity based on the ontology of Spirit is hard to swallow.

3.2.2 *How does Taylor think Hegel continues to be relevant today?*

Taylor thinks that Hegel's ontological vision of Geist (which is the basis for his particular philosophy of history and politics) is incredible and that Hegel's metaphysical vision can only seem illusory to contemporary readers. Taylor – and he argues contemporary readers like us – are nonetheless drawn to Hegel because of the recurrent experience we have of the need for a critique of the illusions and distortions of Enlightenment thinking while at the same time refusing the Romantic counter-illusions they continually generate. Endemic to the rise of modern industrial society and its technological rationalized mode of civilization has been an atomistic social philosophy, utilitarian ethical outlook, and an instrumental conception of nature, which Taylor traces back to the Enlightenment. He writes that technology and industrial society have pushed more and more extensive subjugation of nature and repeatedly enforced the reorganization of society and way of life in the name of efficiency and higher production. While social relations and nature itself become progressively objectified, an instrumental mode of evaluation relates the activities defining the institutions of modern industrial economy and society to external purposes such as profit, efficient production, or growth. As an ongoing reaction to Enlightenment thought and sensibilities, the Romanticist hope of combining the aspirations to both expressivist unity, with nature and within society, and radical autonomist currents of reaction have remained important in our civilization.^{cxliiii} The tension that we moderns experience, according to Taylor, comes from the fact that we cannot and do not want to abandon the rational, technological bent of our society which comes from the Enlightenment, while we constantly feel the appeal of the Romanticist aspirations to radical autonomy and expressive unity. Hegel's philosophy is important and even more relevant to us than Romantic thinkers, Taylor writes, because he is a thinker who tried to combine all three. The need for expressive unity emerges in Hegel's thought in his understanding of the importance of Sittlichkeit; the need for rational autonomy comes out in the demand for a modern Sittlichkeit that

will give full scope to the rational will of the modern individual. Moreover, in taking up these twin aspirations of Romanticism, Hegel insisted on the essential role of reason to do so, the consequences of which were enormous in his day and remain important to us today.

Taylor argues that the dilemma Hegel's solution was meant to solve – which is what Tocqueville also tried to grapple with albeit in different terms – still remains with us.^{cclxiv} The two tendencies that Hegel identified in the Enlightenment, the utilitarian tendency of atomist social engineering, and the drive to absolute freedom through the realization of the general will, have continued to shape the development of modern society, making Hegel's analysis of these extraordinarily deep, perceptive, and important for us. Hegel's account of the utilitarian, atomist streak in modern society goes beyond the analysis of utilitarianism as a mode of consciousness to an analysis of the modern productive economy of emancipated bourgeois society. Hegel anticipated some of the themes and insights later developed by Marx, particularly in the way that he saw that modern industrial production tends to an increasing and ramifying division of labor, and along with this the creation of a proletariat.^{cclxv} Hegel saw the dangers inherent in the drive to absolute freedom and discerned what he took to be the two great disruptive forces that threaten the modern state. The first is the force of private interests, inherent in civil society and in its mode of production, which constantly threatens to overrun all limits, polarize the society between rich and poor, and dissolve the bonds of the state. The second is the diametrically opposed attempt to overcome this and all other divisions by sweeping away all differentiation in the name of the general will and the true society of equals, an attempt which must issue, Hegel thinks, in violence and the dictatorship of a revolutionary elite. The third destructive potential of modern society, which Hegel thought was sustained by the first two is the force towards the homogenization of modern society, that is, the creation of one large society in which cultural subgroups are progressively eroded. For it is not only the drive towards absolute freedom which sweeps aside all differentiations; the development of the capitalist economy has also meant the disruption of traditional community, the mass migrations of populations, and the creation of a unified market and as much as possible a unified labor force.

Taylor sees that the inability to check poverty is still the galling experience of our affluent, technological societies, which eats away at the unity and solidarity of every modern community, what Hegel saw as the growing alienation which would ruin the modern *Sittlichkeit* if left unchecked. Hegel's *Sittlichkeit* refers to that dimension of our ethical obligations which are to a larger life which we have to sustain and continue. The *Sittlich* dimension is important in men's ethical life where they have a profound identification with their society and its institutions. Where they do not and what is of central importance to them lies elsewhere, we have what Hegel characterizes as alienation. Hegel, following in this Montesquieu and a long tradition, does not believe that a free society can be sustained without this kind of identification which sustains a vital *Sittlichkeit*. Hegel charged that in the intermittent crisis of alienation that followed the breakdown of traditional society, utilitarian theories have been powerless to fill the gap.^{cclxvi} They have not, and by definition, cannot provide a new basis for men's identification with their society since the demand for absolute freedom by itself is empty. Using the French Revolution as a key example, Hegel argued that the consequence of such emptiness was destructiveness.^{cclxvii} The increasing alienation of a society which has eroded its traditional foci of allegiance makes it harder and harder to achieve basic consensus, to bring everyone to the 'general will' which is essential for radical democracy. As the traditional limits fade with the grounds for accepting them, society tends to fragment when partial groups become increasingly truculent in their demands, as they see less reason to compromise with the 'system'. The point that Hegel repeatedly made was that radical demand for participation can do nothing to stem this fragmentation. Participation of all in a decision is only possible if there is a ground of

agreement, or an underlying common purpose, but radical participation presupposes this kind of basis and cannot create it.^{ccxviii} Ideologies of absolute freedom only produce something in the hands of a minority with a powerful vision which it is willing to impose, and when some radical break was sought, societies have had recourse to more powerful variants of the general will tradition, i.e. Jacobinism, Marxism, or anarchism as a revolutionary ideology. But when a group takes over and imprints its own purpose on society claiming to represent the general will, they may 'solve' the problem of diversity but they do so by force, e.g. contemporary communist societies, or militant nationalism or some totalitarian ideology by depreciating or even crushing diversity and individuality, and so would not be models of freedom. Their solution to the emptiness of absolute freedom is in a sense only provisional. An ideology of participation which does not want to take a totalitarian road of general mobilization cannot cope with the complexity and fragmentation of a large-scale contemporary society. Many protagonists of absolute freedom see this and return to Rousseau's idea of a highly decentralized federation of communities, but the growth of a large homogeneous society has made this much less feasible. Homogenization undermines the partial communities which would have been the basis of such a decentralized federation, and decentralization gives us no way of coping with the lot of decisions that need to be made over our massive concentration of population and economic interdependence.

Taylor points out how the first response of liberal society has been to try even more measures toward homogenization: programs to eliminate poverty, or assimilate groups, move populations out of declining regions, bring an urban way of life to the countryside, etc. The more radical response has been to convert this sense of alienation into a demand for total participation, by creating a society in which everyone, including the present 'out' groups, participates fully in the decision. But both these solutions simply aggravate the problem because homogenization undermines the communities and characteristics by which people formerly identified themselves while putting nothing in their place. The attempts to overcome the alienation of a mass society by mass participation is vain since the very size, complexity, and interdependence of modern society makes mass participation increasingly difficult on technical grounds alone. And while total participation may be unrealizable in a large-scale society, the attempt to fill the gap by moving towards a society of universal and total participation, where it is not actually harmful in suppressing freedom, is itself vain. It can only aggravate the problem by intensifying homogenization, while offering no relief since absolute freedom by itself is empty and cannot offer a focus of identity.

Taylor writes that the drive toward homogenization continues today. The dilemma that Taylor sees in contemporary society is that while modern societies have moved towards much greater homogeneity and greater interdependence, greater minority alienation and resentment have resulted from partial communities losing their autonomy and to some extent their identity. Modern democracy is therefore in a bind. Men define themselves more immediately by their partial community, cultural, linguistic, religious and so on, than simply as men. Great differences remain but because of the ideology of homogeneity, these differential characteristics no longer retain meaning and value for those who have them. One of the great needs of the modern democratic polity, therefore, is to recover a sense of significant differentiation, a meaning to differences between social groups so that all the partial communities, be they geographical or cultural can become again important centers of concern and activity for their members in a way that connects them to the whole. Under the impact of both radical egalitarianism and liberal individualism all deeply rooted social differentiations have come under attack, not only those forms which are based on birth and social position, but even the biologically based one, that between the sexes. The modern notion of equality will suffer no differences in the field of opportunity, which individuals have before them.

Before they choose, individuals must be interchangeable; or alternatively put, any differences must be chosen. Even the emphasis on choice in the contemporary principle of equality reflects its marriage with a radical notion of freedom, as self-creation. Of course, in a sense, Hegel did not foresee this immense homogenization, precisely because he thought that it would be contained by the new *Sittlichkeit* founded on the Idea. But as Taylor sees it, he identified the forces which pushed in that direction, making his philosophy a valuable starting point if we want to ask questions of the range that incorporates underlying conceptions of man and society, which Taylor thinks all problems of modern society and issues in contemporary life do.

What modern society needs is a ground for differentiation meaningful to the people concerned, which at the same time does not set the partial communities against each other, but rather knits them together in a larger whole. Taylor sees the aspiration to what Hegel calls ‘absolute freedom’ or universal and total participation as the attempt to meet an endemic need to fill this lack in modern political theory to find grounds for identification with one’s society that are fully in the spirit of modern society. At its simplest, Hegel’s analysis is that the modern ideology of equality and of total participation leads to a homogenization of society, which shakes men loose from their traditional communities, while being incapable of replacing them as a focus of identity. Taylor thinks we cannot accept Hegel’s solution to give social and political differentiation a meaning by seeing them as expressive of cosmic order, conceived as founded on reason alone, and hence as the ultimate object of the free will, and thus the final and complete fulfillment of the modern aspiration to autonomy. Hegel’s answer to the problem of *Sittlichkeit*, the evolution of a society founded on the Idea, is a complete non-starter for us today, not least because its rejection of the modern thrust towards equality and radical democracy has potentially very reactionary consequences (see section 3.1 above). Still, Taylor thinks that the utility of the Hegelian concept of *Sittlichkeit* more than compensates for the fact that we cannot accept his solution.^{cclxix}

Conclusion

In Taylor’s eyes, the problem of how free societies – societies whose institutions can only function with widespread voluntary participation – might maintain their unity and vitality is an important question in the tradition of political theory – Aristotle, Machiavelli, Montesquieu, which the liberal era tended to lose sight of, taking the unity of liberal society for granted. This was a central issue for Hegel, who shared with his generation the nostalgia for the free states of ancient Greece, where their citizens identified so profoundly that the city’s life was the center of theirs. The polis was the paradigm historical case from which Hegel’s notion of *Sittlichkeit* derived; and it is with this concept and those related to it that Hegel comes to grips with the issue of free societies.^{cclxx} Hegel’s rational state was meant to restore *Sittlichkeit*, the embodiment of the highest norms in an ongoing public life, recovering what was lost with the Greeks, but one that would do so on a higher level, since Hegel constantly stressed how the tight unity of the Greek city-state cannot be recaptured in the modern world that has known the principle of individual freedom.^{cclxxi} Taylor argues that Hegel’s statement of the dilemma for absolute freedom is relevant to us not only as a keenly prescient characterization of modern democracy but even more so for the kind of explanation that his conceptual scheme makes possible. According to Taylor, Hegel’s analysis occupies an important place in the line of development of the aspiration to absolute freedom as it develops from Rousseau through Marx and the anarchist thinkers to contemporary theories of participatory democracy^{cclxxii} precisely because his posing of the problem with his concepts of *Sittlichkeit* and alienation, although related to the tradition, open up a new way of treating the requirements of a free society that still remains one of the most acute and penetrating available to us.

Hegel's insistence that all viable societies must be meaningfully articulated made for a new way of posing the question.

Taylor thinks we are beginning to rediscover the importance of restoring something like Hegel's *Sittlichkeit*, as our societies are threatened with breakup. But much to his chagrin, the issue has typically been dealt with in modern political science in a way that breaks entirely from the tradition in which Hegel stood.^{cclxxiii} The major contemporary issue of the rising tension and disunity within many western democratic polities is understood as a decline in 'legitimacy', where the concept is defined in terms of the subjective orientations of the members of a polity towards the polity and its institutions. In scientific discourse, institutions are not characterized as legitimate or illegitimate as such; rather, 'legitimacy' is used to characterize the way they are seen by those who live under them, or what these people feel about them. Taylor's critique, of course, is fully in keeping with his concurrent writings on interpretation against the drive of modernist forms of social science to keep its descriptions and explanations free from evaluation and its quest to make human scientific inquiry 'value-free'.^{cclxxiv} We can see again the great influence of Hegel on Taylor's thinking about the misplaced empiricist split in our human sciences which keeps political scientists from explaining change in people's orientations by the evolution of society itself. The requirement of value-freedom means that when this science characterizes polities and institutions themselves, it must steer clear of any terms that are properly used to describe people's orientations to these institutions. Properly speaking, we ought not to describe a society's institutions as embodying or expressing a certain conception of man and of his relation to society – except in the limiting case where these institutions were set up to embody this conception. Thus, this science must make use of a stripped-down reductivist language to characterize polities and institutions. It will understand institutions as patterns of action that shape how men behave, and either frustrate or facilitate their purposes. Shifts in people's "values" or "expectations" remain either inexplicable starting points in their account, or must be explained on some quite other level of analysis. In contrast to the Hegelian vocabulary of *Sittlichkeit*, it cannot look on them in an *expressive* dimension, as embodying certain conceptions or a certain quality of life.

Thus the great value that Taylor saw in Hegel's philosophy was not merely the way it identified and detailed the forces at work in modernity but also in how Hegel's concepts provided the theoretical language for actually dealing with those very problems. Taylor argued that the alternative kind of account that Hegel's philosophy imparted made possible essential insight into the development of contemporary society. What Taylor saw was how Hegel's notion of 'objective spirit' provides the basis for an ontological way of understanding society, strongly at variance with the modern empiricist tendencies of mainstream political science as he witnessed it in the '70s. An Hegelian account explains rising tension or disunity in ontological relation to the evolution of the society itself, understood in terms of alienation, which arises where the important ideas of man and society and their relation to nature, embodied in the institutions of a given society, cease to be those with which its members identify themselves. The vocabulary of *Sittlichkeit* and alienation offers a way of accounting for the shift in people's allegiance by dealing with the underlying conceptions embodied in institutions and the definitions of identity that are essential to it. Because Hegel's vocabulary carries the idea that our institutions and practices embody a certain view of ourselves both as individuals and social beings, it strongly supported Taylor's critique of modernist ways of reflecting. Taylor drew on Hegel to argue that what we need to aim for – if we can hope to explain the rise of alienation or "the decline of legitimacy" or our present context of threatened breakdown – is to understand precisely the ideas of man that a given society embodies in its institutions coupled with an understanding of its development. Hegel's philosophy certainly helped Taylor to formulate

his view of what alternative was needed. Even more than that, as we shall see, what Taylor learned from Hegel was that the only kind of argument he could offer for why the modernist way of knowing is fundamentally crippled by its own conceptual limitations must be historical.

The major reason for Taylor's turn to Hegel, therefore, has to do with his belief that Hegel might provide the resources he needs to transcend the impasse we arrived at – already alluded to at the opening of this chapter – for claiming one ontology of selfhood over another. In developing his view of human agency as the basis of his anti-naturalism, Taylor needed to address the immediate implications of his strong ontological claims about selfhood on how we should reflect on issues of morality and politics, beyond epistemological issues in the human sciences. Explicating Hegel's philosophy of history and theory of modernity was a way for Taylor to grapple with how exactly the problem of epistemology in the philosophy of human sciences is necessarily tied to debates about how we should think about the grounds for ethics, the relationship between individual and society, and how to debate issues of meaning, language, and community.

4.0 Moral Philosophy and the Good

4.1 Historicizing Moral Ontology

4.1.1 *What are the ontological features of personhood?*

4.1.2 *What implications does moral ontology have for moral philosophy?*

4.1.3 *What is the structure of Taylor's argument about the moral nature of our interpretive being?*

4.2 Value Pluralism and Normative Practices

4.2.1 *What are the moral roots of the modern identity?*

4.2.2 *What constraints does Taylor see in reasoning about ontology?*

4.2.3 *Is moral ontology necessary for moral philosophy?*

4.1 Historicizing Moral Ontology

On Taylor's reading, the departure from Kant's criterion of rationality in Hegel's use of "reason" was original in historical context and monumental in its impact on the history of philosophy. Taylor saw how all of the elements of Hegel's critique of Kant systematically connect to leave us with a complex of ideas that shows the fundamental interrelatedness of knowledge, morals, and politics. Taylor's own critique of contemporary moral philosophy in the Kantian tradition, as well as his criticisms of contemporary political theory - against both atomistic forms of liberal theories and subjectivist/projectivist varieties of critique, reveal how insightful and appealing he found Hegel's rejection of Kant's conception of reason to be. Hegel charged that Kant's purely formal notion could not provide the necessary content to moral obligation because autonomous reason divided what ought to be with what is, and ultimately defined the right to be opposed to the real, pitting moral obligation against nature in endless opposition to what is. Kant could not derive a satisfactory notion of the polity from a view of rationality that is external, formal, and universal, unlike Hegel could from the view of reason as immanent, particular, and historical. Moreover, since Kant's view of moral obligation shied away from that larger life of which we are a part - in that it rejected the ethical content that comes from an ongoing society to which we belong - it remained an ethic of the individual.^{cclxxxv} In Taylor's eyes, Hegel's view made it possible to overcome the vacuity that bedeviled the theory of radical autonomy, and thus transformed the situation in his day, with tremendous consequences for both moral and political philosophy.

Taylor credits Hegel's reading of the demands of freedom as taking us beyond atomistic forms of both the contract theory of modern natural law and the utilitarian conception of society as an instrument of general happiness. He shares Hegel's disdain for the moral and political philosophy associated with a purely formal concept of freedom where the aspiration for radical autonomy assumes that the individual and his goals are of ultimate importance and that the task of society is merely to permit individual fulfillment along with those of others. While Taylor thought we should reject the Hegelian ramifications of the self-sufficient community as the state, whose role is central insofar as it expresses the Idea, he thought there was nonetheless a key lesson to be distilled from the incredible notion of Geist as the formula of rational necessity underlying man and his world. By putting the notion of Sittlichkeit at the apex of moral life, Hegel's notion of morality requires a society as the larger community life in which man participates as a member; it thus shifted the center of gravity from the individual to the community. While setting aside the political consequences of this doctrine that the highest and most complete moral existence is one that we can attain only as members of community founded upon Geist, Taylor staunchly defended the veracity of Hegel's

ontological picture that the set of practices and institutions that make up the public life of the community expresses the most important norms, most central to its members' identity; according to which individuals are only sustained in their identity by their participation in these practices and institutions, and which in turn they themselves perpetuate by their participation.

In this way, explicating Hegel's ontologized concept of reason in history – particularly as a critique of Kant's epistemology and moral theory – allows Taylor to grapple with the kind of argument he himself was trying to formulate to make the case for the unity of scientific and moral outlooks. It would not suffice for him, however, merely to show the connections between scientific and moral outlooks. Taylor wanted to advance the scientific force and normative appeal of his own defense of a *hermeneutical* sciences of man in particular, and demonstrate its appropriateness also for issues of morality and politics. For this he needed to offer an argument that recognizes the historicity, i.e. changeability, of notions of selfhood, but one that could also intervene on the issue of ordering better and worse conceptions, to provide the basis for a moral choice between them, i.e. reasons for morally preferring one over another. Taylor was stuck between two understandings of selfhood on which the human sciences could be modeled: (i) the view of disengaged selfhood, which he claimed lay behind the drive toward naturalism in the human sciences; and (ii) his view of self-interpreting strong evaluators, which he argued only an interpretive human sciences could possibly elucidate. In his arguments about the double hermeneutic in the human sciences, Taylor asserted that strong evaluation is an undeniable truth about our nature. We are always already strong evaluators such that even the disengaged view of selfhood has something that is necessarily strongly valued on some deeper level that it outwardly denies, be it instrumentality, efficiency, or a zeal for absolute freedom. To transcend the impasse that his argument for anti-naturalism culminated in and to show how any view of selfhood – even weak evaluation – presupposes strong evaluation, Taylor needed a convincing ontological argument about selfhood that would explain the moral outlooks behind our own preferences, and thus why we really must prefer his moral ontology of selfhood over any of its weak or disengaged others.

