OLIVER O'DONOVAN'S MORAL THEOLOGY, WORLD ORDER, AND
THE PRACTICE OF ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION: A THEOLOGICAL
PHENOMENOLOGY OF ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

By

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A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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August 2023

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Abstract

The United Nations has named the decade of 2021-2030 "The UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration". According to the UN scientists, this decade represents the last chance to avoid catastrophic climate change. There has never been a more perspicuous time for theologians to address the issue of ecological restoration. The problem is a fundamental question about who we are as modern humans, what constitutes a world, and the relation to temporality. In other words, the answer is deeply theological. In this thesis, I argue that thinking about restoration requires a theological phenomenological exploration of self, world, and time. I examine Oliver O'Donovan phenomenological ethics series, *Ethics as Theology*, as an applied ethic for understanding the relationship between Creator, creature, and ecological restoration. I propose that O'Donovan's theological phenomenology approach to ethics allows for a ground-up look at the practice of restoration, from a dirt under the fingernail perspective. My approach is multi-faceted, arguing that restoration must address various concerns—a shared world, subjectivity, and temporal limits. I present theological phenomenological ethics as a countervailing method to the anxiety inducing neoliberalism by appealing to the moods of *faith, hope, and love*. Highlighting these relationships is intended to elucidate for Christians how they might think about ecological restoration and degraded ecosystems. To illuminate these issues, I critique current restoration practices that I argue are antithetical to a Christian ethic—specifically those associated with neoliberalism.

Acknowledgements

A PhD thesis is never a solo project. I am indebted to several people who have encouraged me or provided meaningful insight along the way. First and foremost, is my family. My spouse Amelia Burnette has never faltered in her support of me even at times when I could not see a path forward. There will never be enough words to express how much your love and support meant to me over the course of this project. Thank you to my children who have endured a father often working long days and nights. I could not have done this without my family's love and support.

A special thanks to my supervisor Dr. Jeremy Kidwell, for his insight, expertise, and encouragement. I appreciate the generosity with his time and patience. Dr. Kidwell's guidance made this PhD possible. Thank you to Professor Nicholas Adams whose timely conversation played an oversized part in shaping this thesis. Lastly, I want to give a huge thanks to Ryan Turnbull, Joshua Abrego, and Antonin Ficatier for all the long conversations and reading through early drafts. Lastly, a thank you to my reviewers, Professors Peter Scott and Ben Dandelion. I appreciate your lively engagement during the viva and your feedback has undoubtedly improved this thesis.

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1   Introduction

1.1   The Decade of Restoration

The United Nations (UN) has named the decade of 2021-2030 "The UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration".[1] According to the UN scientists, this decade represents the last chance to avoid catastrophic climate change. On March 1, 2019, the UN adopted a resolution under the abovementioned title. In it, members of the assembly highlighted ecological restoration as a primary means for addressing global poverty and sustainable development. The committee noted some 2020 restoration goals, previously targeted in the 2015 resolution "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", were quickly approaching (now passed). Goals such as: restoring freshwater ecosystems (goal 6); implementing actions for strengthening and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems (goal 14); restoring terrestrial ecosystems (goal 15).[2] The UN also resolved by 2030 to combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, and achieve a land-degradation-neutral world.[3] The aggressive agenda laid out by the committee members amplifies the urgency of engaging in ecological restoration. Therefore, there has never been a more perspicuous time for theologians to address the issue of ecological restoration and the environment in general.

Writing in a time of climate crisis and ecological devastation often concerns itself with immediate questions attempting to deal with present and future problems. Solutions suggested are typically scientific, technological, or political. However, the problem is a profoundly

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[1] "About the UN Decade." *UN Decade on Restoration*. Retrieved June, 2, 2021, from https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/about-un-decade.
[2] *United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)*. (2019). Retrieved February 25, 2021 from https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda.
[3] Ibid.

fundamental question about who we are as modern humans, what constitutes a world, and the relation to temporality. In other words, the answer is deeply theological.

I struggle with the concept of ecological collapse, especially with a processual reading of creation. When it comes to concern for the environment, what I mean, what most environmentalists have ever meant, is this current situation in which humans are a part. Acknowledging this opens the door to several questions. Certainly, the current state of ecological affairs may, rather will, collapse due to human-induced environmental problems if left unchecked. However, in the thread of life, is it so different from the asteroid that signalled the end of the dinosaurs or the natural flux of global cooling and warming? Are we mere cogs in the wheels of change? Are human-induced disasters less "natural"? To even ask these questions suggests that there is something different about ecological disasters brought about by human behaviour. But what? Is it just that we are observers who can reflect on the demise? Is that it, simple reflexivity? Or is it deeper; is it because we sense our culpability in the loss of beauty?

Oliver O'Donovan, my interlocutor for this project, comments that "Beauty comes first, admiration second."[4] Beauty is a lure that draws one in; it calls to those who see it, evoking a duty of care and a feeling of appreciation – beauty is a good. Using the example of a beautiful work of art, O'Donovan writes, "It stands before us for what it is in itself, not for what we may make of it."[5] This does not imply that beauty is independent of anyone's response. According to O'Donovan, one cannot see their relation to the good as one of no interest; nor is it true that the good has no interest in being admired.[6] God, whom O'Donovan calls the most excellent-

[4] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking: Ethics as Theology*, vol. 2. (Grand Rapids: William. B. Eerdmans, 2014), p. 71.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.

Good, desires to know and be known. God, then must be self-communicating. As I discuss in the next chapter, creation is the beautiful self-communicating good of God. What one feels in their culpability in the death of beauty and the good is a severing of the relationship between themselves and their Creator. As O'Donovan emphasizes, "it is the *subsisting reality* of our good, whether we know it or not."[7]

1.2   Project Orientation

I direct this project to fellow Christians and anyone interested in how theological ethics might inform current ecological restoration practices. While I contend that restoration practitioners can benefit from thinking theologically about their projects, whether they adhere to any belief in the divine or not, I do not intend to lay out practical objectives for restoration. Though ecological restoration is the vehicle of choice, a shared concern is the relationship between Creator and creature, with special attention paid to how humans navigate the space between God and the world; as liminal beings made a little lower than the angels, but creatures of the earth nonetheless (Psalm 8:5).

My approach to addressing these concerns is multi-faceted. From the above discourse, one can see that ecological restoration must address various concerns—a shared world, subjectivity, and temporal limits. All three represent a node in the God-creature-world relationship, meaning a theological component to all three divisions needs attending to. Highlighting these relationships is intended to elucidate for Christians how they can think about ecological restoration and degraded and destroyed ecosystems. I also critique current ecological

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[7] O'Donovan. *Finding and Seeking*, p. 72.

practices that I argue are antithetical to a Christian ethic—specifically those associated with neoliberalism, such as Ecosystem Services.

Ecological restoration is theologically significant, as creation depends on God for its existence. If creation is an act of the divine, then restoration is an act of liturgy. It is performative action that publicly participates in the works of Christ. The restoration practitioner's role is to assist in ecosystem recovery.[8] As a result, from a Christian perspective, restorationists actively participate in God's creation. Restoration, however, is not, by nature, a theological venture. Nonetheless, a theological horizon can inform how a person might respond or care about ecological restoration. If in service to Christ, we are *to do unto the least of these* (Matthew 25:40), to feed the poor and clothe the naked, then ecological restoration will have a part to play.

1.3   The Age of the Modern Human

Anthropogenic causes that lead to the loss of beauty and relationship with ecosystems are human-induced environmental alterations, often leading to the degradation or destruction of an ecosystem. These causes have had such an adverse effect globally that many have started referring to the current geologic era as the Anthropocene. Nevertheless, human environmental alterations are decidedly impactful enough to be seen in the geologic record. Global changes captured in the geologic record (i.e., rock layers) define geologic epochs. Epochs, though the smallest geologic units of time, are still measured in millions of years. The current geologic epoch is the Holocene, (not the Anthropocene). The Holocene is roughly 11,000 years old, beginning with the end of the last glacial period. Hence, the controversy in naming a new

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[8] Andre F. Clewell and James Aronson, *Ecological Restoration: Principles, Values, and Structure of an Emerging Profession*. 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2013), pp. 3-4.

geologic epoch. The Earth has just entered an epoch, which would typically last a few million years. Ignoring the fact that the Holocene is relatively young, the idea that some consider the Anthropocene a new geologic epoch demonstrates how catastrophic anthropogenic alterations to the Earth have been.

Paul Crutzen initially coined the term "Anthropocene" in his *Nature* article "Geology of Mankind".[9] In this article, Crutzen attributes the exponential growth of the human population and increased exploitation of resources leading to ozone depletion, deforestation, climate change, river diversion, and pollution with inaugurating the Anthropocene.[10] Since Crutzen's article initiated the discussion of the Anthropocene and when it began others have suggested various beginnings—the colonization of the Americas, the late 18th century, the industrial revolution, the Great Acceleration following World War II and several other points in history.[11] Given that *homo sapiens* existed well before these events, several other terms have been put forth to capture the effects of modern humans on the planet, such as the Capitalocene, Misanthropocene, Plantationocene, Technocene, and Chthulucene.[12] These terms attempt to capture the essence behind the anthropogenic causes of the current ecological disasters and climate change. If what it means to be a modern human, leads to environmental peril and

[9] Paul J. Crutzen. "Geology of Mankind," *Nature* 415, vol. 6867 (2002): 23, doi:10.1038/415023a, p. 23.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Jan Zalasiewicz et al., "The Anthropocene: A New Epoch of Geological Time?" *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*. 369 (2011): 835-841. https://doi.org/10.1098/rsta.2010.0339.
[12] Donna Haraway, "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin." *Environmental Humanities* 6(1). (2015): 159–65. https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-3615934.; Jason W. Moore, "The Capitalocene, Part I: On the Nature and Origins of Our Ecological Crisis." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44 (3), (2017): 594–630. https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2016.1235036.; Michael Warren Murphy and Caitlin Schroering, "Refiguring the Plantationocene: Racial Capitalism, World-Systems Analysis, and Global Socioecological Transformation." *Journal of World-Systems Research* 26 (2), (2020): 400–415. https://doi.org/10.5195/jwsr.2020.983.; Andreas Malm, *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming*. (New York: Verso Books, 2016).; Alf Hornburg, "The Political Ecology of the Technocene: Uncovering Ecologically Unequal Exchange in the World-System." In *The Anthropocene and the Global Environmental Crisis*, edited by Clive Hamilton, François Gemenne, and Christophe Bonneuil, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 57-69.; Hermínio Martins, *The Technocene: Reflections on Bodies, Minds, and Markets*. (London: Anthem Press, 2018).; Raj Patel, "Misanthropocene." *Earth Island Journal* 28, no. 1 (2013): 21.

ecological collapse, then what it means to be human must be transformed at the ontological level. Suggesting that ecological restoration, as a practice, can only go so far in addressing these harms.

1.4   What is Ecological Restoration?

To begin, the term restoration is not without its critics, as I demonstrate in this thesis (pp. 170-175). I too have qualms with using this term to describe what is done by restorationists. Restoration is the word used to by those in the practice of ecological restoration. For some, it means restoring an ecosystem to a past condition, this is how I object to using the term. Others, myself included, would equate restoration to 'restoring' ecosystem functions (Doyle and Yates, 2010; Lave, 2012; Martin, 2017). More importantly, I use the term restoration for coherency. If I were to use a word other than restoration, it becomes less clear what I am discussing, and could obscure my critique of current ecological practices.

I consider ecological restoration to exhibit a bottom-up approach to present day ecological problems. Ecological restoration being a more dirt under the fingernails approach, than say top-down explorations which are more theoretical in nature. Ecological restoration practices bring the person in contact with creation, or in theological terms, restoration practices are physical connections with the works of the Creator. In non-theological terms, ecological restoration refers to the practical arm of restoration ecology. Restoration ecology is the science and academic theories underpinning restoration practices.

Ecological restoration is rooted in the early twentieth-century landscape architecture of designers such as Jens Jensen, Wilhelm Miller, and Fredrick Law Olmsted.[13]These initial

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[13] Gretel Van Wieren, *Restored to Earth: Christianity, Environmental Ethics, and Ecological Restoration*, (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2013), p. 37.

activities of manipulating the natural environment to produce idealizations of nature are the foundation of eco-restoration. Though modern restoration has shifted its focus from aesthetics and design to repairing landscape degradation, many projects continue to reflect these early roots. Ecological restoration efforts occupy the space between the manicured garden and wildness, all the while driving our understanding of nature and reality.[14]

The Society for Ecological Restoration (SER), in their 2004 Primer, defines ecological restoration as "the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed."[15] Most ecosystem degradation is directly linked to human causes, like toxic spills, deforestation, and drained wetlands; also indirectly, including species migration, increased forest fires and intensifying weather extremes tied to anthropocentric-driven climate change. The practice of ecological restoration is undertaken for a variety of reasons (addressing environmental problems, governmental regulations, or local concerns – i.e. species loss) and has proven to work under a myriad of conditions, ranging from the community level to the macro landscape.[16]

In December 2016, SER produced the International Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration – including principles and key concepts (The Standards). This document is a collaborative effort to provide the international community with unifying principles and concepts for ecological restoration. The Standards suggest three principles for successful restoration: restoration must be effective, efficient, and engaging. Engaging restoration is collaborative, drawing in community members "promotes participation and enhances

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[14] Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design: People, Natural Process, and Ecological Restoration*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2004), pp. 62-63.

[15] André Clewell, James Aronson, and Keith Winterhalder, "The SER International Primer on Ecological Restoration." *Society for Ecological Restoration*, (2004):1-8, www.ser.org. p. 3.

[16] Michael P. Perring et al., "Advances in Restoration ecology: Rising to the Challenges of the Coming Decades." *Ecosphere* 6, no. 8 (2015): 1-25, https://doi.org/10.1890/ES15-00121.1. pp. 2-3.

experience of ecosystems"; efficiency in restoration attends to "maximizing beneficial outcomes while minimizing costs in time, resources and efforts"; and effectiveness "establishes and maintains an ecosystem's values."[17] The Standards have codified well-established practices and goals for ecological restoration, creating metrics to grade restoration efforts.

While The Standards may eventually help normalize restoration practices, debate remains concerning best-practices for ecological restoration. As Higgs et al. demonstrate, the standards have already been met with criticism. They assert that "a standards approach that emphasizes metrics rather than responsibility and excellence potentially diminishes the role of good professional judgment gained through experience, education, and adaptive capacity."[18] This group would prefer to see "widely accepted principles" rather than metrics, except in settings where this level of precision is warranted.[19] Furthermore, Higgs et al. posit that restorationists should continuously refine their guidelines and provide examples of restoration efforts (good and bad) while promoting "excellence in practice."[20] Likewise, Suding et al. ask restorationists to commit to four principles of ecological restoration to increase sustainability and resilience for restoration projects. These principles, informed by the past and future, aim to increase ecological integrity and long-term sustainability while benefiting and engaging society.[21] The anthropogenically accelerated pace of environmental change is causing some restorationists to rethink the whole approach to the question of what it means to restore an ecosystem. As J. Leighton Reid and James Aronson argue, "Escalating global change is

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[17] Tein McDonald et al., "International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration – Including Principles and Key Concepts," 1st edition. *Restoration Ecology* (2016), https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.13035, p. 9.

[18] Eric Higgs et al., "On Principles and Standards in Ecological Restoration," *Restoration Ecology* 26, no 3 (2018): 399-403, https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.12691, p. 401.

[19] Ibid., p. 402.

[20] Eric Higgs et al., "On Principles and Standards in Ecological Restoration," p. 402.

[21] Katharine Suding at al., "Committing to Ecological Restoration," *Science*, 348, no. 6235, (2015): 638–40. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aaa4216. p. 638.

resulting in no-analogue environments and novel ecosystems that render traditional goals unachievable."[22] This suggests that the rate of anthropogenic changes is outpacing restoration goals. Though much has been done to establish best practices, much work remains.

1.5   Why Ecological Restoration?

Why focus on ecological restoration? While my thesis presents theoretical arguments for ecological restoration; it also focuses on critique current ecological practices. Climate change understandably garners much of the collective environmental attention. Climate change can evoke an existential dread, grasping the collective imagination for impending global catastrophes. However, ecological degradation and destruction are rampant globally, affecting countless lives daily. As I have already stated, the UN believes ecological restoration is essential for combating climate change. Moreover, restoration can be engaged at various levels, from governing bodies to individuals, having immediate impacts on ecological integrity and health. Restoration projects range from small-scale, locally significant, involving individuals or communities to large-scale projects instituted by governments or agencies.[23] Ecological restoration allows a variety of involvement from differing arenas of public life. More importantly, ecosystems are once again able to function properly, bringing benefits to non-human creation. The challenge is recognizing that non-human restoration benefits are equally as important as goals that directly impact human persons.

On a personal note, I chose this topic because it reflects aspects of my work as an environmental restoration program manager. Every day I witness the way ecological restoration is discussed and implemented as a practice. An argument I make in this thesis is that restoration

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[22] Reid, J. Leighton, and James Aronson, "Ecological Restoration in a Changing Biosphere," *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 102 no. 2 (2017): 185–87. https://doi.org/10.3417/2017004. p. 185.

[23] Michael P. Perring et al., "Advances in Restoration Ecology," p. 6.

is dictated by neoliberal economic practices, which frames restoration practices in monetary terms. In the restoration industry, restoration projects are discussed in terms of monetary awards. For instance, "this is a 3.5-million-dollar project," instead of saying "we have awarded a groundwater remediation project, focused on restoring clean drinking water". Conceiving of projects in monetary terms shifts the emphasis from cleanup goals to budgetary requirements. Often, more importance is placed on audit requirements around project spending than ecological restoration targets. Where a person places their emphasis reflects, to some extent, their values. However, if they choose to value creation first, then their practices will reflect creation's needs; this is what I mean by a bottom-up approach to restoration. That is, how creation *is*, as a set of factical relationships, provides the basis for understanding ecosystems and what restoration might look like if creation is one's guide. More importantly, one's values will better reflect the divine ideal; as creation., I argue, is imbued with the divine will of God.

Ecological restoration practices, as I argue throughout, are a reflection of value (see 3.8.2 beginning on p.166). In this section, I argue that one moves from values to principles. The principles of restoration, that is one's goals, will in turn, drive techniques and practices. As I show in Chapter 3, Richard J. Hobbs states that what one means by restoration, is a reflection of values, ethical principles, and the role of human persons. Similarly, Eric Higgs argues that cultural values play a role in determining what is meant by 'good ecological restoration'. Meaning, that how a person conceptualizes what determines a healthy ecosystem is governed by their underlying values. In turn, the means, or the practices and techniques, to produce that ecosystem are at minimum indirectly influenced by those values. Therefore, the move from values to practices is a key component for understanding current ecological practices and how changing the framework of values can change the way one practices ecological restoration. If restoration practitioners choose to emphasize financial goals, then I argue they are reflecting

values more aligned with neoliberal economic targets; instead of objectives focused on ecological vitality.

The purported goal of restoration is to assist ecosystems in recovering from environmental harms, often anthropogenic. Though restoration work is globally cumulative, it is inherently local.[24] The benefit of being local is that it has the potential to shape communities and reveal the relationship they have with the ecosystems they inhabit. As Andrew F. Clewell and Aronson point out, the benefits of ecological restoration are intergenerational, representing an ongoing commitment to the land, ideally consensus building, engendering respect and appreciation for ecosystems.[25]

According to Clewell and Aronson, there are a variety of horizons for perceiving the need to restore ecosystems: an ecological perspective seeks to restore ecological processes; conservationists attempt to restore biodiversity; socioeconomic perspectives are driven to restore ecosystem services; cultural perspectives restore community and relationships to ecosystems; and finally, a personal perspective attempts to reconnect the individuals and nature, restoring both ecosystems and themselves. However, they all come down to the idea that nature sustains humans and therefore sustaining nature is beneficial to human persons. [26] Their statement resonates with the idea that restoration is, at minimum, weakly anthropocentric. The claim of a weak anthropocentrism is not an indictment of restoration, though there are some critics of restoration for this reason, as I discuss in the next chapter. Instead, it reinforces the fundamental relationship between humans and creation. Humans are integral to the ecosystems

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24 Andre F. Clewell and James Aronson, *Ecological Restoration,* p. 3.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.

they inhabit, the same as any other creature. They have co-evolved, meaning each depends on the other to function correctly at a given moment in history.

1.6   Environmental Ethics

The above discussion has briefly touched on the field of ecological restoration practices. The potential methods and criteria reflect a small portion of the ongoing dialogue between restorationists regarding best practices. How then do we make sense of what restoration efforts we should undertake — what methods, which projects, and whether to intervene at all? Environmental ethics provides overarching principles to guide ecological restoration. John Nolt describes ethics as 'ought' principles. These 'oughts' are the guiding parameters for actions that ethical theories are meant to explain. Therefore, "ethical theories are broad philosophical accounts of what moral action is and how it is justified."[27] Nolt states that the scope of an ethical theory is to determine what entities are morally considerable, and these entities, in turn, form a moral community. Communities are comprised of moral patients, some of whom are moral agents (those who can act ethically). Agents attempt to act morally concerning the natural environment and its inhabitants.[28] Environmental ethics are an "attempt to expand moral thinking and action in two directions: beyond the human species and into the distant future."[29] Paul Taylor defines environmental ethics as "an attempt to establish the rational grounds for a system of moral principles by which human treatment of natural ecosystems and wild communities of life ought to be guided."[30] Taylor claims that "every species counts as having the same value in the sense that, regardless of what species a living thing belongs to, it is deemed

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[27] John Nolt, *Environmental Ethics for the Long Term: An Introduction*, (New York: Routledge, 2015). p. 47.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid., p. xxii, p. 251.
[30] Paul W. Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*, (Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 9.

to be prima facie deserving of equal concerns and consideration on the part of moral agents."[31] However, even as we try to discern which are moral agents and which are moral patients, we begin to get lost in how best to determine ethical principles.

One of the difficulties facing any ethical question is how to resolve disagreements between parties. This is especially pertinent for global issues, such as environmental degradation and climate change. The scale of issues and global extent appear to be intractable problems. However, Joseph R. DesJardins does not see disagreement concerning ethical issues as a reason to believe that reaching agreements are insurmountable. Moreover, he believes it is "a mistake to reason that because cultures disagree about values, no correct answer exists."[32] As complicated as they appear to resolve, the misalignment of core values and differing responses to the environmental crisis must be addressed. He views this as the primary aim of ethics, to challenge one's beliefs and disclose "the limitations of our ethical and environmental consciousness."[33] As DesJardins points out, "Few things are as frustrating as having our fundamental perspectives challenged."[34]

It seems fitting to start with one's everyday existence when challenging one's beliefs. The mundane is the realm of *normative ethics* and a focal point of this thesis. A person makes several ethical judgements every day, even if unaware, about what *ought* to be done. According to DesJardins, determining what one should do participates in the first level of abstraction, known as normative ethics.[35] Normative ethics appeal to an ethical standard or norm that is often the source of disagreement. Who decides what should or should not be done? According

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[31] Paul W. Taylor, *Respect for Nature*, p. 155.
[32] Joseph R. DesJardins, *Environmental Ethics: An Introduction to Environmental Philosophy*. 5th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2013), p. 16.
[33] Ibid., p. 25.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.

to DesJardins, "Many environmental controversies involve disputes of normative ethics."[36] He notes that disputes of this nature are frustrating because each side can offer reasons or evidence for their position. As a result, he argues that one must move beyond normative ethics to philosophical ethics to resolve such disagreements.

Philosophical ethics seek to provide "general concepts, principles, and theories" for evaluating ethical claims by moving outside of specific disagreements.[37] DesJardins defines philosophical ethics as the "next level of generality and abstraction, at which we analyze and evaluate normative judgments and their supporting reasons."[38] At this level, one evaluates the reasons given to justify normative claims or attempts to make clear concepts used for normative judgments. Environmental ethics is a branch of philosophy that evaluates normative claims regarding environmentalism.[39] The question is how to ground philosophical or environmental ethics.

1.6.1 *Christian Environmental Ethics*

Ethical questions involve discussing the ideas surrounding the function of morality. Theological ethics does this by grounding their ethics in a transcendent source, typically under the obfuscating appellation of *God*. In this thesis, I appeal to Christian conceptions of God to critique current ecological restoration methods that more closely align with my understanding of Christian theology.

In environmental ethics, Christianity has been infamously tied to Lynn White Jr.'s 1967 article "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis", in which White fixes the blame for the

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[36] Joseph R. DesJardins, *Environmental Ethics*, p. 25.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

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world's current environmental crisis squarely on Christianity. [40] The initial response by Christian theologians and ethicists sought to rehabilitate Christianity in the public sphere as a religion that not only *is not* anti-environment but *is* implicitly for the welfare of nature. Therefore, theologians spent much of their early ink refuting White's thesis. More recent scholarship argues that not only is Christianity *not* to blame for the current ecological crisis, but Christianity may also very well be the historical root of the environmental movement.[41] Similar to environmental ethics in general, Christian environmental ethics also have a myriad of approaches.

The Christian ethicist Michael Northcott presents a theocentric, anthropocentric, and ecocentric interrelated hierarchal structure in his work, asserting that—

> the existence of value and moral significance in the objective order of the world prior to human acts of valuing, an independence which Western theists have traditionally located in the original act of divine beneficence in the creation of the world, and in the valuing of the creation by the creator God.[42]

Northcott claims creation is worth valuing since creation's shared ontological dependence is God. Other eco-theologians have presented versions of pantheism or panentheism as a way of connecting creation and God.

Catherine Keller contends that all creation participates in bringing about the future and that we are amid a transformation, one where we shift "focus from mitigation to adaption."[43]

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[40] Lynn White Jr., "The historical roots of our ecologic crisis," *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1203-1207.; see also Willis Jenkins, "After Lynn White: Religious Ethics and Environmental Problems," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 37, no. 2 (2009): 283–309.

[41] Evan Berry, *Devoted to Nature: The Roots of American Environmentalism.* (Oakland: University of California, 2015); Mark Stoll, *Inherit this mountain: Religion and the Rise of American Environmentalism.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[42] Michael S. Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 92-3.

[43] Catherine Keller. *Cloud of the impossible: Negative Theology and Planetary Entanglement.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), p. 277.

According to Keller, adaptation forces one to face changes they do not want to consider. Adaptation signifies "the new geography of violence" unleashed by climate change. [44] It involves a technical and political transformation—humans are "*transforming our relation to nature* as nature transforms: learning to live with the damage we have wrought."[45] I agree with Keller that climate change and the threat of ecological collapse will fundamentally alter how modern humans relate to creation. Many on the planet, often the most vulnerable, are already experiencing the life-altering effects of climate change.

Other theologians have suggested eschatological views concerning Christians' relation to creation – restoration efforts are seen as ushering in the Kingdom of God and, with it, the new creation. Still, others claim that restoration is an effort to redeem the earth for God. Social justice theologians have argued for political forms of ecojustice and liberation theologies. Ecotheologians are well-intentioned and have their arguments for relating humanity to God and creation.[46] However, they are not without their critics.

Lisa Sideris argues that ecotheologians fail to acknowledge the reality of nature while claiming that nature provides a model for how humans should relate to each other and the rest of creation. [47] She argues that an objective view of nature objectively reveals a world of suffering. A world where life is preserved or lost through violence, animal populations increase or decrease based on their proximity to sustenance and predator alike, and a world where the physical landscape is marred and transformed through, heat, pressure, floods, and wind. Sideris contends that when ecotheologians address these pains, the "issues are often grafted onto a

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[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Gretel Van Wieren, *Restored to Earth*, pp. 13-25.
[47] Lisa Sideris, *Environmental Ethics Ecological Theology and Natural Selection.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003). p. 5.

Christian eschatology or liberation theology that is ill-fitted to a serious understanding of the processes of natural selection."[48] Sideris claims that "from a theocentric and ecocentric perspective the failure to come to terms with nature as it *really is* constitutes a fundamental lack of respect for the natural ordering and processes that sustain, as well as destroy life."[49] This, she argues, puts the eco-theologian who believes they can alter the natural order of things [in terms of suffering or natural processes, i.e. natural disasters], in a position of denying "God as God".[50] Sideris contends that as finite beings, humans should maintain a "moral modesty" in our attempts to intervene in the natural world.[51]

Theologian Celia Deane-Drummond shares Sideris's concern that any emphasis on natural laws should consider current scientific understandings. Deane-Drummond cautions those engaging in natural law and Christian ethics not to promote "the myth of the balance of nature."[52] Instead, they must acknowledge "ecological instability and apparent flux [which] betrays the fragile nature of any ordering that seems apparent to the casual observer."[53] Nonetheless, she argues that natural law is a theological concept by which rational creatures participate in the eternal law.[54] Deane-Drummond argues that if one wishes to preserve the natural law, it is best read through a Thomistic lens. She claims that the first principle of natural law is to seek the Good and avoid evil, as understood by human reason.[55] Reason for Deane-Drummond refers to the human ability to "take account of a multiplicity of circumstances and plan for the future."[56] Moreover, she takes up Aquinas's understanding of reason as subordinate

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[48] Lisa Sideris, Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology and Natural Selection, p. 5.
[49] Ibid., p. 266.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Celia Deane-Drummond, *The Ethics of Nature*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p. 39.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Celia Deane-Drummond, *The Ethics of Nature*, p. 39
[56] Ibid.

to faith.[57] The second principle is that natural law is related to natural inclinations – self-preservation, child-rearing, and reasoning. For Deane-Drummond, natural law relates to one's natural tendencies, those found in life forms. In one's natural inclinations, she recognizes a correspondence to the twin commands to love God and love our neighbour.[58] Reading natural law in this way, Deane-Drummond argues, better reflects "a dynamic movement of all creation towards flourishing and the good."[59] O'Donovan's account of natural law resonates with Deane-Drummond's position. For O'Donovan, the way the world is expresses how humans should behave.

1.7   Christian Engagements with Ecological Restoration

David Lowenthal outlines Christianity's ecological restoration history arguing that the divine response to the curse of original sin. Humans are cursed to "ceaselessly labor to return nature as far as possible to edenic perfection."[60] Despite Lynn White Jr.'s critique that the current environmental degradation results from Christianity's theology of dominion, Lowenthal argues that Christian theology has been concerned with righting environmental wrongs. He touches on early Christian responses to creation, showing that theological responses to exile from the Garden of Eden evoked reparative responses to creation, with some believing that restoration is an improvement to the original creation.[61] Lowenthal argues that this reasoning carried over to colonial settlers of the Americas, with America representing an "Eden restored, paradise regained."[62] Furthermore, He argues that these thoughts eventually "helped to justify

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[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid., p. 40
[59] Ibid.
[60] David Lowenthal, *Quest for the Unity of Knowledge*. (Milton: Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), p. 59.
[61] Ibid., p. 60.
[62] Ibid.

early-modern science" and "environmentalism was spurred by a reformist rationale saturated with religious sentiment."[63] I return to this theme in Chapter 4   .

Mark Stoll and Evan Berry independently argue that Christians and Christianity are the historical roots of the environmental movement. While Berry does not mention ecological restoration and Stoll only briefly, in the context of conservation and reforestation, they both argue that Christianity played a significant role in modern environmentalism. According to Berry, "Christian theology and biblical rhetoric were the standard means by which most Americans made sense of the natural world and framed their experience in moral terms."[64] He writes, "the emergence of modern environmental thought drank deeply from the well of theology."[65] For Berry, it is not that early environmentalists happened to be Christians or that certain theological doctrines lent their voice to ecological concerns. Instead, environmentalism is a natural outworking of the cultural milieu of Christian theology. Moreover, Berry argues that it is oversimplistic to place enmity between Christian religion and nature.[66]

Similarly, Stoll traces the history of the environmental movement through the art and the history of Christians in the United States. Stoll argues that there is a "close relationship between religion and environmentalism." [67] In particular, he argues that Calvinistic denominations of Presbyterianism and Congregationalism evidenced that Calvinism played a "major role" in the environmental movement.[68] According to Stoll, John Calvin honoured creation, believing nature to be a semiotic pointing to God. [69] Adherents to Calvinistic

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[63] Ibid., p. 62.
[64] Evan Berry, *Devoted to Nature*, p. 10.
[65] Ibid., p. 34.
[66] Ibid., p. 14.
[67] Mark Stoll, *Inherit this Mountain*, p. 2.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., p. 22.

denominations were highly influential in the American environmental movement and responsible for much of the early conservation work. For example, Stoll highlights the early environmental influence of Presbyterians, writing, "Whether in the cause of conservation or parks, wilderness or pollution, livable cities or safe workplaces, Presbyterians would dominate environmental discourse and lead the major environmental battles into the 1960s."[70] The importance of Stoll and Berry's work is to demonstrate that Christian theology has a long history of concern for the created order, with both sharing the belief that creation and Creator are intimately related.

Gretel Van Wieren's *Restored to Earth: Christianity, Environmental Ethics, and Ecological Restoration* is one of the few book-length treatments of ecological restoration and Christianity. In *Restored to Earth*, Van Wieren engages the ecological restoration movement's use of best practices, science, community, politics, and spirituality to examine how they influence environmental ethics and the human relationship with creation. She understands ecological restoration as more than an attempt to repair damaged ecosystems. It also represents a means for healing the human-nature relationship; ecological restoration is a metaphysical project. Van Wieren aims to provide a framework of how ecological restoration and Christian tradition form environmental ethics. I share with Van Wieren the idea that restoration is a metaphysical undertaking. The global extent to which ecological restoration is a priority indicates that something fundamental to human existence needs to change.

On an individual and communal level, there is an opportunity to participate in practices that bring healing and a sense of righting ecological wrongs while restoring relationships between humans and the ecosystems they inhabit. Van Wieren notes that acts of restoration are

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[70] Ibid., p. 139.

"a symbolic ecological revision and enactment of the eucharist, a public liturgy testifying to the sacramental life-death-life, flourishing-suffering-flourishing process inherent to all biological nature."[71] I agree that restoration practices can provide a form of liturgy. I also look at ecological practices to participate in shaping one's ethic, and to demonstrate that certain current restoration practices do not reflect Christian theological and ethical commitments.

Michael Northcott offers a theological critique of ecological restoration efforts in the highlands of Scotland. In this article, he critiques restoration practices that appeal to the *pristine* wilderness myth (discussed in chapter 4) and fail to consider humans endemic to the landscape. Northcott argues that the Highlands have long been settled by humans who learned to dwell in the land. Removing native Highlanders during "the Clearings" led to biodiversity loss caused by the sheep and deer who displaced the native human population.[72] Northcott argues that it is unscientific and antithetical to theology to view humans as something other than a creature of God, just like any other creature.[73] He argues that wilderness restoration efforts in the Scottish Highlands ignore the human element, removing any evidence of the prior communities who lived there. Northcott notes their approach is ambiguous as it attempts to restore and protect the environment; it also "excludes and seems to problematize human dwelling."[74]

Northcott highlights that restoration can promote the "pristine wilderness" myth, and while attempting to protect the environment, it also treats humans as separate from nature. As he pointedly demonstrates, original Highland inhabitants co-evolved with the land, with humans and nature adapting to one another. I echo Northcott's concern that certain restoration

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[71] Gretel Van Wieren, *Restored to Earth*, p. 90.
[72] Michael Northcott, "Wilderness, Religion, and Ecological Restoration in the Scottish Highlands," *Ecotheology* 10.3 (2005): 382-399, p. 385.
[73] Ibid., p. 391.
[74] Ibid. p. 388.

practices can potentially dissociate humankind from creation. However, one cannot just return communities to the land of their ancestors. The modern human cannot be re-introduced to the wilds and expected to dwell in and with the land as their ancestors did, not without a resetting of what it means to be human for many modern communities. Merely re-introducing displaced descendants bypasses the co-evolutionary process, processes not easily replicated. Nevertheless, I agree with Northcott that effective restoration restores the human-nature relationship, and this project aims to demonstrate how the use of O'Donovan's phenomenological ethics highlights the human relationship to the created order.

Philosophers and ethicists, who are not necessarily religious scholars, have noticed the moral implications of ecological restoration. Philosopher Ben Almassi argues ecological restoration is a practice of moral repair that can be adapted to fit various religious or non-religious perspectives. Almassi offers a take on Margaret Walkers's feminist ethic for restorative justice and moral repair. He proposes restoration as a "work of acknowledgment, apology, and amends for historical and persisting environmental injustice and wrongdoing."[75] Similarly, John Basal has argued that collectively humanity has incurred a moral debt due to perpetrating environmental harms that require restitution.[76] Likewise, John Cairns Jr. and Markku Oksanen, separately argue for categorizing restoration as moral reparations for environmental degradation.[77] However, as Almassi and Van Wierner note, a significant challenge to restoration as moral repair is that restoration is typically conducted by contracted

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[75] Ben Almassi, "Ecological Restorations as Practices of Moral Repair," *Ethics and the Environment* 22 no.1, (2017): 19-40. https://doi.org/10.2979/ethicsenviro.22.1.02. p. 25.

[76] John Basal, "Restitutive Restoration."

[77] John Cairns, "Reparations for Environmental Degradation and Species Extinction: A Moral and Ethical Imperative for Human Society," *Ethics in Science and Environmental Politics* 3 (2003): 25–32. https://doi.org/10.3354/esep003025.; Markku Oksanen, "Ecological Restoration as Moral Reparation," *Proceedings of the XXII World Congress of Philosophy* 23 (2008): 99–105. https://doi.org/10.5840/wcp22200823687.

professionals and disconnected from the perpetrators of the environmental harm. Critiquing Almassi's position, Eric Katz argues that moral repair as restoration is a religious gloss to justify human's playing God. Katz argues that the book of Job demonstrates that not even God can restore. Instead, he contends, "there is not actual repair; there is no actual forgiveness or building of relationship or trust."[78] Katz believes restoration is a new creation, a human artefact and, thus, not natural. I discuss Katz and other critiques of ecological restoration in chapter 2.

1.8   Engaging Oliver O'Donovan

As previously stated, the Anglican theologian Oliver O'Donovan is my interlocutor for this project. Samuel Tranter notes, there has been limited engagement with O'Donovan's work. He argues that it proves difficult "to place his powerfully idiosyncratic contributions into conversation with other voices."[79] It is said of O'Donovan, that he is "clearly not a camp follower of any one theologian or school of thought."[80] It may be that O'Donovan is willing to venture into the richness of Christian traditions outside his own Anglicanism and philosophical traditions that prove difficult for others to interact critically with his body of work. I primarily focus on O'Donovan's *Ethics as Theology* series, which squarely places itself within the phenomenology box. However, before examining that series, I discuss some recent involvements with O'Donovan's writings.

In *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology: Tensions and Triumphs*, Tranter offers the first full-length engagement and critical reflection of Oliver O'Donovan's corpus.[81] Tranter focuses

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[78] Eric Katz, "Replacement and Irreversibility: The Problem with Ecological Restoration as Moral Repair," *Ethics and the Environment* 23, no. 1, (2018): 17-28. https://doi.org/10.2979/ethicsenviro.23.1.02. p. 22.
[79] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology: Tensions and Triumphs*. (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2020). http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bham/detail.action?docID=6270620. p. 3.
[80] David Elliot 2018 "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan, Entering into Rest: Ethics as Theology, Volume 3," *Studies in Christian Ethics,* 31, no. 4, (2018): 493-496. https://doi.org/10.1177/0953946818791862c. p. 493.
[81] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 1.

on uncovering "the relationship between eschatology and ethics" in O'Donovan's work.[82] He believes that Christian ethicists exhibit a general "eschatological squeamishness," to which Tranter believes O'Donovan is no exception.[83] Nevertheless, Tranter argues for three reasons to examine eschatology's role in O'Donovan's works. The first reason is that eschatology is "rarely far from the surface" in O'Donovan's ethics, spanning forty years.[84] Second, Tranter believes eschatology is the foundation for much of O'Donovan's political and moral thought. Last, Tranter argues that the role of eschatology is a source of tension in the entirety of O'Donovan's published work.[85]

Unlike Tranter, eschatology is not my main concern. Certainly, eschatology influences most Christian thinkers and their work to some extent. However, the everyday existence of creatures is the focus of ecological restoration. The importance of last things to Christianity is without question; however, I do not consider it a central theme for addressing restoration. I grant that the term restoration is often associated with eschatology, but one must steer clear of such equivocation when speaking about ecological restoration.

In tracing the contours of eschatology in O'Donovan's moral theology, Tranter attends to four significant developments in O'Donovan's thoughts. The theme important for this thesis is O'Donovan's treatment of the *natural ethic*. Tranter observes that there has been an "unmatched" turn to creation in the works of Christian ethicists, which O'Donovan's is undoubtedly one.[86] According to Tranter, O'Donovan's early article "The Natural Ethic" is a significant leitmotif, foundational to his moral theology.[87] Tranter argues that O'Donovan seeks

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[82] Ibid.; Tranter cites theologian David Elliot when making this point.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid., p. 2.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 1.
[87] Ibid., p. 13.

to rescue the natural ethic from Protestant thinking, which attributes "sinful disorder to nature where it ought not," leading to "misapprehending the relationship between creation and redemption."[88] However, Tranter contends that O'Donovan's emphasis on creation over redemption diminishes the importance of eschatology as a "positive ethical import," which Tranter views as a mistake.[89] Conversely, I argue this is why O'Donovan's ethics readily lend themselves to environmental concerns. His ethics, especially in the *Ethics as Theology* series, is directed towards daily existence.

Arguably, O'Donovan's most influential monograph is *Resurrection and Moral Order*. In this work, Tranter sees O'Donovan's attempt to integrate a creation ethic with the kingdom ethic. He argues that, in *Resurrection*, O'Donovan demonstrates eschatology's importance to moral meaning. Restoration, he states, is the definitive eschatological ethic; it highlights the importance of the resurrection of Jesus in redeeming and affirming the created order. However, Tranter believes O'Donovan's appealing to an objective order gleaned from the created order runs afoul of eschatological promises of new creation, either as a discontinuity between a resetting of the "prior creature reality" or a restoration "with the grain of altered nature," that is a transformed creation, severing creatures from their "prior creaturely reality."[90] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser (discussed below) turns to these themes from *Resurrection* in her doctoral thesis to address ecological restoration.

Andrew Errington explores the work of O'Donovan and Aquinas in his book, *In Every Good Path: Wisdom and Practical Reason in Christian Ethics and the Book of Proverbs*. Errington focuses on O'Donovan's moral theology, arguing for a practical application of

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[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid., p. 14.
[90] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 94.

wisdom literature, particularly Proverbs.[91] Errington's approach highlights how the proverbs function as practical reason, drawing on the human desire to do good. He argues that creation's order is more amicable to certain actions than others. Errington handles Proverbs and other biblical texts, like O'Donovan, as scripture; they are informative for shaping Christian conceptions about God and the world. Therefore, the scriptures play an epistemic role, an important consideration if the proverbs are to inform Christian ethical concerns. Errington's work is pertinent to this project for two reasons. First, it is one of the only books to think through the implications of O'Donovan's *Ethics as Theology* series. Second, while Errington does not mention phenomenology, his work demonstrates that practical reason concerns itself with one's everydayness. In attempting to shape human actions as an ethical response to creation, Errington attunes human discernment to the created order. His approach underscores the idea that there is an order to creation, and by attending to it humans can access objective truths about creation and God.

Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser's Doctoral thesis, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature: Towards a Theological Framework for Christian Environmental Action through Ecological Restoration", can be viewed as laying some of the groundwork for this thesis. My project could be broadly read as a continuation of the work she began. Artinian-Kaiser demonstrates the applicability of reframing Oliver O'Donovan's ethics for Christian engagement with the environment in general, and ecological restoration in particular. More

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[91] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path: Wisdom and Practical Reason in Christian Ethics and the Book of Proverbs*. (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019).

importantly, she underscores the lack of attention paid to ecological restoration by theologians.[92]

This thesis shares Artinian-Kaiser's appreciation for O'Donovan's use of natural ethics and the created order. However, as she claims, a "considerable translation and application" of the implications from *Resurrection* must be undergone to address the particular pastoral concerns of restoration.[93] Conversely, O'Donovan's *Ethics as Theology* series is more readily adaptable to this application. In comparison, O'Donovan's approach in *Resurrection* highlights the objectivity of the created order and the resurrection as an affirmation of those goods and a restoration of human agency. His *Ethics as Theology* series is a vision of renewed human agency in creation open to the call of God. O'Donovan considers these works to be complementary.[94]

In her thesis, Artinian-Kaiser's stated objective is to contribute to the overall body of works responding to environmental degradation and species collapse. The starting point for Artinian-Kaiser (and myself) is that these are moral issues. She believes restoration is a means by which Christians can exhibit God's redemptive work in Christ for creation.[95] Artinian-Kaiser explores how Christian theology can act as a guide for ecological restoration, to which ecological damage, as understood by ecologists, is her jumping-off point.[96] I share with her the idea that ecological restoration raises questions about what it means to be human and how that should inform how humans act. In addressing these questions, she demonstrates that the moral

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[92] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature: Towards a Theological Framework for Christian Environmental Action," (PhD Thesis, University of Chester, 2015), https://chesterrep.openrepository.com/handle/10034/347003, p. 15.

[93] Ibid., p. 23.

[94] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World and Time: Ethics as Theology*, *Vol. 1.* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2013), pp. 93-94.

[95] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 2.

[96] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 2.

life is embedded in the environment. Artinian-Kaiser focuses attention on these themes through the resurrection of Jesus and how it represents the redemptive power of Christ for creation.

Though O'Donovan does not present his work as an environmental ethic, his broad attention to natural ethics and creation is a congruous segue to environmental issues. As Artinian-Kaiser writes, "a close reading of his [O'Donovan] work will show, [it is] inherently hospitable to such concerns." [97] Artinian-Kaiser draws primarily from O'Donovan's *Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics*. In it, O'Donovan demonstrates the role of the natural order in shaping ethics, which Artinian-Kaiser finds useful for "exploring what Christian environmental action might look like."[98]

Artinian-Kaiser proposes three principles she takes from *Resurrection* for orienting her project theologically. These are the realist principle, the evangelical principle, and the Easter principle.[99] The realist principle speaks to the notion that there is something real and discernible about the way the world is and how one is to act.[100] The evangelical principle argues that God's redemptive work through Jesus the Christ "changes what Christian action in the natural world will look like, though it does not yet change what the world itself is."[101] Closely tied to this is the Easter principle. The Easter principle asserts that God's work in the resurrection liberates human agency, restoring and fulfilling the intelligibility of creation's order.[102] According to Artinian-Kaiser and O'Donovan, the resurrection vindicates creation and gives purpose to human action within creation.

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[97] Ibid., p. 22.
[98] Ibid., p. 23.
[99] Ibid., pp. 23-25.
[100] Ibid., p. 23.
[101] Ibid., p. 24.
[102] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 25.