Although Taylor thought that Hegel's 'strict dialectics' ultimately fails to convince contemporary readers of the ontology of Geist, the lesson he takes from it is actually twofold. Not only does he accept Hegel's basic ontological picture of the interdependent identities of individuals and their social context, but Taylor also accepts that in order to argue for ontology we must examine our history. Hegel's concept of reason – which Taylor saw as pivotal in the history of practical reason – taught him that the only kind of argument that can be offered for our ontology as strong evaluators is historical; that an argument for or against a particular understanding of selfhood cannot be made merely from philosophical theory but must come from a broader historical articulation. To understand why we reflect the way we do in our present condition we must grasp how 'we' have come to be how we are, in short, how the modern identity – with all of its ideals, injunctions, assumptions, concerns, and neglects – has come to be. In *Sources of the Self*, published in 1989^{cclxxvi}, Taylor attempts to do just this by narrating the historical changes in conceptions of selfhood from antiquity to the present, and in particular, by explaining how each historically new understanding of selfhood is related to and underpins a particular view of human agency along with a new conception of society and understanding of social bonds, a vision of the good, and new forms of narrative in which people understand their lives – in short, how people reflect on, live out, and debate social life. Understanding the history of the modern identity means, for Taylor, to grasp the explicit as well as the implicit ideas of what it means to be a human agent, incorporating both "what it casts in relief and what it casts in shadow – which shape our philosophical thought, our epistemology and our philosophy of language, largely without our awareness."^{cclxxvii}

As such, Taylor's turn to Hegel's dialectics in formulating his arguments about human agency, and in thinking through their broader implications, is in many ways unremarkable. Hegel's concept of reason in history, unlike Kant's static view of the self, gives Taylor an argument for the changeableness of conceptions of selfhood. Moreover, Hegel's view of the existence of hierarchies – between forms of being, of thought, and of culture in human history – teaches Taylor that the only way to argue for a judgment between rival conceptions is through historical narrative. Furthermore, as Taylor interrogates how the contemporary age tends to reflect on these issues, Hegel provides the language – language in a broad sense – for formulating his claims about the ontological features of selfhood. But *Sources* is ultimately anti-Hegelian in two key senses: first, for Taylor, the ordering of the changing conceptions of selfhood is not based on any necessity of historical dialectics, since one does not result from the previous one's necessary culmination in history. Hegel's central idea that there isn't merely historical variation but a necessary, non-arbitrary, movement of history is something that Taylor thought could not be shown. He thought that Hegel ultimately failed to show the contradiction in finite things and that Hegel's demonstration of the rational necessity of Geist is ultimately unconvincing (see chapter 3). Rather, Taylor narrates how history shows the contingent movement of conceptions of selfhood from antiquity through to the modern conception of identity in the contemporary age. Second, there is no necessary Hegelian synthesis for Taylor. Taylor broke entirely with the notion of the necessary movement of historical stages and inevitable progress in one direction. Rather, for Taylor, the contingent history of western thought has resulted in a fragmented modern condition. The modern identity is faced with an irreducible plurality of values and must contend with the disunity and diversity of goods in the modern world, which he argues contemporary moral philosophy, in all of its dominant strands, have failed to come to terms with in any adequate manner.

In the end, Taylor goes beyond Hegel to diagnose the utter standoffs he argues that our modern intellectual culture has generated for collective life. He argues that neither Kantian nor existentialist philosophical approaches to reflecting on moral life supports the truth of our ontology; and worse yet, they therefore cannot even acknowledge the very source of their own moral appeal. Taylor insists that “there is a great deal of motivated suppression of moral ontology” – partly because the pluralist nature of our societies make it much easier to live that way but also because of the epistemology and the spiritual outlook associated with it. Taylor clearly tries to distance himself from the empiricist-atomistic-liberal traditions that locate the foundation for knowledge and truth in individual experience, and which hold up individual rights and personal autonomy as what matters most in politics. But he also refuses to endorse “half-baked, neo-Nietzschean theories”, which he associates with Foucault and Derrida, according to which all judgments, whether moral, epistemological, or political, are said to be grounded on the interplay of power.^{cclxxviii} Aligning himself with such thinkers as Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, and to a great extent, Wittgenstein – for all of whom knowledge can only be the work of an embodied agent interacting with others – Taylor insists that there is such a thing as moral objectivity. But to understand what kind of moral objectivity it is that Taylor is after, and the kind of argument he makes in its defense, we must examine the claims he makes about the ontological features of personhood, since they are the basis of Taylor's views on both how human action and social practices should be explained as well as how we ought to think about morality and ethics.

With this in mind, this chapter seeks to examine the relationship between Taylor's concept of ‘strong evaluation’ as a claim about explanation in the human sciences and one about moral philosophy, understood as the “background languages” or “inescapable frameworks” in which we

live, reflect on, and debate morality. This latter view of Taylor's is that our moral descriptions, reactions, questions, issues, in short - morality - involves discriminations of right or wrong, better or worse, higher or lower, which are not rendered valid by our own desires, inclinations, or choices, but stand independent of these, offering standards by which they can be judged. Such an ontological picture of our being and predicament is the basis of Taylor's critique of contemporary moral philosophy, in all of its various naturalistic moments. Just as natural science operates on the assumption that we focus on a world where all of our responses such as fears, lusts, nausea, desire, have been neutralized, Taylor argues that moral argument necessarily takes place within a world shaped by our deepest moral responses. It is simply a mistake, therefore, to discuss morals as if we had a neutral perspective on ourselves as beings who can put on and take off our moral reactions.

But how does Taylor come to argue for the special features of personhood he claims are ontological? What does it mean to claim that there are ontological features of personhood in the first place? As support for his gestures toward moral realism and for his critique of moral philosophy, Taylor offers an historical narrative of the moral ontology of selfhood over time. But how exactly does arguing from history tell us what is constant and true about human agency? And what, if anything, do such ontological arguments about being entail for how we should debate morals and politics? It is to these questions of the extent to which Taylor's claim about explanation in the human sciences based on our strong evaluative being can go to intervene on issues of morality and as a critique of moral philosophy that we now turn.

4.1.1 *What are the ontological features of personhood?*

Taylor lists several features of human beings, without which, despite how damaged they may be in any particular life, a life could not be judged to be human. These are: the possession of a sense of self, a notion of the future and the past, the ability to hold values, adopt life plans, and make choices.^{cclxxxix} Unlike with other living creatures found in nature, these qualities make human beings, *qua subjects*, a distinctive sub-class of agents who, because of their own view on things can respond and be addressed.^{cclxxx} Recall how it was these self-interpretive, strong evaluative features of human agents necessarily engaged in social practices - and not what we think of as the merely descriptive or anatomical attributes of individuals - that Taylor ultimately appealed to in arguing that the human sciences must be hermeneutical. The position that he arrived at, on why we must make a distinction between the natural and human sciences, hinged on what kind of subject matter the human sciences presupposes. Taylor tried to show that if the aim of the human sciences is human understanding, it must be modeled after the kind of beings that human subjects are, and therefore must be, simply put, hermeneutic. Only a hermeneutic science sensitive to the self-interpretations of subjects can account for their actions, since the life plans, choices, sense of self that human agents possess imbue their actions with meaning, unlike non-human objects of interpretation which do not have this dimension. Precisely because the aim of the human sciences is to understand its subject matter, we must explain the behavior of human beings by treating them like the respondents they are, whose purposes, intentions, beliefs, and interpretations can be attributed to them as in some sense their origin. Taylor argued that the dominant empiricist drive toward naturalism in the human sciences misled us because it sought to deny this basic ontology of personhood and, in its place, presupposed a mistaken picture of human agency as disengaged and mechanistic.

According to Taylor, the question of what personhood *is* incorporates two orders of question, only one of which is scientific or how human behavior might be explained. The essentially human capacities and capabilities also provide the conditions for the status of personhood that

figures prominently in political and legal discourse where we accord status to persons as bearers of rights or dignity.^{cclxxxix} This dimension of the question of what personhood *is* is practical or moral. It asks what form a good human life is, which, in the main, is a separate question from how human behavior and social practices should be explained. Taylor sees the essentially human feature of strong evaluation as the quintessential aspect of personhood that separates human beings from inanimate objects and mere animals, but what is more, in a way that makes human agency, unlike other forms of agency, essentially moral.^{cclxxxii} Recall that when Taylor first invoked the term ‘strong evaluation’ in 1977 he simply referred to the capacity that human agents possess to form desires about our desires, that is, the ability to value the desires we have differently, to make qualitative distinctions among them.^{cclxxxiii} This notion of a distinctively human capacity for self-interpretation and self-evaluation was straightforward enough as a critique of behaviorism in the human sciences. But what began as Taylor’s critique of naturalism on empirical grounds gradually evolved into a commitment to anti-naturalism on moral grounds. As his defense of anti-naturalism emerged through his broader critique of the empiricist epistemological outlook that tries to separate human agency from moral ontology, Taylor discredited its ontological commitments by showing that holding naturalistic assumptions about human agency was itself a moral position that relies on a particular moral ontology.

As such, Taylor’s appeal to strong evaluation is a way to call attention to the speciousness also underpinning naturalist approaches to moral philosophy. And when the concept of strong evaluation returns in his writings on moral philosophy, it is with a vengeance. Joined with the term ‘spiritual’, with all of its vague and open-ended connotations, it takes on even greater signification than before.^{cclxxxiv} In this wider context, strong evaluation is what links Taylor’s view of human agency inextricably to morality, but it is what also constitutes the greatest source of confusion and the center of the growing maelstrom of debates on Taylor’s works. So what is this wider context in which the concept of strong evaluation is featured? As Taylor sees it, modernity’s struggle between rival approaches in the sciences of man on the one hand, and competing views about practical or moral reasoning on the other, must both be understood as derivative of incommensurable answers to the same underlying question about the nature of personhood.^{cclxxxv} Taylor wants to show that the conception of person is the background of modern views about practical deliberation. “The struggle between rival approaches in the science of man is no mere question of the relative efficacy of different methodologies, but is rather one facet of a clash of moral and spiritual outlooks.”^{cclxxxvi} As such, the enlightenment sources of naturalism that the human sciences needed rescuing from, according to Taylor, is also responsible for the misguided way in which “much contemporary moral philosophy, particularly but not only in the English-speaking world” tries to get at what morality is about.^{cclxxxvii}

A modern naturalist consciousness has hived the ontology of the human off from morality. According to Taylor, empiricist and rationalist theories of knowledge and the overall success of modern natural science account for the temptation to deny ontological accounts. Taylor takes issue with how our attempts at moral reflection and moral description in the contemporary age are “cramped”. Echoing Iris Murdoch, Taylor sees narrowness in how morality gets conceived, focused only on what it is right to do, purely as a guide to action, to the exclusion of what it is good to be.^{cclxxxviii} The result has been a severely truncated construal of morality, defined solely as the content of obligation rather than invoking the nature of the good life. So much, according to Taylor, has been excluded by moral philosophy’s narrow focus on morality, including what it is good to do even though we are not obliged; what it may be good to be and to love, the nature of the good life

itself, and what can be the object of our love and allegiance. Moral philosophy has left us no conceptual place for a notion of the good as an object of our love or allegiance.

Taylor's thesis of the strong evaluative nature of human beings is comprised of several claims. To recapitulate, what Taylor means by strong evaluation: selves are self-interpretive, they are subjects of significance, who are by nature dynamic and changing through articulation so that they are never fully explicated.^{cclxxxix} Selves necessarily move in a certain space of moral questions in the quest and discovery of an orientation to the good. They exist, moreover, in language communities with other selves within "webs of interlocution" such that we grasp ourselves in narratives only possible through shared meanings. Taylor invokes Wittgenstein's arguments against a private language to show the necessarily social aspect of our moral ontology and that of the concept of strong evaluation.

When we discuss and debate morals, our moral ontology simply cannot be ignored. Taylor complains that there is a whole range of connections between senses of the self and moral visions, between identity and the good, that make up the "background picture" in which we set the basis and point of the moral obligations that we do acknowledge, but which our narrow contemporary sense of morality actually keeps us from acknowledging. We have the capacity of strong evaluation, to make discriminations of right or wrong, better or worse, higher or lower precisely because these "background languages" or "inescapable frameworks" in which we live, reflect on, and debate morality are not simply made of our own desires, inclinations, or choices, but stand independent of them and offer standards to judge them by. If this notion strikes contemporary readers as strange or unbelievable, Taylor maintains that is only because our modern epistemology has rendered the very moral ontology that lies behind our moral and spiritual descriptions, intuitions, and reactions largely incomprehensible, and thus illegitimate to speak of. Taylor's main complaint is that we are thus tempted to deny the very existence of that which makes sense of our moral responses. Much like his critique of the human sciences, Taylor views his task within moral philosophy largely as a critical exercise in retrieval, to post hoc "enlarge our range of legitimate moral descriptions, and in some cases retrieving modes of thought and description which have misguidedly been made to seem problematic."^{ccxc}

4.1.2 *What implications does moral ontology have for moral philosophy?*

The strong evaluative aspects of the moral ontology of human beings have direct implications for how human beings might be interpreted and understood. To recapitulate once more, it means that strong evaluative creatures elude scientific studies that assume the false ideal of detachment of a 'punctual' or 'neutral' self. Insofar as objects of scientific study are understood "absolutely" and their meanings are taken to be "objective" and independent of subjective interpretations, such objects can be described outside of their context, and can well be captured in explicit description. The strong evaluative nature of human beings also puts requirements on moral inquiry and how values should be understood. When it comes to the subject of moral philosophy, Taylor's aim is to take a broader view of our "moral" intuitions. Taylor wants to examine, take account of, and articulate not just **what** our moral intuitions and demands are, but to make clearer their roots. His claim is that the moral demands we make and the goods which command our respect are inseparable. Thus, in order to get at what makes our lives meaningful and fulfilling, Taylor aims to articulate the background languages and the spiritual nature of the moral obligations that we in the modern world do acknowledge, by "exploring the frameworks which articulate our sense of orientation in the space of questions about the good."^{ccxc}

When it comes to how we should make sense of virtue terms that apply to social functions, or visions of the good – be they individual or social. Taylor argues that our moral ontology means we should strive to understand the kind of social interchange and common purposes that exist where the term is current, ideas about how things can go well or badly between people in the society where it makes sense to speak of that value. We would need to grasp the qualitative discriminations that people make to have a sense of what their perceptions of the good are. According to Taylor, qualitative distinctions are the definitions of the good that give the reasons for our moral reactions, beliefs, and principles. No external standard can do this. No basic, general, or philosophically abstract reason that is meant to be obligation-conferring can actually manage to do so without actually being a part of the cultural norms and practices that give it currency and moral weight. Modern ethical theories and the dominant traditions of moral philosophy tend toward systematization of our ends and obligations around basic reasons. Utilitarianism and Kantianism both define the criteria or procedures for deriving all and only the things we are obliged to do. Moreover, they both center around one basic reason, and attempt to unify our moral views around a single base. Instead, what Taylor argues communities ought to strive to do is to articulate our qualitative distinctions, the moral point of the actions that are recognized as such in our society, and articulate the multiplicity of goods and valuing that underlie our ethical choices, leanings, and intuitions, since “pre-articulately, they function as an orienting sense of what is important, valuable, or commanding.”^{ccxcii}

Taylor also thinks that if we are going to take the moral ontology of human beings seriously then the fact that humans are strong evaluators has direct bearing on how we understand values. If human beings are strong evaluators then values must be real and in some sense independent, and not just our subjectivistic projections onto a neutral world. As strong evaluators we make discriminations of right or wrong, better or worse, higher or lower that stand independent of our desires, and we judge our desires by these standards, rather than take our desires – whatever they may be – as paramount or final. Taylor’s belief that individuals are strong evaluators says that when individuals experience some goods as inherently more worthy than others, what they are doing is responding to their sense that the good is valuable independently of their choice of it; that is, that the good is seen as normative for desire, not constituted as good by the fact that individuals do so desire them. This claim that strongly valued goods command our respect and makes demands upon us because of their intrinsic value has put him in strong accord with other moral realist positions. Taylor positions himself against sociobiologists with their ‘involuntary projection view’ of subjective values and moral theorists who espouse a crude ‘error theory’ which takes values as ‘metaphysically queer’, e.g. Mackie.^{ccxciii} Such views would adopt a non-realist position about strongly valued goods. But Taylor also takes issue with Bernard Williams’s brand of moral realism, even though he finds favor with Williams’s interpretation of the inseparability of descriptive and evaluative meaning, as well as his argument for the ineptitude of using the metaphor of values to secondary properties. Also suspect to Taylor is the ‘quasi-realism’ of Simon Blackburn’s consequentialist moral theory.

Taylor’s thesis about strong evaluation includes an argument he deploys for the existence of something he calls “hypergoods”, which are goods that are at the top in priority of all other strong values. They are “goods which not only are incomparably more important than others but provide the standpoint from which these must be weighed, judged, decided about.”^{ccxciv} It is Taylor’s view that any comprehensive ethical theory **must** incorporate some notion of the relative importance of goods, class of ends, issues. But modern moral philosophy, as he sees it, rejects hypergoods, defining them by segregating and binding their meaning. The modern ideal of freedom, Taylor argues, has been the strongest motive for the massive shift from substantive to procedural

justification, as is evidenced by both utilitarian and Kantian versions of moral theory.^{ccxcv} Benthamite utilitarianism rejects the notion of higher and lower with metaphysics and allows for no qualitative discriminations regarding happiness maximization, or desire fulfillment.

But Taylor says that even a reductivist theory like utilitarianism does not lack a framework or a hypergood of its own. Rather, utilitarian theories have a strong commitment to the ideal of rationality and benevolence, and these effectively get accorded hypergood status. So even when a moral theory rejects the existence of hypergoods, hypergoods remain only unadmitted by the theory, and the utilitarian lives within a moral horizon that cannot be explicated by his own moral theory. Because hypergoods make us re-evaluate all other goods we hold, including any original primitive notion of morals, they are disruptive, and are generally “sources of conflict.”^{ccxcvi} Hypergoods are also historical, according to Taylor. They are understood by those who espouse them as a step to a higher moral consciousness. And our awareness of its being incomparably higher than others is that it supersedes earlier, less adequate views. Might they be base or illusory? Taylor says perhaps they may be, but he nonetheless argues that we need to be open to and vigilant about examining them, in the high classical tradition of practical reason. Taylor holds that we can rationally argue over hypergoods when they differ and we can persuade others as well as ourselves be convinced of them.

Indeed, Taylor directs *Sources* against a variety of views that seek to deny moral frameworks and the weight or burden, so to speak, of values. Continuing his reproach of naturalism, Taylor finds fault with the way that the naturalist inspired metaphysical picture of humans reduces moral frameworks and values to make them dependent on the answers we give to the question of identity rather than the other way around. According to Taylor, naturalism’s disengaged view of selfhood takes human beings as objects of science that are part of a disenchanted universe, where this “imagined agent of naturalist theory is a monster.”^{ccxcvii} Similarly to blame are relativistic views that assume the incommensurability of values within or across human cultures, which, in refusing to judge between them is ultimately to attribute to all values equal weight. Taylor criticizes both the naturalistic and subjectivist stances, which he thinks, for all of their differences, actually share crucial features. They both share the assumption that there is a neutral world in which ‘goods’ and ‘values’ are merely what we project onto it, and that a neutral descriptive language separate from prescriptive force is even possible. The assumption that we can somehow separate out the descriptive level to their meaning from their evaluative force upon us is false. Values are mistakenly seen as a kind of “colouration which the neutral world inescapably has for us”^{ccxcviii} such that non-evaluative descriptions are thought to be extensionally equivalent to our value terms, either as ‘descriptive meaning’ or the ‘underlying reality’ that triggers our colored experience of values.