I am fully in concert with Artinian-Kaiser's first principle. For creatures, creation provides general principles for how one is to live. However, I diverge from her project on the second two principles. For Christians, the centrality of Christ is unquestionable (Colossians 1:15-20). Furthermore, the resurrection justifies God's redemptive plan for all creation (Romans 8:21). However, I argue that creation, as the given good of God, justifies environmental concern and ecological restoration. I want to avoid the idea that if not for the death of Christ, then creation would be meaningless; insofar as creation is the result of God's work, a work he declares very good (Genesis 1:31). That creation *is*, and that all of life participates in creation, is enough to necessitate human concern for creation. It signals a recognition that humans are an integral part of creation, and life flourishes when they actively participate in creation towards the good. However, when humanity works in its own self-interest to the detriment of creation, death flourishes. Though, I cannot entirely agree with how significant the resurrection is for marking creation as redeemed and thus reshaping human attitudes towards creation, I nevertheless, concur with Artinian-Kaiser that the Christian tradition has considerable resources for directing how a person should respond to environmental harm.[103] I refer to her thesis throughout this work to demonstrate points of agreement and, occasionally, points of departure.

1.8.1.1 *Ethics as Theology Series*

In her review of the Ethics as Theology series, Sarah Coakley discusses O'Donovan's thoughts on love and desire, prayer, and how to attend to others. Regarding desire, she critiques what she believes to be O'Donovan's inability to "grasp the full richness of the significance of

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[103] Ibid., p. 21.

desire in a moral vision."[104] Coakley considers desire an essential aspect of being human, and O'Donovan's lack of attention means he cannot fully address that which she directly connects to one's "bodily 'sexuality and gendered 'difference',"" which is humankind's moral lives.[105] According to Coakley, he fails to see the connection between love and desire and arguably believes pursuing love requires a different ethical starting point.[106]

For O'Donovan, the Pauline prayer of "Abba, Father" frees humankind to affirm God's work and make it one's own. Coakley highlights that this prayer's import marks humans as agents reshaped by the Spirit.[107] Similarly, I want to argue that for humans to see creation with fresh eyes, there must be a fundamental transformation of what it means to be human. Moreover, she points out how all "three core phenomenological categories… [108](self, world and time)" rely on the Spirit for guidance. An aspect I draw attention to throughout this thesis.

If a person is to behave ethically, as Coakley asks, they must reflect on their freedom and how it might occlude and repress others. Coakley considers how this new freedom in the Spirit affects one's relationship to the other – "the gendered other, the 'black' other, the economically-dispossessed other." [109] I ask how a transformed life affects how one thinks about the ecological other and restoration.

Joseph E. Capizzi underscores O'Donovan's ability to read "all events through a theological lens."[110] Capizzi's reading arguably makes it easier to apply O'Donovan's ethics

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[104] Sarah Coakley, "A Response to Oliver O'Donovan's Ethics as Theology Trilogy," *Modern Theology* 36, no. 1, (2020): 186–92. https://doi.org/10.1111/moth.12561. p. 188.
[105] Ibid., p. 190.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid., p. 191.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Sarah Coakley, "A Response to Oliver O'Donovan's Ethics as Theology Trilogy," p. 191.
[110] Joseph E. Capizzi, "Giant: Review of Oliver O'Donovan's Ethics as Theology," *Modern Theology* 36, no.1, (2020): 173–77. https://doi.org/10.1111/moth.12559, p. 174.

toward ecological restoration. Moreover, Capizzi highlights the communal nature of O'Donovan's ethics, demonstrating how O'Donovan approaches the task of moral theology from both the ends of action and the communities where agents act.[111]

Charles Mathewes points out that O'Donovan understands ethics to reflect moral thinking. Ethics aim to "analyze and suggest improvements to the process of practical deliberation as actual humans inhabit it."[112] O'Donovan seeks ethical reflection on the everyday decision processes. For Mathewes, this suggests ethics are of interest to anyone asking "what it means to live a good life."[113] As I understand it, ethics apply to any field, including ecological restoration. How one deliberates about ecological restoration is an ethical inquiry. It opens itself up to moral consideration when restoration concerns itself with what *is good for life*.

Mathewes wants to know from O'Donovan, the relationship between "the "penultimate rest" of death and the ultimate "rest" of the New Creation."[114] Mathewes is eager to hear how the latter informs the former. However, I think Mathews and Tranter are asking a question that O'Donovan has not set out to answer with this series. As a phenomenological project, O'Donovan is after the ethics of everyday existence. Of course, O'Donovan is eschatologically minded in that much of what he says reflects upon human existence in a post-resurrection context. O'Donovan's final book, *Entering into Rest*, is geared towards eschatology, but his ethics address the moral deliberations of today, even when aimed at a future horizon.

Those who believe in a life after death must adjudicate their life in the face of such knowledge. Indeed, a person's belief about life after death shapes their existence, but the New

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[111] Ibid., p. 175.
[112] Charles Mathewes, "A Response to Oliver O'Donovan's Ethics as Theology Trilogy," *Modern Theology* 36, no. 1, (2020): 165–72. https://doi.org/10.1111/moth.12558. p. 167.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid., p. 169.

Creation is something human persons are not epistemically privy, functioning more in the moral imagination than actual knowledge. If the only point to this existence was to get to the next, would there be moral obligations that placed heavy consideration for creation and others?

Jennifer A. Herdt's assessment of the *Ethics as Theology* series draws comparisons between O'Donovan and Barth. Herdt, like the others, stresses O'Donovan's focus on the "natural moral experience and the practical questions of ordinary people."[115] The practicality of the mundane speaks to the phenomenological nature of his approach to ethics, as I discuss below. Like Capizzi, Herdt draws attention to the communal nature of O'Donovan's ethics. She asks O'Donovan's readers to consider the nature of communication and how often it can be misused to enforce power differentials.[116] A key aspect of O'Donovan's applicability to ecological restoration is to show how moral communication can confront these dynamics.

David Elliot focuses on O'Donovan's *Entering into Rest*. Elliot underlines how *love*, as an eschatological end, grounds the work of human agency. Love is the guiding principle for human action, an aspect I highlight in later chapters. Elliot remarks that love may be sovereign but not a "naïve love monism"; instead, love is temporally oriented towards the future in an effort "to coordinate our moral reasoning."[117] He also notes that O'Donovan's use of love suggests that the ends of actions are not individualistic but dependent upon the community.[118] Communities are a significant point of emphasis for O'Donovan and restorationists alike. Restorationists often focus on how community participation and approval are necessary for restoration practices.

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[115] Jennifer A. Herdt, "Oliver O'Donovan's Ethics as Theology and the Struggle for Communication," *Modern Theology* 36, no. 1, (2020): 159–64. https://doi.org/10.1111/moth.12557. p. 160.
[116] Ibid., p. 163.
[117] David Elliot, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan, Entering into Rest: Ethics as Theology, Volume 3," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 31, no. 4 (2018): 493-496, https://doi.org/10.1177/0953946818791862c, p. 494.
[118] Ibid.

Communities imply communication, and communicating well is an essential aspect of ecological restoration. Moral reasoning, when done well, is a community-building activity. Elliot comments on O'Donovan's conception of communication as a good. He states that O'Donovan portrays communication "as goods shared and the good of their *being* shared in community."[119] Communication reveals community, and community is a central concern of ecological restoration.

Elliot also distinguishes the temporal element of community and love. O'Donovan's sense of community, Elliot says, "takes time seriously," acknowledging that communities are intergenerational.[120] As I discuss in chapter 4, temporality is an important feature of ecological restoration. Ecological restoration must contend with intergenerational memory. In my chapter on temporality, I discuss shifting baselines, a problematic issue for restoration. For now, suffice it to say that a community's ecological memory shifts over time, such that they lose sight of ecological change generationally.

Another temporal component of community and restoration is that restoration work often looks to the past to determine how best to restore ecosystems. The act of restoration renders a moral judgement on the past. It indicates that there was a moral wrong perpetrated upon an ecological community. Ecological restoration implies that what happened in a community's history is no longer desirable or good for present and future communities.

Elliot ends with a critique of O'Donovan's methodology. While acknowledging that O'Donovan has methodological underpinnings (i.e., his constant dialogue with scripture), he suggests that O'Donovan's lack of methodological monism (e.g., virtue ethics, command

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[119] Ibid., p. 494.
[120] Ibid.

ethics) leaves a question mark of clarity hanging over O'Donovan's work.[121] Consider this quote by Elliot:

> [O'Donovan's] work is at root 'occasional', perhaps even mostly idiosyncratic. That impression is reinforced by the astonishingly loose structure of the book, whose lack of mapping, transitions and summaries leaves the reader with almost no idea of what will be coming next… while straining to see where it is all going, or quite how it all hangs together.[122]

Conversely, I argue there is a methodology holding O'Donovan's work together and failing to see it leaves one with the impression Elliot has here. With this series, O'Donovan engages in a phenomenological project. Other readers of O'Donovan (discussed below) have made this connection, though mainly in passing. Therefore, a secondary aspect of this project is to construct the phenomenological links between O'Donovan's work and phenomenological concepts. I believe this will provide the methodology Elliot seeks.

Another characteristic of O'Donovan's moral theology is the belief that morality is not a human artifact but is discovered in nature. Luke Bretherton states, "what is moral and the nature of human flourishing is, for O'Donovan, an inductive process. Morality is discovered rather than made." [123] From a Christian perspective, moral deliberation and appropriate responses to these discoveries are filtered through "what has been and will be done for creation as a whole in and through Christ."[124] Creation may provide a directive for human action, but the meaning of actions must be interpreted through the revelation of Christ.

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[121] David Elliot, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*," p. 493.
[122] Ibid., p. 495.
[123] Luke Bretherton, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time: Ethics as Theology, Volume 1: An Induction*," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 27, no. 3, (2014): 365–69. https://doi.org/10.1177/0953946814530239g. p. 366.
[124] Ibid.

According to Bretherton, O'Donovan immerses Christian ethics in everydayness, as opposed to later modern takes on Christian ethics, which "bracket their own social location from the analysis and too often sit so far above the fray that they forget the first task."[125] The first task is understanding the ethicist's work as "bound up with our participation in the church and the world" and navigating their intersection.[126] The second task "entails assembling the intellectual resources" necessary to "understand better what we are doing when we speak and act morally." [127] As the second task indicates, ethics draws on tradition, theological accountability, and interpreting one's context to critique it philosophically and socially.[128] To this, Bretherton adds that one must engage it ethnographically – "the thick description and analysis of the social, political and economic means and conditions of coming to judgment born out of immersion in particular contexts of belief and practice."[129] Theological engagements are no less concerned with the way the world is than any other ethical discipline.

O'Donovan's account of ethics, as something enmeshed with daily existence, provides the necessary ground-up accounting for how one should act in the world while tempering that accounting through the theological lens of Christian doctrine and teachings. A world whose current times could benefit from a theological reinterpretation of the social, political, and economic means, given that it faces its own moment of global ecological peril. As Bretherton notes, "Our moral judgements pertain to and reach towards what is fitting given the whole."[130] Christian ethics necessarily encompasses more than a person's life. There is no 'Christian life' independent of what one calls the world.

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[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Luke Bretherton, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan," p. 366.

1.9   O'Donovan and Phenomenology

I chose O'Donovan as my interlocutor because he is an established reference point in the literature and his connection to phenomenology through his theological ethics (see sections 1.8 through 1.9). Other possible partners included Niels Henrik Gregersen, Lise Sideris, Celia Deane-Drummond, and Gretel Van Wieren. Gregersen was not included in the literature review, so I will provide a brief overview here. I discuss the others in sections 1.6.1 and 1.7. Gregersen's works explore creaturely suffering in a cruciform theology, and a Christology of the material universe itself.[131] His reflection on Christ's eternality and relationship to creation and time led him to propose the concept of *Deep Incarnation*. Gregersen develops a high Christology where the incarnation transcends the human figure of Jesus, extending beyond creaturely flesh into the materiality of all the cosmos. His proposal of deep incarnation attempts to make sense of the mystery of Christ and the cosmic relationship between Jesus and the Logos. A unification of all creation, reconciled in the Cosmic Christ. Gregersen's reasoned approach to the cosmic nature of Christ argues that if God was in Christ the incarnation extends beyond animal flesh into the materiality of all the cosmos. However, while I appreciate Gregersen's use of the incarnation to unify creation in Christ and though others have seen his contributions fertile ground for exploring the ecotheological implications, I have some reservations to this approach.[132] Such as, if God had chosen not to become incarnate, is creation less important? Or does creation have nothing to say about one's relationships to existence *sans* Christ? I argue that my approach affirms creation as a work of God and is worth attention on that ground alone.

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[131] See Gregersen, N. H., 2013, "*Cur Deus Caro*: Jesus and the Cosmos Story". *Theology and Science*, 11(4), 370-393.; Gregersen, N. H., 2016. "The Emotional Christ: Bonaventure and Deep Incarnation". *Dialog*, 55(3), 247-261

[132] Edwards, Denis. *Deep incarnation: God's redemptive suffering with creatures*. Orbis Books, 2019.; also see Celia Dean-Drummond's and Elizabeth Johnson's chapters in Gregersen, Niels Henrik, ed., *Incarnation: On the scope and depth of Christology*. (Fortress Press, 2015).

While Gregersen and the other theologians shared my interest in the intimate nature of Christ and creation, it is O'Donovan's approach to ethics in this series that makes him a suitable interlocutor. In this thesis, I argue that O'Donovan's ethical framework, like ecological restoration, is from the ground up and practical in nature. In other words, his ethics are a phenomenological ethic.

As I have mentioned already, this project is broadly phenomenological. Insofar as I come to know the world, I come to know the relations that give rise to *life*. As a matter of practice more than theory, ecological restoration is engaged with factical existence and lived experience and, therefore, phenomenological. To be broadly phenomenological is to acknowledge that one derives epistemic concerns from their facticity. Dan Zahavi broadly defines phenomenology as "the science or study of the phenomena," with its objective being the appearance of the phenomena – "the way in which the object shows or displays itself."[133] Similarly, Shaun Gallagher describes phenomenology as a concern for "how we experience things."[134] That is, how one encounters the objects of their daily existence. For Martin Heidegger, whose thoughts haunt the work of O'Donovan, phenomenology is a "means to grasp its objects *in such a way* that everything about them which is up for discussion must be treated by exhibiting it directly and demonstrating it directly."[135]

Heidegger asks his readers to re-think Being and Being's relationship to beings. He challenges suppositions about what it means to be a person in the world, prodding deeper thinking about one's situational context and how one encounters and interacts with a world. Heidegger writes that phenomenology "is our way of access to what is to be the theme of

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[133] Dan Zahavi, 2018. *Phenomenology The Basics*. (New York: Routledge, 2019), p. 9.
[134] Shaun Gallagher, *Phenomenology*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 8.
[135] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*. trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 2019), p. 59.

ontology…. *Only as phenomenology, is ontology possible*." [136] In other words, by existing, one comes to know the nature of reality.

As mentioned above, part of this project is to show the links between O'Donovan's themes in the *Ethics as Theology* series and phenomenology. To that end, I use Heidegger not to insinuate that O'Donovan directly follows Heidegger but to define the categories and themes O'Donovan uses, often without explanation. Anyone versed in phenomenology will not fail to recognize the themes in O'Donovan's work. Themes such as self, world, and time are the title of the first book in the trilogy. O'Donovan also speaks of death, technology, and being-in, all categories for which Heidegger is known. I intend to use Heidegger to define phenomenological categories, which will clarify O'Donovan's subject matter for the reader, as O'Donovan is inclined to pick these subjects up while failing to mention where he found them. I do this through breaks in the text I call *phenomenological soundings*. These soundings echo O'Donovan's soundings on sin, in that to gain clarity on a subject, I pause the narrative to explore the subject in more depth, as he does in the case of sin (see *Finding and Seeking pp. 19-23, 81-88, 173-178)*. Soundings are a break from the overarching argument of the thesis, to explore the phenomenological concepts O'Donovan has adopted. I intend the soundings to add depth to the conversation by demonstrating the underlying phenomenology O'Donovan is appropriating in his ethics. He often uses these phenomenological terms and concepts without explanation obscuring the insight his ethical approach provides. For example, if one understands *moods* (see section 2.7.1) as an emotional response, they miss the ontological openness moods reveal and their usefulness as a hermeneutical guide for navigating existence. The purpose in breaking the narrative is to draw one's attention to the concept itself, so that the

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[136] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 60.

reader might apply it to the relevant sections in the thesis. These concepts may have been glossed over if I had not interrupted the narrative with phenomenological soundings. Highlighting the phenomenological characteristics of O'Donovan's work accentuates how his ethics, in this series, takes creation and one's facticity as a fruitful location to build an ethical approach to a world, subjectivity and temporal limits.

O'Donovan, to my knowledge, never calls himself a phenomenologist or expressly asserts that he is doing phenomenology. Nonetheless, several scholars have pointed out that the *Ethics as Theology* series is phenomenological. Jacob Sherman writes, "The entire trilogy can be understood as a kind of phenomenology of Christian formation, which perforce includes within it a phenomenology of the moral life more generally."[137] Likewise, Aaron Perry describes *Self, World and Time* as a phenomenological approach to Christian ethics and theology.[138] Another example is Sarah Coakley, who writes:

> Indeed, although O'Donovan only spatteringly cites Heidegger himself, the French philosophical authors he now warms to are of course all deeply indebted to Heidegger (if only by the need to respond theologically to his challenge); and the very way that O'Donovan sets up his project – by way of the phenomenological description of the triad of self, world and time – is perhaps even consciously evocative of *Sein and Zeit*, albeit with a strongly Christian reassertion of the importance of an eschatological time-beyond-death.[139]

She recognizes in O'Donovan's work a Heideggerian influence, both directly and filtered through French theologians working with phenomenology. Coakley also concludes that the *Ethics as Theology* series is "a veiled 'natural theology' of agency, in which the unashamed God-claims creep up on us out of the rich phenomenology of moral existence."[140] She sees this

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[137] Jacob Sherman, "Oliver O'Donovan, Entering into Rest, Vol. 3 of Ethics as Theology." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 27, no. 3, 335-336, doi:10.1017/S0036930618000522, p. 335.
[138] Aaron Perry, *Biblical Theology for Ethical Leadership: Leaders from Beginning to End*. (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75043-9. p. 55.
[139] Sarah Coakley, "A Response to Oliver O'Donovan's Ethics," pp. 186-187.
[140] Ibid., p. 187.

as something new in O'Donovan's thinking and does not believe this is a project one could have identified within O'Donovan's earlier works.[141]

I believe Coakley is correct to suggest that the theological turn in French phenomenology has encouraged O'Donovan's phenomenological turn in his theology. I would credit this *turn* (if one can call it that, *Resurrection* also demonstrates hints of phenomenology as evidenced in Chapter 2 of that book) with his association with French theologian and phenomenologist Jean-Yves Lacoste. O'Donovan, in *The Appearing of God*, a book O'Donovan translated alongside or near the time of the *Ethics as Theology* series, mentions his long-time friendship and admiration of Lacoste.

In *The Appearing of God*, Lacoste argues that "phenomenology is neutral in the debates between philosophy and theology."[142] For Lacoste, it is not very meaningful to separate phenomenology from theology. Phenomenology is a methodology for understanding phenomena. The phenomenon, he states, "is what appears–to perception, to memory, to anticipation, to imagination, or whatever."[143] The phenomenon refers to more than the merely visible; hence the appearing of God is not outside the realm of phenomenology. The problem is discerning how to "describe and distinguish" how God might appear.[144] As for the frontiers of philosophy and theology, Lacoste declares, "Phenomenology is frontier-free."[145] Lacoste has no qualms with theologians taking up phenomenology in their theology.

Tranter also remarks on O'Donovan's use of phenomenology. In a note on page 192 of *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, Tranter attributes O'Donovan's "intensified attention to

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141 Ibid.
142 Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), p. ix.
143 Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*, p. ix
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid., p. xi.

temporality and its phenomenological texture" to his "fruitful engagement with Lacoste."[146] Tranter argues that the phenomenological texture of the *Ethics as Theology* series "provides, at the first level, a general phenomenology of ethical experience that serves as a propaedeutic to the explicit claims of moral theology, which it insinuates into the unfolding of moral reason's search for wisdom as that search strains towards ultimate horizons."[147] Tranter also claims that the *Ethics as Theology* series provides a "phenomenological richness and perceptiveness about the everyday experience of moral agency in the world."[148] Furthermore, Tranter also argues that O'Donovan displays a "concomitant phenomenological mediation upon the temporal reality of the moral life."[149] It mirrors Heidegger's emphasis in *Being and Time*.

Brian Brock, who has written on technology and ethics, argues that O'Donovan and Heidegger share similar concerns regarding technology and ontology.[150] I will discuss this in more detail in Chapter 5. I want to highlight here that Brock notices in both Heidegger and O'Donovan an emphasis on creation's ability to limit the Nietzschean will-to-power.[151] However, Brock details a critical difference. Heidegger appeals to a divinized earth, while O'Donovan, rightfully sees the natural order as derived from God. Brock asserts, "we see the richness of O'Donovan's account emerging in relation to Heidegger's."[152] However, while Bock sees a congruence between O'Donovan and Heidegger, he also argues for real difference. Brock notes that Heidegger's account lacks any mechanism to ground the created order or

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[146] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 192.
[147] Ibid., p. 217.
[148] Ibid., p. 218.
[149] Ibid., p. 8.
[150] Brian Brock, "The Form of the Matter: Heidegger, Ontology and Christian Ethics." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 3, no. 3 (2001): 257–79. https://doi.org/10.1111/1463-1652.00064.
[151] Brian Brock, "The Form of the Matter," p. 262.
[152] Ibid., p. 271.

humanity preserving that order. O'Donovan, on the other hand, fixes the natural order in God's faithfulness.[153]

The above discussion is to reiterate that O'Donovan, while not identifying as a phenomenologist or even mentioning that he is doing phenomenology, is, at minimum, working with phenomenological themes. It is important to have a basic awareness of how phenomenology uses these terms in which O'Donovan trades. I chose Heidegger to help elucidate these points, as he is the source material for much of the French phenomenology, with which, as Coakley points out, O'Donovan has an affinity.

Of course, the use of Heidegger's work is fraught with difficulties. It is now without question the extent to which Heidegger's philosophy reflects his ties to the National Socialist Party of Germany (Nazism). The publication of Heidegger's *Black Notebooks*, alongside recent works such as *Heidegger's Black Notebooks: Responses to Anti-Semitism*, and the more recent *Heidegger in Ruins: Between Philosophy and Ideology*, lay bare the degree to which Heidegger's philosophy is bound to his antisemitism and Nazism. Heidegger's association with the National Socialist Party is undoubtedly a sober topic that deserves prolonged attention; however, this is not the place for that. It is essential to clarify that Heidegger's critique of modernity had been well-established in philosophy several decades before the breadth of Heidegger's Nazism came to light. The first installment of the *Black Notebook* was released in 2014; to date, eight other installments have been published. Moreover, Heidegger's literary executors actively covered the extent of his Nazism by purposefully sanitizing the philosophers' works of pro-Nazism and antisemitism. Not to make excuses for those who utilize Heidegger's philosophy; however, it is unclear, at this stage, how those who have drawn on Heidegger's

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[153] Ibid.

works, often richly, will be judged and to what extent their insights need to be viewed through the same lens that Heidegger's works will now undoubtedly be examined. Therefore, I wish to be charitable to those who have made fruitful use of Heidegger's philosophy. However, there is no doubt that the scrutiny of his philosophy will only grow more intense and the discoveries potentially darker.

1.10 Dissertation Outline

My thesis, outlined below, moves from world, self, and temporality to the problems associated with modern ecological practices. Arguably, I could have begun with the problem and then presented O'Donovan's theological ethics as a means of answering the problem. However, I choses this configuration in order to think theologically about one's relation Creator and creation and ecological restoration practices, and to then demonstrate how ecological practices have ignored these fundamental components of existence. I begin with world, in general, because O'Donovan starts with world. The world, he argues, is the first thing to which one wakes and is the locus of objective truths. It is only after waking to the world can one wake to the self. Temporality frames the self's existence in the world.

1.10.1 *Moral Reasoning and World Order*

This project's overarching question is how theology and Christian ethics inform how one conceives of the purpose of ecological restoration. In this thesis, I argue for grounding the answer to this question in the facticity of existence. Therefore, I explore ecological restoration and O'Donovan's phenomenological concepts of self, world, and time. In the opening chapter, I detail the relationship between moral reasoning, ecological restoration, and what is meant by the concept of a world. Waking is the dominant metaphor that undergirds O'Donovan's *Ethics as Theology* series. According to O'Donovan, one wakes to their *self*, their *world*, and their

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time. Waking is the recognition that one is morally obligated to self, world, and time, which entails responsibility and action. O'Donovan argues that to wake is an openness to Spirit and being led by Spirit.

However, in waking to a *world* of obligation, how does one ground their obligations and actions? According to O'Donovan, "the Natural Ethic" aids a person in grounding their moral response to creation. The natural ethic is a teleological attempt to solve moral disagreements concerning the structure of reality. Creation provides the ontological guide for human moral obligation and epistemic access to the call of God's wisdom. Practical reason operates in the world to discern good and bad reasons for acting. The purpose of the natural ethic is to call humanity back to its moral obligations, and I argue that this includes acts of ecological restoration. Creation provides a guide for Christian ethics. Ethics elucidate one's moral responsibility to the world around them.

1.10.2 *Human Agency and Ecological Restoration*

In this third chapter, I explore the role of human persons in ecological restoration. I argue that humans are the only creatures responsible for creation. However, they are also the only creature responsible for the current ecological crisis. Humans operate in the liminal space between the divine and the created. Conversely, language like this may raise concerns regarding anthropocentrism. To avoid anthropocentrism, I appeal to the person of Christ. *In-Christ*, human persons can learn to relate to creation as both responsible for creation and as vital members of the ecological community. Humans are neither the lords of creation nor *another creature among creatures*, bearing no responsibility.

I begin with the metaphor of waking to the self. To wake to the self, O'Donovan argues, is to attend to oneself. One must locate themselves within the world and their role in it before

they can take responsibility for it. A person must wake to the idea that they are contextualized creatures, and context shapes how a person understands the world. O'Donovan contends that one must also wake to their agency, which is the first step in becoming responsible for creation. Acknowledging agency emphasizes the importance of one's actions and the consequences of those actions. Agency is the ability to do, a trait humans share with other creatures. However, humans are distinctly moral agents, implying that human actions carry a burden of responsibility. Ecological restoration is one way to acknowledge the burden of responsibility humans have for creation. Answering the call of God's wisdom in the form of creation-focused action demonstrates faithful obedience. Furthermore, ecological restoration asserts a value system. As a result, theology has something to offer restoration because restoration and theology share concerns over the question of value. In Chapters 4 and 5, I demonstrate how misaligned values affect restoration practices.

1.10.3 *A Time to Restore*

In the fourth chapter, I detail O'Donovan understanding of waking to temporality. Ecological restoration is intimately linked with temporality. Restoration mobilizes temporal frameworks to guide normative restoration practices. However, historical frames give way to grand narrative and ecology mythos that I believe are incongruent with a theological horizon for ecological restoration. Grand narratives and mythos lead to unrealistic expectations for restoration by giving deference to the past and are guilty of certain forms of historicism. Conversely, in the face of the current ecological crisis, ecological restoration's temporal horizon might be better served when oriented to the future. I will argue that O'Donovan sees creation as the lure of the call of wisdom summoning human response and that the call of wisdom extends across past, present, and future, encouraging creaturely action that is always striving but never reaching a consummation in God, in this present age. Applying this type of frame to

restoration emphasizes the dynamic nature of creation and pushes back against restoration practices that attempt to overly rely on historical references or pristine conditions to determine best restoration practices.

1.10.4 *The Question Concerning Neoliberalism, Technology, and the Theological Key*

Chapter 5 is dedicated to how modern cultures, institutions, and forms of governance have failed to wake to the world, self, and time. Failing to wake to the basic phenomenological tenets of existence has led to disastrous results for creation. Moreover, restoration practices have succumbed to what Heidegger and O'Donovan describe as the essence of technology. The framing of creation through the lens of technology reduces creation, including humans, to resources to be consumed. I argue that the modern manifestation of the essence of technology is neoliberalism. Neoliberalism, particularly in Western cultures, understands the world in terms of economic markets. It is a subversive horizon that has infiltrated all levels of society: government, education, science, and even ecological restoration. Theologically, neoliberalism sets itself up as a shaper of worlds and, therefore, as a theological foil to God and the call of God's wisdom. Neoliberalism attempts to make the world conform to its image.

Ecosystem Services is the most dominant form of neoliberal restoration theories. Ecosystem Services are a market-based approach that seeks to monetize an ecosystem's value related to human concerns. Other forms are carbon and stream restoration mitigation. These forms of mitigation treat creation as a credit that can be bartered. Restoration projects facilitate ecosystem destruction by offsetting the destruction of one ecosystem with the restoration of another. I argue that mitigation banking commodifies creation and treats it as something to consume, with a faux veneer of environmental concern.

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2   Moral Reason and World Order

2.1   Introduction

I begin with the self-communicating Good of God known as a world. Starting with the world and moral reasoning provides a theological ground for considering how Christians might respond to ecological restoration and creation. As I stated in the introduction, my primary audience is Christians or Christian practitioners who want to think theologically about ecological restoration. Nevertheless, those less inclined to think theologically about creation will hopefully still find value by replacing the divine with another transcendental.

Ecological restoration is a scientific field with particular objectives and practices. However, restoration is not a value-neutral subject. The questions of 'Why do we restore?', 'What to restore?' and 'How to restore it?' are value latent. Theology and science are overlapping spheres regarding the question of values. To value something implies a ground, a standard by which to judge. For Christians, that ground is God. In this chapter, I look at how that ground might reveal itself in creation and what that does for restoration. O'Donovan's ethics, read through an ecologically sensitive lens, deliver a guide for thinking about restoration and restoration practices.

O'Donovan argues that moral reasoning attempts to provide a coherent means of thinking through complex problems. According to O'Donovan, the world is the province of practical reason, which speaks to the phenomenological aspect of this thesis. There is the world as it is, and then there is the world as it gives itself, which is the world a person experiences. In his *Ethics as Theology* series, O'Donovan explores moral reasoning by interrogating human experience. He argues that knowledge of the world and God is revealed in the created order. The created order is both the object and source of moral reasoning. One reflects, deliberates, and acts in the world, but it is the world that helps shape their moral imagination. Creation can

do this because its order points to a Creator. Attunement to the world and its divine order can aid Christians in responding to ecological restoration.

This chapter explores how the created order is a source of moral reasoning. The created order reflects the wisdom of God, and out of creation, the wisdom of God calls. Pursuing wisdom involves recognizing our limited knowledge and striving for deeper understanding. A deeper understanding of creation offers insight into creation's order, insight that a person can apply to thinking about ecological restoration. If God, as Creator, is an ontological feature of reality, then creation reflects the divine. Given that premise, I argue restoration practices attuned to creation's order are aligned with the principles of God's wisdom. The question is how does one recognize the call of wisdom. O'Donovan argues that one must wake to their self, world, and time. The metaphor of waking refers to a person's recognition of their moral experience. One wakes to existence and their obligation to the created order. O'Donovan provides the natural ethic as a way for discerning one's obligation to creation and knowledge of the structure of reality in so much as a finite mind can comprehend. Despite that impediment, one's interactions in factical existence provide an understanding of how the world is and how to act in it. Ultimately, it is God's wisdom that calls us to participate in creation's order and to love and be loved.

2.1.1   *Waking*

O'Donovan asks the reader to begin this exploration of the "bad idea" of a Christian ethic with the metaphor of waking.[1] To wake is to realize that one is already "caught up in the middle of things."[2] A person wakes to an awareness of moral experience. It "is not constructed

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[1] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World and Time*, p. vii.
[2] Ibid., 3.

or achieved out of non-moral experience"; instead, it is something "present from the beginning and distinct in kind."[3] In *Self, World, and Time*, O'Donovan emphasizes that moral awareness is situated "within the wider scheme of things," and one must "identify its presuppositions and its function in the world."[4] At the event of one's being, a person is already indebted to existence, swimming in what O'Donovan writes is a "sea of moral obligations … acknowledging claims here, asserting responsibilities there."[5] These obligations may be an act of one's choosing, but most often, they are set upon a person, quite possibly with them failing to realize the duties to which they are indebted.

To be awake is to be aware of not only one's surroundings but also one's horizon. O'Donovan claims that "we *awake* to our moral experience in the beginning. What seems like the beginning is not really a beginning at all. We wake to find things going on, and ourselves going on in the midst of them."[6] Where is moral experience found? O'Donovan finds it "where we find ourselves, active subjects caught up in the middle of things."[7] Not all experiences are moral experiences. Moral experiences suggest that one's actions and choices have objective value. O'Donovan states that one cannot test the ground of morality; since, from the beginning, a person is already engaged in moral experience. He asserts, "*Already* we are asking questions about our actions and obligations. *Already* we are contesting the reasons for acting this way or in that way."[8] One awakes to an awareness of the value innate in their choices.

In O'Donovan's account a person is already obligated in their facticity, but to whom do they owe this obligation? To be clear, moral experience is not religious experience. Everyone

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[3] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World and Time*, p. 3.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid., p. 2.
[7] Ibid., p. 3.
[8] Ibid., p. 2.

is engaged in moral experiences and moral choices, religious or otherwise. How one grounds their moral experiences varies. Nonetheless, O'Donovan argues that the metaphor of waking frames moral experience as "Christian provenance."[9] He acknowledges that philosophy can make use of this metaphor, arguing that "it is the task of moral philosophy to account for moral experience efficiently, equipping it with ordered concepts that clarify its logic and open it to critical discussion."[10] To this task, theology adds its conceptual ordering of the world, to which scripture provides guidance. For O'Donovan, it is the reciprocity of the givenness of a world and the givenness of scripture that shapes a Christian's moral experience. Therefore, the metaphor of waking's "theological justification" is that it "leads moral experience back to its source in God's purposes."[11] If this is the case, then it must inform how one navigates their moral experience *with* the world. Theological reflection can lead one back to God's purposes for creation.

The term waking has three embedded meanings O'Donovan has drawn from the New Testament. They are to "get up," "to stay awake," and "'to lose sleep' over something."[12] To be awake is to be concerned for one's situation, but more than that, it is to get up and do something about it. It is to have moral thinking, moral awareness, and make moral choices. At least, that is the task of one who is awake. Failing to wake is to display an "Ignorance of the moment."[13] It is to be unaware of the signs of the times. Wakefulness, then, must not be one's ordinary state; something must wake a person.

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[9] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World and Time*, p. 6.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., p. 7.
[12] Ibid., p. 8.
[13] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World and Time*, p. 9.

What then wakes them, and what are they awakened to? O'Donovan argues that to be awake is an openness to "*being led by* Spirit."[14] Here I think the reader should pay attention to O'Donovan's disregard for the definite article. O'Donovan tells his reader that "the life of 'Spirit'" is a "life of intelligence, responsibility, and freedom."[15] All of which are formative for the moral life. In *Self, World, and Time*, O'Donovan declares that to speak of Pentecost is to speak of the *life* of the Holy Spirit, and talk of *the* Spirit is speech about "Christ, revealed, crucified, and raised from the dead."[16] O'Donovan writes:

> The Spirit, like the Creator Father, veils himself, and as what we discuss in the ordinary course of business is, in the one case, the order of created goods, so in the other it is the ordinary practical impulses and movements of the human subject, but now heightened and drawn into the risen life of Christ, who is set before our eyes as goal and end to follow. What we find, as we turn our gaze forward, is not that we leave "old" forms of moral thinking behind, but that those forms of thinking are renewed, given back to us incomparably more disciplined, more informed, more comprehensive, more inviting, than they could have been before.[17]

Therefore, the awakened life in the resurrected Christ steps into the "life of Spirit."[18] For O'Donovan, the daily choices and actions one engages in have spiritual implications. Being awakened to the life of Spirit does not provide a person with *special* forms of thinking.[19] Instead, it renews one's moral sensibilities in light of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Tranter notes that this is in keeping with "O'Donovan's approach towards moral conversion 'from below'" distancing itself from "dogmatic approaches 'from above'."[20] Though Tranter does not elaborate, he suspects O'Donovan's moral theology *from below* is

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[14] Ibid., p. 4.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid., p. 95.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., p. 75.
[20] Samuel. Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 219.

"articulating moral reason in such a way that it can be seen as latent with religious commitments."[21] The life of Spirit reflects the renewed agency of the person in their facticity.

In awakening, one realizes their obligation to a life in Spirit. A life of debt to Spirit, O'Donovan argues, is not distinct from what one owes anyone else. It is "precisely that we owe anyone anything" that one can even speak of having moral obligations at all.[22] One's moral commitments are not extraneous to the world; outside of a person's existence, as one *in-the-world*, a person has no moral obligations. According to O'Donovan, my debt is not to Spirit nor the flesh, but to life. He writes—

> We are in some sense debtors to the business of living, but that means there is a difference between *being alive* and *living*, between the life we live without trying to do so and the life we must *reach out* to live, by knowing ourselves not merely materially conditioned but spiritual: "If by the Spirit you put to death the body, you shall live."[23]

A person's obligation is to Spirit, but they fulfill that obligation within the created order. Nevertheless, "the spiritual life is a *directed* life."[24] A life directed to "free action" through "a word of truth addressed to us, a declaration of the way things are between the world and ourselves."[25] Where does that word of truth exist? According to O'Donovan, in creation and scripture. A Spirit-led life calls a person to wake and leave their state of slumber. To what then shall they wake? They wake to a renewed agency, to be brought "sharply back to the task in hand, the deed to be performed, the life to be lived."[26] O'Donovan, drawing on the theology of

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[21] Ibid.
[22] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World and Time*, p. 4.
[23] Ibid., p. 5.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World and Time*, p. 9.

Paul, says, "we wake to *life*, wake to its *direction*, and we awake to the *truth* that makes it possible."[27] One is called to wake to a world, a self, and a time.

Despite O'Donovan devoting a significant number of words to developing his metaphor of waking and its underwriting of the entire *Ethics as Theology* series, other readers of his have paid it little attention. Tranter says almost nothing about the metaphor of waking. Where O'Donovan claims that one must *wake* to self, world, and time, Tranter only asks that one be attentive.[28] Certainly, attentiveness is a key aspect of waking. However, it fails to impart the full context of what O'Donovan is doing. I argue that reading O'Donovan's *Ethics as Theology* series with a phenomenological lens adds clarity and nuance to what O'Donovan is doing throughout this series. However, before I discuss the import of phenomenology, I will discuss how key contemporary interlocutors Artinian-Kaiser, Bretherton, and Errington contend with the metaphor of waking.

Artinian-Kaiser believes that waking as a metaphor paints the individual as an isolated subject among others. She argues that O'Donovan has failed to adumbrate how "human moral development" depends upon "our lived proximity to, and engagement with, other creatures."[29] I contend that a phenomenological reading will provide a different perspective, which I argue below. For now, Artinian-Kaiser argues—

> For instance, in [O'Donovan's] metaphor of 'waking', while offering a helpful way to envision what it is like to become aware of oneself as a moral agent and of the world as a field of action, he fails to give an account of that waking, thus conveying a view of the moral agent as an isolated creature – without an evolutionary history – who looks out upon the world to appreciate or reject it.[30]

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[27] Ibid., p. 9-10.
[28] Samuel. Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 196.
[29] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 194.
[30] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 194.

Moreover, Artinian-Kaiser suggests that O'Donovan and theologians have long had "their eyes closed" to the "entanglements between humans and their environments."[31] She thinks that humans need to awaken to their indebtedness to their environment. Recognizing that human moral development has been fostered by "our lived proximity to and engagement with, other creatures" can deepen the meaning of waking.[32] She argues that waking in this context awakens restorationists to the fact that they are not restoring pristine states. Instead, ecosystems "in which humans have already been constructing niches alongside other creatures, forming and being formed by the environments they inhabit."[33] To which she is entirely correct. Humankind would not exist if it were not for other creatures and their geographical and geological location. Humans are indebted to their ecological surroundings and history.[34] In fact, to some extent, this is *precisely* what the metaphor of waking is meant to relay.

Bretherton also discounts the effectiveness of waking as a metaphor. He is concerned that this motif underplays the "radical nature of conversion and the new moral knowledge Christ reveals."[35] Bretherton worries that with wakefulness, O'Donovan trades the transformative work of the self, performed by Christ, for a "moral conversion of the self" that is little more than a "recollection, refinement and perfection of what we already could know." [36] For Bretherton, if waking is transformative of human moral knowledge, then there is little left for the work of Christ on the cross. Bretherton believes he has identified a tension in O'Donovan's

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[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] See Esther Herrmann, et. al., "Humans have evolved specialized skills of social cognition: the cultural intelligence hypothesis," *Science* 317, (2007):1360–1366.; Micahel P. Meuchlenbein ed., *Basics in Human Evolution*. (London: Academic Press, 2015), pp. 85-101.; Kenneth Hewitt, 2010. "Gifts and Perils of Landslides: Catastrophic rockslides and related landscape developments are an integral part of human settlement along upper Indus streams," *American Scientist* 98, no. 5, (2010): 410-419.
[35] Luke Bretherton, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan," p. 367.
[36] Luke Bretherton, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan," p. 367.

thought, stating that this would be "clearly unintended given the place of resurrection" in O'Donovan's work. Bretherton argues that if this is the case, then wakefulness "seems to lose the emphasis given in his earlier work on the eschatological and thence evangelical nature of Christian moral knowledge."[37] He suggests this could be because of an "inevitable and explicit tension" due to the "continuity and discontinuity of Christian ethics with other forms of ethical analysis."[38] Conversely, I contend that a phenomenological reading of wakefulness alleviates some of Bretherton's concerns. Primarily when understood under the broader pneumatological phenomenology of *Being-in-Christ* presented in chapter three.

Errington discusses the *waking* metaphor in *Every Good Path* in two sections. The first is found in a discussion on practical reason and later in the chapter, where he associates waking with faith. Regarding the former, Errington, quoting O'Donovan from *Self, World and Time*, writes this:

> The experience of "waking," of "coming-to to what is happening and to how we are already placed," is something common to human life, and practical thought is "the rational expression of our existence-towards-action." Self, world, and time name the three key elements of natural moral reasoning.[39]

Errington emphasizes that *waking* relates to one's contextualized coming to be and practical reason, with practical reason pushing one to see that the gift of moral thought is only possible through God's renewal of human agency.[40] To awake in this first instance, Errington believes, is to make the human agent aware of the God that grounds moral thought. I agree that this is not foreign to the concept of waking; however, it does not go far enough—more on that to come in chapter two.

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[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 154.
[40] Ibid.

In a footnote, Errington argues that O'Donovan's metaphor of waking was influenced by Spaemann's awakening, attributing it to the impression Spaemann has made on O'Donovan. Holger Zaborowski writes that Robert Spaemann's metaphor of awaking is meant "to conceptualize how a transcendent, absolute, and unconditional horizon is always already present in human life."[41] I agree with Errington that Spaemann has influenced O'Donovan's thoughts, so it is curious that despite citing Spaemann several times throughout the series, O'Donovan never cites Spaemann regarding waking. It may be that Spaemann's metaphor of awakening does not go far enough for O'Donovan. O'Donovan's conceptualization of waking shares much with Spaemann's metaphor of awakening; however, they fundamentally differ in scale and scope. Spaemann's awakening sheds light on what it means to be a person, awakened by the infinite horizon that is the ground of their existence and awakens them to reality. However, in this series, O'Donovan's thesis focuses on the limited horizon of human existence. It is waking to the moment of response to the call of the life of Spirit. Equally, neither are they opposed; instead, they should be seen as complementary, similar to how the *Ethics as Theology* series complements *Resurrection and Moral Order*.

Regarding Spaemann's metaphor of awakening, Zaborowski does not draw quite as straight a line from awakening to the absolute horizon. Instead, Zaborowski defines Spaemann's awakening as a "metaphor of the essential movement of human beings towards the reality of *Selbstsein*."[42] *Selbstsein* "is the Being *of the person*, that is to say the dynamic having-of-one's-nature."[43] Zaborowski also defines it as "the very Being that, as the being of the nature-having

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[41] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 154; Holger Zaborowski, *Robert Spaemann's Philosophy of the Human Person: Nature, Freedom, and the Critique of Modernity*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 236.

[42] Holger Zaborowski, *Robert Spaemann's Philosophy of the Human Person*, p. 221.

[43] Ibid., p. 218.

person, is the paradigm of being both in itself and for us."[44] God, as the absolute horizon, is present in the person that *awakens* them to reality. While this is slightly different from how Errington stated, it shows that O'Donovan's waking metaphor resonates with Spaemann's awakening. I maintain that the difference between them to be O'Donovan's commitment to a ground-up exploration of the human person in the *Ethics as Theology* series, and Spaemann's position is distinctly top-down.

Spaemann, in *Happiness and Benevolence*, expresses the top-down approach to awakening. For Spaemann, God is the ultimate ground and, therefore, the ultimate horizon, awakening a person to their reality. Following Heidegger, he argues that the base of all purposes is an *in-order-to* which is always *for-the-sake-of*, and this, Spaemann defends, is "accurately described, in this analysis, as an awakening to 'actuality'," or as "awakening to reality."[45] Spaemann maintains that "everything in our world which has significance only shows itself in this its function, not as its own self, not its own reality."[46] Everything has its purpose *for-the-sake-of* the final end. Heidegger calls this the totality of equipment (an end, not a final end); for Spaemann, it is God or the absolute horizon. However, an *end*, final or not, is not "that which is to be realized"; instead, it is "presupposed as a ground in every realization."[47] To which Spaemann concludes, "The showing-itself of this ground is that which we call awakening to reality or 'the becoming real of reality for me.'"[48] The revelation of God in each moment as the ground of each event awakens a person to reality. Conversely, for O'Donovan, it is an awakening to each event as a world to which I am morally obligated to act through a *life of*

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[44] Ibid., note 171.
[45] Robert Spaemann, *Happiness and Benevolence*. trans. by Jeremiah Alberg (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2000), p. 104.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Robert Spaemann, *Happiness and Benevolence*, p. 104.

Spirit. Both attribute the waking or awakening to the divine, one as top-down, the other bottom-up. However, on Spaemann's account, one never fully awakes. Zaborowski notes, "Awakening, however, is an infinite process. Full awakening can never be achieved."[49] The person awakens to the absolute horizon already present, the presupposed ground of Being. In the face of awakening to the infinite, the finite could never be fulfilled. It is a continual striving toward Being. On that note, it shares much with Heidegger's notion of the authentic person, which can only be judged upon death.