Taylor’s point is that modern philosophy has moral sources, but they have been ignored by moral philosophy, primarily obligatory theories that are unable to admit their own moral sources, making them deeply flawed theories for moral description as well as guides to action. The widespread assumptions in moral philosophy that Taylor wants to overturn are threefold: (i) that moral reaction can be assimilated to visceral reaction, (ii) that our notions of the good on an issue are optional, and (iii) that value terms have descriptive equivalents. There are two strands of moral philosophy that Taylor is concerned to curtail. The first is against naturalism or empiricism, which tempts us to deny that ontology is essential to moral argument, and takes values to be merely projections onto a neutral world of facts. Against these, with his ontological thesis of strong evaluation, Taylor implores us to see that the existence of values is inescapable in our moral language. He perseverates that simply because our anthropocentric conceptions of good and right are not part of the world that the natural sciences study, that does not mean that values are

somehow not real, objective, or non-relative.^{cccix} The second strand of moral philosophy that Taylor deprecates is a Neo-Nietzschean/Foucaultian brand of critical theory. These theories attack procedural ethics for masking implicit moral motives, and seek to unmask the pretensions of moral philosophy; they use a meta-doctrine of moral orders as imposed orders to discredit values as domination. Yet they fail to avow the value they no doubt implicitly hold in articulation itself. They do not come clean about their own moral motivations, and actually deny having any of their own. But if all positions and “regimes of truth” are based on fiat, and none are more justified than another, then the projection theory they themselves espouse also must fail. Against this strain of moral relativism that seeks to dissolve conflict in the modern world by discrediting all values as domination, Taylor deploys his argument for the existence of hypergoods, and for the existence of a diversity of goods that underlies conflict in the modern world.^{ccc}

4.1.3 *What is the structure of Taylor’s argument about the moral nature of our interpretive being?*

Taylor’s ontological thesis about strong evaluation is to show how our notion of the self is “inextricably connected with our understanding of our moral predicament and moral agency. Our description of ourselves as selves is inseparable from our existing in a space of moral aspiration and assessment.”^{ccci} Our moral ontology is something that Taylor claims is essential to being a human; it is what distinctly separates being human selves from other living beings or machines, according to Taylor. “Being a self is not like having some biologically given organs, say eyes, or faculty, like vision, which are there as part of our equipment regardless of how we understand or interpret them. Being a self is existing in a space of issues, to do with how one ought to be, or how one measures up against what is good, what is right, what is really worth doing. It is being able to find one’s standpoint in this space, being able to occupy, to be a perspective in it. This is what Heidegger was getting at in his famous formulation about *Dasein* that its being is ‘in question’.”^{ccci}

We want to be clear about the exact nature of Taylor’s claim of the necessity of moral ontology. Is he arguing that what is moral about our ontology is grounded in the very nature of being or that it is grounded only in changeable human interpretations and so ultimately dispensable? Taylor’s answer to the question is unflinchingly the stronger thesis. Against the weaker claim, which he attributes to “reductivist theories”, Taylor’s position is decidedly that doing without moral frameworks is utterly impossible for human beings because moral frameworks are constitutive of human agency, personhood, and identity. To his readers in psychology, or history, or philosophy – regardless of his audience – Taylor maintains his position that being a self is inseparable from existing in a space of moral issues, which has essentially to do with identity and how one ought to be.^{ccci} Even to speak of an identity crisis, he writes, is to presuppose the constant and inescapable frameworks, since “the condition of there being such a thing as an identity crisis is precisely that our identities define the space of qualitative distinctions within which we live and choose.”^{ccci}

Taylor tries to clarify what he means by his unabashedly essentialist claim of the nature of human beings by analogizing his notion of ‘moral ontology’ to an image of space and topography, wherein human beings essentially exist in a moral space. He tries to convey this by way of a master spatial image he calls the ‘moral topography’ of the self.^{cccv} We are asked to consider how our most basic and inescapable languages of the self incorporate terms that are intrinsically spatial, such as ‘within’, ‘without’, ‘above’, ‘below’, as well as the typically topographical way in which we construe the unconscious, where we speak of our sense of ‘inner depths’, or devalue some feelings as ‘superficial’. For Taylor, such terms are “anchored in moral consciousness itself” and further “this inherent spatiality of the self is essentially linked to a moral topography, a sense of where moral

sources lie.”^{cccvi} Taylor calls a “moral topography” a doctrine of moral sources or a doctrine that tells us where our strength lies, and the substance of these are what provide the context in relations to which we can distinguish what we essentially are. They provide some principle of ordering the self, and in an important sense, “where we consider the self to be what we truly are, our essence, they furnish the indispensable context for our having such a thing as a self at all.”^{cccvii}

Does this image help to clarify what Taylor means by an essential moral ontology to human beings? So far, Taylor’s description seems to offer a rather circular definition of what this ontology of selfhood amounts to. We have a sense of self, which exists in a space of moral sources, which in turn is what gives us the context for even having a sense of self at all. What makes this view of selfhood ontological for Taylor is that he finds it indispensable. He writes, “a sense of self that is thus linked to essences and defined in relation to some understanding of moral sources is indispensable to us. It is inescapably part of our language of self-understanding, if we have a notion of the self at all, and where this term doesn’t figure, some other expression for our essence or true being does.”^{cccviii} But can this strong thesis about strong evaluation and his essentialist claim of moral ontology do all the work Taylor wants it to do for ethics and debates on morality? In no definitive way can Taylor prove this moral ontology to be accurate or, in some independent sense, real. We quickly see, however, that the whole point of Taylor’s description of moral ontology is not to try to demonstrate its truth, *sui generis*. Rather, by showing how his idea of moral ontology figures in his analysis and critique of modernity, Taylor’s strategy is to convince us that his argument about moral ontology provides the *best* way to view selfhood; it is the one that he hopes we will find makes the best sense of ourselves in our modern predicament. So whether an inescapably moral view of our ontology is the best way to view selfhood is the question we will eventually need to answer. (See section 4.2.3 below)

In order to see Taylor’s argument, however, we need to notice that there are two claims at work for him: (i) one is about the ontological nature of selfhood as such, or the moral topography of selfhood that is the general and moral nature of human agency across cultures, and which Taylor admits, “I put forward with trepidation”, acknowledging that there is more than one sense of the term ‘self’, even strikingly, over history; (ii) the other is about the modern, particularly “western”, notion of what being a “self” means to us today, “about which I feel dogmatic and militant (but that may just hide my even greater inner uncertainties).”^{cccix} The distinction here is between what is constant about human agency, and the particular senses of selfhood that belong to other times and cultures, “that between what belongs to human agency as such, in all times and places, and what is shaped differently in different cultures.”^{cccx} Taylor is not offering a structured theory of human agency but he thinks it is “undeniable that we inescapably make hazy, provisional assumptions about those timeless features of human agency that hold across cultures whenever we try to define the historically specific sense of self of a given age, like our own.”^{cccxi} He writes, “provisionally, and to come a bit cleaner about my own assumptions, I believe that what we are as human agents is profoundly interpretation-dependent, that human beings in different cultures can be radically diverse, in keeping with their fundamentally different self-understandings. But I think that a constant is to be found in the shape of the questions that all cultures must address.”^{cccxii}

According to Taylor, what is particular to (ii), our modern notion of the self, is, among other things, an “inwardness” where we think of “who we are” in terms of identity such that it makes sense to us to use the term “self” in context with an indefinite article, as ‘a’ or ‘the’ self.^{cccxiii} This is a historically contingent truth about selfhood in modern times, explains Taylor, since we did not always put the issue this way. Another particularity inherent in (ii), according to Taylor, is its

tendencies to try to deny that there is any point in considering the essentially moral nature of our ontology, to altogether reject (i). Taylor wants to show, however, that there is an inherent contradiction in how our modern naturalistic outlook tempts us to deny that ontology is essential to moral argument. He wants to show how our gut reactions, moral judgments, and intuitions can only be what they are against some background that is not of our choosing, and that contrary to the way contemporary moral philosophy is typically conceived, our moral ontology actually does provide the framework within which we make distinctions of worth. Taylor wants to show how even the condition of ‘inwardness’, while it is a moral preference that is particular to the experience of moderns, it is also something that points to the ontology of human beings, in the sense that he says all cultures distinguishes inside-outside as a human universal, regardless of their particular moral preferences. Taylor says that the way we think, reason, argue, etc. presupposes a picture that incorporates our gut instincts – aversions, fears, brute reactions, as well as the implicit and explicit ontological claims about the status and nature of human beings, descriptions of objects of moral response whose criteria are independent of our de facto reactions. He writes, “a moral reaction is an assent to, an affirmation of, a given ontology of the human.”^{cccxiv}

But how can Taylor convince us of his claim that moral ontology is somehow essential to moral argument? In order to convince us to accept that there is such a concept of (i) as the best way to understand ourselves, Taylor must historicize the particular presumptions of (ii) that seek to deny it. In narrating the development of the modern notion of selfhood and the historically contingent ways in which naturalism’s temptations to deny our ontology arose, Taylor’s strategy is to reveal how even naturalism’s explicit spurning of moral ontology actually presupposes a moral ontology of its own. He would then show why, rather than take the modern denial of inescapable frameworks to be given, we ought to find non-optional and ineluctable the moral space of qualitative distinctions within and against which we live and choose. Note that Taylor’s strategy for making essentialist claims about human beings is not simply to put forward an abstract formulation of the philosophical necessity of moral ontology. This is because he sees the contemporary mode of formulating philosophical arguments, insofar as it denies the existence of ‘the Good’ or some sense of qualitative discriminations of the incomparably higher, as deeply flawed. And Taylor’s aim is to try to get at these most fundamental assumptions that he thinks have largely, even if implicitly, shaped our thinking. He writes, “I would dearly like to explain this central but puzzling feature of modern culture, that it both generates a characteristic configuration of the sense of self and obscures its nature and its roots. As a result the real, interpretation-dependent nature of the self has to be perpetually recovered, by an effort of philosophical insight, against the grain of our thinking.”^{cccv} The only way we can wrest ourselves from the assumptions inherent in our intellectual culture is to take a historicized view of the variable self-understandings that have filled the ontological form over time, including – and especially – our own in the modern West. With such highly ambitious aims to explain the moral and spiritual foundations of modernity that he admits is largely hidden from our view, Taylor launches into a sweeping historical narrative and analysis of the development of the modern identity that is his *Sources of the Self*.

4.2 Value Pluralism and Normative Practices

We can now turn to Taylor’s story of the development of the modern identity in *Sources of the Self*, knowing that Taylor’s point in narrating how our understandings of the human predicament and concepts of the self have changed is to demonstrate how moral frameworks are inescapable and that we are neither neutral about where we stand within them, nor how near or far we are from the good. The main argument of the book is to show that selfhood and morality are inseparable, something

Taylor thinks we would never know from looking at how moral philosophy is actually conceived and practiced today. Instead Taylor thinks we need to examine the long history of how the main intellectual trends in the contemporary age that fail to grasp our moral ontology have come to be and why the domain of what even counts as ‘moral description’ has come to be so narrowly conceived. To understand ourselves in the modern, and in many ways, the post-modern age, we need to get a sense of what our notion of selfhood consists in, but this, in turn, can only be done, Taylor argues, by taking a historical perspective on concepts of selfhood.

The development of the modern notion of the self, according to Taylor, corresponds to a very important historical shift in self-understanding that has helped to constitute modern western civilization, such that it has both created our peculiar modern understanding of the self and helped to obscure its historical origins and to mask its dependence on the particular moral self-interpretations of our civilization, “thus accrediting the illusion that we have selves as we have eyes, hearts, or livers.”^{cccxvi} Taylor’s story of the development of the modern identity goes back as far as Plato where the moral ideal was understood in terms of self-mastery and for the rule of reason over the desires, and passions, or the lower part of the soul. Plato’s notion of the rational man as “master of himself” may seem paradoxical because we typically think of mastery as a two-place relation. But Taylor wants us to recall from *The Republic* that being master of oneself for Plato meant that something higher in one controls the lower, in fact, that reason controls the desire. Plato situated moral resources, or where we go to access a higher form of moral consciousness, in the domain of Thought and Reason. The rational, hence moral, man must, with his attention-cum-desire, turn his soul towards Reason, which endures on the outside. The good man achieves self-mastery through reason, and achieves unity and collected self-possession within himself. “For Plato, reason in us is the capacity which enables us to see the order of things, to grasp the Ideas and their ordering for the best, which latter insight he captures with the famous image of the Idea of the Good. For reason to rule in us is for us to be moved by this vision, to want to imitate and realize the good it reveals to us; something that Plato thinks we cannot help but want once we see it.”^{cccxvii} Reason, for Plato, was understood substantively and was considered a property of human thoughts and desires such that our being rational just is our having the substantively correct vision of things. The latter was a criterion of the former.^{cccxviii}

Taylor traces how in many ways Plato set the form of the dominant family of moral theories that take thought and reason to order our lives for the good against the passions and desires. The Stoics retained Plato’s view that the mastery of reason involves the mastery of a certain vision. What we are essentially, by nature, is reason, and for the Stoics this meant above all practical reason. For reason to rule desire is for desire to be reshaped by the vision of order, and in the Stoic version, our passions disappeared altogether because at base they are nothing but false opinions. Plato’s morality of rational contemplation and reflection from a self-collected stance was in contrast to the warrior-hero morality where an ethic of action and glory prevails. The Christian radical conversion of the will, which comes later, took reason to be an insufficient guarantor of the good. In contrast to the ethic of reason in a different way were Neo-Nietzschean ideas, including those of the Frankfurt school, that saw us as standing in need of liberation from reason and saw self-domination as a form of enslavement where rational hegemony would stifle, repress, and dessicate us. But Plato’s moral philosophy of reason was, Taylor argues, about an ethic of reflection and the rational unification of the moral self, not an inner and outer distinction, which appears later with Descartes, but a unification of the soul or the immaterial and the body or the material, the eternal and the changing, according to the order in the cosmos.

From Plato's notion of the love of reason and rational order in the cosmos, Taylor's story continues to narrate the turn to the self with Augustine as a turn to radical reflexivity where turning inward actually meant turning to outside sources, i.e. God as the superior being. The Christian opposition between the spirit and the flesh was a reformulation of the Platonic distinction between the bodily and non-bodily, the eternal and the temporal. Augustine retains the Platonic notion of the order of things in the cosmos, which is seen as good. Ideas were seen as thoughts of God where God is to be found in the intimacy of self-presence. Taylor writes, "the Truth is not in me, I see the truth 'in' God."^{cccix} The notion of going within memory took one beyond, in effect, from the exterior to the interior, but ultimately to the superior. "We turn to the path within only to accede beyond, to God."^{cccx} Of course the other part of this story was the necessity of Grace to restore man's ability to see God. But Taylor's point is that Augustine made the language of inwardness possible, even irresistible. Only with Descartes do moral sources get situated within us and power internalized so that we no longer see ourselves as related to moral sources on the outside. Descartes offered a new understanding of Reason away from Plato's view that the sources of moral strength reside outside. Descartes rejected teleological modes of thinking and abandoned any theory of ontic logos. Rather than see the cosmic order as embodying Ideas, the universe was to be understood mechanistically, by the resolute, compositive method of Galileo. The Galilean view of representational knowledge meant that to know reality is to have the correct representation of it. A representation of reality, however, must now be constructed, and with Descartes, not only must it be correct, but it must also carry certainty.

Taylor argues that the very notion of what it is for reason to be master shifts in the 17th C. Descartes's conception of the mastery of reason is not the hegemony of a certain vision, but the direct domination of one faculty over another where reason instrumentalizes the passions. Rational mastery consists in our being able to control the passions so that they serve only the function as instruments of our purposes as soul/body unions and do not escape from our power and subvert these ends. The stronger the passions the better, so long as they are properly steered by reason. Taylor contrasts Descartes' dualism of soul and body with Plato's in the following way. Whereas with Plato, I realize my true nature as a supersensible soul when I turn towards the eternal things, with Descartes there simply is no such immutable order of things to turn oneself to. Understanding physical reality requires, for Descartes, disengaging oneself from the material world, disengaging from the usual embodied perspective and actually distrusting our perceptions. Furthermore, it requires objectifying the world, including our own bodies to see them as mechanistic and functional. The external world is seen as an entity that is out there, which the subject is disengaged from. The causal connections between states of the world and my body in primary properties can be traced as the 'ideas' in my mind. Cartesian dualism needs the bodily, but the Cartesian discovers and affirms his immaterial nature by objectifying what is bodily. The Cartesian soul forces itself by objectifying, not turning away from, embodied experience. The body is an inescapable object of attention to it. Platonic dualism did not need the bodily. The soul realized eternal nature by becoming absorbed in the supersensible. With Descartes, however, a new conception of self-mastery, wrought by reason, consists in the capacity to construct orders that meet standards demanded by knowledge or certainty. Self-mastery consists in our lives being shaped by the orders that our reasoning capacity constructs according to those appropriate standards.

The changed idea of mastery of reason went along with a changed idea of reason itself, Taylor argues. And he points out how this new conception of self-mastery through reason is inextricably tied to a different ontology and theory of knowledge in turn. A major shift occurs in scientific theory and a radical change in anthropology when an 'idea' migrates from an ontic sense to

being applied to the intra-psychic contents in the mind. The order of ideas is not something found but instead something we build. And well-grounded certainty comes from matter presenting themselves in a certain light where truth is so clear as to be undeniable evidence. Certainty is thereby generated through the chain of clear and distinct perceptions building from the simpler to the more complex. Descartes' ethic and epistemology calls for disengagement from the world and the body and the assumption of an instrumental stance towards them. Descartes' view of knowledge underlay his view of ethics and this can be seen in his revised view of Plato's hegemony of reason to be no longer a dominant vision but rather to be about instrumentalizing the desires, and "in terms of a directing agency subordinating a functional domain."^{cccxix} Passions are emotions in the soul whose function is to strengthen the response which the survival of the organism requires. So the hegemony of reason is understood as rational control, or the power to objectify the bodily world and passions in an instrumental stance toward them. In this important way, argues Taylor, the sources of moral strength got to be internalized. Taylor argues that with Descartes, and even through to Kant, rational control as mind dominating a disenchanted world of matter means the sense of superiority of the good life, and the inspiration to attain it comes from the agent's sense of his own dignity as a rational being. This internalization gives rise to the modern term, Taylor thinks, of the dignity of human persons. The dignity is of the thinking being, not by some vision of a cosmic order.

4.2.1 *What are the moral roots of the modern identity?*

Taylor writes that it is with Descartes, first, that reason comes to be defined procedurally. The speculative and practical essence of reason pushed us to disengage, our life being shaped by the order we construct (rather than find in the cosmos) according to the demands of reason's dominance. "Rationality is no longer defined substantively in terms of the order of being – but rather procedurally – in terms of the standards by which we construct orders in science and life."^{cccxii} Descartes lays out how the procedure will result in substantively true beliefs about the world, which makes the idea of the judgment of rationality turning on the properties of the activity of the thinking being, rather than on the substantive beliefs that emerge from it, acceptable. With Descartes, the link between this procedure in the mind and truth is made with his proof that we are creatures of a beneficent and veracious God. But the Cartesian idea of key interest to Taylor is how rationality becomes an internal property of subjective thinking rather than consisting in its vision of reality. In this shift, Taylor sees in Descartes the earliest source of the standard modern view of reason as procedural knowing. But Taylor writes that in turn, the late 16th C-early 17th C arrival of "neo-stoicism" and ideas about soul-body dualism with its emphasis on self-mastery provided the necessary backdrop and influenced Descartes' formulation of a procedural notion of rationality, disengaged subject, and his instrumental control view of human agency.

The goal of theoretical reason is science, and science is defined by Descartes in terms of certainty, but of a kind that is generated by certain procedures. We must organize our thoughts so as to achieve clarity and distinctness in our ideas. The Platonic notion of order in the universe could not survive the Galilean revolution that Descartes espoused. Descartes put in place the goal of an order of representations in the mind. On the order of deployment of our ideas hangs their certainty and thus science. This order, however, is one that is constructed and built. Rationality is defined by a certain manner of thinking, regardless of the substantive beliefs that emerge from it. The Cartesian 'cogito' argument, with his notion of the delivery of 'clear' and 'distinct' ideas, establishes self-sufficiency and certainty through the power to give ourselves the certainty we seek. This view of self-sufficiency and autonomy through reason is also the moral source of modern unbelief,

according to Taylor. The shift in what mastery of reason means, and what reason itself is is related to changes in the notion of the human agent. With Descartes, reason and human excellence requires a stance of disengagement, a stance toward something that might otherwise serve to define our identity or purposes, whereby we separate ourselves from it by defining it as at best of instrumental significance. We must disengage from the cosmos, no longer considered a meaningful order, in relation to which our paradigm purposes are to be defined. Rather it is a neutral domain of mechanical movement, whose laws have to be adequately represented in the mind. Disengagement was the proper stance to self and nature for Descartes. These ideas, moreover, were reciprocally tied to those of the ‘new philosophy’ or “methods of administration and military organization, spirit of government, methods of discipline... the ideal of a human agent who is able to remake himself by methodical and disciplined action.”^{cccxxiii} The ability to take an instrumental stance to one’s given properties, desires, inclinations, tendencies, habits of thought and feeling were a constitutive part of the new forms of discipline among political and military elites in the “absolutist state”.

In Taylor’s story, the Cartesian notion of disengagement undergoes further reformulation and greater mechanization in the 17th century at the hands of Locke and other Enlightenment thinkers. Disengagement and objectification turn into a means of gaining power and control. Thus the previously dominant teleological view of the world where things surrounding us exemplify the ideas, archetypes, or forms, and how we assemble our ideas takes its form from this meaningful order gives way to a “new science” of mechanization, e.g. Bacon, where instrumental control is identified as the criterion of scientific truth.^{cccxxiv} Taylor writes, “Once we disengage and no longer live in our experience, then some supposition has to be invoked to take up the interpretive slack, to supply an account in the place of the one we are foregoing. For Descartes and his empiricist successors, the suppositions are (naturally) mechanistic.”^{cccxxv} In Taylor’s story, Locke went beyond Descartes to reject any form of the doctrine of innate ideas in an epistemologically grounded move that follows a Baconian and Gassendian model of science, not Descartes’s. Locke’s was an anti-teleological view of human nature in both knowledge and morality.

When it comes to knowledge, Locke proposed to demolish and rebuild. He urged suspending judgment on all traditional ideas and examining their foundations before accepting any belief. This was not in and of itself new, of course, since Plato and even Descartes urged the attack on errors inculcated by custom and ordinary education. But what was new with Locke, according to Taylor, was the extent of disengagement that he proposed and the strong embrace of an atomism of the mind. Locke reified the mind and took even ideas themselves to be materials. Our understanding of things was constructed out of the building blocks of simple ideas so that man’s power is the same in the material and intellectual world, to build and construct out of material bits. Locke’s building block theory of thinking means that ideas, like globules, are assembled, disassembled, and reassembled to build a picture of the world on a solid foundation. It shares with Descartes a view of “self-responsibility” to think it out ourselves in that knowledge is not genuine unless you develop it yourself. And it is also procedural, as we are called not to become contemplators of order, but rather to construct a picture of things following the canons of rational thinking. Locke’s radically reflexive procedure exemplifies the great shift in scientific world picture of the 17th C to see rationality as above all a property of the process of the radically independent thinker disengaged from spontaneous beliefs and from all authority, rather than a property of the substantive content of thought.

When it comes to morality, Locke’s anti-teleological view of mind and knowledge get directed against moral theories that see humans as tending by nature toward the good. Radical

disengagement opens up the project of self-remaking. And Taylor argues that Locke combined a theological voluntarism, where the rational goal of remaking would be to follow the law of God or natural law, with a hedonism that says we are motivated by pleasure and pain which is all that good and evil amount to and that what we ought to do morally is what conduces to our greatest happiness. The result is Locke's view of the punctual self, which is a radically subjectivist view of selfhood. What we are is the capacity of fixing and working on things; it is a punctual stance to identify oneself with the power to objectify and remake, and to distance oneself from all the particular features which are objects of potential change. The real self is "extensionless", nowhere but in the power to fix things as objects.^{cccxxvi} Locke's person is the moral agent who takes responsibility for his acts in the light of future retribution. Locke offered a plausible account of the new science as valid knowledge by intertwining and bringing together a theory of rational control of the self under the ideal of self responsibility. This ideal of freedom was an independence backed by a conception of disengagement and procedural reason. Modern disengagement calls us to separation from ourselves through self-objectification. "The modern ideal of disengagement requires a reflexive stance. We have to turn inward and become aware of our own activity and of the processes which form us. We have to take charge of constructing our own representation of the world, which otherwise goes on within order and consequently without science."^{cccxxvii}

Taylor writes that the assumption that consciousness can be disembodied is an illusion. And he sees in this radical disengagement and abstracted notion of the self the sources of the reification of the human psychology and the central place of the disengaged disciplinary stance to the self in modern culture. And he also sees a great paradox in modern philosophy where this radical objectivity meets radical subjectivity. He writes "Here we see the origin of one of the great paradoxes of modern philosophy. The philosophy of disengagement and objectification has helped to create a picture of man, at its most extreme in certain forms of materialism, from which the last vestiges of subjectivity seem to have been expelled. It is a picture of man from a completely third-person perspective. The paradox is that this severe outlook is connected with, indeed, based on giving a central place to the first-person stance. Radical objectivity is only intelligible and accessible through radical subjectivity. This paradox has, of course, been much commented on by Heidegger, for instance, in his critique of subjectivism, and by Merleau-Ponty. Modern naturalism can never be the same once one sees this connection, as both these philosophers argue."^{cccxxviii} According to Taylor, Rationalism and Empiricism divide but they both take for granted the belief in mechanism, as against a universe of meaningful order.

Taylor makes his case for the self as intrinsically linked with moral topography by arguing that even the modern disengaged self has arisen from a certain moral vision, a definite moral topography that has eschewed all external sources and sees our moral resources as inner. And in Taylor's story, these moral resources in us are seen not as the impulses of nature but in the power of rational disengagement itself, at least in the more austere variants of Cartesian and Lockean disengagement. The connection that Taylor draws from epistemological disengagement to moral frameworks is in the concept of human dignity. Knowing through disengagement is related to a view of human dignity that resides in the power of disengaged freedom where humans achieve their full stature when they realize this power integrally. The paradox with this view of human dignity however, Taylor points out, is that this same notion of the self has made it difficult to see the connection that Taylor is arguing for. He writes, "The modern disengaged self aspires after a kind of neutrality. Disengagement entails a kind of neutrality in relation to what is disengaged from. With Descartes or Kant, the connection of this neutrality with a moral ideal is clear enough. But once the drive to objectification becomes all-encompassing, as with modern naturalism, and is

meant to account for the totality of human life, this connection becomes lost to view. We might even say that naturalism makes a point of losing it from view, in order to be true to its explanatory principles.”^{ccccxxix} The drive to neutrality has made the disengaged subject appear like a natural fact to us, according to Taylor. What Taylor thinks has happened is that having a self, or being endowed with egos as steering mechanisms, appears like another fact about us in the same way that we are possessed of heads or torsos. As with heads or torsos, the ego can be the object of moral judgments, the point of application of standards, but these are not seen as essential to understanding its very natures.

Taylor urges us that the road to surer knowledge doesn't have to be through disengagement and procedural reason. Rather than withdrawing and disengaging, we can attain greater knowledge through “engaged exploration” and “being there” and throwing ourselves more fully into the situation.^{ccccxxx} It is Taylor's contention that we cannot even begin to attempt to do this or desire to do so if we do not first realize how misguided neutralizing disengagement is, how it has ended up including itself in its scope, and thus losing from sight what it is really all about.

4.2.2 *What constraints does Taylor see in reasoning about ontology?*

We need thus to revisit the question of whether moral ontology is necessary for moral philosophy. Taylor's answer is an emphatic yes, and his story of the development of the modern identity was meant to show the moral ontology of selfhood even as it has changed over time, is undeniable. We should be convinced that strong evaluation, an inescapably moral view of our ontology, is in fact the best way to view selfhood. But is it? We can consider this question by working through the constraints that Taylor saw in putting forward his thesis of our moral ontology. What are the constraints on the kind of argument that Taylor can make to support such ontological assertions, or upon anyone in considering such claims? Not surprisingly, in defending his own moral realist position, Taylor maintains that ontological claims are not only discernible but that they can be rationally argued about. He wants us to see that we can ask what the ‘background picture’ behind our moral and spiritual outlooks is, and what role it plays in human life, and what the picture of our spiritual nature (predicament) is that makes our moral reactions and responses appropriate. But whatever “background languages” or “inescapable moral frameworks” are, how can we know whether they refer to anything beyond Taylor's own turn of phrase or merely a way of speaking, even if our own? On what grounds can we argue for the realness of values? In other words, what measure of reality in human affairs do we have to assess rival claims about ontology? Taylor's answer is that whatever makes sense through critical reflection and error correction is the best and only choice we have. Against both Platonic Ideas and a natural science assumption that ordinary language and everyday terms of life should be relegated from the level of true ‘reality’ to the realm of appearance, Taylor thinks that “our language of deliberation is continuous with our language of assessment and this with the language in which we explain what people do and feel.”^{ccccxxxi}

Still, if we are going to entertain the ontological question of human agency, we need to be able to judge between rival theories of ontology and to know an answer is right or wrong, better or worse. Taylor's ontological arguments attempt to combine an indefatigable moral realism with a fierce critique of objectivity. He writes that if non-realism cannot be supported by our moral experience, which he argues it cannot be, then there is simply no good grounds to believe it.^{ccccxxxi} We should consult and appeal to our experiences in order to assess the ‘reality’ of strong values. Taylor appeals to us to see our own need for strongly valued goods for purposes of life, as indispensable concepts for making the best sense of what we are doing.^{ccccxxxi} Notions of strong

value, or the qualitative distinctions we make, give the reasons for our moral and ethical beliefs, and are indispensable to explanation and understanding of ourselves and of others. Taylor thinks there is no other way to determine what is real or objective or part of the furniture of things than by seeing what properties or entities or features our best account of things has to invoke.^{ccccxxiv} Strongly valued goods are interwoven with life uses that we regularly make to assess conduct, behavior, and action; and we know that what we experience as indispensable is real because we also experience how what we value doesn't simply go away because it doesn't fit with our prejudices. Even the idea that strongly valued goods are not real, but merely our projections, itself presupposes strong moral reasons for adopting such an ethic. Taylor finds that dissonance, namely, how we find that we still have to deal with those things that we object to or reject as strong values, to be quite key. He thinks even in objecting to a strong value we still must presuppose its existence as such. In this way he offers no further criteria of truth or rightness than straightforwardly practical reasons. Strong values are necessary because they are useful, convincing, illuminating, and ultimately seem realistic to us.^{ccccxxv} The resources we have in the natural sciences, of explanation in absolute physical or chemical terms are simply not as good for explaining human life so there is no good reason to take such reasoning as evidence against the necessity or reality of values.

Taylor's argument for practical reasoning is his way of putting forward an alternative standard of correctness that he thinks we should employ when deliberating. Knowledge is the goal in practical reasoning, but this knowledge only comes about through reasoning in transitions.^{ccccxxvi} The aim is to establish not that one position is superior to some other but rather to choose between comparative propositions, on the grounds of the epistemic gain attained from a move in one direction rather than another. So if moving from rival position A to B resolves a contradiction in A, or resolves a confusion that A relied on, or acknowledges the importance of something that A neglected, then the move from A to B is shown to be superior because it is "error-reducing", more so perhaps than moving from B to A, for example. In practical reasoning, the argument fixes not on either A or B but rather the possible transitions from A to B or B to A. Taylor extols the further merits of genealogy, which he thinks goes to the heart of practical reasoning. When it comes to moral debate and defending a particular good, he thinks we must seek to deploy practical reasoning since we can only defend particular goods through a certain reading of its genesis.^{ccccxxvii} Moreover, when it comes to our moral ontology as human agents, Taylor suggests employing the image of a biographical narrative, citing MacIntyre's notion of a 'quest', where we think of how we have become and where we are going as a whole, through lived transitions with epistemic gain.^{ccccxxviii}

As such, Taylor is fully aware that he can in no way *prove* the necessity of moral topography of selfhood, nor can he demonstrate the distinction between inwardness as a moral preference in the modern west and inwardness as an ontological constraint or the essential underlying nature of a self-interpreting animal. Nonetheless, they are his views. Taylor appeals to how we experience ourselves – our emotions, feelings, experiences to argue for what he thinks is moral about our being. How we experience our experiences should tell us important things about what kind of subjects we are as well as how we stand in relation to the language we have and the situations we find ourselves in. Taylor's model of practical reasoning through epistemic gain is his invitation **to us** to consider and choose for ourselves which picture makes the best sense of our being: denying moral topography and frameworks, or finding it essential to living and living well. But Taylor thinks that if he is going to convince us that the question of the good always and inevitably arises, then we need to see how the moral sources of the strands of our modern identity that seek to deny its existence also arose and developed. Thus, to help us see strong evaluation as non-optional and an orientation to the good as essential to personhood, Taylor offers a historical story of how the various aspects of the modern

idea of selfhood, namely a sense of inwardness, the distinction between inside-outside in our languages of self-understanding came to be.

What, therefore, must a story of the historical development of the modern identity be able to do as a proper defense of moral ontology? Taylor acknowledges that the story he has to offer about the development of the modern identity is partial.^{cccxix} It dwells mainly on particular developments in philosophy and religious outlook, and completely leaves aside institutional and structural changes, e.g. great changes in political structures, economic practices, and military and bureaucratic organization, without which the emergence of the modern identity would quite clearly be impossible. Can such a story have any meaningful relation to an historical explanation of that identity? What Taylor offers is something distinct from, and less ambitious than historical explanation, as diachronic causation, which would attempt an answer to the question: what brought the modern identity about? The question Taylor is asking, in contrast, is an interpretive one. Rather than inquiring into the precipitating conditions of the features peculiar to Western civilization in the early modern period, or the rise of capitalism, the industrial revolution, or the rise of representative democracies, or some statement of another feature particular to the emergence of modern Western civilization, Taylor wants to answer the question of what new identities over time makes clear what drew people to those developments, or to put it slightly differently, what makes the best sense of their spiritual power or moral appeal? To put it as he puts it, “what this question asks for is an interpretation of the identity (or of any cultural phenomenon which interests us) which will show why people found (or find) it convincing/inspiring/moving, which will identify what can be called the ‘idées-forces’ it contains.”^{cccxl} Taylor argues that giving an interpretation of the visions of good involved in a cultural phenomenon in question is separate from but nonetheless importantly relevant to the more ambitious question, since to understand wherein the force of certain ideas consists is to know something relevant to how they come to be central to a society in history. Likewise, any insight into the diachronic-causal genesis of an idea should also be useful for identifying its ‘spiritual centre of gravity’.

What Taylor thinks makes for adequate historical explanation is where the answers to the diachronic question and the interpretive (and therefore moral) questions meet. Because understanding what people’s self-interpretations and their visions of the good are can only be achieved through - but is also necessary for - an understanding of how they arose, an historical narrative can only do explanatory work when the two questions are taken together. Taylor’s interpretive view of what adequate historical explanation requires only makes sense against the backdrop of his moral ontology of persons and social practices. This is no surprise, after all, since it was to defend his moral ontology that he thought it necessary to offer a historical story in the first place, and why the question of adequate historical explanation even arose. Taylor’s stance that strong evaluation is the best and most convincing way to view our ontology means that moral ideals are something embedded in the social practices themselves, and which any adequate historical explanation must not ignore. As yet another example of his own stance on practical reasoning, it remains up to us to find Taylor’s story of the rise of the modern identity, and by extension, the necessity of moral ontology, compelling or not, convincing or not. It might help us to decide for ourselves how we want to think about our moral agency if we examine what concrete differences that recognizing moral ontology might make to how we think about and debate morality.

4.2.3 *Is moral ontology necessary for moral philosophy?*

For Taylor, strong evaluation gets to the center, the essence, the very nature of our existence as agents. The capacity for strong evaluation is a constant feature of the human subject, according to Taylor, an essential part of our identity to reason, choose, and act according to our conceptions of differential worth of options. As strong evaluators, humans have depth. We envisage our alternatives through a richer language of worth, not simply defined by what we desire plus the calculation of consequences as the weak evaluator does, but defined for us also by the contrastive qualitative characterizations we make as to their worth, by assessing which desires are worthier ones to have.^{cccxi} In contrast to the idea that individuals see things as having value because of their choice to endorse them, Taylor says that strongly valued goods prevent us from experiencing all our choices equally for we in fact sense that a desire or good of greater worth is at stake. He insists that individuals do not see all their values or desires as being of potentially equal worth; rather, strong priorities are what guides moral choice and decision-making.^{cccxi} But can this notion of strong evaluation as an explanatory theory of what moral agency **is** like also work as a basis for moral criticism? Can a description of human agency that tells us who we are have anything to say about what we **should** do or strive to be like?

Taylor comes closest to an answer to what kind of moral philosophy follows from recognizing our moral ontology in his description of strong evaluation's relationship to language, and what the process of articulation involves. Taylor writes that strong evaluators engage in a kind of reflection that is not merely a matter of registering the conclusion that something is more attractive to us than something else, but where we can articulate the higher desirability of something because we have a vocabulary of worth that enables us to articulate the superiority of one over the other. "For in strong evaluation where we deploy a language of evaluative distinctions, the rejected desire is not so rejected because of some mere contingent or circumstantial conflict with another goal."^{cccxi} To develop a strongly evaluative language is to become more articulate about one's preferences. It also means being able to have a much deeper, more intense, experience of one's experiences, which goes hand in hand with being able to characterize one's motivations and desires at greater depth. Articulation is self-interpretation, attempts to formulate the experiences we have and our relationship to those experiences, formulated as such. Our feelings are intimately bound up with this process of articulation.^{cccxi} And as linguistic animals, Taylor argues, our motivations, desires, evaluations are not merely given to us, or fixed truths that we discover about ourselves, which we then employ language to express. Language is not merely an instrumental device we make use of but rather constitutive of human beings so that when we interpret ourselves our self-interpretations are constituted by the articulations we come to accept of them. In this way, self-interpretations are not merely descriptive. Our self-interpretations are partly constitutive of our experiences such that an altered description of our motivations and what we hold to be important is inseparable from a change in the motivation itself and our sense of what is important.

So when we are faced with the incommensurable choice between desires we find ourselves in a struggle of self-interpretations. The struggle is in figuring out which of the incommensurables is a truer, more authentic, more illusion-free interpretation of the meanings things have for us.^{cccxi} Often our articulations, our attempts to form and reformulate what we experience will be, at least initially, inchoate, largely confused, or otherwise incompletely or badly formulated.^{cccxi} When new terms are introduced to our evaluative vocabulary considering them alters the sense of the existing terms we have and further refines our evaluative vocabulary. Taylor writes that the strong evaluative self has an identity that is defined in terms of certain essential evaluations that provide the horizon

or foundation for the other evaluations one makes. These are moral orientations that are for the most part not up for grabs, at least not very often or not easily. They are what make possible and underwrite all the other perhaps more mundane evaluation and self-interpretation that occur on the basis of them. An articulation purports to characterize a feeling; and it is meant to be faithful to what it is that moves us. But in trying to articulate our experience we find that our formation and reformulation actually changes our experience. Articulation does not leave its “object” unchanged but necessarily alters it. Our formulations about ourselves can alter what they are about because our understanding of our emotions, the interpretations we accept about them are constitutive of the emotions. The paradox of human emotion and articulation is that only an articulated emotional life is properly human, yet all our articulations are open to challenge from our inarticulate sense of what is important.

To characterize desires in strong evaluation is to speak of them in terms of the kinds of quality of life they express and sustain. Strong evaluation necessarily makes reference to a mode of life, a certain quality of personhood. To acquire a strongly evaluative language is to reflect on the different possible modes of being. It is to examine the kind of life and kind of subject a desire properly belongs to and to reflect about the kind of being we are in having a particular desire or in carrying out a particular action.^{cccxlvi} A conflict between desires will, therefore, be deep, not merely contingent, because it will mean choosing between incommensurable kinds of life we might want to live and persons we think we are and want to be. Yet, Taylor writes that these deepest core evaluations may be the least clear, least articulated, and most subject to disillusion.^{cccxlvi} And when that is challenged, it is the most profound of crises one can experience. Taylor argues that evaluations are always challengeable, and questioning the deepest evaluations is radical in the sense that no formulation at that level will be un-revisable. This kind of re-evaluation is deep and total; it has us look at the most fundamental formulations: without a yardstick to judge by. It is not that anything goes, but rather that we are evaluating with a deepest unstructured sense of what is important, which is inchoate and which we are trying to bring to definition.^{cccxlvi} This re-evaluation engages the whole self and Taylor thinks we thus have a responsibility to ourselves to work out our identity. We are responsible for ourselves in the sense that it is always up to us to engage in the process of self-resolution, and to question whether we have our deepest evaluations right.

Responsibility and obligation arises, therefore, from the choices strong evaluators make, which for Taylor is a special kind of moral choice. For Taylor, our moral agency engages our responsibility because our evaluations are not only given to us, such as our 1st order desires – of hunger, fear, pain, etc. – are. Rather, our evaluations are reflected on and endorsed by us, which he argues is what engages our responsibility for them.^{cccxlvi} But if this is a personal responsibility that a strong evaluator has to oneself, to articulate and endorse the choices we make by strong evaluations, how far does this responsibility go to securing specific obligations of one kind or another to others? It remains unclear how a right view of our moral ontology could generate specific norms, prescribe or proscribe actions and sentiments, or supply anything like a basis for moral criticism.

Of course, Taylor does not want merely to point out what is wrong with our current standards and intellectual climate, but actually to help open ourselves up to moving toward a better alternative. But what alternative basis of moral obligations is there? A moral ontology of strong evaluation does not itself point to any particular moral philosophy. We cannot generate norms from considerations of the good, nor do such considerations motivate a specific choice between substantive values or give rise to concrete obligations. Whether we ought to deny the priority of the right over the good, or concede that that is a silly question we ought to stop asking, Taylor’s

historical story suggests that we cannot even begin to see what alternatives there are until we peel away moral philosophy's long entrenched rejection of moral ontology, which has become more and more reified and made to seem the only natural and given way of addressing the topic of morality. Taylor's project has decidedly not been to offer a competing moral philosophy to rival Kantianism, Utilitarianism, or Existentialist critique. He has raised a substantial challenge to what he deems is the hyper-static ways in which many of these contemporary philosophical speculations about morality proceed and would himself staunchly oppose offering the same.^{ccclii} Instead, his intellectual labor has been aimed at showing the historical contingency and, ultimately, weakness, of moral outlooks that have arisen which attempt to deny our moral ontology. Through his grappling with ontological issues of human agency that led to his critique of moral philosophy, Taylor has developed a comprehensive way of thinking about modernity and our present age that seeks to overcome both the nihilism of postmodern relativism and the shortcomings of traditional philosophy.

Taylor's two-pronged challenge comes in his view that our moral ontology shows both approaches to moral philosophy – naturalist varieties on the one hand, and existentialist or moral relativist variants on the other - to be deeply flawed for not recognizing how our visions of good are necessarily tied up with our understandings of the self. On the one hand, moral philosophy's preoccupation with specifying obligations and determining right actions fails to acknowledge the qualitative distinctions we make and the goods that give the reasons for our moral reactions, beliefs, and principles. Consequentialist ethics and Kantian moral theories remain silent on what notions of good form the background against which we hold our views, even while these theories themselves actually keep commitments to goods such as rationality and benevolence. Taylor assaults the reductionism of utilitarianism in its commitment to defend "utility" as the highest universal good, which eliminates distinctions of worth among desires and goods and places them all on an equal footing.^{cccliii} Rather than speak to our strong evaluation languages, these theories induce us to abandon them and redefine the issues we are reflecting on in a non-qualitative, non-contrastive way.^{cccliii} As utilitarianism neutralizes all distinctions of worth and renders all desires commensurable and reducible to a common unit of calculation, such as Benthamite utilitarianism does, they end up writing into the theory the notion that we are agents whose only authentic evaluations are non-qualitative. Thus, the problem with these theories for Taylor is precisely that while the picture of the moral agent that emerges from them is patently contrary to how we as moral agents actually experience the world, these theories are unable to explicate the very commitments they hold but which remain unadmitted.

On the other end of the moral philosophical spectrum, Taylor alleges a fundamental contradiction in neo-Nietzschean and Foucaultian critique which cannot escape their own condemnation of putting forward one's own meta-doctrine of moral orders to discredit all normative stances and values as domination. Taylor argues that when it comes to moral deliberation or decision-making these outlooks are notoriously hamstrung by their own terms, namely that all regimes of truth are based on fiat, none of which is more justified than another. Moreover, he finds the relativist idea that what the individual faces in the moral world is a dazzling array of equally appealing and equally arbitrary goods to be an utterly implausible account of moral life. "Radical choice", as advanced for instance by Sartre, which tries to deny that strong evaluation gives rise to responsibility, cannot be inflated into an account of all moral choice.^{cccliv} We cannot understand our responsibility for our evaluations through Sartre's notion of "radical choice" because it is an incoherent and ultimately self-defeating claim.^{cccliv} The notion of "radical choice" depends on strong evaluation, insofar as it assumes a conflict between the strong pull of incommensurables, but it simultaneously wants to deny their status as judgments. Sartre's picture of the individual in a

dramatic rendition of a moral dilemma where he is forced to choose without any criteria tries to deny that there are strongly valued goods colliding, but to maintain both strong evaluation and radical choice is a contradiction.^{ccclvi} According to Taylor, in order to speak of radical choice, we cannot just find ourselves in one of the alternatives but we have to feel the pull of each. But when we do, we are feeling the pull of two incommensurable options as the strong evaluator does, and the “radical chooser” is precisely throwing his choice to one of the options because of, not for the lack of, the felt weight of the difficult choice before him. The choice is difficult for the radical chooser precisely because of the pull of his strong evaluation of the options before him. Taylor’s view is that strong evaluation simply cannot be denied even for the radical chooser to have to make a choice that is experienced as radical.