O'Donovan's waking is also continuous, as he states, "Wakefulness is anything but a settled state"[50] O'Donovan begins with facticity, one's everyday existence and from there one wakes to creation and God. A person wakes to their context, to their presence in the present. Time is the third waking O'Donovan commends one to attend (discussed in Chapter 4). However, to wake temporally is to recognize the present moment, "the present being our moment of purchase" to act.[51] Unlike Spaemann, the horizon O'Donovan sets before his reader is the present moment, "*disposing of* the past and *appropriating* the future."[52] The horizon is not the absolute unconditional horizon of Spaemann's. Instead, O'Donovan argues that the present is "Constituted, in Heidegger's expression, by its "horizons," the points at which past and future meet in interface, our hold on the present is simply a moment of coming together and opening up, when what we *have* been faces what we *may* be."[53]

Like Tranter, Errington's second discussion of waking speaks about waking as making aware. Errington writes, "in the New Testament the theme of "waking" is persistently

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[49] Holger Zaborowski, *Robert Spaemann's Philosophy of the Human Person*, p. 221.
[50] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 9.
[51] Ibid., p. 15.
[52] Ibid., p. 15.
[53] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 15.

associated with being aware of the time."[54] Errington then presents O'Donovan's quote in parallel —"Being awake, he [O'Donovan] writes, means being 'aware of the truth of a world,' by which he [O'Donovan] means 'an order of things that stands behind and before' our existence, which 'was and will be.'"[55] To which, Errington argues, is O'Donovan's defense of an objective world: "His primary aim in this is to defend the objectivity of the world: the world is not simply *my* world."[56] In response, Errington asserts that O'Donovan "is missing a clear recognition that the world is something in motion, something to which certain critically important things have happened."[57] This reading is slightly perplexing, as O'Donovan, a couple of paragraphs later, states —"We shall have to reckon not only with the fact that there is a world, but with what the world is like, where it has come from, where it is going, and how it holds together."[58] This reads as a recognition of a world in motion, bringing me to my first phenomenological sounding

2.1.2 *Phenomenological Sounding on Waking, the Horizon, and Thrownness*

As I stated in the introduction, on my reading, O'Donovan is working with phenomenological categories, which need to be attended to when it will help to clarify what O'Donovan is doing. What is missed by these readers of O'Donovan is how closely O'Donovan's understanding resonates with Heidegger's use of the waking metaphor. Arguably a phenomenological understanding will address some of the misgivings voiced towards his metaphor of waking—as a lack of attention to the environment humans inhabit, a conflation of

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[54] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 188.
[55] Ibid., pp. 188-189; Errington also associates waking with an awareness of faith to make the same point.
[56] Ibid., p. 189.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 10.

waking with awareness, and the suggestion that O'Donovan fails to recognize a world in motion.

For Heidegger, Awakening is "not ascertaining something at hand, but letting what is asleep become wakeful." [59] In Heidegger's metaphor of awakening one wakes to "*a fundamental attunement*," which sustains one's philosophizing.[60] Philosophizing is calling into question one's existence and alignment to a world. Waking, Heidegger argues, seeks a fundamental attunement to what occupies one's concern. He writes, "Attunements are the fundamental ways in which we *find* ourselves *disposed* in such and such a way."[61] As J. M. Magrini explains, "Attunement (*Befindlichkeit*) represents the ways in which we find ourselves in the world."[62] In short, it is one's particular context, which Heidegger refers to as one's thrownness. It is how one comports themselves to the world they find themselves in. For Heidegger attunement is waking as action—"awakening is an acting, we must *act* in accordance with it." [63] To wake to creation is to act in accordance with the way the world is. The phenomenological concepts of waking and attunement situate a person in their world. I argue that when it comes to restoration, this recontextualizing of human situatedness moves the focus away from individualistic concerns (e. g. anthropocentric needs) towards more pluralistic interests such as overall ecological health. Waking and attunement draw attention to the interconnectedness between human persons and their world.

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[59] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*. Studies in Continental Thought. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 59.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid., p. 58.

[62] J. M. Magrini, "Worlds Apart in the Curriculum: Heidegger, Technology, and the poietic Attunement of Literature." *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 44, no. 5 (2012): 500-521, https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2010.00718.x. p. 502.

[63] Martin Heidegger, The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics, p. 68.

Attunement and waking occur in close connection with Heidegger's concept of a horizon. In *Self, World, and Time* O'Donovan acknowledges that he is working with Heidegger's definition of a horizon.[64] At the mention of horizon, one might imagine themselves as an observer staring out at a vast expanse of possibility. However, what Heidegger means by horizon is much more limiting. For Heidegger, a horizon is something "which we can neither widen nor go beyond"; it limits the "intellectual activities performed 'within' it."[65] A horizon functions like a horse's blinders to keep it undistracted and focused on the task at hand.

Hans-Georg Gadamer, a student of Husserl and Heidegger, has written extensively on horizons. For Gadamer, "Every finite present has its limitations", and "The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point."[66] However, to have a horizon is not a definitive limit, according to Gadamer. To have no horizon, he states, is to "not see far enough and hence over-values what is nearest to him."[67] Conversely, a person who has a horizon knows to look beyond it. He argues that to have a horizon is to know "the relative significance of everything within his horizon, whether it is near or far, great or small."[68] The key consideration, according to Gadamer, is to have the correct horizon for the purpose. O'Donovan is not intentionally working within a static frame; rather, it is an acknowledgement that in this moment of action, I am limited to the horizon the present provides. However, there is not a singular horizon. For instance, a person can choose to view existence within a theological horizon, or as I discuss in Chapter 5, an economic horizon. Recognizing that one has a horizon will benefit restoration by understanding how horizons have limits and that there

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[64] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 15.
[65] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 19, note 4.
[66] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. (New York: Crossroad, 1982), p. 302.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.

are multiple horizons by which to conceptualize restoration projects, not all of which are beneficial. For instance, in Chapter 5 I discuss how an economic horizon is harmful for the practice of ecological restoration.

Regarding the question of motion raised by Errington, Gadamer argues that horizons are "something into which we move and that moves with us".[69] For Gadamer, the "the horizon of the past … is always in motion."[70] Gadamer's thought on horizons coalesces around the idea that "There is no more an isolate horizon of the present in itself than there are historical horizons which have to be acquired. *Rather, understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves*."[71] O'Donovan expresses a similar sentiment—

> There are vast tracts of time past, and quite possibly of time future, which lie open to our speculation and imagination; there are ways of experiencing the present which shut out the horizons of past and future and concentrate wholly on the passing moment. But the only time of *practical* immediacy is this future moment offered to present wakefulness. It is a future moment because we must still act into it; it is not realized yet. But in a sense it is also present, because it is now, before we act, that we can confront it and may deliberate about it.[72]

O'Donovan is very much aware of the motion of the world's temporality. In his account, a person awakes to the moment of action and obligation—a responsibility to the next moment in the perpetual motion experienced by everyone. O'Donovan's point is, "I reflect, but cannot deliberate, on what I ought to have done last week. I imagine, but cannot deliberate about what my life will be like in many years hence."[73] My horizon is constrained by the social location and time I was born in and called out of; Heidegger calls this *thrownness*.

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[69] Ibid., p. 304.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 306.
[72] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, pp. 15-16.
[73] Ibid., p. 16.

In the preface to *Self, World and Time*, O'Donovan writes, "I embarked on Christian Ethics as I embarked on life and faith themselves, by being catapulted into it."[74] It is an admission that his life and faith are, to a certain degree, a product of his having been thrust into a particular moment in history. To awake, then, is to wake, in part, to one's thrownness. It is "our coming-to to what is already happening and to how we are already placed."[75] To be catapulted is to be shot like a projectile; it is to be *thrown*.

Thrownness speaks to the context of one's being *there*. Heidegger describes it as "the *facticity of its being delivered over*."[76] As a person, according to Heidegger, I am a "Being which has been thrown and submitted to the 'world'."[77] For Heidegger, thrownness is to be "already in a definite world and alongside a definite range of definite entities within-the-world." Katherine Withy, a philosopher of Heidegger suggests, "to be thrown is to have a starting point—something that we already have or are … with which we are stuck."[78] Starting points are "all sorts of things—various situations, our lives, our culture, and so on."[79] Charles E. Scott makes this final point:

> Human spirit does not occur flesh-free. The syntheses of body and reflective consciousness are never outside time. We find ourselves occurring with answers and meanings that were generated and mutated over time and under all manner of circumstances. "Thrownness" means in part that alertness, rationality and other aspects of living always happen in the midst of realities, truths, unresolved ambiguity, complex entanglements and the strange, given requirements of being alive.[80]

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74 Ibid., p. ix.
75 Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 2.
76 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 174.
77 Ibid., p. 204.
78 Katherine Withy, *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674286771, p. 72.
79 Ibid.
80 Charles E. Scott, "Care and Authenticity," in *Key concepts*, ed. Brett W. Davis (New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 59.

Thrownness, according to Scott, encompasses the entirety of being human, even one's flesh. Artinian-Kaiser is right to point out that O'Donovan has not expressly acknowledged the impact one's environment has on the development of human persons. However, a phenomenological account of thrownness does not preclude such a reading; it arguably demands it\. Thrownness speaks to the context a person is born into, a product of history not easily isolated from its ecological foundations. There is leeway here for those inclined to read the entirety of evolution into the concept of thrownness.[81]

If one accepts that O'Donovan is working with Heidegger's categories of horizons (which he claims to be) and thrownness, then waking cannot simply mean being aware. Instead, awareness, when used in this thesis means no less than waking. It is a phenomenological awareness. It is one thing to be aware of a chair in the room; it is another to reflect and deliberate on it, e.g., its maker and the context of its coming to be, and to allow those thoughts to shape one's conception of it. Likewise, when a person awakes to find themselves in an ecological environment, should they not reflect and deliberate on its purpose, its creator, and its coming to be? Even more so, if they desire to perform restoration by restoring an ecosystem to some state of affairs it does not currently have. Extending O'Donovan's theological metaphor of waking to ecosystems elucidates a person's moral obligations to the environment. In waking to a world, self, and time, one awakes to the realm of moral obligations, to ethics.

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[81] Evolutionary processes alongside environmental pressure has led to a variety of adaptations and traits that make modern-day humans what they are. Environmental and social factors in evolution have led to increased brain size, use of language, emotions, bipedal motion, tool making, and symbols. All of these provide the context of human thrownness. See: Rene J. Herrera and Ralph Garcia-Betrand, *Ancestral DNA, Human Origins, and Migrations*, (Academic press: London, 2018); John H. Evans, *What is a Human?: What the Answers Mean for Human Rights*. (New York: Oxford University, 2016).; Brigitte M. Holt, "Anatomically modern homo sapiens," in *Basics in Human Evolution*, ed. Michael P. Meuchlenbein (Massachusetts: Elsevier, 2015), 177-192.

2.2 The Natural Ethic

According to Tranter, O'Donovan's article "The Natural Ethic" served as a basis of his moral theology "throughout his career."[82] The natural ethic, O'Donovan argues, is a "natural teleology", in that it attempts account for moral disagreements regarding "the structure of reality."[83] Before diving into the natural ethics, I start with what O'Donovan means by nature and natural. If one reads "The Natural Ethics", they will notice that O'Donovan uses nature several different ways. The first, he uses as I do, to delineate all non-anthropogenic aspects of creation. What is typically understood when someone says they took a walk in nature. He also refers to nature to refer to the essence of an entity, where I have used the term Being. Therefore, things can be natural as occurring in nature, or they can be natural as in an outworking of a thing's nature. In this section, I have tried to only cite O'Donovan's use in the first sense, to reduce confusion.

In *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, Northcott proposes that natural law requires an ecological revision. Arguably, this is what Artinian-Kaiser and I are attempting to do while working with O'Donovan's framing. What then does O'Donovan mean by natural law and how is it related to what I am arguing is his natural theology? Natural law, as defined by O'Donovan, is the idea that—

> there are natural kinds of things, and they are constituted by a teleological order to their different ways of flourishing and success; these bear witness to a system of ends which includes us, too, and must be reckoned with when we ask how we may treat other things, and how we conduct ourselves.[84]

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[82] Samuel. Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 13.

[83] Oliver O'Donovan, "The Natural Ethic," in *Essays in Evangelical Social Ethics*, ed. David F. Wright, (Wilton, Conn: Morehouse-Barlow Co., 1983), p. 21.

[84] Oliver O'Donovan, "2011 Natural Law Lecture: The Path." *The American Journal of Jurisprudence* 56, no.1, (2011): 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1093/ajj/56.1.1, p. 4.

For O'Donovan, there is an order to creation which entails, that there are kinds with ends, and not only one way for creation to unfold. O'Donovan highlights the fact that entities are related and one must deliberate theologically on those relations to understand the created order. As Tranter argues, O'Donovan's natural order inhabits a creation that is providentially disposed to creaturely life by God.[85]

O'Donovan says less about natural theology, than he does natural law. However, like Coakley (see introduction), I too believe the *Ethics as Theology* series functions as natural theology of moral existence. In "The Natural Ethic", he has a section called 'The Natural' in Theology, within which he argues that the natural in theology is ontological and epistemological. It is ontological he writes, because "The natural order is not brought about as the result of saving history"; and natural knowledge "is that which does not depend directly on Jesus and his appointed witnesses, the apostles and prophets."[86] Natural knowledge speaks out of creation of the Creator. This is especially evident, in O'Donovan's use of wisdom and the call of wisdom (discussed below). For example, he writes, "'Does not wisdom call?' That is to ask, does not the order and loveliness of the created world call us to know it and love it? Does it not call us to recognize it as the work of the Creator's way…"[87] This suggests a natural theology is at work in wisdom, for O'Donovan. His phenomenological approach to theology has humankind answering this call out of their facticity. However, O'Donovan does not find natural theology or natural law sufficient to stand on their own; both he argues lack the requisites to fully articulate the reality of creation. According to O'Donovan, "natural knowledge is restored by revelation, the natural order is of things by saving history."[88] The first

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[85] Samuel. Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 18.
[86] Oliver O'Donovan, "The Natural Ethic," p. 32.
[87] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 112.
[88] Oliver O'Donovan, "The Natural Ethic," p. 32.

is detailed throughout this thesis in discussions of O'Donovan's thoughts on reflection and deliberation; the latter speaks to O'Donovan's argument that the Resurrection is the horizon to best understand creation.

The natural ethic represents, what Tranter calls, O'Donovan's "decades-long struggle with creation and redemption, their relation and the implications for morality."[89] It attempts to strike a balance between creation ethics and kingdom ethics.[90] Tranter believes he fails to achieve such a balance. For O'Donovan, ethics can never be solely "given in nature" with nothing "to be revealed in history," nor can it abandon the given value of nature in return for an eschatological ethic.[91] Instead, they must work in concert. Not all of what is natural (found in nature) is ethical for humankind. For instance, it may be natural for male gorillas to kill male baby gorillas, but it would be unethical for male humans to go around doing the same. Therefore, ethical solutions, for O'Donovan, are also tested by the revelation of God in Christ and the scriptures. There is also the worry that an eschatological ethic renders a creation with "no natural purpose to which we can respond in love and obedience. The destiny of nature has to be imposed on it, either by our activity or by God's."[92] It would be a creation without the possibility of self-directed becoming. Instead, creation would be concretized by human or divine will. The natural ethic is a means to navigate questions of this type.

O'Donovan offers two principles. The first principle is that creation is given in kinds and therefore has "*a natural meaning*," and the goal is to correctly discern to what *kind* a thing

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[89] Samuel. Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 13.
[90] Ibid., p. 14.
[91] Oliver O'Donovan, "The Natural Ethic," p. 28.
[92] Ibid., p. 26.; Tranter believes that he has discerned "a troubling pattern in O'Donovan's thoughts." A pattern that places eschatology "under suspicion", as a moral "get out of jail free card" or as Tranter puts it, "a cause for moral irresponsibility." Tranter's own suspicion is that this moral boogieman serves "as a theological foil for O'Donovan's retrieval of the natural ethic." Samuel. Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 19.

belongs.[93] The second states that kinds are not given in isolation; instead, they belong to a world, and each kind is a part of the whole.[94] Things also have "*a natural purpose*" that I am called to understand; in understanding, a claim is laid on me, to which I am to deliberate and respond.[95] Natural purpose, according to O'Donovan, is the relationship between kinds of things. He argues, "To know what a thing is is to know what *kind* of thing it is, and to know what *kind* of thing it is is to know how it fits into the whole, that is to say, what it is *for*."[96] Similarly, Northcott, in a discussion on Aquinas and the Hebrew Bible, argues that natural law (ethics) affirms that —

> Nature is ordered by God for its own purposes and these purposes are fundamentally good. We are guided by nature and reason to do what is right. There is a common inheritance and morality shared by all humans which is a part of our nature.[97]

There is an order to creation that all creatures participate in. An order that is constitutive and ontologically prior to being a creature of God. O'Donovan, in *Resurrection and Moral Order*, argues that God's order is objective, and humankind has a place in it. According to O'Donovan, this order provides Christian ethics "an objective reference," an ethics "founded on reality as God has given it."[98] He states, "The way the universe *is*, determines how man *ought* to behave himself in it."[99] However, it is only "in Christ do we apprehend that order."[100] As Artinian-Kaiser notes, for O'Donovan, "Faith and morality are for him inextricably linked."[101]

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[93] Oliver O'Donovan, "The Natural Ethic," p. 21.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid. p. 23.
[97] Michael S. Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, pp. 229-230.
[98] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline of Evangelical Ethics*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1994), p. 17.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid., p. 20; see Chapter 3 for a phenomenological discussion on what it means to be *in-Christ*.
[101] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 24.

As proposed by O'Donovan, the natural ethic is an attempt to settle moral disagreements that arise, not about "the bare facts," but about "the structure of reality behind these facts."[102] As an example, O'Donovan offers *milk*: Is milk an industrial dairy product or is it food?[103] To one, its purpose is "*for* nourishment," the other "as produce."[104] A product's purpose is to serve "the purposes that its producer has had for it."[105] If the dairy farmer disposes of it, is she wasting food or decreasing the surplus product? Are there real *kinds* in nature, or are they merely conventions? The answer has implications for how we treat creation. Are natural resources entities in their own right, or are they raw materials with no value until they serve the purposes of their producers? These questions are alive today in a world of human-induced climate change and ecological devastation.

As I mentioned at the start of this section, Northcott suggests that natural law requires an ecological revision. Natural law often prioritizes human perspectives. However, Northcott argues that "the Christian natural law tradition locates moral value in a relational account of the common good of humans and non-human goods in particular moral communities where the virtues of justice, compassion and prudence are generated and sustained."[106] A revised natural law ethic recognizes "that natural law is operative at every level of reality, and ecosystems like animals pursue certain goods after which they are teleologically ordered by the creator."[107] Sidestepping the controversy of teleology, I agree with Northcott that ecosystems exhibit an order, not by convention, but innately. O'Donovan warns of a voluntarist approach where creation no longer reflects "the Creator's glory", but is a product of human will "the exclusive

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[102] Oliver O'Donovan, "The Natural Ethic," p. 21.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Michael S. Northcott, The Environment and Christian Ethics, p. 121.
[107] Ibid., p. 253.

giver of practical meaning."[108] Nor do I want to say that the order seen in creation implies a rigid theological determinism for creation. Instead, the order is a given of God, but as a response to the call of God's wisdom and not a divine dictum.

Nevertheless, Christian ethics of restoration need to pay attention to an ecosystem's order. Artinian-Kaiser explains it this way, "Christian responses to the natural world must be deeply attentive and respectful of the relations between kinds and always mindful of its primary ordering to its creator."[109] A rejection of this order is what O'Donovan calls a mishap of ethics. I argue that the rejection of the natural order manifests as an ecological crisis. As humanity imposes its will for creation, with less respect paid to the relations between creatures, the order begins to breakdown; this can, and often does lead to ecological peril. Likewise, Northcott argues that flaunting the natural law leads to "alienation from God, and self, in broken relationships and in ecological breakdown."[110] The purpose of ethics is to call humankind back to its moral obligations, emboldening a person to question the institutions and suppositions of culture and governance that violate the natural ethic. What follows is a discussion of O'Donovan's ethics and how they might help Christians interested in ecological restoration think through their moral obligations to creation's order.

To bring this back to the metaphor of waking, waking is realizing one's moral experience and moral obligations. It suggests that the person, by existing, is indebted to someone for their existence, and that indebtedness lays a moral claim on a person. The arena of one's obligations and responsibility is their contextualized location, their thrownness. All persons interpret their thrownness through their horizon. For Christians, the Spirit gives the

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[108] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 112.
[109] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 137.
[110] Michael S. Northcott, The Environment and Christian Ethics, p. 263.

horizon from which to view creation. Christians or restorationists who want to think faithfully about restoration practices wake to wisdom's call out of creation. It is waking to the idea that one's relationship to creation, in some ways, reflects their relationship to God. Does one impose their will on creation or do they recognize the will of God that creation should flourish? The natural ethic proposed by O'Donovan is a helpful means to evaluate how one wakes and responds to creation and the current ecological crisis.

2.3   The Role of Ethics

Moral obligations assume that there is someone or something to which a person is morally obligated. Towards which one has a responsibility to act in a particular way. For a Christian, that obligation begins with conforming "*to the image of Christ*" (Romans 8:29). As Oliver O'Donovan argues, a theology that places Christ at the center but not at the center of creation is a theology "wholly lacking worldly dimensions" and has little to say regarding ethics.[111] Furthermore, O'Donovan argues that theological ethics must elucidate the worldly order if they are to be of any use at all.[112] The world is the realm of ethics and moral obligations. Moreover, ethics and moral obligations are not things one applies to a world. Instead, ethics and obligations are concomitant with there being a world at all, they are inseparable.

It is easy to hear the words ethics and morality and wish to sequester them into spiritual enclaves within a person's life, personal guidelines with no objective stance in the world. However, if ethics are practical ways of acting in the world, then they must conform to a world as given. Ethics is "a *practical* discipline" insofar as they are "concerned with good and bad reasons for acting."[113] Ethics takes seriously the idea that actions matter, but more importantly,

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[111] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 93.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid., p. 70

why one acts also matters. As O'Donovan argues, "Moral debate and reasoning are, by definition, normative."[114] The purpose of practical reason is "distinguishing good reasons for doing something from bad reasons and no reasons."[115] If Ethics are to be normative, they must "fit the reality of that thing"; they are judged a good fit when reality verifies that description.[116] Therefore, one's theological description must be held to no less an account. The theological description a person draws, while informing them about the world they "live and act in" and reshaping their moral thinking and action, must also accord with reality.[117] If it is true, that one's reason for acting and the actions cohere to reality, then one has gained an ontological footing with which to ground their claim.

For O'Donovan, *ethics* covers "the whole range of intellectual attention that is given to moral thinking and moral teaching by philosophy and theology."[118] Ethics, he writes, is meant to "interpret, test, prove, and order the variety of things commonly thought and said in the ordinary courses of practical reasoning and instruction."[119] Ethics are concerned with how one behaves in a world of other things. O'Donovan's account of practical reason is phenomenological in that it is concerned with how a person experiences existence. He writes, practical reason "is concerned with the living of our life within the world."[120] O'Donovan argues that moral theology interprets the quotidian through the "hermeneutic framework of Christian Theology."[121] According to O'Donovan, "Ethics affords normative wisdom to those who have undertaken to rule their lives under God's rule."[122] Here O'Donovan is speaking to

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[114] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 71.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 75.
[118] Ibid., p. 67.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid., p. 18.
[121] Ibid., p. 67.
[122] Ibid., p. 88.

Christians about theologically ethical actions and reasons for acting. The same theological principles are important for Christians thinking about ecological restoration and how to carry it out. Artinian-Kaiser argues, "Christian tradition has potent resources at its disposal for shaping how human beings live and act in the natural world."[123] I am worried about this resonating with some as moral imperialism, imposing Christian morals in an arena with little space or time for them. Conversely, if God is the presupposed ground of creation, then theological consideration is never far from creation.

The applicability of ethics depends upon its ability to differentiate between the good and the evil, the right and the wrong. Likewise, it must be "answerable to ordinary moral discourse and practice."[124] Ethical reflection, O'Donovan states, "thinks alongside the moral thinker, not from a point of detached observation but normatively."[125] From within creation and out of the mundane, ethical reflection emerges to inform a person's agency. There is no detached perch of objectivity by which the subjective can render moral judgements. Ethical decisions are made from within the messiness of existence; they are inseparable from one's subjectivity and lived experience.