Taylor’s strong evaluation is both about the kind of beings we should strive to be and the kind of beings we are, our identity. In this sense our moral ontology is necessary for moral philosophy because it is a necessary feature of what we are. But Taylor thinks that this will likely sound strange and unorthodox to us in the contemporary age, imbued as we are in our modern empiricist natural science view of the world. What he thinks is needed for us to appreciate this argument is to grasp what selfhood today is like, and we cannot do this merely by way of philosophical argument, but rather through an articulation of our modern understandings of the good which has evolved over time. Unfortunately, Taylor’s argument about the responsibility that strong evaluators have to themselves to strongly evaluate and strive to get right their moral descriptions will not go far enough to guide us towards specific responsibilities or to adjudicate between competing options for actions or sentiments. Nonetheless, it is only by immersing ourselves in a historical enterprise concerned with broad mentalités and the changing views of identity and moral orientations over time^{ccclvii} -- it is Taylor’s wager -- that we will be able to see 1) the impulse to try to deny moral ontology is not a given, but rather a contingent fact that resulted from the particular historical development in the west of enlightenment ideas about selfhood, and how 2) trying to deny moral ontology leads us to contradict our own experience of strong value.

Conclusion

This chapter began by showing why Taylor’s turn to Hegel’s ontologizing philosophy necessitated a critique of moral philosophy, not as a separate matter from the philosophy of human sciences, but rather as an integral part of how our understandings of what it means to be a self have historically evolved. Taylor’s insistence on the unsuitableness of natural science techniques in the human sciences was based on his ontological view that persons *are* self-interpreting ‘strong evaluators’ – the actions/meanings of whom only an interpretive human sciences could possibly elucidate. A double hermeneutic was required, he argued, to explain human action and social practices since they are thoroughly imbued with meanings, which cannot be divorced from the subjective views of those who hold them. Taylor’s ontological claim of strong evaluation, the basis for his anti-naturalism in the human sciences, has equally deep and critical implications for moral philosophy, which he tries to get at through an historical explanation of the development of the modern notion of selfhood. He wants to show that strong evaluation is inescapable in our conception of the agent because it is bound up with the notion of the self and how we use the term “self” today.^{ccclviii} We use the term for self reference because this brings out what for us are the essential powers of human agency.^{ccclix} A human agent is one who can take a reflexive stance, can say ‘I’^{ccclx}. And *Sources of the Self* was Taylor’s way of articulating what that reflexive stance involves as the locus of the defining human capacities, which he thinks “takes some explaining, not because it is

unfamiliar to us, but rather because it is so fundamental to our way of thinking that it escapes our attention.”^{ccclxi}

In *Sources of the Self*, Taylor sought to give a historicist account of the changing idea of personhood by charting the various conceptions of the western self that have emerged through centuries past. By detailing the historical changes in how selfhood has been conceptualized over time Taylor wants to articulate how it is that the way the self is viewed has a powerful influence on the sorts of goods, broadly defined, that get valued in different societies.^{ccclxii} He is primarily concerned, however, to map out what he takes to be the ontological, that is to say constant, features of selfhood, which he thinks all human beings, even across quite radically diverse cultures, must grapple with, albeit in particular ways. He writes, “I can now try to state the relation between what is perennial and what is ever changing in human life. Humans always have a sense of self, which situates them in ethical space. But the terms that define this space, and that situate us within it, vary in striking fashion.”^{ccclxiii} Taylor takes the universal or permanent features of moral life to underpin the changes that he argues the notion of the self has undergone from the ancient to the modern world in the west.^{ccclxiv} Whether his historical account together with his ontological stance makes for a powerful tension within his own thinking is an issue that several critics have been quick to point out.^{ccclxv} But since Taylor wants to maintain, unremittingly, that ethics is not history “all the way down,”^{ccclxvi} his historicist reading of the modern self should be taken in light of the normative vision of selfhood he wants to advance, which Taylor argues more accurately captures what it is to be human than naturalist alternatives that deny ontology.

In examining the relationship between Taylor’s ‘strong evaluation’ as a claim about what explanation in the human sciences requires and one about the object of moral philosophy, the question that inevitably arose was the extent to which Taylor’s arguments about the interpretive nature of human agency is compatible with his arguments for an immanent horizon of meanings. On the one hand, according to Taylor, our interpretive nature means strong evaluators not only are, but also become more and more the way we interpret ourselves. All the while he posits that the inescapable moral frameworks – in which strong evaluators necessarily find ourselves – act as immanent constraints that push back on our interpretations. Strong evaluation as a claim about moral philosophy says that there are and have always been “background languages” or “inescapable frameworks” in which we, moral creatures, live, reflect on, and debate morality, such that all of our moral descriptions, reactions, questions, issues, in short – our sense of morality - involves discriminations of right or wrong, better or worse, higher or lower, that are **not** rendered valid by our own desires, inclinations, or choices, but rather stand independent of these, offering standards by which they can be judged. What constrains us is of us, they are our meanings, and yet in no way could we read off norms or moral prescripts from these background frameworks, that is to say, our moral ontology. It remains unclear, therefore, how the fact that we continually endorse an always revisable set of choices can give rise to specific norms or substantive obligations to others, or ground concrete responsibilities. Thus, this chapter drew down with an analysis of the limits of strong evaluation to work as a basis of moral criticism, and to provide the grounds for moral obligation.

However, it is only in this narrowed light of moral philosophy’s concern with grounding the right that the significance of what Taylor *has* managed to do gets diminished. Taylor’s view of morality is immanently critical of moral philosophy, of the terms on which he sees contemporary moral philosophy rests. What he has tried to accomplish is to shift the burden of evidence, so to speak, or the burdens of argumentation, away from his own stance and to his targets in moral

philosophy. With his historical story of the development of the modern identity, he tries to show that strong evaluation is undeniable about persons, in that any view of selfhood— even utilitarian or existentialist varieties of weak evaluation – presupposes strong evaluation. We are always already strong evaluators such that even the disengaged view of selfhood has something that is necessarily strongly valued on some deeper level that it outwardly denies, be it instrumentality, efficiency, or a zeal for absolute freedom. On Taylor’s account, these moral philosophies have lost sight of the sources of their own commitments, and they leave out from their own theorizing too much of what is salient in moral life for their ensuing normative prescripts to carry the weight they presume.

While Taylor’s description of human agency can say comparatively very little about the specifics of what we ought or ought not to do, the resources that he does provide in his thesis of our moral ontology for thinking about what a better alternative to modernist moral philosophy might be is no small accomplishment. His historical examination of the roots of modernity says that the modern world is marked by a conflict among a plurality of moral outlooks, for instance, between a view which gives unchallenged primacy to the hypergood, on the one hand, and a view which sees the kind of sacrifice of other ‘lower’ goods which this entails as utterly unacceptable.^{ccclxvii} “The cramped formulations of mainstream philosophy already represent denials, the sacrifice of one kind of good in favor of another, but frozen in a logical mould which prevents their even being put in question.”^{ccclxviii} What is needed is greater articulacy but where there is articulacy, Taylor is conscious to point out, there will be a plurality of visions. There will be a plurality of ways of viewing a predicament where the choice is not only between what is higher or lower but between incommensurable ways of looking at the choice.^{ccclxix} Indeed Taylor’s criticisms of Benthamite utilitarianism is precisely for not allowing a plurality of visions about the good but instead reducing all evaluations to one metric of goodness, pleasure - however specified.

Paradoxically, however, articulacy is also the condition of reconciliation for Taylor. If we undertake the deeper moral phenomenology that he urges – to examine the inescapable features of our moral language – then we should realize our orientation to the good as a condition of our being selves with an identity. We should find, moreover, that the logic of the virtue or value terms we use is such that their value is embedded in those practices and meanings where the terms are an essential part of which is their value. And in turn that our conceptions of society and the kinds of narrative in play that make sense of identity, self, human agency, are inseparable from a moral orientation to the good, so conceived. Taylor’s explanation of strong evaluation as our moral ontology insofar as it is urging this closer, more perspicuous, examination of the meanings we do share in our social practices succeeds critically in both the philosophy of social sciences and moral philosophy. The lesson to learn is that a new understanding of selfhood and agency goes hand in hand with a new conception of society, that is, new understandings of social bonds and new forms or kinds of narrative in which we make sense of our lives.

Endnotes

ⁱ As a vital source of the very subject of mathematical logic, Russell and his Theory of Descriptions had immediate impact on his friend Moore and his pupil Wittgenstein in his *Tractatus*, which was most influential on the Vienna Circle. Moreover, an important line of development of logical analysis of ordinary-language propositions can be further attributed to him. To quote Stuart Hampshire, “Carnap and the logical positivist school associated with him started from Russell’s programme of logical analysis and – abandoning his metaphysics – provided a simplified diagram of the structure of natural knowledge, and of mathematical knowledge, which Russell did not accept“ in “Conversation with Stuart Hampshire: The Philosophy of Russell I,” *Modern British Philosophy*, ed. Bryan Magee, London: Secker & Warburg, 1971.

ⁱⁱ A.J. Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic*. London, 1936.

ⁱⁱⁱ Emotivism has also been referred to colloquially as the “boo/hurrah” theory. In *Language, Truth and Logic*, Ayer did much to lay out the bases of the meta-ethical view of emotivism. Its development as a systematic value judgment theory owes most to C.L. Stevenson. See particularly his *Ethics and Language*, New Haven: Yale UP, 1944.

^{iv} See especially T.D. Weldon, *The Vocabulary of Politics* New York: Penguin Books, 1953 and J.L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1962. Many different and unrelated schools of thought have come to be associated with “the linguistic turn” in 20th C philosophy. For an excellent treatment of the issues surrounding what might be thought of as the linguistic turn that were of principal interest to philosophers concerned with language in the 20th C see *The Linguistic Turn: Essays in Philosophical Method*, ed. Richard Rorty, Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1967, repr.1992.

^v Until the 1920s, idealists held nearly all the leading chairs in British philosophy departments. At Oxford, philosophy declined to a trickle after the great days of Absolute Idealism of T.H. Green (1836-1882) and Bradley (1846-1924) until its revival in the mid-30’s. Oxford philosophy during the inter-war period, in which the senior philosophers held “Philosopher’s Teas,” was largely inbred, lacking any contact with outside influences. And it wasn’t until the next generation of “Wee Teas” with its 6 founding members, Ryle, Mabbott, Price, Hardie, T.D. Weldon, and C.S. Lewis that Oxford philosophy revived. Stemmed by WWII, this revival was led by Ryle in the immediate post-war years, who more than any of the others made the transition from the old to the new philosophical world, unleashed a fury of energy and creativity in philosophy, which continued with Ryle’s student Ayer and his contemporaries, most notably, Austin, Berlin, and Hampshire.

^{vi} Berlin and Hampshire were by no means the only ones who would count here. Another strong humanist voice came from Iris Murdoch, who read Classics, Ancient History, and Philosophy, and came up through Somerville College, Oxford in the ‘30s. Her philosophical and literary contributions exhibited a persistent Aristotelianism in her thinking.

^{vii} See Jamie Reed, “From Logical Positivism to ‘Metaphysical Rationalism’: Isaiah Berlin on the ‘Fallacy of Reduction’ History of Political Thought Vol. XXIX No. 1, Spring 2008 for an examination of the continuity in Berlin’s thinking from the formative period of Berlin’s intellectual development during the 1930’s and late 1940’s in which logical positivism and linguistic analysis were most powerfully underway in Britain, to his later post-war writings as a political theorist and historian of ideas, which IB is most famous for.

^{viii} See the introduction by Bernard Williams in Isaiah Berlin, *Concepts and Categories: Philosophical Essays*, ed. Henry Hardy. Princeton UP, 1978.

^{ix} According to P.M.S. Hacker, this was the first public discussion of Wittgenstein’s works at Oxford, delivered to the Jowett Society in 1932, and on which Berlin supplied a response. See P. M. S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein’s Place in Twentieth Century Philosophy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996. See also Isaiah Berlin, “Austin and the Early Beginnings of Oxford Philosophy” in *Essays on J. L. Austin* ed. Isaiah Berlin et al. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973, p. 3

^x Both Cook Wilson and Moore insisted on a realist account of knowledge, and argued for the reality of relations and the distinctness of knowledge from its objects against Idealists, but did so differently. Cook Wilson, who was the Chair of Logic from 1899 until his death in 1915 was the leading spirit of the realist revolt at Oxford against the idealism of Bradley and Bosanquet that was dominant prior to WWI. He was taught by T.H. Green and Jowett at Balliol but soon revolted against his teachers and inspired the next generation of Oxford realists, referred to as the ‘Cook-Wilsonians’. Unlike Cambridge philosophers against idealism like Moore and Russell, Oxford realists were not trained mathematicians or scientists. They read literae humaniores and were predominantly Aristotelian scholars in the venerable Oxford tradition. Their attack on idealism was rooted in respect for ordinary language, and the ordinary usage of terms, a theme echoed by Austin in the 1930s, according to which the student of logic must aim to determine the normal use of an expression. At Cambridge, Moore rejected the monistic holism of Bradley’s idealism in favor of an extreme form of pluralist atomist realism, or “conceptual realism”. His 1898 dissertation was rooted not in empiricism or common sense but Platonic realism by giving a description for the specific philosophic purposes of the use of linguistic expression and its rule-governed connections with other expressions by way of implication, exclusion, presupposition,

and so on. Meinong and Brentano had the parallel inspiration on the Continent, but at Cambridge, Moore led the revolt against idealism, with Russell swiftly following in his footsteps, and “conceptual analysis” in Britain after the war is heir to Moorean analysis. For a fuller historical narrative, see P.M.S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein’s Place in Twentieth Century Philosophy*.

^{xi} See Berlin, “Austin and the Early Beginnings of Oxford Philosophy” in *Essays on J.L. Austin*, p. 9.

^{xii} In addition to Berlin’s recounting in *Essays on J.L. Austin*, Ayers’ autobiography includes a useful description of these meetings in his chapter, “Oxford”, in *Part of My Life: The Memoirs of a Philosopher*, London: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1977.

^{xiii} Other related topics that occupied young Oxford philosophy in the 1930s in addition to theories of sense-data, phenomenalism, and theories of meaning were apriori truths which are not analytic, propositions that appeared necessarily true or false but did not appear reducible to rules or definitions; verification and logical character of counterfactual statements; problems about, nature and criteria of, personal identity; and knowledge of other minds. See Berlin, “Austin and the Early Beginnings of Oxford Philosophy” in *Essays on J.L. Austin* ed. Berlin et al. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973. For one example of the continued relevance of Price’s work, see Laurence Bonjour and Ernest Sosa, *Epistemic Justification*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003.

^{xiv} Hacker explains how Ayer’s advocacy of logical positivism irritated his seniors at Oxford. Ayer was unsympathetic to the “picture theory of the proposition” and to doctrines of “showing” and “saying” and instead accepted the Vienna circle interpretation that all significant propositions are either tautologies (propositions of logic and mathematics) or empirically verifiable. He attended their meetings from 1932-3 and the annual summer joint sessions of Mind Association and Aristotelian society allowed him to meet Moore as well as younger philosophers from Cambridge. Berlin persuades Ayer to write up his ideas in 1934 and in 1936 he published the highly polemical *Language, Truth, and Logic*, which became the primary English text of logical positivism. See P.M.S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein’s Place in Twentieth Century Philosophy*.

^{xv} Austin most admired Russell and Prichard and staunchly opposed Ayer’s reductivist, logical positivist approach to sense-datum theories of perception.

^{xvi} See Berlin’s own account of the disagreement between Austin and Ayer in I. Berlin, “Austin and the Early Beginnings of Oxford Philosophy” in *Essays on J. L. Austin* ed. Berlin et al. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973. See also a published discussion among Berlin, Hampshire, Murdoch, and Anthony Quinton in which Berlin and Hampshire recount their views of logical positivism in “Philosophy and Beliefs” in *The Twentieth Century*, Vol. clvii, No. 940, June 1955, London, p. 495-521.

^{xvii} See Berlin, *Personal Impressions*, ed. H. Hardy, Oxford: 1982, p. 225.

^{xviii} Hampshire’s persistent interest in the connection between meaning and meaning confirmation resembles the concerns of logical positivism, although he himself could in no way be called a positivist. His early paper, “Logical Form” displays a recognizable positivist spirit in its explanation of differences of form in terms of differences in methods of confirmation but his overarching concern was to explore the various certainty conditions of different classes of statement, rather than to assign a privileged status of certainty to some special class of statements. See *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 48, (1947-8), p. 37-58.

^{xix} Like Berlin, Hampshire found the anti-metaphysical thrust of the Vienna circle and its insistence upon verification as a criterion of meaningfulness to undermine not only Hegelian metaphysics, but also Marxism as a doctrine of historical inevitability, Comtean positivism, and liberal theories of progress.

^{xx} See “Verification” in *Concepts and Categories: Philosophical Essays*, ed. H. Hardy, London: Penguin 1999.

^{xxi} See Berlin, “Empirical Propositions and Hypothetical Statements” in *Concepts and Categories*, p. 33-4.

^{xxii} He writes, “disagreement can arise only about the adequacy of this or that suggested analysis of how material object sentences are to be ‘reduced’ (without residue) to sentences describing both what the observer does, or did, or will observe, as well as what he would, or would have, might or might have, observed under appropriate conditions. See Berlin, “Empirical Propositions and Hypothetical Statements” in *Concepts and Categories*, p. 33-4.

^{xxiii} See Berlin, “Verification” in *Concepts and Categories*, p. 12, emphasis added.

^{xxiv} See “Empirical Propositions & Hypothetical Statements” in *Mind*, 59 (1950) and “Logical Translation” in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 50 (1949-50).

^{xxv} See Berlin, *Concepts and Categories*, Author’s preface, p. xiii, “This was the manouvre of phenomenalism, which was par excellence the positivist theory of the external world – which tried to analyze all statements about the material world into statements about actual or possible experiences...”

^{xxvi} Ayer’s view was that all genuine philosophical proposition were of two types, either a logical tautology, the truth of which could be ascertained through the meanings of its constituent terms, or a statement displaying a potential for verification by ‘sense-data’ derived from actual or possible experience. See Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, London: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 2001, p. 16.

^{xxvii} Throughout the Thursday meetings from 1936-1939, Berlin along with Austin opposed the verification principle and logical positivism of Ayer that attributed a privileged role to a particular category of explanation in its analysis of human experience. Berlin recalls the class he jointly led with Austin in 1936 on Harvard positivist pragmatist, C.I. Lewis's *Mind and World Order* as "the best class I have ever attended," in "Austin and the Early Beginnings of Oxford Philosophy", p. 8.

^{xxviii} See Austin's first published contribution to philosophy, "A Priori Concepts" in Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, supplementary volume (1939), which expresses much of his positive doctrine against the pure Carnapian logical positivism of Ayer, and also with the logical atomism of Russell. See also his more developed later work, *Sense and Sensibilia*, Oxford, 1964.

^{xxix} Although Berlin continued to teach and write on philosophy through the later '40s and early '50s, his interests had decidedly shifted to the history of ideas, particularly Russian intellectual history, the history of Marxist and socialist theories, as well as the Enlightenment and its critics.

^{xxx} See Isaiah Berlin, *Karl Marx: His Life and Environment*. Thornton Butterworth, First edition, 1939.

^{xxxi} According to P.M.S. Hacker, Berlin contemplated writing books on the early British empiricists but never did. See P. M. S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein's Place in Twentieth Century Philosophy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996.

^{xxxii} See I. Berlin, "The Concept of Scientific History" in *The Proper Study of Mankind: An Anthology of Essays*, ed. Henry Hardy, Roger Hausheer, re-issued by Macmillan, 2000, p. 34.

^{xxxiii} "The Purpose of Philosophy" was published in the Sunday Times, 4 November 1962, and "Does Political Theory Still Exist?" was first published in French as 'La theorie politique existe-t-elle?' in *Revue francaise de science politique* 11 (1961) and then in English in Peter Laslett and W.G. Runciman (eds) *Philosophy, Politics, and Society*, 2nd series, Oxford: Blackwell, 1962. Both are reprinted in *Concepts and Categories*.

^{xxxiv} See "The Purpose of Philosophy" reprinted in *Concepts and Categories*, p. 11.

^{xxxv} He contrasts the dispassionately objective scientific method in history with an empathetic approach that he developed in particular through his writings on Vico. See Isaiah Berlin, "The Concept of Scientific History" in *Concepts and Categories*. See also Isaiah Berlin, "Historical Inevitability" (originally 1954) reprinted in *Liberty*, ed. Henry Hardy, Oxford UP, 2002.

^{xxxvi} Berlin's arguments for a vitalist account of human behavior in "The Concept of Scientific History" is also echoed in "Does Political Theory Still Exist?" in *Concepts and Categories*.

^{xxxvii} See Stuart Hampshire, *Thought and Action*. In his introduction, Hampshire announces his ambitious task to explore and trace the connections between certain familiar contrasts – "the contrast between that which is unavoidable in human thought and that which is contingent and changeable: between inner thought and its natural expression in speech and action: between that which confronts a man as the situation before him and that which is his own response to it: between knowledge and decision: between criticism and practice: between abstract philosophical opinions and the concrete varieties of experience."

^{xxxviii} See Stuart Hampshire, "The Analogy of Feeling" in the *Journal of Mind* 61 (1952), p. 1-12.

^{xxxix} See "Self-Knowledge and the Will," in *Revue internationale de philosophie* 7 (25) (1953), p. 230-45. Also see "On Referring and Intending," in *Philosophical Review* 65 (1956), p. 1-13.

^{xl} See Charles Taylor, *Explanation of Behavior*, Prometheus Books, 1964.

^{xli} See Hampshire's review of Gilbert Ryle's *Concept of Mind* in "Critical Notice of Ryle's *Concept of Mind*" in *Mind* 59 (1950), p. 237-255.

^{xlii} See Stuart Hampshire with H.L.A. Hart, "Decision, Intention and Certainty," in *Mind* 67 (1958), p. 1-12.

^{xliii} Hampshire's account of a notion of a disposition as applied to human character that first appeared in his "Dispositions" in *Analysis* 14 (1953), p. 5-11 is later elaborated in psychoanalytical terms in "Disposition and Memory" in *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 43 (1962), p. 59-68. Psychoanalysis is understood to reveal a basic way of understanding an individual's disposition whereby Hampshire's concept of a disposition is linked to the notion of rationality and freedom, in that control over one's dispositions may be increased by self-knowledge, or an understanding of how they have come about from primitive responses.

^{xliv} See Stuart Hampshire, *Thought and Action*.

^{xlv} Berlin traces Soviet communism back through Marx to the optimistic scientism of well-meaning philosophers like Helvetius, Holbach, Condorcet, and Saint-Simon in the 18th C.

^{xlvi} This is Berlin's important but highly contentious contribution to liberal thought, since it relies on an ascription of unity to the enlightenment that overlooks fundamental divisions within it between monists like Holbach and pluralists like Montesquieu, for instance. See Graeme Garrard, "The Counter-Enlightenment Liberalism of Isaiah Berlin" in *Journal of Political Ideologies*, Vol 2, Issue 3, p. 281-96. He argues that Berlin's treatment of the enlightenment and its enemies amounts to a "strange reversal" of standard liberal judgments. He points out how Rousseau displays no less

pluralism than Machiavelli's proto-pluralism and discusses Berlin's surer view of the counter-enlightenment as deeply pluralistic in outlook.

^{xlvii} See David Miller, "Crooked Timber or Bent Twig?", which examines the sometimes conflicting versions found in Berlin's account of nationalism in different places. Also Ryan Hanley's "Berlin and History" locates Berlin's critique of "scientific history" within his understanding of the quarrel between the humanities and the sciences. Both selections can be found in *The One and the Many: Reading Isaiah Berlin*, ed. George Crowder and Henry Hardy, New York: Prometheus Books, 2007.

^{xlviii} As early as the year following the publication of his dissertation, he published a review of Merleau-Ponty's *The Structure of Behavior* called "Genesis" in the *New Statesman*, 70 (3 September 1965).

^{xlix} See Taylor, Charles. *Hegel*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1975, p. viii.

¹ See Charles Taylor (1991) "The Importance of Herder" in E. and A. Margalit (eds.) *Isaiah Berlin: a Celebration*. London: Hogarth Press, 1991, pp. 40-63

ⁱⁱ I have been careful to point out that the anti-naturalism of Berlin, Hampshire, Taylor, and Williams, for all the subtle differences they manifest given the different contexts in which they were each writing, all insist on an interpretive form of understanding, not as a wholesale epistemological doctrine that would apply to any domain of inquiry, but specifically for a human science because of their conceptions about its subject matter. This is what unites Taylor and Williams, apart from Richard Rorty, who otherwise would also be a major figure in the interpretive humanist liberal tradition this chapter is tracing out. For a useful contrast, see the exchange among Taylor, Dreyfus, and Rorty that appeared in *Review of Metaphysics*, 34:1 September 1980. This debate is continued in their articles in Hiley, Bohman, Shusterman eds. *The Interpretive Turn: Philosophy, Science, Culture*, Ithaca, NY, 1991.

ⁱⁱⁱ One of the most fiercely contested, and often misunderstood, of Williams views is his championing of what he was wont to call "absolute knowledge", namely knowledge that is "to the largest possible extent independent of the local perspectives or idiosyncrasies of enquirers". Of course by "absolute conception of the world" Williams was never advocating a conception without concepts, but only concepts of a certain kind. If it is to be attained anywhere, Williams maintained it was in science, not in philosophy. See his discussion in his Essay "Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline" delivered as the Annual Lecture of the Royal Institute of Philosophy on February 23, 2000, reprinted in *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline*, ed. A.W. Moore, Princeton UP, 2008, p. 180-200.

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ In an obituary for William's his last book, *Truth and Truthfulness: An Essay on Genealogy*, Princeton UP, 2002, is described as an examination written for those who "sneer at any purported truth as ludicrously naïve because it is, inevitably, distorted by power, class bias, and ideology." See Jane O'Grady, Professor Sir Bernard Williams, *The Guardian*, 13 June 2003.

^{liv} Thomas Kuhn's view is a useful comparison here. While he agrees with Taylor that the natural and human sciences are distinct, unlike Taylor, he believes that the concepts of natural science shape the natural world just as much as the concepts of the human sciences shape our social world. See Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed, (Chicago, 1970). He explicitly contrasts himself with Taylor on this issue in Thomas Kuhn, "Natural and the Human Sciences" in Hiley, Bohman, Shusterman eds., *The Interpretive Turn*.

^{lv} Charles Taylor, "Understanding in Human Science", 32

^{lvi} Charles Taylor, "Understanding in Human Science", 31.

^{lvii} Charles Taylor, "Self-Interpreting Animals" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, *Human Agency and Language* (Cambridge, 1985), 47.

^{lviii} See Stuart Hampshire, "Morality and Pessimism" delivered as the Leslie Stephen Lecture at Cambridge in 1972.

^{lix} *Ibid.*

^{lx} See Stuart Hampshire, et al, *Public and Private Morality*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978, p. 7-10.

^{lxi} See *Public and Private Morality*, p. 19.

^{lxii} See Stuart Hampshire, *Public and Private Morality*, p 14.

^{lxiii} See Stuart Hampshire, *Public and Private Morality*, p. 42, 44, 47.

^{lxiv} See Bernard Williams, "Ethical Consistency" in *Problems of the Self*, Cambridge UP, 1973, 166-186.

^{lxv} See Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Harvard UP, 1985, p. 176-77.

^{lxvi} See Naomi Choi, "Arguing for Strong Evaluation: Must Human Agency be Moral?" *in draft*.

^{lxvii} Taylor takes the idea from Harry Frankfurt, who argued that what is essential to humans is not just the capacity to have desires of the 1st order, but the ability to form 2nd order desires, that is, the capacity to form desires about our desires. Taylor goes further than Frankfurt, however, to contrast two kinds of evaluating when it comes to our desires: strong and weak.

^{lxviii} Charles Taylor, "What is Human Agency?" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, 38.

^{lxix} See Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 26.

^{lxx} Ruth Abbey explains how Taylor defends his moral realism by usefully distinguishing what she calls his “falsifiable realism” from two other kinds of moral realism that he is commonly interpreted as claiming, a strong and a weak version. According to Abbey, Taylor is not merely saying that individuals experience a good in their lives as if it had an independent existence even though they believe such a description may be false or in error (weak), nor is Taylor claiming that the goods in question actually do exist independently of human beings in the way that gravity in the natural sciences, for example, exists independently of there being humans to know about it or understand it in a certain way (strong). Instead, Taylor’s defense is to argue that from the point of view of humans and our experience of morality assuming that moral realism – the notion that we respond to values that seem good to us independently of our choosing them - is most persuasive and gives us the best account of moral life; thus we should go on assuming it is the case unless and until a moral theory emerges that can explain why the human urge to respond to goods as if they had an independent existence is somehow unconnected to reality. See Ruth Abbey, *Charles Taylor*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000, p. 26-31.

^{lxxi} Taylor positions himself against sociobiologists with their ‘involuntary projection view’ of subjective values and moral theorists who espouse a crude ‘error theory’ which takes values as ‘metaphysically queer’, e.g. Mackie. See J.L. Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. London: Penguin, 1977. See also his *The Miracle of Theism*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1982.

^{lxxii} Of course this is not to say that the two versions of moral realism in Taylor and Williams have nothing in dispute. See Taylor’s *Sources of the Self*, Harvard UP, 1989, chapter 1.

^{lxxiii} See *Sources of the Self*, p. 79

^{lxxiv} Taylor’s essay, “Foucault on Freedom and Truth”, first published in 1984, generated a great deal of controversy in this regard. See Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985.

^{lxxv} For a succinct exposition see the last chapter of Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Harvard UP, 1985.

^{lxxvi} See Bernard Williams, *Morality: An Introduction to Ethics*, Cambridge UP, 1972; *Problems of the Self*, 1973; *Utilitarianism: For and Against* with J.J.C. Smart, Cambridge UP 1973; *Moral Luck*, Cambridge UP, 1981; *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Harvard UP, 1985.

^{lxxvii} See Bernard Williams, *Utilitarianism For and Against*, Cambridge UP 1973.

^{lxxviii} See Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Harvard UP, 1985, p. 194.

^{lxxix} See Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Harvard UP, 1985, p. 181-2.

^{lxxx} See Bernard Williams, *Making Sense of Humanity*, Cambridge UP, 1995, 170-171.

^{lxxxi} See Isaiah Berlin, “The Hedgehog and the Fox” in *Russian Thinkers*, ed. Henry Hardy and Aileen Kelly, Hogarth Press, 1978. This idea is further developed in his book, co-edited with Roger Hausheer, *The Proper Study of Mankind: An Anthology of Essays*, Chatto & Windus, 1997.

^{lxxxii} In an interview where Taylor is asked how he sees himself following this distinction made famous by his teacher Berlin, he answers hedgehog at first but laughingly admits his duplicity. Retrieved from http://www.templeton.org/questions/spiritual_thinking/ on February 8, 2010.

^{lxxxiii} In an interview, looking back over his career, Williams said, “If there’s on theme in all my work it’s about authenticity and self-expression... It’s the idea that some things are in some real sense really you, or express what you and others aren’t... The whole thing has been about spelling out the notion of inner necessity.” See Interview with Bernard Williams by Stuart Jeffries in *The Guardian*, November 30, 2002.

^{lxxxiv} See Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Harvard UP, 1992.

^{lxxxv} See Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Harvard 1985, p. 186, and *Morality: An Introduction to Ethics*, 1972, p. 95.

^{lxxxvi} See Bernard Williams, *Moral Luck*, Cambridge UP, p. x.

^{lxxxvii} In this way, self-interpretations are not merely descriptive. If self-interpretations were simple descriptions it would imply that what is being interpreted is independent of the interpretation given of it. Rather, it is that our self interpretations, because they are constitutive of our emotions and point of view, are inextricably tied to our experience of ourselves.

^{lxxxviii} See Charles Taylor, “The Concept of a Person,” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1 p. 103: “Our formulations about ourselves can be right and wrong in a way that our preferences, say for ice cream, can not.”

^{lxxxix} See Naomi Choi, “Arguing for Strong Evaluation: Must Human Agency Be Moral?” *in draft*.

^{xc} “If the theory is right, we ought to be able to give an account of what tempts naturalists to adopt their thin theory of the self in terms of our richer theory.” See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2: *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, p. 4.

^{xci} Williams identifies the two basic values of truth as accuracy and sincerity, and he tries to mediate between the demand for certain truth and the skeptic’s doubt that no such thing exists. Williams attacks those who deny the value of truth, in

his *Truth And Truthfulness: An Essay In Genealogy*. Although part of his intention was to attack those he felt denied the value of truth, the book cautions that to understand it simply in that sense would be to miss part of its purpose.

^{xcii} See Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, postscript, p. 197.

^{xciii} See Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, p. 170.

^{xciv} See Charles Taylor, *Social Theory As Practice*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983, for Taylor's view of the interdependent relationship between theory and practice.

^{xcv} John Gray claimed that liberal universalism is inconsistent with pluralism. See Gray, *Post-liberalism: Studies in Political Thought*, Routledge, 1993, *Liberalism*, University of Minnesota Press, 1995, and *Two Faces of Liberalism*, Polity, 2000.

^{xcvi} See William Galston, *Liberal Pluralism: the Implications of Value Pluralism for Political Theory and Practice*, Cambridge UP, 2002, and *The Practice of Liberal Pluralism*, Cambridge UP, 2005.

^{xcvii} See Bernard Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness*.

^{xcviii} See Stuart Hampshire, *Thought and Action*, p. 9.

^{xcix} Following G.E.M. Anscombe, Williams argues that the analytic philosophers' narrow focus on such works like "ought," "right," and "good" has come to give them an air of authority which could only be earned against a moral and religious backdrop – roughly, the Christian world-view – that largely does not exist today. He wrote, "the various features of the moral judgement system support each other, and collectively they are modeled on the prerogatives of a Pelagian God." See Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, p. 38. Rather more along Nietzsche's lines, Williams thinks that the idea that morality can and will go on just as before in the absence of religious belief is simply an illusion that reflects a lack of "historical sense." See G.E.M. Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy" in *Philosophy* 1958, p. 30: "It is not possible to have a [coherent conception of ethics] unless you believe in God as a law-giver..."

^c Arto Laitinen's very recent study of Taylor's strong evaluation supports Taylor's value realism but argues that Taylor ought to drop the notion of constitutive moral sources which many commentators have previously interpreted to veil Taylor's requirement of God. See Arto Laitinen, *Strong Evaluation without Moral Sources*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008. The aspects of Taylor's strong evaluation and doctrine of moral sources that are open to being interpreted as requiring theism have generally not been well received. In particular, see Quentin Skinner, "Who Are 'We'?" Ambiguities of the Modern Self," *Inquiry*, 34 (1991), 133-153; and Quentin Skinner, "1994, 'Modernity and Disenchantment: Some Historical Reflections,'" *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism: The Philosophy of Charles Taylor in Question*, ed. J. Tully (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994). See also Melissa Lane, "God or Orienteering: A Critical Study of Taylor's Sources of the Self" *Ratio*, 5 (1996), 46-56. See also J.B. Schneewind, "Review of Sources of the Self," *Journal of Philosophy*, 88:8 (1991), 422-426. Ian Fraser offers the fullest and most detailed critique of Taylor's Catholicism. See Ian Fraser, *Dialectics of the Self: Transcending Charles Taylor*. Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic, 2007.

^{ci} See Charles Taylor, *The Explanation of Behavior*. Prometheus Books, 1964. p. 3: "It is sometimes said that the behavior of human beings and animals shows a purposiveness which is not found elsewhere in nature, or that it has an intrinsic "meaning" which natural processes do not.... Or again, to draw the circle somewhat narrower, it is said of human beings and some animals that they are conscious of and direct their behavior in a way which finds no analogue in inanimate nature... or that, specifically in an account of human affairs, concepts like 'significance' and 'value' play a uniquely important part which is denied them in natural science."

^{cii} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p.3

^{ciii} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 10.

^{civ} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 268-271.

^{cv} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 44.

^{cvi} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 48.

^{cvi} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 46.

^{cviii} "To say that the behavior of a given system should be explained in terms of purpose, then, is, in part, to make an assertion about the form of the laws, or the type of laws which hold of the system." See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 9.

^{cix} "But *qua* teleological these laws will not be of the kind which makes behavior a function of the state of some unobservable entity; rather the behavior is a function of the state of the system and (in the case of animate organisms) its environment; but the relevant feature of system and environment on which behavior depends will be what the condition of both makes necessary if the end concerned is to be realized." See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 9.

^{cx} In teleological explanation, Taylor writes, "the prevalence of order cannot be accounted for on principles which are only contingently or 'accidentally' connected with it, by laws whose operation only contingently results in it, but must be accounted for in terms of the order itself... the events productive of order in animate beings are to be explained not in terms of other unconnected antecedent conditions, but in terms of the very order which they produce." See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 5

- ^{cx} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 15: “For atomism in effect rules out teleological explanation and thus also the possibility of construing purposiveness as a feature of the whole system and its manner of operation.”
- ^{cxii} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 15: “The influence of atomism can also be seen in the common misinterpretation of teleological explanation as explanation in terms of a correlation between intrinsically characterized terms which has the peculiarity that the antecedent comes after the consequent.”
- ^{cxiii} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 17.
- ^{cxiv} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 15: “Whether the stringent atomist requirement can be met by all valid laws, then, is itself an empirical question, which hinges partly on the question whether all teleological explanation – or any other type of explanation which involves holistic assumptions – can be done away with.”
- ^{cxv} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 14.
- ^{cxvi} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 17: “It involves, in part, the thesis that the laws by which we explain the behavior of these organisms are teleological in form, and whether the laws which hold of a system are or are not of this kind is an empirical question.” See also p. 25: “For whether or not an explanation of a teleological sort holds is plainly an empirical matter. And therefore whether the principle of asymmetry is valid and whether the most basic laws are of this sort are also empirical questions.”
- ^{cxvii} He writes that “the best way to settle the question is to test the validity of these approaches against the phenomena.” See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 272.
- ^{cxviii} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 268.
- ^{cxix} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 268-9.
- ^{cxx} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 269.
- ^{cxxi} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 269.
- ^{cxixii} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 17-21
- ^{cxixiii} See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 134.
- ^{cxixiv} See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 134.
- ^{cxixv} Taylor thinks this objection misses the point about the form of the teleological laws for he writes, “A teleological explanation is marked out as such by the form of its laws and not by reliance on some special type of antecedent variable.” See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 98.
- ^{cxixvi} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 272.
- ^{cxixvii} See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 272.
- ^{cxixviii} See *Explanation of Behavior* p. 271-2.
- ^{cxixix} See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 130.
- ^{cxixxx} “When we reflect on our language, we do so with the intellectual tools of an advanced civilization, and we cannot help but pose ourselves ontological problems, but we can live unreflectingly in the “world” of the primitive.” See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 138.
- ^{cxixxxi} See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 128.
- ^{cxixxxii} See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 137.
- ^{cxixxxiii} See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 139.
- ^{cxixxxiv} “The nonsense in question is only nonsense from the standpoint of ordinary language or the languages of science. It is itself part of a language stratum of its own, which we can learn, as we have the others, and it may enable us to see and understand things about human beings that we wouldn’t otherwise. But when we stand back for a moment, we can see the contingency of this language. There may be others which will teach us more. Our metaphysical craving for the *real* language remains unsatiated.” See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 141.
- ^{cxixxxv} “This after all was the procedure of the Logical Positivists, although they were never quite sure whether to anchor their artillery in the solid cement of physical theory, or to immure themselves behind a wall of sense-data. The latter proved to be a smoke screen rather than a fortified position, but those entrenched in the former positions had no difficulty in reducing to ashes all statements outside of their charmed circle. Similarly, if one takes one’s stand in ordinary language, that of physical theory cannot be given an interpretation, and nor can, e.g. the statements of Freud. But there is no justification for this civil war.” See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 136.
- ^{cxixxxvi} “Thus, some of the problems of the philosophy of science, as well as some of those of the philosophy of mind arise from a failure to recognize ontological “gaps”. In trying to treat the laws of science like ordinary language statements, we fell into a metaphysical trap laid for us by the notion of “cause”. Periodic purges are carried out to eradicate this and related notions, and they are characterized with such pejoratives as “occult forces”, “otiose hypotheses”, and “metaphysical entities”, but the way is paved for their return as long as no distinction is made between the two languages, and return they did.” See “Ontology” in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141, at p. 135.