I do not deny objectivity, but even objectivity needs a subjective medium from which to emerge. As O'Donovan states, "If the evidence of experience is insurmountable, it is also insurmountably subjective."[126] Bretherton observes that 'for O'Donovan, ethics entails not simple observation of the world around us but alert participation in and cultivation of our world in order that it might provide conditions in which the fruits of the Spirit will grow and ripen.'[127]

[123] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 21.
[124] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 72.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid., p. 11.
[127] Luke Bretherton, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan," pp. 365-366.

According to Bretherton, "… for O'Donovan, ethics are an inductive process. Morality is discovered rather than made."[128] The creative order provides the proving grounds for one's ethical inclinations, but the veracity of one's moral judgements is determined by how they "contribute to the fulfilment of all things in Christ."[129] Insofar as human action "pertain to and reach towards" the created order, human "finitude and fallenness" render their moral judgements unable to "encompass the whole and are therefore contingent and revisable."[130] Humans, by their being created, face epistemic limits. A person can only know so much, but that knowledge builds. However, in one's time, a person acts on the knowledge that has been provided to the best of their ethical reasoning, including their response to the current ecological crisis. As Artinian-Kaiser argues, a Christian response to ecological restoration "is inherently ethical and practical: it seeks to discover what kinds of action are right and fitting in contexts of degradation and in light of God's purpose for creation."[131] She highlights that ecological restoration is subjective in the face of the objective call of God's purpose. The created order is the playground of ethics and the locus of human decisions. Christian ethics, as understood here and by O'Donovan, require moral reflection on the relationship between creation and the Creator.

Ethics cannot be separated from the daily existence of human persons. O'Donovan clearly sees ethics as a practical discipline as opposed to theoretical (though not entirely void of theory) and innately tied to the doctrine of creation.[132] Ethics, he writes, "reflects on the conditions of good moral *thinking*."[133] What it does not do is use scripture as a moralistic rod

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[128] Ibid., p. 366.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Luke Bretherton, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan," p. 366.
[131] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 2.
[132] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 5.
[133] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 77.

to beat others into line. Although scripture provides "normative force," it does not provide "an ideal relation of text to action," which would abolish moral thinking and ethics itself.[134] Instead, O'Donovan claims, "There is a necessary indeterminacy in the obedient action required by the faithful reading of text."[135] Humans are tasked with wrestling with the texts through reflection and deliberation. Scripture does not provide "the concrete act *itself*, the act we must perform *now*."[136] A global act to be performed, in need of immediate attention, is responsive action to climate change, and towards that, scripture can only provide so much guidance; the created order provides another means of guidance. O'Donovan tells the reader that ethics are not the first or last words of theology; instead, ethics waits on the doctrine of theology which speaks to "God's purposes, acts, and ultimate ends."[137] Ethics is content to have "the second word."[138] Though a word nonetheless.

For O'Donovan, ethics occupy the space between first and last words, summoning one "to be alert and understanding" continually thinking about "what it is we are to do while it is ours to do it."[139] Doctrine and ethics are not branches of theology vying for theological primacy. According to O'Donovan, they are complementary: "Doctrine completes Ethics by speaking of an end of God's works; Ethics completes Doctrine by offering it an understanding of itself."[140] Doctrine "expresses the truth of the divine," while ethics watch "reflectively over practical reason."[141] Ethics can never replace Doctrine. Ethics can only respond to the first word to bring it to deliberation. Subsequently, ethics cannot "be brought to rest" prematurely, losing "sight of

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[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 77.
[137] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 5.
[138] Ibid., p. 6.
[139] Ibid., p. 5.
[140] Ibid., p. 6.
[141] Ibid.

the distinct time of practical action."[142] As O'Donovan proclaims, ethics "must call us back from the apocalyptic viewpoint to the moment that confronts us now."[143] The role of ethics is to navigate the indeterminacy left after Doctrine has had its first word and before it has its final world.

Tranter dedicates space to considering O'Donovan's interplay of ethics and Doctrine. According to Tranter, O'Donovan is cautious with yielding complete authority to doctrine alone. O'Donovan writes that "there can be ways of framing doctrine" so that it "swallow[s] up the 'what are we to do?' in the irrevocable gift and calling of God?"[144] Tranter is sympathetic to O'Donovan's concern, as such a framing fails to "recognize the realm of morality."[145] However, Tranter takes O'Donovan to say that *what are we to do*, to speak of the "sphere of human freedom, and that ethics, as the discipline that reflects upon that reasoning-to-action, is an intellectual realm with its own dignity."[146] A concerned Tranter believes O'Donovan has tipped too far in the direction of human freedom. For Tranter, if action is "truly consequent" upon the call of God, then said action "must be conceived as founded, encompassed, directed and brought to completion by the sovereign work of God."[147] Tranter maintains that the "doctrine of election"' is "determinative for ethics," arguing that *the doctrine* is "what establishes free action, which God prepared beforehand."[148] Conversely, he still holds that O'Donovan has correctly understood dogmatics and ethics to be "non-competitive."[149]

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[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 82.
[145] Samuel. Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 206.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid., p. 207.

Tranter, in his explication of O'Donovan's thoughts, does not divulge much of his thoughts on the doctrine of election, and understandably so. Nonetheless, it appears he believes it to be God's will alone that is responsible for human actions. If this is the case, then Tranter's "slightly curious" concern over O'Donovan's way of "putting things" is possibly due to Tranter's conflating of his and O'Donovan's position on the doctrine of election. If not, then O'Donovan's distinction between doctrine and ethics would be inconsistent. If understood as deterministic, as Tranter appears to suggest that the doctrine of election is deterministic for all actions and would therefore take primacy over ethics, such that ethics would have to be understood as an application of election. Of course, others may have a different reading of Tranter. As I have noted above, O'Donovan does not yield ethic's role in theology to doctrine. Rather, if I take O'Donovan to be genuine with his assertions, then ethics and doctrines are understood to be complementary. To the question of election and free will I can allow O'Donovan to say a little.

In the *Ethics as Theology* series, O'Donovan does not mention the doctrine of election other than to say it may be on a person's "hate-list" of speculative doctrine.[150] Likewise, in *Resurrection and Moral Order*, the reference to election is equally scant. What O'Donovan does tell his reader is that election should be understood as it is in the book of Joshua. Mainly, that divine revelation is more than a means for "justifying the good and condemning the bad"; that "This Old Testament history is concerned only to reveal the impact of the divine reality upon the human in election and judgement."[151] Moreover, he states that "To be among the chosen of Israel's God means, in the end, to be conformed to the order of worldly life which God has created. To believe in the anointed one of God means also to believe in the moral order

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[150] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 5.
[151] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*. p. 158.

which Jesus has shown and vindicated to us."[152] Even here, there is little to indicate that the doctrine of election is overly determinate, for O'Donovan. If anything, O'Donovan's devotion to the doctrine of creation looms over everything.

In *The Desire of the Nations*, when speaking on God's authority and kingship, O'Donovan discusses the concept of authority. Authority, he argues, "is 'the objective correlate of freedom.' That is to say, it evokes free action, and makes free action intelligible."[153] He juxtaposes authority with force. According to O'Donovan, "Force overrides the agency of those against who it is brought to bear, treats them as passive objects, imposes its purposes in such a way as to make their capacity for action irrelevant or event to destroy it."[154] The free deference to authority is more aligned with O'Donovan's thoughts in the *Ethics as Theology* series regarding human freedom, actions, and moral reasoning, than the idea that one's actions are solely determined by God.

O'Donovan puts forth the most precise picture of his thoughts on the doctrine of election in *On the Thirty-Nine Articles: A Conversation with Tudor Christianity*. In it, O'Donovan discusses several topics connected with the capacity of humans to act freely. He argues that what "the Reformers almost all *meant* by free-will," which he inversely expresses as "The loss of free-will is simply the incapacity of fallen man to 'turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God.'"[155] Moreover, he argues that the question for the Reformers was not whether persons had "the capacity to make free

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[152] Ibid., p. 159.
[153] Oliver O'Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 30.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Oliver O'Donovan, *On the Thirty-Nine Articles: A Conversation with Tudor Christianity*. (London: Hymns Ancient & Modern Ltd, 2013), p. 72.

decisions as such."[156] Instead, could a person make decisions that affected their moral standing "under God's judgement."[157] The question is one of soteriology and not causation. More importantly, O'Donovan states that:

> We are not to conceive the grace of God in a deterministic and causal way, as later generations were to do and as, indeed, early Calvinist determinism was already tending to do. If we do so, we will find ourselves forced into the impossible either-or of radical voluntarism and determinism which rendered later discussions sterile from a theological point of view.[158]

O'Donovan argues that a person's behaviour and actions matter, to which I contend free-will is a necessary part. I argue that people accountable to the Creator and the created order for what they do. In other words, dogmatics refers to "God's sanctifying work," and ethics "speaks of a human work corresponding to it."[159] How, then, does one determine what actions are ethical and which are not? How can a person discern the natural ethic, as best one can? They do so by learning to reason well.

2.4   Moral Reasoning

Moral reasoning, often called practical reasoning, asserts itself in the interests of daily existence. However, moral reasoning is not to be confused with moralism, a legalistic undertaking for legislating the morality of others. Instead, moral reasoning is how one navigates the world. Practical reason is the application of "general knowledge of moral principles to particular cases in light of specific knowledge of their details."[160] The "conviction that we must act reasonably" is, as O'Donovan argues, at the core of morality.[161] By this, O'Donovan

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[156] Ibid., p. 72.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Oliver O'Donovan, *On the Thirty-Nine Articles*, p. 73.
[159] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, *Vol. 3*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2017), p. 72.
[160] Stephen Pope, "Reason and Natural Law," in Gilbert Meilaender and William Werpehowski, *The Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 150-15.
[161] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 21.

maintains "that our actions" must cohere "with how things are," and equally important, "we must think about what we propose to do in an ordered way."[162] Moral reasoning must be reasonable. It cannot be haphazard or lacking an anchor in reality.

According to O'Donovan, moral reasoning "is concerned with the living of our life within the world."[163] Practical reason "terminates in concrete purposes, from which action flows seamlessly."[164] It is not the same as thinking abstractly, nor is it aimless action. It is deliberate reasoning towards an object of moral reflection. This is not an injunction for thinking abstractly; abstraction has its purposes. However, when it is time to do what needs to be done, sober thinking about one's intentions is needed. O'Donovan understands moral reason as a means "to negotiate a way between the two poles of description and resolution, the one determinate and the other indeterminate, one in the sphere of the actual, the other in the sphere of the possible."[165] The way the world is and what a person is to do about it. Restoration ecology finds a home in theoretical reasoning, but ecological restoration needs practical reason. Restorationists recognize that the disordered creation of degraded ecosystems fails to correlate to a good world. The act of restoration is an admission that an ecosystem fails to live up to some sort of standard, which would be considered a good. For an ecosystem to exist in a state of degradation is disharmonious with the idea of order. If it were not, why would one seek to restore it? It is recognition of value and a good that is necessary and good for all.

It follows then that "Practical reason correlates the actions we immediately project with the way things are."[166] For O'Donovan, moral reasoning "is not deductive, but inductive."[167] If

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[162] Ibid.
[163] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 18.
[164] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 179.
[165] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 29.
[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid., p. 30.

one could move from premise to conclusion, there would be little left for reason to accomplish. Instead, one begins with a set of facts, not "an uncontroversial start" nor settled conclusions.[168] The purpose of practical reason is "action, not belief."[169] Beliefs do not require a person to act, though they may provide a reason. Practical reason gives purpose, and purpose can only be purpose if one acts on it. As O'Donovan writes, "A purpose is the ripe bud of thought that opens into execution; it is the idea of doing what we immediately proceed to do."[170] The lack of action betrays a reported purpose to be, at best, a belief. The flaw of belief is that it cannot compel action. A person *can* believe that climate change is a result of human actions and will result in devastating consequences. They *can* also push aside these concerns and continue their present course of action with little regard for future costs.

However, this would not be practical reasoning, despite any reason they might give for not changing course. Practical reason must accord with the distinct realities of this world, which, at this moment, warns of ecological peril. As Artinian-Kaiser notes, "a necessary feature of practical reason is not only attentiveness to the world but also   to an awareness of the self in the world and one's viewpoint as one of many possibilities."[171] An understanding of creation mitigated "by cultural contexts … will shift as one encounters new ideas that test and challenge" one's understanding of the world.[172] Creation as the penultimate ground of a person's world, shapes their understanding of *what they are to do*.

Furthermore, practical reason is an acknowledgement of obligations placed on a person as a created being. Humankind is obligated to the world. They are obligated to the

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[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 179.
[171] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 2.
[172] Ibid., p. 130.

circumstances of their coming to be and obligated to do their part. According to Artinian-Kaiser, "having discovered ourselves thus embroiled, we reach out to understand ourselves, the world, and the direction of our action."[173] One is not in this world for the world to serve them. Christ himself did not come to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45; Matthew 20:28). Are people to do no less? One is obligated to serve creation, including acts of ecological restoration. They have a responsibility towards creation, which includes their motivations for acting. Ecological restoration runs the risk of falling short of its obligations when it restores certain ecological functions solely to benefit humans. Ecological restoration of this sort is under the umbrella of Ecosystem Services. I will revisit Ecosystem Services in Chapter 5. Creation as a guide impress upon a person that restoration must first fulfil its obligation to ecosystems as a whole.

To be clear, arguments regarding practical reason do not make creation the arbiter of morality. To do this would undermine the dialectic of doctrine and ethics. As Errington argues, a concept of reason that relies on "a particular social context … relativizes the value of life in accordance with that social context."[174] However, "the rationality that practical rationality implies must transcend the *polis*."[175] An ethics based on practical reason must guard against sliding too far towards the extreme versions of anthropocentrism or ecocentrism. The dialectic of doctrine and ethics is meant to strike a balance between these poles.

Like O'Donovan and Artinian-Kaiser, Errington believes that Christian ethics are "grounded in the reality of the world God has made."[176] He puts forth the premise that "God's wisdom is a perfection, not of his theoretical knowledge, but of his action, which is why it

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[173] Ibid., p. 151.
[174] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 25.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid., p. 3.

ultimately relates to Jesus Christ crucified." [177] O'Donovan shares Errington's concern regarding wisdom. Errington finds this wisdom in the book of Proverbs, which "reframes our understanding of natural order and its place within moral thinking."[178] Moreover, he claims that "Acting well means acting in certain *kinds* of ways; and in the end, we cannot talk about *kinds* without talking about creation."[179] How one is to act is predicated, on the one hand, by the realities of the world, and on the other, by the one who gives the world. Errington claims that practical reason is "fundamentally [dependent] upon the world that God made hospitable to action."[180] If actions are to be considered 'right' actions, they must cohere with the realities of creation. Contrarily, unreasonable actions will fail to fit within creation's framework. If creation is naturally a life-giving process, then immoral actions are those that bring about degradation and untimely death (except for cases of ignorance or accident).

Practical reason must work to serve the good. As Errington argues, practical reason cannot "merely serve[] the needs of desire.… For the objects of want in question are the things that are *held* to be good."[181] O'Donovan offers deliberation as a means of practical reason which "has to penetrate below the superficial glow with which the object of desire presents itself, and find out what good, if any, it opens to us — concretely, given existing commitments, other desires."[182] Practical reason pushes past creaturely desire to the goods that serve the common good. It is no less a desire to have clean air, water, and food. However, these desires are rooted in the *good-of-creation* and not merely the *good-for-me*. Seeking only the *good-for-me* leads to selfishness and greed. It treats creation as a *good-for-me* to meet these ill-fitted desires. As I

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[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path* p. 8.
[180] Ibid., p. 9
[181] Ibid., p. 27
[182] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 27.

discuss in Chapter 5, treating creation as a standing-reserve, that is, as a resource to be consumed for human desire, distorts the created order's relationships in order to serve the *good-for-me*. According to O'Donovan, "For even if I could get a clear view of where my own happiness lay simply by consulting my desire, that would still leave the happiness of the rest of the world out of account."[183] A completely inward focus leads natural desires astray, turning desire into self-infatuation. An infatuated self fails to recognize the need to pursue the good of others alongside their own. As the good is not self-evident, desire becomes an "inconclusive guide," meaning "morality cannot depend on intuition, but always involves thinking."[184] Nevertheless, like O'Donovan, Errington recognizes "that at the heart of moral deliberation lies an *interpretive* task: the task of rightly construing courses of action."[185] Interpretation is also at the heart of the phenomenological project.

The idea that one must *reason* at all alludes to the problem that practical reason involves ambiguity. It is not always clear the correct path to take or what outcomes actions will produce. Nevertheless, despite this, I am still obligated to reason with the realities of the world. As Errington argues –

> Even when we do not know what we are doing, in the sense that we do not know *all* of what our action will add up to and mean, there is always a sense, however limited, in which we *do* know what we are doing, and that sense matters.[186]

To the extent that one is aware of degraded and destroyed ecosystems, especially when human-induced, it evokes in them a responsibility. It lays a claim on a person to act. Recognizing this claim is a function of moral awareness.

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[183] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 27.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 31.
[186] Ibid., p. 179.

Being morally aware awakens me to the times of action and to discern what actions might be necessary. Not all destroyed or degraded environments convey a moral obligation for me to act. For instance, if the aftermath of a storm at sea cuts a new inlet in a barrier island, I have no obligation to close that inlet. My moral obligation may be to leave the island, not 'repair' it. Conversely, this seems to be the preferred option when those islands are inhabited. Human hubris attempts to fix in place what has been in motion for thousands of years. It is a denial of the Being of barrier islands.

Moral awareness is an awareness of the truth of this world. For O'Donovan, an awareness of the *objective truth* is awakening to the "paradoxical constitution of "mine" in relation to "not mine" …. To be morally awake is to be "invested" or "taken over" by reality from beyond myself."[187] Objective truth, according to O'Donovan, demands an awareness of how the world *is*, not how one wishes it to be. As O'Donovan claims, moral reasoning is deeply involved in world description. He contends that moral reasoning "describes particular things, describes their relations and purposes, describes the way the world as a whole fits together."[188] The importance is their interconnectedness. Being able to reason well requires a moral awareness of the world, self, and time that sees them as a unified whole, with each "affording a point of view upon the others."[189] If a person is to reason well about ecological restoration, they must also perceive the self, world, and time as integral aspects of an ecosystem.

O'Donovan provides three points of emphasis for moral reason: reflection, deliberation, and responsibility. Reflection, he writes, "is "turning back" on something that is already there, "behind us" as it were; "deliberation" is "weighing up," facing an alternative, looking at

[187] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 10.
[188] Ibid., p. 11.
[189] Ibid., p. 97.

possible courses of action that have not yet been resolved."[190] O'Donovan more concisely refers to these as *thinking about* and *thinking towards*.[191] He considers reflection and deliberation central to practical reason, stating that "one cannot think-towards acting without thinking-about some truth of the world in which one will act."[192] Responsibility is the natural result of reflection and deliberation.

2.4.1 *Reflection*

Reflection, for O'Donovan, is the first task of moral reasoning. It is an awareness of a state of affairs, thinking back on why it is this way and imagining what it might have been and what could be. According to O'Donovan, "reflection on things remembered, anticipation of things projected, feed and shape my actual deliberations."[193] However, reflection is not *itself* yet concerned with action, which is the task of deliberation. As Artinian-Kaiser notes, moral reflection attends to existence, reflecting on "how one should live, rather than particular kinds of action."[194] She considers reflection a necessary exercise to establish the "human place in the created order and our relation to its other creatures." [195] Similarly, Tranter argues that O'Donovan views ethics "as the discipline that reflects that reasoning-to-action."[196] A person must first reflect on what is in order to discern what is to be. Before restorationists can conceive of restorative actions, they must first reflect on present conditions, about what has been lost, and what might be gained.

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[190] Ibid., p. 31.
[191] Ibid.
[192] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 32.
[193] Ibid., p. 16.
[194] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 172.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Samuel. Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 206.

Theological reflection considers what it means to have a Creator and how creation might represent its Creator in its Being. For O'Donovan —

> The proposition that God loves the world is in itself a work of reflection, a determination of the truth of things, not a decision to do something, yet we have not grasped its full significance unless our minds are led on to how we may conduct ourselves in a world that God loves.[197]

Reflection may not consider specific actions; nonetheless, it gradually draws a person to action. According to O'Donovan, as the lure of action, it cannot remain in isolation, lest it falls prey to abstraction and theory, being relegated to those disciplines that trade in these types of discourse, to which philosophy and theology are prone.[198] Its usefulness for practical reason would be insincere, O'Donovan claims, "careless of the real significance of what it speaks about."[199] Reflection must be anchored in reality, awake to self, world, and time. However, in its wakefulness, theological reflection transforms the structure of moral reasoning. According to O'Donovan, this transformation returns "the structure of the discipline of Theological Ethics: 'faith,' 'love,' and 'hope'."[200] These separate disciplines are essential for O'Donovan, with him connecting them to self, world, and time, respectively.

2.4.2 *Deliberation*

Deliberation is a *weighing up*, a measured account of what might be done. Deliberation turns one's thoughts towards a future possibility, a course of action. O'Donovan's ethics begin with scripture.[201] However, he notes, "There is a necessary indeterminacy in the obedient action

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[197] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 32.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ibid., p. 97
[201] In *Resurrection and Moral Order*, O'Donovan states that evangelical ethics are those which "arise from the gospel of Jesus. (p.11)" He writes, "Christian ethics is a belief that certain ethical and moral judgments belong to the gospel itself; a belief, in other words, that the church can be committed to ethics without moderating the tone of its voice as a bearer of glad tidings. (p. 12)" It is an ethic "which rejoices the heart and gives light to the eyes

required by the faithful reading of text."[202] By this, he means that scripture cannot be used as a set of rules and correct answers. To approach the scriptures this way fails to understand their purpose. Errington notes, "Scripture can tell us about *kinds*, but it cannot determine the particular act we must perform here and now."[203] Moreover, he writes, "Obedience to Scripture is a matter of achieving a 'correspondence' between trains of thought in the Bible and our own train of thought in the present."[204] Deliberation and practical reason seek coherence between creation, factical existence, and scripture. What deliberation does not do is "simply repeat what it is has heard."[205] Instead, it seeks faithful objectives and appropriate responses "possible within the material conditions that prevail."[206] Objectives and responses are tested against "the testimony of Scripture."[207] Creation sets a necessary limit on a person's ability to act, but which actions they choose are meant to accord with their understanding of the text.

The resolve of deliberation is to direct thinking towards action, not to drown in a sea of possible actions. For O'Donovan, deliberation seeks an end of action, which one's actions are directed towards. It is "what we *intend by* our action."[208] According to O'Donovan, deliberation longs for "an objective determination, one possibility which (for me, at this juncture) is the right one."[209] Deliberation's point is not an opinion but a purpose. O'Donovan defines purpose as "the thought from which the action flows directly, 'decision' refers to the 'cutting off' (*de-cidere*) which the forming of a purpose imposes on the train of thought leading up to it."[210] It

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because it springs from God's gift to mankind in Jesus Christ. (p. 12)" It is an ethic that hangs on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (p. 13).