- cxvii See “Mind-Body Identity, A Side Issue?” in *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (April 1967), p. 201-213, at p. 208.
- cxviii See “Mind-Body Identity, A Side Issue?” in *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (April 1967), p. 201-213, at p. 206-7.
- cxix See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 270-271.
- cxli See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 2.
- cxlii See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 2.
- cxliii See “Explaining Action” in *Inquiry*, Vol. 13 (Summer 1970) p. 54-89, at p. 86.
- cxliiii See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 82.
- cxliv See “Explaining Action” in *Inquiry*, Vol. 13 (Summer 1970) p. 54-89, at p. 55.
- cxlv See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 6.
- cxlvi See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*.
- cxlvii See Interpretation and the Sciences of Man in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 17: “The issue here is at root an epistemological one. But it is inextricable from an ontological one, and, hence, cannot but be relevant to our notions of science and of the proper conduct of enquiry.”
- cxlviii See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,” p. 20-1.
- cxlix Taylor points to two general directions, the rationalist and the empiricist, in which attempts have been made to break out of the hermeneutic circle, but focuses more heavily on the latter empiricist direction. The rationalist or idealist version “aspires to attainment of an understanding of such clarity that it would carry with it the certainty of the undeniable.” This approach aimed to ground an interpretation in the necessity of an inner movement of thought. By grasping the inner necessity of thought we have reason to believe that our thinking corresponds to absolute truth. See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,” p. 18.
- cl “To reconstruct knowledge in such a way that there is a need to make final appeal to readings or judgments which cannot be checked further.” See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,” p. 18.
- cli See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,” p. 17, 24.
- clii See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,” p. 21.
- cliii See “Understanding in Human Science” *Review of Metaphysics* 34:1, 1980.
- cliv See “Understanding in Human Science” in *Review of Metaphysics*, 34:1, 1980, p. 25.
- clv See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 26.
- clvi See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 25.
- clvii See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 31.
- clviii See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 32.
- clix See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 32.
- clx See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 31.
- clxi See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 32: “It is clear that *this* alleged point of difference is not rendered irrelevant by a proof that the deductive-nomological model is bankrupt, or that we can’t sharply distinguish between observation and theory, or that some (other kind of) understanding is essential to natural science.”
- clxii See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 31-2.
- clxiii See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 32.
- clxiv See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 31.
- clxv See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 38.
- clxvi See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 33.
- clxvii See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 33.
- clxviii See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 34.
- clxix See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 36.
- clxx See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 34.
- clxxi See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 35.
- clxxii See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 36
- clxxiii See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 36.
- clxxiv See “Understanding in Human Science,” p. 36.
- clxxv It needs to be pointed out that my artificial separation of Taylor’s philosophical anthropology into this chapter on the philosophy of human sciences, and chapter 4 on selfhood and moral philosophy may now appear rather unwarranted. Taylor’s arguments about the influences of an empiricist outlook simultaneously pervade all of his reflections in more and less discernible ways – they drive his arguments about the character and aims of human scientific knowledge and ground his views on the scope and character of morality’s domain, and they cannot help but bear on his

thinking about political advocacy either, the subject of chapter 4. However, my project's overall purpose to get at how these are intrinsically related for Taylor seems best pursued by this organizational manner wherein I divide the emphasis I give to one over another aspect of his thought.

clxxvi See "The Concept of a Person" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol.1 ch. 4, p. 98

clxxvii See Taylor's "The Dialogical Self", in *The Interpretive Turn*, p. 307.

clxxviii See "The Concept of a Person" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, ch. 4, p. 104.

clxxix See "Self-Interpreting Animals" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, ch.2, p. 47.

clxxx See "The Concept of a Person" *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1 ch.4. p. 97.

clxxxi See "Self-interpreting Animals" *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, ch. 2, p. 47

clxxxii See "What is Human Agency" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, ch. 1.

clxxxiii See "What is Human Agency?" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, Ch. 1, p. 16.

clxxxiv See "Self interpreting animals *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, ch. 2, p. 47.

clxxxv See "Self interpreting animals *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, ch. 2, p. 48.

clxxxvi See "Self interpreting animals *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, ch. 2, p. 50.

clxxxvii See "Self Interpreting Animals" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 64

clxxxviii See "The Concept of A Person" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 107.

clxxxix See "What is Human Agency?" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 38.

cx In this way, self-interpretations are not merely descriptive. If self-interpretations were simple descriptions it would imply that what is being interpreted is independent of the interpretation given of it. Rather, it is that our self interpretations, because they are constitutive of our emotions and point of view, are inextricably tied to our experience of ourselves.

cxci See "The Concept of a Person" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 103: "Our formulations about ourselves can be right and wrong in a way that our preferences, say for ice cream, can not.

cxcii See "Self-Interpreting Animals" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 75.

cxciii See "What is Human Agency?" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 21.

cxniv See "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 22.

cxcv See "Self-interpretation Animals" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol., 1, p. 53: "the import-term "shameful" has no sense outside of a world in which there is a subject for whom things have certain (emotional) meanings, a subject who experiences it as an import."

cxcvi See "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 22.

cxcvii See "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 22.

cxcviii Taylor uses these terms (not to mention 'personhood', 'selfhood', and 'identity', as well as 'subject' and 'human agency') somewhat interchangeably across his writings, much to the chagrin of some readers. Several scholars have criticized Taylor for what they argue is his idiosyncratic use of concepts, complaining that without precise and consistent terminology it is not always clear what he means, whom he disagrees with, or why. In Taylor's defense it can be said that his foremost concern is with theorizing what it means to be human, to specify all of those things that inform identity, that make someone a person. Second to this is an aim, characteristic of most contemporary philosophy, to differentiate terms one from another and accord to them precise meanings. Thus in following Taylor's own lead on this issue, I seek not to mirror a general lack of concern for terminological exactitude, but rather what I take to be Taylor's belief that these terms all relate irreducibly to what it is to be human. Taylor makes explicit his interest to address the broader question of what personhood is, a concern which he sees as suffusing a wide range of issues, those that used to be raised under the rubric of "human nature" and what now fall under investigations of "philosophical anthropology."

cxcxix See "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 27.

cc "An emotion term like 'shame' for instance, essentially refers us to a certain kind of situation, the 'shameful', or 'humiliating', and a certain mode of response, that of hiding oneself, of covering up, or else 'wiping out' the blot. That is, it is essential to this feeling's being identified as shame that it be related to this situation and give rise to this type of disposition. But this situation in its turn can only be identified in relation to the feelings which it provokes; and the disposition is to a goal which can similarly not be understood without reference to the feelings experienced. An emotion term like 'shame' can only be explained by reference to other concepts which in turn cannot be understood without reference to shame. To understand these concepts we have to be in on a certain experience, we have to understand a certain language, not just of words, but also a certain language of mutual action and communication, by which we blame, exhort, admire, esteem each other." See "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 23-4.

cci See "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 25: "The range of human desires, feelings, emotions, and hence meanings is bound up with the level and type of culture, which in turn is inseparable from the distinctions and categories marked by the language people speak. The field of meanings in which a given situation

can find its place is bound up with the semantic field of the terms characterizing these meanings and the related feelings, desires, predicaments.”

ccii See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 26.

cciii See “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 9.

cciv See “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 10.

ccv See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 27

ccvi Taylor sees this same epistemological strain carried more rigorously in the contemporary period in “computer-influenced theories of intelligence” that attempt to model and reproduce behavior, “consisting of operations on machine-recognizable input which could themselves be matched by programs which could be run on machines.” See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 20.

ccvii See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 31.

ccviii “The situation we have here is one in which the vocabulary of a given social dimension is grounded in the shape of social practice in this dimension; that is, the vocabulary would not make sense, could not be applied sensibly, where this range of practices did not prevail. And yet this range of practices could not exist without the prevalence of this or some related vocabulary. There is no simple one-way dependence here. We can speak of mutual dependence if we like, but really what this points up is the artificiality of the distinction between social reality and the language of description of that social reality. The language is constitutive of the reality, is essential to its being the kind of reality it is. To separate the two and distinguish them as we quite rightly distinguish the heavens from our theories about them is forever to miss the point.” See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 34.

ccix “The meanings and norms implicit in these practices are not just in the minds of the actors but are out there in the practices themselves, practices which cannot be conceived as a set of individual actions, but which are essentially modes of social relation, of mutual action.” See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 36.

ccx “What the ontology of mainstream social science lacks is the notion of meaning as not simply for an individual subject; of a subject who can be a ‘we’ as well as an ‘I.’” See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 40.

ccxi See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 52.

ccxii “Thus, human behavior seen as action of agents who desire and are moved, who have goals and aspirations, necessarily offers a purchase for descriptions in terms of meaning – what I have called ‘experiential meaning’. The norm of explanation which it posits is one which ‘makes sense’ of the behavior, which shows a coherence of meaning. This ‘making sense of’ is the positing of an interpretation; and we have seen that what is interpreted meets the conditions of a science of interpretation: first, that we can speak of its sense or coherence; and second, that this sense can be expressed in another form, so that we can speak of the interpretation as giving clearer expression to what is only implicit in the explicandum. The third condition, that this sense be for a subject, is obviously met in this case, although who this subject is is by no means an unproblematical question, as we shall see later on. ...” See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2 p. 27.

ccxiii See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 53.

ccxiv See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 17

ccxv See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 24.

ccxvi See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 53.

ccxvii See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 53.

ccxviii See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 53.

ccxix See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 17.

ccxix See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 17.

ccxx See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 53.

ccxxi See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 54.

ccxxii Also see “Social Theory as Practice” and “Understanding and Ethnocentricity,” both in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, for Taylor’s view of the interdependent relationship between theory and practice.

ccxxiii See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 56.

ccxxiv “Thus if we look at human behavior as action done out of a background of desire, feeling, emotion, then we are looking at a reality which must be characterized in terms of meaning.” See “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 24.

ccxxv See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 4.

ccxxvi See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 4.

ccxxvii See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 4.

ccxxviii See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 5.

- ccxxix “If the theory is right, we ought to be able to give an account of what tempts naturalists to adopt their thin theory of the self in terms of our richer theory.” See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 4.
- ccxxx “To be able to make this hermeneutical account plausible would thus be to make the final refutation of naturalism, to show that its opponents understand it better than it does itself, that indeed the phenomenon of people believing in naturalism was only adequately explicable in terms of a rival, incompatible theory.” See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 6.
- ccxxxi See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 5-6.
- ccxxxii See Geertz’s piece in *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism: The Philosophy of Charles Taylor in Question*, ed. James Tully and David Weinstock, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1994.
- ccxxxiii See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 5.
- ccxxxiv See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 6.
- ccxxxv See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 7.
- ccxxxvi See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 12.
- ccxxxvii See his Preface to *Philosophical Arguments*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997 p. vii.
- ccxxxviii See *Explanation of Behavior*, p. 25.
- ccxxxix See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 7.
- ccxl See his “Introduction” to *Philosophical Papers*, p. 8.
- ccxli See Taylor’s “Reply and Rearticulation” in J. Tully ed. *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism: The Philosophy of Charles Taylor in Question*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1994, p. 234.
- ccxlii Until fairly recently, Hegel was a rather shadowy figure in the Anglo-American philosophical canon. Arguably, it was Taylor’s pioneering work on Hegel that ignited the renewed interest in debates in contemporary Anglo-American philosophy, particularly among John McDowell, Robert Brandom, and others about the limitations of naturalism in philosophy and the need to find a way of harmonizing nature with freedom or reason.
- ccxliii See Taylor’s “Reply and Rearticulation” in J. Tully ed. *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism*, p. 234.
- ccxliv See Taylor’s “Genesis” review of *The Structure of Behaviour* by Merleau-Ponty, *New Statesman*, 70 (3 September 1965), p. 327.
- ccxlv Taylor sees Herder as the founder of modern nationalism in that he saw the community to have its own expressive unity, the “Volk” as a bearer of certain culture that sustains its members. But Herder’s expressive individualist view that each member also each has its own peculiarity, which can’t be suppressed or aped by others, or substituted for or directed by another, makes him also one of the main bulwarks against the excesses of nationalism.
- ccxlvii Taylor also draws heavily on Herder’s expressive theory of language, which was an essential part of his expressive theory of man, in formulating his own arguments about the relationship between language and human agency. For Herder, and Taylor also, words have meaning not simply because they come to be used to refer to certain things in the world or in the mind, but more fundamentally, because they express or embody a certain kind of consciousness of ourselves and things, peculiar to man as language user. Language is seen not just as a set of signs, but as the medium of expression of a certain way of seeing and experiencing, as continuous with art. According to this anti-dualist view of thinking beings thought is inseparable from its medium. So not only is thought a condition for the medium but it is in fact partly shaped by its medium. There can be no thought without language, art, gesture, or some external medium, which also means that the languages of different people reflect their different visions of things.
- ccxlvii Schlegel united beauty and harmony in poetry with philosophical statement of freedom and sublimity of self by uniting Goethe and Fichte. Schelling and Schleiermacher united Kant and Spinoza. Schiller, Schlegel, the young Hegel, and Holderlin also stated the problem in terms of history, where the ancient Greeks were seen by many Germans of late 18th C as the paradigm of expressivist perfection, but which unity between nature and highest human expressive form had to die because man had to be inwardly divided in order to grow. This sacrifice was necessary to develop man to his fullest self-consciousness and free self-determination. Modern man had to be at war with himself and there was no hope of a return to primal unity.
- ccxlviii See Taylor, Charles. *Hegel and Modern Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979. p. 14.
- ccxlix Taylor’s paper on “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in which he introduces his concept of the shared basis of identity is first published in 1971 in the *Review of Metaphysics*, 25 (1971), pp. 3-51. Taylor’s essay “What is Human Agency?” in which he develops the essentially linguistic/communal nature of his concept of strong evaluation is first published in 1977 in *The Self: Psychological and Philosophical Issues*, ed. Theodore Mischel, Oxford: Blackwell, 1977, pp. 103-135.
- cccl See Taylor, Charles. *Hegel and Modern Society*, chapter 2, esp. section 3.
- cccli Alienation arises when the goals, norms or ends which define the common practices or institutions begin to seem irrelevant or even monstrous, or when the norms are redefined so that the practices appear a travesty of them. Norms

expressed in public practices cease to hold the people's allegiance and they are seen, rather, as irrelevant or are decried as usurpation. When this alienation occurs, men have to turn elsewhere to define what is centrally important to them. As Hegel saw it, sometimes they strike out on their own and define their identity as individuals. Individualism comes when men cease to identify with the community's life, and see themselves most importantly as individuals with individual goals. This is the moment of dissolution of a Volk and its life, and the paradigm even of this kind for Hegel was the breakup of the Greek city-state.

^{ccliii} Taylor writes, "The conditions of its existence are in conflict with the demands of its perfection." In order for a conscious rational being to exist at all is to seek its perfection, but to be at all as a conscious being, the subject must be embodied in life where the natural bent of life is a limit and runs counter to the demands of its perfection. See *Hegel and Modern Society*, p. 22.

^{ccliiii} Hegel works out the general structure of the universe in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977. But suffice it to say that the general structure of the universe is determined by virtue of its being the embodiment of Geist, from the lowest inanimate forms to living species, and ultimately to man.

^{ccliv} Taylor goes through Hegel's two arguments for the existence of finite spirits. The first is that if Geist as subject is to come to rational self-awareness in freedom, the universe must contain finite spirit because for consciousness to be, it must be located somewhere sometime, which means it is not somewhere else sometime else. So if Geist must be embodied, there must be limits between what is and what is not itself, and so there must be finite spirits. The second takes up both Kant and Fichte's view of the requirement of consciousness for why finite limited subjects are necessary if cosmic spirit is to attain full awareness. Hegel takes up both Kant's idea of the distinction between subjective and objective within experience distinct from things in themselves and Fichte's notion of the ego positing the non-ego as a condition of consciousness in his espousal of the view that rational awareness requires separation, that consciousness is only possible when a subject is set over against an object. And this can only be through vehicles, which are finite spirits. Geist can exist only by overcoming its opposite – only by negating its own negation – in struggle with himself, with his necessary embodiment and coming to realization out of this struggle.

^{cclv} Everything is therefore mediate. Contradiction is the source of all life and movement for Hegel because whatever is in contradiction must pass over into something else, whether it is ontological passage between levels of being, which go on existing coevally, or a historical one between different stages of human civilization. Contradiction is a universally applicable category, which is as essential to reality as identity, because there is an inner contradiction to everything.

^{cclvi} The fact that things are arranged as if by design can only show a high probability, not necessity, that a designer exists and has designed.

^{cclvii} See Charles Taylor's "The Opening Arguments of *The Phenomenology*" in *Hegel*, ed. Alasdair MacIntyre, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976.

^{cclviii} See *Hegel and Modern Society*.

^{cclix} Hegel's assessment of Kant's conception of reason and the politics of 'absolute freedom' it generated was no mere abstract philosophical critique. His charge of vacuity was central to the whole revolutionary age. The curse of vacuity, Hegel argued, is in the aim to found society on no particular interest or traditional positive principle, but on freedom alone, which in application can only amount to the fury of destruction. Hegel saw the destruction wrought by the French Revolution as following logically from both Rousseau and Kant. The principle of absolute freedom and radical autonomy, in being empty, gives no basis for a new articulated structure of society. It only enjoins destruction of the existing articulations and any new ones that threaten to arise. Hegel describes the Jacobin period of Revolutionary terror as the zealous pursuit of the notion of absolute freedom and a yearning for radical autonomy, for a society beyond the struggle and compromise of particular wills. See Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, G. Lasson edition, Hamburg, 1952.

^{cclx} See Taylor's discussion in *Hegel and Modern Society*, p. chapter 2, section 4.

^{cclxi} See Hegel's dialectical derivation of the estates of modern society from the Concept in his *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.

^{cclxii} Taylor gleans this from Hegel's passages where the principles that "reason rules the world" and that the final purpose of the world is the actualization of freedom have to be presupposed in the study of history, but as having been "proved in philosophy". Hegel refers to the Logic where the theses that are proved concern the Idea, which are the presuppositions that enable the Philosophy of History to begin. Taylor contrasts this with Hegel's statement following it that it is not simply a presupposition of study, but that history itself must be taken as it is, we have to proceed historically, empirically. See *Hegel and Modern Society*, p. 64–6.

^{cclxiii} According to Taylor, the influence of Romantic ideas has largely been on the definition of individual fulfillment. Modern society is Romanticist in its private and imaginative life while its public effective life has become ever more utilitarian, instrumentalist, with the growing rationalization and bureaucratization of collective structures. He writes that the bent of modern society has been to treat efficient utilitarian structures as a neutral, objectified domain, to be

reorganized for maximum effect, even if it is periodically checked or overridden by powerful collective emotions, principally nationalism, but protests from both the Right and the Left which each have its roots in the romantic period. The Romantic origins of Fascism, and Marxism, too, incorporates through its Hegelian parentage, the twin aspirations to radical autonomy and expressive unity claimed on behalf of the 'generic being' species man. "New Left" and "gauchiste" contestations marking the end of the '60s in this sense was another attempt to break through the limits of a technological, bureaucratic, capitalist civilization through a synthesis of radical freedom and integral expression. This, according to Taylor, is the continuing tension in our civilization, and the writings, music, art of Romantic period still have a powerful appeal to us.

^{cclxiv} Tocqueville saw the immense importance to a democratic polity of vigorous constituent communities in a decentralized structure of power while at the same time the pull of equality tended to take modern society towards uniformity and perhaps also submission under an omnipotent government. This is the same problem that theories of liberal democracy and modern constitutionalism try to cope with.

^{cclxv} According to Hegel, if the process of increasingly ramified production is left to itself, the proletariat will be impoverished, materially by low wages and uncertainty of employment, and spiritually by the narrowness and monotony of its work. "It hence becomes apparent that despite an excess of wealth civil society is not rich enough; i.e. its own resources are insufficient to check excessive poverty and the creation of a penurious rabble." See his *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991, section 245.

^{cclxvi} See Taylor, *Hegel and Modern Society*, chapter 2, section 6.

^{cclxvii} Hegel's analysis of the French revolution sees it as the final culmination of the enlightenment, the climax of its inner contradiction. The enlightenment, for him, is the apex of the movement of spiritualization of man in modern times. It disengaged itself from all the 'positive' acceptance of any existing institution and the irrational authority of the past. But it cannot see that man is the vehicle of a greater subject than merely rational will. And since it defines man alone as the course of rational will but can find no content for this will, it can only destroy, even itself and its own children.

^{cclxviii} Taylor argues that what does step into the gap almost everywhere is ethnic or national identity and the demand for radical freedom can and frequently does join up with nationalism, the most powerful focus of identity in modern society. Hegel gave little importance to nationalism and he failed to foresee its pivotal role in the modern world.

^{cclxix} Of course, the two levels of Hegel's thought on the necessary differentiation of society are meshed with each other. On one level is the set of considerations drawn from a comparison with the Greek polis: the size of the modern state, the great differences which a state must encompass, given the modern notion of individuality, once all the functions are to be performed by citizens. On the other level, there is the necessary articulation of the Idea that should be reflected in society. For Hegel, these do not operate as discretely separate orders of consideration. Hegel saw the existing social differentiations of his time as reflecting the articulations of the Idea, or rather as preparing a perfectly adequate reflection as the Idea realizes itself in history. He did not see these differences as remnants of earlier history destined to wither away, as the radical thinkers of his time thought, but rather as approaching the lineaments of a state that would finally be 'adequate to the Concept'.

^{cclxx} Hegel began the main drama of history by the breakdown of the perfect unity of Sittlichkeit in the Greek world, the birth of the individual with universal consciousness, and followed the slow development through the succeeding centuries both of the individual (his *Bildung*) and of the institutions embodying Sittlichkeit, so that the two eventually comeingle in the rational state. Hegel's notion of Sittlichkeit is a rendering of that expressive unity which his whole generation saw in the Greek polis where it was believed men had seen the collective life of their city as the essence and meaning of their own lives, and sought their glory in its public life, their rewards in power and reputation within it, and immortality in its memory. Traditional society was based on differentiation which served to ground men's identification with the society in which they lived. The status quo was maintained and justified as a reflection of a hierarchical order of things, but after the revolution of modern, self-defining subjectivity such conceptions came to be seen as fiction and were denounced. The revolution of modern subjectivity gave rise to another type of political theory where society was justified not by what it was or expressed but by what it achieved, the fulfillment of men's needs, desires and purposes, for example with utilitarianism where society's different modes and structures could be studied scientifically for their effects on human happiness.

^{cclxxi} It is not surprising that the theorists of absolute freedom have often been close to the reactionary critics of liberal society, and have often themselves expressed admiration for earlier societies. The aspiration to absolute freedom has been born of deep dissatisfaction with the utilitarian model of society as an instrument for the furtherance of interests, where such societies are experienced as a spiritual desert or machine, and their regulations and discipline as an intolerable imposition. Hegel understood this aspiration and made the demand for radical autonomy a central part of his theory by synthesizing the demand for radical autonomy of Rousseau and Kant together with the expressivist theory of Herder, all the while remaining a strong critic of radical freedom.