[202] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 77.
[203] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 162.
[204] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 162.
[205] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 77.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.
[208] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 24.
[209] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 184.
[210] Ibid., p. 183.

is the recognition of the objective ground of one's action. Purposes are "an answer to the deliberative question, 'what is to be done?'"[211] It requires discernment, a drawing on experience and that which is useful for finding a solution to the problem, hoping it is "obedient to God's purpose."[212] As best one can muster, a resolution is the end point of deliberation. O'Donovan finds the core of practical reason in the deliberative process. For him, "the decision to act" distinguishes the practical from the theoretical, defining "the limits of Ethics."[213]

Conversely, choosing, O'Donovan argues, "is a subjective resolution of practical alternatives where no objective resolution is conclusive."[214] A choice does not necessarily require deliberation. Choices are free to be arbitrary. A choice, O'Donovan argues, "is appended to deliberation where deliberation runs out."[215] If there is no 'right' answer, no one way of doing things after deliberation, then one is free to make a choice. A choice of this nature, O'Donovan states, is, for the most part, morally indifferent.[216] According to Rufus Black, O'Donovan believes the word 'choice' to inhabit voluntarist inclinations, placing too much emphasis on "the individual's freedom to choose."[217] O'Donovan's preference for the word decision, Black says, is indicative of his belief that "it is always possible to find criteria that enable one option to be preferred to another."[218] Nevertheless, Black concludes O'Donovan's use of choice or decision is "generally interchangeable" though he may prefer one over the other "in order to highlight the importance of the agent or the importance of the given moral

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[211] Ibid., p. 185.
[212] Ibid., p. 184.
[213] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 23.
[214] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 184.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid., p. 185.
[217] Rufus Black, *Christian Moral Realism: Natural Law, Narrative, Virtue, and the Gospel*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 85.
[218] Ibid.

order."[219] While this may be the case in *Resurrection and Moral Order*, O'Donovan appears to be maintaining a more significant distinction in *Ethics as Theology*. In the latter, a choice, as he defines it, exists "*between* or *among* possible objects."[220] Conversely, a decision, it seems, provides a more resolute answer than a choice. A decision, O'Donovan argues, gives purpose, and purposes are "not 'between' this and that; it is simply 'for' a given course of action," which is the objective of deliberation.[221] Deliberative action is the ends of ethics.

A response to ecological restoration needs no less discernment and deliberation, when contemplating the best course of action. Creation itself, when viewed through the horizon of natural ethics, aids the restorationist in this exercise. As I discuss in section 1.7, O'Donovan argues that creation has a voice—the voice of wisdom. However, for now I rely on Errington and his reading of Proverbs. For Errington, Proverbs suggests that a person "cannot see the end clearly enough to be in a position to calculate the way to get there."[222] Instead, he argues that a person needs "intimate guidance," a guidance Errington finds in a particular reading of the book of Proverbs.[223] Errington argues that the insight of Proverbs is not in a "subjective capacity," it is not internal to the reader, left up to their interpretation; instead, it is demonstrates "a kind of relation to the character of the world."[224] Stated another way, Proverbs presents "wisdom as a kind of practical knowledge that depends upon the hospitality of creation to good action."[225] Proverbs describes actions encountered in a particulate social context; however, they provide insight into the nature of wisdom and practical reason.[226]

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[219] Ibid., p. 86.
[220] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 182.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 134.
[223] Ibid., p. 135.
[224] Ibid., p. 137.
[225] Ibid., p. 140.
[226] Ibid., pp. 137-138.

Artinian-Kaiser points to humility as a tool of deliberation. Taking a humble approach, she states, "reminds us that there is an order of value that existed [in creation] before we stepped into it, that it was an order of natural meaning and purposes that owed nothing to us."[227] Humans are not the focal point, they are a part of the whole, an important part, but a part nonetheless. Therefore, she argues that human interests "cannot be allowed to crowd out a concern for other creaturely beings."[228] Instead, one's moral deliberations pursue those possibilities which account for the interests of human and non-human creatures alike. I argue that restoration methods that are economic-based solutions or are most concerned with human flourishing crowd out other creaturely concerns. As O'Donovan points out, the often-self-interested choices used by economists "envisages the agent imposing a "preference" upon a range of possible futures, or "outcomes," a class of entities that does not in fact exist."[229] I maintain that limiting ecological restoration to those choices which are attuned to economic concerns or merely with human flourishing confines purpose and restricts deliberation. Possibility and broader purposes are shunned for the expediency of pre-determined ends. Ecological restoration requires sincere deliberation about the nature of creation and my role in it; "And because we may deliberate about it, we are unquestionably responsible for it."[230]

2.4.3 *Phenomenological Sounding on Deliberation*

Before moving on to responsibility, I take a second phenomenological sounding in deliberation. Deliberation is temporal, and while temporality is the subject of Chapter 4, a short discussion concerning the temporality of deliberation is warranted. O'Donovan states that deliberation "weighs up existing states and projected outcomes", with the "focus of

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[227] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 138.
[228] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature,"
[229] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 26.
[230] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 16.

deliberation" being "the immediate future, the forward-looking present, the future as it beckons to the present, the present as it opens to the future."[231] Thinking about deliberation temporally is also a consideration of Heidegger's. Heidegger states that "deliberation the existential meaning of a *making present* … deliberation catches sight directly of that which is needed but which is un-ready-to-hand."[232] That is, deliberation seeks that which is needed to bring about an action. It is a bringing near of future contingencies to be made ready-to-hand. The ready-to-hand entities are something to use or manipulate. Consider this quote from Heidegger:

> [O]nly to the extent that Dasein, in awaiting some possibility (here this means a "towards-which"), has come back to a "towards-this" (that is to say that it retains something ready-to-hand)—only to this extent can the making-present which belongs to this awaiting and retaining, start with what is thus retained, and *bring* it, in its character of having been assigned or referred to its "towards-which", *explicitly closer.*[233]

The *towards-which* here means "The work to be produced," the end of action.[234] Retaining refers to the ability to use or manipulate an object for its purpose. The making-present, or deliberation, brings some future outcome directed towards an end closer. That is, it makes it present. Deliberation, for Heidegger, is the contemplation of some future set of events and devising what is necessary to bring it about. O'Donovan and Heidegger accentuate the temporal nature of deliberation.

O'Donovan's reasoning echoes Heidegger's when he argues that deliberation is about the future moment, which is available for action. He calls it the future-present. [235] Acting is always towards-which what one believes they are able to do and are responsible for. O'Donovan argues, that "*practical* immediacy [is] a future moment [and] it is also the present, because it is

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[231] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 17.
[232] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 410.
[233] Ibid., p. 411.
[234] Ibid., p. 99.
[235] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 16.

now, before we act, that we confront it and may deliberate about it."[236] A person acts into the multiplicity of becoming—the future. Deliberation is a making-present of the future-present. It does so in order that one might know how to act and attempt to bring to fruition a desired future state. It is what Heidegger and O'Donovan will refer to as the *for-the-sake-of*. The moment we deliberate about and are responsible for O'Donovan calls the future-present. There is more to be said here (see Chapter 4), but that should suffice in demonstrating that O'Donovan's sense of deliberation is at least compatible with Heidegger's use of the term. For the restorationists, deliberation reminds them that their attention is not on the past but towards the future. They are responsible, not to the past, but to a future set of ecological conditions. Deliberation focuses one's attention on future concerns, and brings about present actions to address those future concerns.

2.4.4 *Responsibility*

To say a person is responsible for something connotes an obligation that belongs to them, even if not to them alone. According to O'Donovan, reflection and deliberation illuminate one's responsibility. Reflection and deliberation, taken together, mean more than thinking about. One can direct their thinking towards several objects or situations for which they cannot take responsibility. Moreover, responsibility appears to belong to the human sphere alone as a general practice. O'Donovan notes:

> Let us be quite clear: there are duties in respect of animals, and (why not?) of plants, too. We can know enough about how different living species flourish and suffer harm to know what kinds of use will foster their wellbeing and what treatment of them is compatible with care for the world God made. When we read of dolphins killed in dragnets, of battery hens denied the possibility of walking on two legs, or of ancient forests felled to make housing estates, we feel justified guilt on behalf of our race. But responsibility for these creatures is unilateral. We have no relations

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[236] Ibid.

of equality with them, for there is no reciprocity. We cannot without lunacy expect that equal regard be paid to us by trees.[237]

It is difficult to discern the sincerity of O'Donovan's statement here. His primary use is to juxtapose the category of humankind with other creatures. It is a statement differentiating humans from non-humans. Incidentally, he follows this up with a comment on angels to further set humans apart. Nevertheless, I do believe that O'Donovan understands humans to be the sole animal responsible for creation, and to that end I agree.

However, I believe the difference is primarily one of being responsible *to* and being responsible *for*. I think creatures are responsible *to* God and *to* creation, including humans. Therefore, it is not entirely unilateral, as O'Donovan asserts. There are many examples where creatures behave in a way towards humans that exhibit a responsibility to, for instance, *to* their well-being (e.g., protective). I also believe that other animals exhibit a responsibility *to* God by continuing to exist within the created order and not seeking to rule over it, as humans have done. On the other hand, I do not believe that non-human animals are responsible *for* humans in the way that humans are responsible for the well-being of creation. Responsibility intimates more than an object of one's attention; it asserts a moral quality about creation. According to O'Donovan, moral qualities lay a claim on a person "which is always and necessarily important," and I ignore it at my peril.[238] He states responsibility "is an awareness of ourselves as subjects of action … who come to resolutions of which they know themselves to be the author and understand the weight and significance of what they do."[239] It is a recognition of the gift of God and the need to respond in kind.

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[237] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 64.
[238] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 33.
[239] Ibid., p. 36.

It brings one back to the metaphor of waking, which Bretherton describes as O'Donovan's "key … for conceptualising moral responsibility."[240] For O'Donovan, waking to responsibility is waking to "a calling which lays claim on me."[241] The claim to "do right, whatever right may be" recognizes a "moral consciousness" that "bears upon us, binds us and forces us to ask about relative claims presented in the moral field whether they interest us or not, extracting our acknowledgment that some things have unnegotiable seriousness."[242] One can infer from responsibility that there are certain ways of being towards which their acts must cohere if a person is to take that responsibility seriously. O'Donovan considers responsibility, as an aspect of moral thinking, a means "for treating the complex of action and reasons-for-action with heightened seriousness."[243] Errington names responsibility as "the moment where we experience this weightiness."[244] To take responsibility for an action or an object is to raise the stakes on the consequences of one's actions.

According to O'Donovan, humans derive responsibility from their relationship with God. He asserts that religion (though I find this term overly ambiguous to provide any substance) denotes the "full sense of responsibility which makes us feel that morality matters."[245] Conversely, O'Donovan does not believe that only religious people can be moral; instead, he is signalling an objective ground in God that lays a claim on the human person. O'Donovan is aware that not all acknowledge a God, much less a personal deity as a Creator. Nevertheless, he argues that the agent's relationship with God is the underpinning of responsibility. O'Donovan contends, "The relation of the self to God may or may not be

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[240] Luke Bretherton, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan," p. 367.
[241] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 30.
[242] Ibid., pp. 30-31.
[243] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 33.
[244] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 159.
[245] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 38.

consciously recognized, but whether it is or not, it underlies the sense of responsibility which gives the moral its character of urgency. But to the extent that it becomes conscious, it becomes explicit."[246] At least from the perspective of a Christian ethic, one's awareness of God and the "call to serve him" is "the content of our responsibility."[247] In acknowledging God as Creator, I become responsible for the gift of creation to the extent I am able.

Arguing that humans are responsible for creation means accepting a level of hubris about human ability. It is distinctly interventionist and places human knowledge and abilities as the pinnacle of creation. How could it not? If humans are responsible for the creation, particularly its restoration, the assumption is that humans possess the necessary skills and knowledge to accomplish it. If not entirely, at least to a greater extent than any other creature on earth. Failing to admit this is tantamount to denying human responsibility, which is an admission restorationists cannot make.

Conversely, Artinian-Kaiser suggests that one also must guard against the idea of "environmental action" as a "superhuman effort to save the world that God cares for, taking upon ourselves sole responsibility for righting the wrongs we have wrought in the natural world."[248] A swing too far towards a humanism that takes sole responsibility for creation is not in keeping with a Christian ethic. Instead, Artinian-Kaiser, following O'Donovan, argues that a Christian ethic is dependent on the work of Christ that humans, as moral agents, participate in. It is arguably the Spirit's vocation to disclose the "true nature of reality" in contrast to any false reality "we have constructed and accepted," which reveals a "moment of judgement,"

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[246] Ibid.
[247] Ibid.
[248] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 107.

opening up the moment of "transformation and recreation of the world."[249] A Spirit enabling human agency in the world is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

As I have debated here, moral reasoning requires reflection and deliberation, arguably making humans responsible agents. To reason well is to commit to moral obligations, where one's actions are predicated on reflecting and deliberating on the nature of creation. There is a correspondence between one's actions and the way the world is. Responsibility, O'Donovan states, that "The command to exercise responsibility, then, arises from outside us. We are responsible to our context [thrownness], to the world we find ourselves in."[250] The created order gives rise to such responsibility and guides a person in carrying that responsibility out. The created order is the province of action. It is the ontological ground for creaturely relations that give rise to a world, and while I have mentioned it several times, I have not discussed it in detail.

2.5 The Created Order

The created order refers to what some might call the laws of physics or mathematics in a general sense. It portends a teleology to which all objects must submit. Creatures cannot traverse the created order, the realm of creaturely belonging. O'Donovan, in *Resurrection and Moral Order*, says that to "speak of this world as 'created' is already to speak of an order."[251] Creation "is ordered to its Creator" and "by its very existence points to God."[252] There exists a vertical ordering, but O'Donovan also describes a horizontal ordering between creatures. The "internal horizontal ordering" exists apart from its Creator.[253] He writes, "It forms, over against

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249 Ibid., p. 108.
250 Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 13.
251 Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 31.
252 Ibid.
253 Ibid.

the Creator, a whole which is 'creation'; and if there is any plurality of creatures within it, they are governed by this shared determinate of their existence, that each to each is as fellow-creature to fellow-creature."[254] Artinian-Kaiser uses creation and created order interchangeably to name what she calls "the all-encompassing basis for existence."[255] The created order as creation is not yet a world; it is the sphere of possibility that gives rise to the world.

The created order is a "complex network of teleological and generic relations."[256] If it were not, then there would be no order, and creatures not ordered to each other cannot form a world. There would be no such things as *goods-for*. O'Donovan argues that it would be "Absolute disorder … a plurality of entities so completely unrelated that there would be no 'world' in which they existed together, no relation that would enable them to be thought together."[257] The teleological and generic ordering O'Donovan describes is not a world; rather, it is a snapshot, a moment that belongs to a "world stopped still in its tracks."[258] The created order is necessary to make room for the goods of creation.

From the human perspective, O'Donovan sees creation as a good, when combined with the good works of the Lord, appears the good of human existence, an existence "which flourishes in relation to all other goods, not excluding that original goodness which is God himself."[259] It is an objective good from which all other goods flow. Accordingly, humans form subjective purposes because we believe there to be objective states of flourishing to be aimed at.[260] As O'Donovan states, there are goods to be garnered because there are distinct means of

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[254] Ibid., p. 32.
[255] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 27.
[256] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 33.
[257] Ibid., p. 32.
[258] Ibid.
[259] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 70.
[260] Ibid.

flourishing "for the psychosomatic organism of the type we are."[261] However, it is not only human beings who have a particular mode of being. O'Donovan argues that all creation, as God declares, "is very good" and if it is very good "then it is very lovable."[262] Therefore, humanity is called to love creation because "Every kind of being is a good" and they have "a distinct way of successfully being."[263] Failure to recognize the good of other beings, and their distinct way of being, is a failure to love the works of God.

Christians might consider keeping at the forefront of their thinking about creation, God's declaration, and love for the good of all beings. Describing the world as a created good of God is to understand the created order theologically.[264] For Artinian-Kaiser, it is "an important reminder in Christian environmental discussions of the creatureliness of humankind and of this shared relation before God."[265] She points out that these relations are not imposed on creation by humans. Instead, they acknowledge that these are goods discovered where "certain things are good for sustaining creaturely bodies."[266] Moreover, these teleological purposes are natural processes, defined as such, "delineate purposes that are given in creation, a helpful clarification especially in light of the human tendency to bind other creaturely kinds to the service of our historical projects."[267] However, Artinian-Kaiser proposes that the mention of teleological relations should be held loosely, recognizing that "kinds and teleological relations between kinds is provisional and must remain open to revision when new particulars come to light."[268] The created order is located in the processes, where the kinds and ends are

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[261] Ibid.
[262] Ibid., p. 78.
[263] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 78.
[264] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 114.
[265] Ibid.
[266] Ibid., p. 116.
[267] Ibid.
[268] Ibid., p. 117.

located in the contingencies. Nevertheless, all creation stands before their Creator as a part of God's good world.

2.5.1 *The World*

What, then, is meant by the world? Is it the created order that brings it into being? O'Donovan believes "World-description belongs, as they say, "on the ground-floor" of practical reason."[269] He claims that "Moral thinking is always descriptive of the world."[270] Of course, one could describe the world in scientific terms and apprehend much of what is called the world. However, from the phenomenological perspective, this would be woefully inadequate. With that, I take my third sounding in phenomenology, to articulate what O'Donovan means by a world.

2.5.2 *Phenomenological Sounding on a World*

According to Edmund Husserl, considered by most to be the father of phenomenology, "the world is the totality of objects that can be known through experience (*Erfahrung*), known in terms of orderly theoretical thought on the basis of direct present (*aktueller*) experience."[271] The life-world is the world as we experience it – "the one that is actually given through perception, that is ever experienced and experienceable."[272] Husserl's conception of a life-world is primordial or a pre-scientific understanding of the world. It is the world in its givenness, as I experience it, not as an objective fact-world to be poked, prodded, measured and scientifically understood. For Husserl, the scientific understanding of the world, the objective

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[269] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 11.
[270] Ibid., p. 93.
[271] Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*. trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 52.
[272] Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. trans. David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), p. 49.

world, and the life-world are two different things.[273] Husserl maintains that the "scientific world is "grounded" in the self-evidence of the life-world."

For Heidegger, like Husserl, a mathematical or natural science description of creation "will never reach the phenomenon that is the 'world'."[274] In *Being and Time*, Heidegger, while offering several different concepts of a "world", the *world* he defends is the "pre-ontological existentiell … "world" may stand for the public we-world, or one's 'own' closest (domestic) environment."[275] Alternatively, in his essay "The Origin of the Work of Art", Heidegger states that the world is more than "the mere collection of the countable or uncountable, familiar and unfamiliar things that are just there."[276] Nor is it "a merely imagined framework"; instead, it "is the ever-nonobjective to which we are subject as long as the paths of birth and death, blessing and curse keep us transported in being into Being." [277] According to Theodore Kisiel, Heidegger's *world* "names what is lived, what life holds to, the content aimed at by life."[278] Moreover, Kisiel writes, "if life is regarded in a relational sense … the relational sense of living can be further formally specified as caring. To live is to care."[279] Thomas Sheehan argues that Heidegger views the world "as a matrix of intelligibility…as a set of meaning-giving relations. … "The world," as Heidegger understands the term, is the prior "open space" or "clearing" that we need in order to understand X *as* Y or use something *in terms of* one of its possibilities."[280] For Heidegger, the world operates as a *transcendental*, escaping the mere materiality of creation

[273] Ibid., p. 130.
[274] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 92.
[275] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 93.
[276] Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*. trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Perennial Classics, 2001), p. 43.
[277] Ibid.
[278] Theodore Kisiel, "Hermeneutics of facticity." in *Key concepts*, ed. Brett W. Davis (New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 21.
[279] Ibid.
[280] Thomas Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger: A Paradigm Shift*. (London: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2015), pp. 125-26.

to reveal its very Being – the realm of intelligibility.[281] The world is the locus of activity where I come to understand others as they are. Heidegger argues that a world is "more than merely "created" things"; the world is that which is "closest to the event" and therefore is *formative of history*."[282]

2.5.3   *O'Donovan's World*

The *world*, as defined by O'Donovan, is the "order of things" by which "our existence is framed" having a past and a future of which one is not a part yet; nonetheless, he argues that "I know the world directly only as I stand within it, calling it "my world." My world is around me, interacts with me, conditions me and responds to me."[283] Stated this way, the world has its own history and relations that exist apart from me. A person comes into being in a world; the world does not come into being *for* them. In acknowledging this, A person de-centers the subjective self as an autonomous entity over and against nature. Existence is something one participates in, not an object one possesses. Nonetheless, in their subjectivity, they come to understand the world.

Like Heidegger, O'Donovan understands the world as something that claims my person. For O'Donovan, operating in the phenomenological frame, the world configures creaturely existences. He writes—

> The created world gives shape to our existence as agents: that is what we mean specifically by calling the totality of things "the world," referring not only to singular objects, but to events, experiences, opportunities, restrictions, all, in fact, that determines our freedom positively and negatively.[284]

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[281] Ibid., p. 125.
[282] Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*. Studies in Continental thought, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), p. 216.
[283] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 10
[284] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 72.

The world calls one to participate in something both external and immanent to themself. To participate in the world, O'Donovan argues, is to interact with "The will that has brought the world into being, and will sustain and redeem it, rules our responses to the world's phenomena. To fix our love and action upon the object of God's will is to engage in the world of God's creation *really*, and not in fantasy."[285] Lacoste asks if dealing with the world requires us to first know God or does our dealing with the world offer the knowledge of God to us?[286] Lacoste lands on the latter. He is arguing that knowledge of God is a product of reason and faith. Nevertheless, for Lacoste, the created order draws one's attention to a Creator, and it is up to the person and their faculties "to accept the indication they provide."[287] However, the world does not provide direct knowledge of God; a theological proof is never certain. Lacoste argues that if one accepts that "the Absolute *can* be known, and *is* known," then "it will allow us, perhaps, to see the world differently, and it will allow that by offering such a possibility to us."[288] O'Donovan agrees, "There is nothing accessible to our imagination that is not 'in' the world, really speaking, God himself included."[289] The created order calls to creation, calling a person to love it and to deal with it as it is.

As a result, unlike Heidegger, O'Donovan does not leave the word description up to one's subjective lens alone. Christians can draw on their theological perspective as well. He recognizes that the world offers an objective footing that allows a person to grab an ethical purchase on how they act in and towards the world. Moral obligations are anchored in reality. According to O'Donovan, "Theological Ethics is always elucidating the worldly order."[290] The

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[285] Ibid., p. 75.
[286] Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*, p. 81.
[287] Ibid., p. 84.
[288] Ibid., p. 85.
[289] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 73.
[290] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 93.

purpose of a theological description, he states, is to inform "our understanding of the world we live and act in, and so re-shapes our moral thinking up to the threshold of action."[291] Proper love of this world consists of the reception of the gift of creation as the reciprocating love of God, to love and be loved. It is to recognize the truth of this world as the truth found in the divine order that points to God.

Reading creation as the result of divine ordering helps Christians concerned with restoration awaken their moral imagination. Artinian-Kaiser argues that a practical orientation that acknowledges a Creator allows Christians to take their "cues from what the created order is, rather than from what may be imposed upon it by the human will."[292] She believes it will encourage attentiveness to the "workings of the natural world," and affirming the world's reality "as it is … opens up ways of creatively responding to the world."[293] Denying the world's reality and failing to acknowledge the Creator that stands behind the created order can lead one to sin against the world (discussed in Chapter 5). Humanity can become prideful, seeing creation as something to be used. Humankind must be careful not to desire the world as something to possess. A desire seeded in self-fulfillment is a source of pride. It is to see what is good in one's own eye and desire to make it their own (Genesis 2:6;2 Samuel 11:2-4; Proverbs 27:20). The world and all the relations that it consists of are viewed as objects to possess, not as entities in their own right. One possible method for countering human hubris's potential pitfalls is listening to Wisdom's calling.

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[291] Ibid., p. 75.
[292] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 23.
[293] Ibid., p. 24.

2.6 Wisdom's Calling

O'Donovan evokes Proverbs (8:1) to ask, "Does not wisdom call?" [294] Wisdom, O'Donovan argues, "is the call of the world's temporal openness to knowledge, a call addressed to our powers of living through time."[295] Artinian-Kaiser, following O'Donovan, understands wisdom as "concerned with the interactions" between creatures and how they fit "into the larger whole."[296] Wisdom, she writes, "seeks to understand what this created order is in which grasses, bumblebees, and oaks are meaningful and valuable entities."[297] Artinian-Kaiser argues, "Only when viewed as a part of a whole can we really know what a thing is, and only then can we really delight in what is."[298] Wisdom is a particular type of knowledge, but not one that necessarily sits outside scientific knowledge. Instead, they can be seen as working in concert with each other to elucidate the natural world.