- cclxxiii Theories of participatory democracy where the recurrent demand has been to reconstruct society, so as to do away with heteronomy, or overcome alienation, or recover spontaneity.
- cclxxiiii See Taylor's "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man" 1971.
- cclxxiv See Taylor's "Neutrality in Political Science," in *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, 3rd Series, eds. Peter Laslett and W. G. Runciman, Oxford: Blackwell, 1967 pp. 25-57.
- cclxxv As radical as Kant's new conception of morality was, its political theory was still disappointingly familiar, as Taylor sees it, demanding only that the negative freedom of all individuals be made compatible.
- cclxxvi See Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1989.
- cclxxvii See *Sources of the Self*, preface, p. ix.
- cclxxviii See Charles Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth" in *Political Theory* 12:2, p. 152-183.
- cclxxix See Charles Taylor, "The Concept of a Person" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 97.
- cclxxx See "The Concept of a Person" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 97.
- cclxxxi See "The Concept of a Person" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 97.
- cclxxxii See *Sources of the Self*, p. 3, "To give a good first approximation of what this ['modern identity'] means would be to say that it involves tracing various strands of our modern notion of what it is to be a human agent, a person, or a self. But pursuing this investigation soon shows that you can't get very clear about this without some further understanding of how our pictures of the good have evolved. Selfhood and the good, or in another way selfhood and morality, turn out to be inextricably intertwined themes."
- cclxxxiii See Charles Taylor, "What is Human Agency" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1.
- cclxxxiv See *Sources of the Self*, p. 4, "What they [questions about what makes life worth living] have in common with moral issues, and what deserves the ague term 'spiritual', is that they involve what I have called elsewhere 'strong evaluation', that is they involve discriminations of right or wrong, better or worse higher or lower, which are not rendered valid by our own desires, inclinations, or choices, but rather stand independent of these and offer standards by which they can be judged."
- cclxxxv See "The Concept of a Person" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 114.
- cclxxxvi See "The Concept of a Person" in *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 114.
- cclxxxvii See *Sources of the Self*, p. 3.
- cclxxxviii See *Sources of the Self*, p. 79.
- cclxxxix See *Sources of the Self*, p. 47.
- ccxc See *Sources of the Self*, p. 3.
- ccxci See *Sources of the Self*, p. 41.
- ccxcii See *Sources of the Self*, p. 77.
- ccxciii See J.L. Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. London: Penguin, 1977. See also his *The Miracle of Theism*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1982.
- ccxciv See *Sources of the Self*, p. 63.
- ccxcv See *Sources of the Self*, p. 86, and p. 89: "Impelled by the strongest metaphysical, epistemological, and moral ideas of the modern age, these theories narrow on focus to these determinants of actions..."
- ccxcvi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 64.
- ccxcvii See *Sources of the Self*, p. 32.
- ccxcviii See *Sources of the Self*, p. 54.
- ccxcix See *Sources of the Self*, p. 59.
- ccc See *Sources of the Self*, p. 101.
- ccci See Charles Taylor "Moral Topography of the Self" *Hermeneutics and Psychological Theory*, eds. Stanley Messer, Louis Sass and Robert Woolfolk. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1988, pp. 298-320, at p. 298.
- cccii See "Moral Topography of the Self," p. 298
- ccciii Compare his statements in "Moral Topography of the Self" with the first part of *Sources of the Self*. Taylor even acknowledges in "Moral Topography of the Self," on p. 299, how "doing justice to these different considerations, both the constants and the historically specific interpretations, puts a number of different, and sometimes conflicting, demands on the following discussion, which I hope I can meet without hopelessly confusing you and myself." Still, there should be no doubt as to the essentialist tenor of his claim.
- ccciv See *Sources of the Self*, p. 30.
- cccv See "Moral Topography of the Self," p. 300.
- cccvii See "Moral Topography of the Self," p. 300.
- cccvi See "Moral Topography of the Self," p. 302.
- cccviii See "Moral Topography of the Self," p. 302.

- cccix See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 298-303.
- cccix See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 299.
- cccxi See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 299.
- cccxi See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 299.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 113.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 5.
- cccxi See “Moral Topography and the Self,” p. 299.
- cccxi See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 299.
- cccxi See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 304.
- cccxi See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 304.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 135.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 143.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 149.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 156.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 159.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 161.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 163.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 171-2.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 174.
- cccxi See “Moral Topography and the Self,” p. 311.
- cccxi See “Moral Topography and the Self,” p. 312-3.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 163.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 57.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 60.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 59.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 60.
- cccxi Taylor has long been involved in controversy with Richard Rorty over this line of reasoning. See Rorty’s *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979. See also their exchange in James Tully’s *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism*.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 72.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 73.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 48.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, chapter 12, “A Digression on Historical Explanation” at p. 202.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 203.
- cccxi “See What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, at p. 23.
- cccxi See *Sources of the Self*, p. 99, cf.100. “The point of view from which we might constate that all orders are equally arbitrary, in particular that all moral views are equally so, is just not available to us humans. It is a form of self-delusion to think that we do not speak from a moral orientation which we take to be right. That is a condition of being a functioning self, not a metaphysical view we can put on or off.”
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 21.
- cccxi See “Self Interpreting Animals” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 64.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 27.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 36.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 25-6.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p.39.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p.41.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 29.
- cccxi In one of his earlier characterizations of his philosophy he states that it strove “to purge our key normative notions – freedom, justice, rights – of their atomist distortions.” See Taylor’s introduction to *Philosophical Papers*, at p.9.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, at p. 17, 21, 23. Also see Taylor’s *Sources of the Self*, p. 22-23, 383.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 21.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 29-33.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 29-35.
- cccxi See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 32.

ccclvii See *Sources of the Self*, p. 104-5.

ccclviii See “What is Human Agency?” in *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, p. 33.

ccclix For Taylor, moral sources, the spatial imagery of the self is rooted in our language. He writes that “various, even indefinite and tentative, senses of “what integration consists of incorporate notions of where it might be found, in the sense of where the strength lies, where the sources or resources are situated, which could bring integration, or fullness about. The sources may be found ‘without,’ in a wide variety of different senses; or ‘within,’ in a number of different ways. They may be related to us as something that we “see” (like the Ideas), or as something we “hear” (the “voice of nature”), or as something that comes upon us (the Holy Ghost). But always a certain topography, related to that of the self, plays a crucial part... Topography is essential to our language of the self, so that transcendence of the self is most naturally described in a language that negates topography.” See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 301.

ccclx See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 303.

ccclxi See “Moral Topography of the Self,” p. 303.

ccclxii Taylor actually thinks that an explicit concern with selfhood is relatively new. He thinks that in some ways the “self” is a modern phenomenon, in that “only in modern western culture have we begun to speak of the human person as “the self” and of people as having and being selves.” See Taylor’s “The Dialogical Self, p. 304. Taylor is not saying that earlier ages had no sense of reflexivity, but that what is special about the way “the “self” is conceived in modern times is in the turn to radical reflexivity, which goes beyond a focusing on oneself, to focusing on one’s own subjective experience, that is to say, examining not only what experiences or thoughts one has but examining and scrutinizing one’s own having of such thoughts and experiences. Also see “Moral Topography of the Self” 1988, p. 316 where he writes, “The search for identity can be seen as the search for what I essentially am, which can no longer be sufficiently defined in terms of some universal description of human agency as such, as soul or reason, or will. There still remains a question about me, and that is why I think of myself as a self. This word now circumscribes an area of questioning. It designates the kind of being of which this question of identity can be asked. But it is clear that this shift, whereby the question first arises in our culture, is one that involves moral topography. No one ever doubted that there were individual differences, that one person differed from another. What is new in the modern era is that these have a specific kind of moral relevance.”

ccclxiii See Taylor’s “The Dialogical Self” in *The Interpretive Turn*, p. 306.

ccclxiv The distinction between things that change and things that stay the same in his depiction of identity and moral life corresponds loosely with the structure of *Sources of the Self*. In Part I of that work he identifies what he takes to be the permanent structures of moral life, while from Parts II to V he charts the changing notions of the self from Plato to postmodernism.

ccclxv Ruth Abbey highlights this dual aspect of Taylor’s treatment of the self and the potential tension that commentators have found with it in her *Charles Taylor*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000, ch. 2.

ccclxvi Taylor gives no support to the radical historicist charge that moral goods require the existence of particular humans within certain cultural forms, and that therefore all goods are radically incommensurable. On Taylor’s view, commensurability is not a question of whether but to what extent.

ccclxvii See *Sources of the Self*, p. 101

ccclxviii See *Sources of the Self*, p. 107

ccclxix See “What is Human Agency?” p. 26.

Selected References

Books

- Ruth Abbey, *Charles Taylor*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000
- J.L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1962
- *Sense and Sensibilia*, Oxford, 1964
- A.J. Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic*. London, 1936
- *Part of My Life: The Memoirs of a Philosopher*, London: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1977
- Isaiah Berlin, *Karl Marx: His Life and Environment*. Thornton Butterworth, First edition, 1939
- *Four Essays on Liberty*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1969
 - *Concepts and Categories: Philosophical Essays*, ed. Henry Hardy, with an introduction by Bernard Williams. Princeton UP, 1978
 - *Russian Thinkers*, ed. Henry Hardy and Aileen Kelly, Hogarth Press, 1978
 - *Personal Impressions*, ed. H. Hardy, Oxford: 1982
 - *The Proper Study of Mankind: An Anthology of Essays*, ed. Henry Hardy and Roger Hausheer, London: Chatto & Windus, 1997, re-issued by Macmillan, 2000
 - *Liberty*, ed. Henry Hardy, Oxford UP, 2002
- Richard Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*. New York, 1976
- Mark Bevir, *The Logic of the History of Ideas*. Cambridge, 1999
- Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984
- *Essays on Actions and Events*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980
- Ian Fraser, *Dialectics of the Self: Transcending Charles Taylor*. Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic, 2007
- William Galston, *Liberal Pluralism: the Implications of Value Pluralism for Political Theory and Practice*. Cambridge UP, 2002
- *The Practice of Liberal Pluralism*. Cambridge UP, 2005
- John Gray, *Post-liberalism: Studies in Political Thought*. Routledge, 1993
- *Liberalism*. University of Minnesota Press, 1995
 - *Two Faces of Liberalism*. Polity, 2000
- John Gunnell, *The Descent of Political Theory: The Genealogy of an American Vocation*. Chicago, 1993
- *Between Philosophy and Politics: The Alienation of Political Theory*. Amherst, 1986
- Jurgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, trans. J. J. Shapiro. Boston: Beacon, 1971

- P. M. S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein's Place in Twentieth Century Philosophy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996
- Stuart Hampshire, *Public and Private Morality*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978
- Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phanomenologie de Geistes*, G. Lasson edition, Hamburg, 1952
- *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977
 - *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991
- Peter Hylton, *Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*. Oxford, 1990
- Mark Jenkins, *Bernard Williams*. Acumen Publishing Ltd, 2006
- Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. Chicago, 1970
- Arto Laitinen, *Strong Evaluation without Moral Sources*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008
- Imre Lakatos, *Proofs and Refutations*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976
- Daniel Little, *Varieties of Social Explanation*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1991
- Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition*. Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991
- J.L. Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. London: Penguin, 1977
- *The Miracle of Theism*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1982
- Mark Redhead, *Charles Taylor: Thinking and Living Deep Diversity*. Lanham, 2002
- Nicholas Smith, *Charles Taylor: Meaning, Morals and Modernity*. Cambridge, 2002
- Keith Spence, *Modernity, Freedom, and Community: Charles Taylor and Political Philosophy*. University of Wales Press: 2007
- C.L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1944
- Tracy Strong, *The Idea of Political Theory: Reflections on the Self in Political Time and Space*. Notre Dame, 1990
- Avrum Stroll, *Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy*. New York, Columbia UP, 2001
- Charles Taylor, *The Explanation of Behavior*. Prometheus Books, 1964
- *Hegel*. Cambridge UP, 1975
 - *Hegel and Modern Society*. Cambridge UP, 1979
 - *Philosophical Papers* Vol. 1, *Human Agency and Language*. Cambridge UP, 1985
 - *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*. Cambridge UP, 1985
 - *Social Theory As Practice*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983
 - *Philosophical Arguments*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997
 - *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1989
 - *The Ethics of Authenticity*. Harvard UP, 1992

- *The Pattern of Politics*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970
- *Reconciling the Solitudes: Essays in Canadian Federalism and Nationalism*, ed. Guy Laforest. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1993
- *Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2002
- *Modern Social Imaginaries*. Duke UP, 2004
- *A Secular Age*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2007

Roger Trigg, *Understanding Social Science*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985

T.D. Weldon, *The Vocabulary of Politics*. New York: Penguin Books, 1953

Bernard Williams, *Morality: An Introduction to Ethics*. Cambridge UP, 1972

- *Problems of the Self*, Cambridge UP, 1973
- *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline*, ed. A.W. Moore, Princeton UP, 2008
- *Truth and Truthfulness: An Essay on Genealogy*, Princeton UP, 2002
- *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Harvard UP, 1985
- *Moral Luck*, Cambridge UP, 1981
- *Making Sense of Humanity*, Cambridge UP, 1995

Edited Volumes

A House Divided: Comparing Analytic and Continental Philosophy, ed. C.G. Prado. Amherst: Humanity Books, 2003

Bernard Williams, ed. Alan Thomas. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007

Bertrand Russell and the Origins of Analytical Philosophy, eds. Ray Monk and Anthony Palmer. Bristol, 1996

Charles Taylor, ed. Ruth Abbey. Cambridge, 2004

Epistemic Justification, eds. Bonjour and Ernest Sosa. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003

Essays on J. L. Austin, ed. Isaiah Berlin et al. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973

German Philosophy Since Kant, ed. Anthony O'Hear. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999

Hegel, ed. Alasdair MacIntyre. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976

Interpreting Political Responsibility: Essays 1981-1989, ed. John Dunn. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990

Interpretive Social Science: A Second Look, eds. Paul Rabinow and William Sullivan. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978

Isaiah Berlin: a Celebration, ed. E. and A. Margalit. London: Hogarth Press, 1991

Modern British Philosophy, ed. Bryan Magee. London: Secker & Warburg, 1971

- Modern Political Science: Anglo-American Exchanges since 1880*, eds. Robert Adcock, Mark Bevir, and Shannon Stimson, Princeton, 2007
- Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994
- Perspectives on the Philosophy of Charles Taylor*, eds. Arto Laitinen and Nicholas Smith. Acta Philosophica Fennica, Vol. 71. Helsinki: The Philosophical Society of Finland, 2002
- Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism: The Philosophy of Charles Taylor in Question*, ed. J. Tully. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994
- Philosophy, Politics, and Society*, 2nd series, eds. Peter Laslett and W. G. Runciman, Oxford: Blackwell, 1962
- Philosophy, Politics and Society*, 3rd series, eds. Peter Laslett and W. G. Runciman. Oxford: Blackwell, 1967
- Reading Rorty*, ed. Alan Malachowski. Oxford: Blackwell, 1990
- The Interpretive Turn: Philosophy, Science, Culture*, ed. Hiley, Bohman, Shusterman. Ithaca, NY, 1991
- The Linguistic Turn: Essays in Philosophical Method*, ed. Richard Rorty. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1967, reprinted 1992
- The One and the Many: Reading Isaiah Berlin*, ed. George Crowder and Henry Hardy. New York: Prometheus Books, 2007
- The Pragmatic Turn in Philosophy: Contemporary Engagements between Analytic and Continental Thought*, eds. William Egginton and Mike Sandbothe. New York: SUNY Press, 2003
- The Self: Psychological and Philosophical Issues*, ed. Theodore Mischel. Oxford: Blackwell, 1977
- Utilitarianism: For and Against*, ed. Bernard Williams with J. C. Smart. Cambridge UP, 1973
- What's Left of Enlightenment?*, eds. Keith Baker and Peter Reill, Stanford: Stanford UP, 2001

Articles

- Ruth Abbey, "Pluralism in Practice: the Political Thought of Charles Taylor" in *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 2002 Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 98-123
- G.E.M. Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy" in *Philosophy* 1958
- J.L. Austin, "A Priori Concepts" in Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, supplementary volume, 1939
- Naomi Choi, "Defending Anti-Naturalism after the Interpretive Turn: Charles Taylor and the Human Sciences" in *History of Political Thought*, Vol. 30:4, 2010
- Terry Hoy, "The Moral Ontology of Charles Taylor: Contra Deconstructivism" in *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, Vol. 16, 1990

- Graeme Garrard, "The Counter-Enlightenment Liberalism of Isaiah Berlin" in *Journal of Political Ideologies*, Vol 2, Issue 3, p. 281-96
- John Gunnell, "Why There Cannot Be a Theory Of Politics", in *Polity*, Summer 1997 Vol. 29:4
- Stuart Hampshire, "Logical Form," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 48, 1947-8, p. 37-58
- "Critical Notice of Ryle's Concept of Mind" in *Mind* 59, 1950, p. 237-255
 - "The Analogy of Feeling" in the *Journal of Mind* 61, 1952, p. 1-12
 - "Self-Knowledge and the Will," in *Revue internationale de philosophie* 7: 25, 1953, p. 230-45
 - "On Referring and Intending," in *Philosophical Review* 65, 1956, p. 1-13
 - with H. L. A. Hart, "Decision, Intention and Certainty" in *Mind* 67, 1958, p. 1-12
 - "Disposition and Memory" in *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 43, 1962, p. 59-68.
- Jeffrey Isaac, "The Strange Silence of Political Theory" in *Political Theory*, 23, 1995
- Frank Jackson, "Defining the Autonomy of Ethics" in *Philosophical Review*, 83:1, 1974
- David R. Kurtzman, "'Is,' 'Ought,' and the Autonomy of Ethics" in *Philosophical Review*, 79, 1970
- Imre Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" in *Philosophical Papers, Vol. I: The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978
- Melissa Lane, "God or Orienteering: A Critical Study of Taylor's Sources of the Self" in *Ratio*, 5, 1996, p. 46-56
- A. N. Prior, "The Autonomy of Ethics" in *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 38, 1960
- W.O. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," in *Philosophical Review* 60, 1951
- Jamie Reed, "From Logical Positivism to 'Metaphysical Rationalism': Isaiah Berlin on the 'Fallacy of Reduction'" in *History of Political Thought* 29:1, 2008
- J.B. Schneewind, "Review of Sources of the Self" in *Journal of Philosophy*, 88:8, 1991, 422-426.
- Quentin Skinner, "Who Are 'We?'" Ambiguities of the Modern Self" in *Inquiry*, 34, 1991, p. 133-153
- Nicholas Smith, "Contingency and Self-Identity: Taylor's Hermeneutics vs. Rorty's Postmodernism" in *Theory Culture and Society*, 13:2, 1996, p. 105-120.
- Charles Taylor, "Ontology" in *Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 129, April 1959, pp. 125-141
- "Phenomenology and Linguistic Analysis", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 33, supplementary volume 1959
 - "Genesis" review of *The Structure of Behaviour* by Merleau-Ponty, *New Statesman*, 70, 3 September 1965
 - "Mind-Body Identity, A Side Issue?" in *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 76, No. 2, April 1967, p. 201-213
 - "Explaining Action" in *Inquiry*, Vol. 13, Summer 1970, p. 54-89

- "Understanding in Human Science" in *Review of Metaphysics* 34:1, 1980
- "Foucault on Freedom and Truth" in *Political Theory* 12:2, p. 152-183.
- "The Moral Topography of the Self," in *Hermeneutics and Psychological Theory*, eds. Stanley Messer, Louis Sass and Robert Woolfolk. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1988, pp. 298-320
- Response to Bromwich's "Culturalism, The Euthanasia of Liberalism" in *Dissent* 42, Winter 1995
- "The Dynamics of Democratic Exclusion" in *Journal of Democracy* 9/4, 1998, p. 143-56
- "Democratic Exclusion (and its remedies?)" in *Multiculturalism, Liberalism and Democracy*, eds. Bhargava, R., A. K. Bagchi & R. Sudarshan. New Delhi: Oxford UP, 1999

Other

Published discussion among Isaiah Berlin, Stuart Hampshire, Iris Murdoch, and Anthony Quinton titled, "Philosophy and Beliefs" in *The Twentieth Century*, Vol. clvii, No. 940, June 1955

Special issue exchange among Charles Taylor, Hubert Dreyfus, and Richard Rorty in *Review of Metaphysics*, 34:1 September 1980

Jane O'Grady, Obituary for Professor Sir Bernard Williams, *The Guardian*, 13 June 2003

Naomi Choi, "Arguing for Strong Evaluation: Must Human Agency be Moral?" *in draft*

Interview with Charles Taylor, retrieved from http://www.templeton.org/questions/spiritual_thinking/ on February 8, 2010

Interview with Bernard Williams by Stuart Jeffries in *The Guardian*, November 30, 2002.

Michael Ignatieff's "Of Human Interest" in *Saturday Night Magazine* (December 1985) pgs. 63-65

G. Scialabba 1990 Review of Sources of the Self. *Dissent* 37, pgs. 534-7

Symposium, "What is Political Theory?" *Political Theory*, December 2002, Vol.30:4

“From Philosophical Anthropology to the Politics of Recognition: An Interview with Philippe de Lara”. *Thesis Eleven*, 52 (February), 103-12