The call of wisdom, O'Donovan argues, "is an existential condition, not an episode."[299] Without stopping for a fourth phenomenological sounding, it will still prove beneficial to at least have a phenomenological understanding of existential. As I argue O'Donovan's understanding mirrors Heidegger's, that the existential as "the state of Being that is constitutive for those entities that exist."[300] It is certainly my belief, if not O'Donovan's, that the *call* and not wisdom itself that is the existential. Wisdom operates at the ontic level, making sense of the physical world. The call of wisdom is *written on the hearts* of humankind. Following Lacoste, the *call of wisdom* makes possible a belief in the Absolute. It calls from within our Being to

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[294] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 100.
[295] Ibid.
[296] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 176.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Ibid., pp. 175-176.
[299] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 101.
[300] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 33.

something transcendent, towards the Creator and the good of God's created order. Furthermore, practical reason reflects a person's interactions with the call of wisdom.

According to O'Donovan, "Wisdom always presents herself at the horizon of possibility… [and] allows us to attend to what is of ultimate and penultimate importance."[301] Samuel Tranter notes that for O'Donovan, moral reason is a search for wisdom, a search that "strains towards ultimate horizons." [302] One such ultimate horizon is love. Love, for O'Donovan, functions eschatologically as the love of God that God shares with humankind. I will come back to this below. For now, wisdom provides knowledge meant to serve a person, put to use "for success in life and action," aiding in the forming of purposes.[303] The purpose of wisdom is to provide knowledge for being in the world. However, as Artinian-Kaiser argues, there is a real tension between human knowing and the limits of human knowledge. The tension is "between the call to know the world and the impossibility of realizing that goal."[304]

Artinian-Kaiser argues that knowledge is the project of life and how humans primarily participate in the world.[305] This desire to know makes one human; nonetheless, she remarks, human knowledge is "profoundly limited, existing as it does within the created order."[306] However, here is where she believes the talk of wisdom begins. It begins with the admission of the lack of knowledge, an incomprehensibility about the ways of the world that human minds seek after. Therefore, for Artinian-Kaiser, drawing on O'Donovan, pursuing wisdom involves struggle and perseverance. The pursuit of "wisdom calls us to move deeper, to persevere,

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[301] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 102.
[302] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 217.
[303] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 102.
[304] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 177
[305] Ibid.
[306] Ibid.

because this is what a loving disposition to the world demands."[307] O'Donovan argues that the "reality of the world" is to be "known and loved, learned and sought."[308] The call to learn he says, is a "call of God," echoing the will of God "as expressed in his creation."[309] The call to learn the world is important in the theological ethics of O'Donovan, because "God's call reaches us only *through* the created world and as we are participators in it."[310] The facticity of human existence is where God draws near and reveals God's self. O'Donovan states, "What wisdom demands is a response to the goodness of God's world."[311] How, then, does one respond to God's call?

According to O'Donovan, humans realize themselves by engaging in creation through knowing and loving it.[312] The claim by which wisdom speaks is that the world "is knowable and lovable in itself, it is the context for knowledge and love of ourselves, of all other reality and of God."[313] Errington argues that wisdom is more concerned "with the nature of the world" and has less to do with the "excellence of the mind."[314] The phrase 'wisdom calls', for Errington, defines the way "creation is hospitable to the successful living of human life."[315] Thinking with the book of Proverbs, Errington concludes that God's wisdom is a perfection of practical knowledge and is inextricably linked to God's action.[316] Creation, he contends, is a "distinct act" of God and must retain its integrity.[317] God's wisdom is "an attribute of his action.

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[307] Ibid., p. 178.
[308] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 100.
[309] Ibid.
[310] Ibid.
[311] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 48.
[312] Ibid.
[313] Ibid., p. 81.
[314] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 195.
[315] Ibid., p. 131.
[316] Ibid., p. 133.
[317] Ibid.

The wisdom by which God made the world therefore comes to characterize the world."[318] Practical knowledge, then, is a way "to speak of knowledge that is essentially connected to action."[319] I gain knowledge and wisdom by acting in the mundane, knowledge about the world and God alike. David Kelsey, who both Tranter and Errington compare with O'Donovan, states that when human actions are a "response to God's call, they aim to be wise for the well-being of [their] proximate contexts."[320] Subsequently, Kelsey concludes that "If it is in wise practices that human beings flourish in the sense of 'thrive', it follows that they flourish as they act intentionally. They flourish in human acting. More exactly, they flourish in action in the here-and-now quotidian world."[321] Wisdom's call is the call to act but to act in such a way that one's actions bring about flourishing.

Actions of ecological restoration can do no less. Restorative acts will align themselves with these principles, human actions attuned to the wisdom of God seek the flourishing of all creatures. However, Errington raises the question about where human actions and the order we come to know rests. Is it in creation and its natural order, or is it in redemption offered by the resurrection, as O'Donovan argues? The latter has been the pursuit of Artinian-Kaiser, grounding ecological restoration in the resurrection and the redemptive work of Christ. She argues that prior to the resurrection, "the fate of creation" was uncertain.[322] She and O'Donovan believe that the resurrection of Jesus affirms the goodness of creation. In doing so, God has assured the eschatological fulfilment of creation, and the created order's "role in shaping moral action is assured."[323] On the other hand, Errington believes that resurrection only tells part of

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[318] Ibid., p. 195.
[319] Ibid., p. 196.
[320] David H. Kelsey, *Eccentric Existence*: *A Theological Anthropology*, vol I, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), p. 319.
[321] David H. Kelsey, *Eccentric Existence*. p. 319.
[322] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 99.
[323] Ibid., p. 100.

the story. Certainly, he argues, that in part the order we know is resurrection, because "Christ is the wisdom by which creation was made"; however, there is also the sense that the order humanity knows is "not resurrection."[324] Errington says this is because humans inhabit a world that has not gone the way of transformation, but anticipates a time of redemption. Meaning that, "We are therefore, unavoidably, claimed by an order that belongs to God's action in creation, even if we know it in the light of Christ."[325] I agree with Errington, placing even more emphasis on the doctrine of creation than he does. I argue that creation matters with or without the salvation of humankind.

Only through one's factical existence does one gain knowledge of the world, a knowledge when oriented by Spirit, that leads to God. In turn, knowledge of God as creator shapes one's attitudes towards creation. However, creation has always been an act of God, and humanity's relationship has always been in light of that fact. The scriptures are my guide, as O'Donovan insists, and the Hebrew bible attests to God's continual action and redemption of the world. The Genesis flood story and subsequent Noahic covenant is one such example of God's pre-resurrection redemptive work in creation. God has always been about the preservation of his creation. Northcott argues that the flood narrative and Noahic Covenant "affirmed that God's ordering of the cosmos would not be again abandoned."[326] Northcott cites God's promise in Genesis 8:22 – "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease." What binds these together is the divine order of creation, which God has promised never to abandon. God's wisdom has never ceased to call humanity to participate in creation's order. It is a call to love and be loved.

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[324] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 201.
[325] Ibid.
[326] Michael S. Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, p. 168.

2.7 The Greatest of These

Faith, love, and hope function in O'Donovan's ethics as theological disciplines relating to self, world, and time. For O'Donovan, they aid in balancing creation and kingdom ethics. He states that for each to function as a Christian discipline, they must be found in "the final *perfection* of mankind and the conditions of *natural* human activity."[327] It is between these three poles moral reason is said to move.[328] I begin with the greatest of these, which is love. However, before I begin, I must take the final sounding of this chapter.

2.7.1 *Phenomenological Sounding on Moods*

Faith and hope, O'Donovan says, should be understood in the phenomenological register—specifically, that of Heidegger's affective moods. O'Donovan does not include love though I will argue that it functions as a mood. Presumably, he does not include love because love is not in this world. God *is* love; therefore, any love in this world originates in God. However, once God makes possible love in the world, it functions the same as an affective mood, as I show below.

A mood for Heidegger is the affected mode of disclosure. Moods are how a person is delivered over to their being-there in the world. Moods are an existential in that they "tell us how we are, the disposition or state of mind we find ourselves in."[329] A mood Heidegger is "a fundamental *existentiale*."[330] A person may manifest a mood, but those are not ontological. According to Heidegger, it is moods that attune us, and attunements "are the 'presupposition' for and 'medium' of thinking and acting."[331] For Heidegger and O'Donovan, moods are

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[327] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 102.
[328] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 102.
[329] Daniel O. Dahlstrom, *The Heidegger Dictionary*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 133.
[330] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 173.
[331] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p. 68.

"remote from anything like … psychical conditions."[332] Instead, one is affected by being in a world; their mood reflects an attunement to the world.[333] It is revelatory of one's thrownness, their being in the world. Moods are not something a person necessarily choose; instead, "mood *assails* me, *comes over* me."[334] My mood may change, but my persistent state of having a mood does not.

Katherine Withy writes of Heidegger's moods as "ways in which things show up as what they are and as mattering to us in some particular way."[335] Moods reveal my attunement to the world. Moods, she writes, "are structured as revelations. and withdrawals."[336] Meaning the particulars of a situation withdrawal, and the mood becomes a means of disclosing the world; moods reveal "something about me, about human life, or about the world as such."[337] I argue that recognizing how moods disclose the world to oneself awakens a person to their interdependence on their ecological environments. Likewise, Matthew Ratcliffe argues that moods do not *determine* significance in the world; they reveal it.[338] Suppose a person comes across an injustice and becomes angry. Their being angry, their mood in the ontic sense, did not determine that action to be unjust. What happens is that the injustice assails my mood, and they became angry. It revealed the situation as unjust; it did not determine it. Moods, in a sense, provide a hermeneutic for disclosing the facticity of creation—*how the world is*. Reflecting on

[332] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 175.
[333] Ibid., p. 172.
[334] Paul Gorner, *Heidegger's Being and Time: An Introduction*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 74; Heidegger does make an exception for counter-moods.
[335] Katherine Withy, *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), p. 52.
[336] Ibid.
[337] Ibid.
[338] Mathew Ratcliffe, "Why Mood Matters," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time*, ed. Mark Wrathall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 157-176, doi:10.1017/CCO9781139047289.008.

the moods of faith, hope, and love shape the way a person views creation, and can help attune them to ecological concerns.

2.7.2 *Love of the World*

Similarly, love, faith, and hope become ways of revealing the world I inhabit and not simply a feeling. However, love is different because love originates in God. The author of John's gospel proclaims "that we love, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). The love of God assails a person, attunes them, and opens them up to the world. The love of God makes human love possible. According to O'Donovan, "As we are offered love in the climactic moment in our moral thinking, concluding, ordering, and making sense of what has gone before, we know it as familiar, and yet we have never encountered it before *like this*."[339] O'Donovan claims that love, as an office of the Christian life, "embrac[es] the world in its reality as the field of action."[340] More importantly for O'Donovan, love "structures our awareness of the world and our appreciation of its ordered values, rejoicing in the world as God's creation."[341] It is love, first given by God, that makes room for a person to love the world. Jean-Luc Marion argues that "Love knows and makes itself known."[342] For Marion, love begins with a transformation of the will and, in turn, transforms the mind.[343] Similarly, Lacoste, drawing on the work of Søren Kierkegaard, contends that love "is something God does before man does it."[344] If one love's God, Lacoste argues, they love God, as God is present to them in the world; however, one "cannot fail to be aware that he transcends every aspect of his revelation to [them]

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[339] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 4.
[340] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 100.
[341] Ibid., p. 102.
[342] Jean-Luc Marion, *Givenness and Revelation*. trans. Stephen E. Lewis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 45.
[343] Ibid., p. 45.
[344] Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*, p.14.

here and now."[345] O'Donovan likewise argues, "Within the world of created and ordered goods God, too, is given to us to love."[346] How, then, does a person come to love God in the world?

Creation functions as a semiotic pointing to the divine if one is willing to entertain such notions. According to O'Donovan, it is by recognizing that the love a person expresses for the goods of creation is wisdom calling them to love the Creator of those goods. O'Donovan writes:

> God's goodness is goodness "itself," or good "supremely," and the application of the epithet "good" to any creature is possible only because that creature has, as such, a relation to God. Created good is a kind of God relatedness, a reference to an original that lies beyond itself.[347]

In recognizing things as *good-for-me*, a person comes to love the good. Through the love of the good, they gain knowledge about the good. As O'Donovan notes, "That 'for me' follows necessarily from my admiration; if I could not say "good for me," I could not say "good" at all."[348] However, one cannot look selfishly at the world's goods if they have been attuned to the world by love. Instead, they come to appreciate the good, realizing that they are "indebted to the goodness of the good."[349] According to O'Donovan, this can act as a means of reflection upon that First Good, "a reference to an original that lies beyond itself."[350] Creation is the good given and born out of God's love. Creation is the call of the created order that beckons us to love and be loved, to know and be known.

God is the First Good from which all other goods arise. To love the goods of creation is to love God, whether one is aware of their Creator or not. However, insofar as one accepts a Creator, they find themselves indebted to creature and Creator alike. A person's love of

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[345] Ibid., p. 37.
[346] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 117.
[347] Ibid.
[348] Ibid., p. 118.
[349] Ibid.
[350] Ibid., p. 117.

creation's goods and their love of God cannot be distinguished from each other, even though they may look different. Nevertheless, "it is within the created world that the goods we love, the ends for which we act, the reasons we discover for each purpose we form, arise."[351] O'Donovan suggests that there would be no way of knowing God without creation. He argues —

> It would be as preposterous to suppose that we could grasp the content of God's goodness apart from the communication of creaturely goods … For love of the world and of the God who gives the world occupies our experience not as a settled condition, but as a series of openings and adventures.[352]

Creation has a voice, the voice of God spoken through the wisdom of creation, calling humans to love and know it. To do ecological restoration well, one must come to know and love creation, not as something to be desired and possessed, but a love that gives freely of itself for the flourishing of another. Failing to heed God's call is a mishap of ethics and a distortion of love. Love of the world can guide restorationists in their efforts, but as Artinian-Kaiser points out, despite love orienting a person towards creation, there is no "straight line of movement from love to ethical action in the world."[353] Taking her cue from O'Donovan, she argues that the natural world informs "what loving action will look like in that world."[354] Failing to love the world brought about the climate and ecological crisis. Restoration expresses a love for the Creator and the created.

2.8   Conclusion

The question in this chapter concerned the relationship between moral reasoning and the created order. The world, as understood here, is the sphere of moral reasoning. It is both the

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[351] Ibid., p. 113.
[352] Ibid., p. 119.
[353] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 172.
[354] Ibid., p. 173.

object and a source of practical reason. A Christian theological framework of ecological restoration starts with God as the creator. Everything is predicated on that realization. The order of the natural world becomes a divine order. However, it is not an unambiguous order. Yes, wisdom calls, but it does not always provide an answer. How to love the world is something to be reflected and deliberated on, bringing me to another question. What exactly is the role of the human person in creation? As liminal beings, human persons stand in a triangle of reciprocity, receiving love from the Father and returning that love, but humans are also called to love their neighbour, including their ecological neighbour. In the next chapter, I look at the role of human persons in restoration.

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3   Human Agency and Ecological Restoration

3.1   Introduction

Human persons are indispensable to ecological restoration efforts, not to say that "restoration" solely depends on humankind. Humans are an integral part of creation and, therefore, as fundamental to the ecosphere as any other creature. However, unlike other creatures, humans are culpable of degrading many ecosystems to the point of needing intervention if they are to retain ecological vitality in the short term. Conversely, humans are also the species that can most effectively reverse environmental harms, at least in a reasonable time frame. Therefore, it is essential to understand the human role in restoration.

In the last chapter, I introduced the idea that theology can offer a picture of the human person as an important member of creation and God as the ground of the 'good'. Now, I want to explore the theme of the human person in more detail, particularly when it comes to valuing creation. Theology has something to offer ecological restoration as a source of ethics and values. To demonstrate the role of human persons and their place in creation, I continue what I began in the previous chapter with the theme of waking, specifically what it means to wake to one's self. In waking to one's self, a person also wakes to their agency. Waking to one's agency allows a person to act and consider how those actions shape the world around them. The question of valuing creation is a question of which and whose values. The question of whose values should an ecosystem be restored in line with raises several questions. For instance, if humans are the creatures responsible for restoration, is it not then human values being asserted above all other creatures? Where do humans get their values? How can one faithfully act in a way that reflects the created order of God's good world? How might Christians think about the human role in restoration in light of the question of value?

Building on the last chapter, I examine how a natural ethic can assist in thinking theologically about the human role in creation. The natural ethic, I assert , when applied broadly, alleviates the concerns regarding anthropocentrism and the location of creation's value. Moreover, O'Donovan puts forth the idea that humans can find their place in the world through a life of Spirit drawing the faith and power of Christ and manifesting that in human persons. In turn, reflecting on faithful action informs Christians how they might respond to environmental degradation through the practice of restoration.

3.1   Waking to the Self

To understand the role of ecological restorationists, it might help to examine personal agency and then extend that to the practice of restoration. I start with O'Donovan's metaphor of waking, but what does it mean to be awake to one's self? The metaphor of wakefulness in the case of the self is, as O'Donovan claims, "to attend to *oneself*. If attentiveness means bringing the world into view, it means bringing ourselves into view together with the world."[1] One cannot turn their attention to the goods and ills of the world without first situating themselves within that world—recognizing their thrownness, as discussed last chapter. They can only come to see the world for what it is if they firmly know who they are. It is a recognition of themselves as contextualized, and out of that contextual space, one comes to understand their agency. Positioning the self as the focus of this chapter may come across as anthropocentric. However, the only way to know the world is through one's subjective experience.

O'Donovan argues, "To attend to one's own presence in the world means becoming aware of one's point of view, identifying oneself as occupying an observation-point and

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[1] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 12.

recognizing that one's point of observation is only one such possible point."[2] Agency, however, is understanding that as a point of observation (i.e., a contextualized self), one can shape their world and the future through their actions. As O'Donovan demonstrates, I cannot know myself apart from the world, for the world is what defines my existence. O'Donovan observes that one is first aware of the world before they are aware of themselves; one has a tactile, affective relationship with creation while knowledge of one's self "lagged behind."[3]

Similarly, Lacoste notes affection (i.e., recall O'Donovan's use of moods – love, faith, hope – from the previous chapter) "is not to locate the other-than-self, but to locate the self."[4] Lacoste's reading of Heidegger on affection and moods influenced O'Donovan's reading in the previous chapter. O'Donovan, in his forward to Lacoste's *The Appearing of God*, writes that he does not "undertake translation simply for the pleasure of it"; instead, he states, that he translated the book "to learn what it could teach me about the relation of knowledge and love."[5] Here, O'Donovan, seems to be explicitly claiming to have Lacoste's thoughts on Heidegger's moods shape his thoughts. Lacoste, relying on Heidegger's understanding of affection in *Being and Time*, argues that "Affection is an ontological category," revealing what it means to be *in-the-world*.[6] According to Lacoste (again following Heidegger), "knowledge and affection work together."[7] Affective tonalities (e.g. feelings), Lacoste argues, only show a "how I am."[8] It takes knowledge and affection to know who one is.

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[2] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 13.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*, p. 106.
[5] Ibid., p. 5.
[6] Ibid., p. 95.
[7] Ibid., p. 106.
[8] Ibid., p. 30.

Anthropocentrism quickly comes into any discussion of humankind's relationship with the rest of creation, and typically in the pejorative. As Artinian-Kaiser notes, "Focusing in on the human being when it comes to environmental issues is often viewed as a step backwards into an anthropocentrism that sees little of value in the world beyond human interests."[9] She argues that environmentalists regard this "fixation on humans and their interests" as the cause of the ecological crisis.[10] However, Artinian-Kaiser suggests that it is not merely a fixation on humans but, instead, a "thoughtless pursuit of short-term human interests" due to a lack of awareness of "what it means to be human and what it looks like to flourish."[11] Humans, she contends, "do not truly know what kind of creature they are, they do not know how to behave properly within the created order they inhabit."[12] O'Donovan wants his reader to embrace "better forms of anthropocentrism." Arguably, anthropocentrism is not the correct term for what O'Donovan desires. Nonetheless, I agree with his sentiment that humanity might best be served by allowing for "more humility before the complex wonder of non-human creation and more responsibility for how we treat it."[13]

O'Donovan argues that "a swing of philosophical fashion brought about a general loss of nerve over the human race."[14] As a result, the sins of anthropocentrism and, to a lesser extent, speciesism are included in an "indefinitely expanding catalogue of unjust discriminations."[15] O'Donovan maintains that "practical reason must be anthropocentric" to some extent. Agency requires that the agent "takes him- or herself as the baseline" as a requisite for acting in the

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[9] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 140.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 62.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

world.[16] The subjective view is the only view by which a person can "engage with the world practically."[17] However, this view of anthropocentrism, if you can call it that, recognizes that their perspective is not the only one but the only perspective one can access. To contemplate a universe where humans are not central or suspend "human self-knowledge and experience" is an imaginative exercise in the "speculative 'what-if?'"[18] Speculation of this sort, he argues, achieves little. Ignorance of humankind's place in creation does little to encourage "careful attention to other creatures"; instead, humans exchange care of another for an unhealthy "preoccupation with man's power to modify himself."[19] Human responsibility requires a certain amount of self-focus but a focus that redirects human attention outwards.

As embodied creatures born into creation, one is aware of their physical concerns before they awaken to the subjective 'I' of agency. However, the world one comes into constrains one's agency (i.e., thrownness). O'Donovan suggests that one's agency is made possible by the communities where one resides. While it is true that as one makes choices in their day-to-day existence, there is a real sense of being alone or solely responsible for one's decisions, nonetheless, O'Donovan asserts, that one's dependency on their world flies in the face of a subjective sense of the self. There is an air of self-reliability and responsibility in one's choices, giving one the illusion of an objective 'I'. However, O'Donovan argues that there is no agent-self distinct from their community – "conceptually, grammar, vocabulary, and syntax are all on loan from the community, which supports them…. Even their desires have a strong cultural component."[20] Lacoste echoes this sentiment, claiming that "'I exist' can never be the last claim

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[16] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 62.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 44.

of self about self."[21] However, Lacoste asserts that "'I' must not come before 'We'; and 'We' must not come before 'I'."[22] Instead, there is a tension between the 'I' and the 'We'. Questions of the self, Lacoste argues, require one to consider the meaning of *being-in*; both a *being-in-God/Christ* and *being-in-the-world* are taken up later in this chapter. Suffice it to say that *being-in* is a necessary trait of being human.

Waking to self requires waking to community. Communities initially shape a person, place boundaries on a person, and help define their moral character. Conversely, personal agency derives from a person's actions given their circumstances. O'Donovan contends that a competent agent is "aware of the social underpinning" of their agency. "That is part of what it means to be a *person*, a subject of action constituted not by a nature but by a place within a community of persons."[23] The agential 'I', in itself, is a center of action. However, a person is not distinct from their surroundings. All activities undertaken by the self are within and influenced by their community. A community gives itself to the 'I' so that a person matures into an 'I' whose moral reasoning is attuned to the needs of their community as much or more than their own.

An awareness of agency is not anthropocentric but a necessary component of understanding one's place in creation. To be aware of one's biases and perspectives is to recognize the limits of one's horizon and attempt to account for one's inability to grasp the whole. Waking is not a passive acknowledgment of being-in-the-world, "but an active turning towards an object, to be aware of oneself as attentive is to be aware of oneself as active, to know that one is no mere creature of impersonal forces, but a site of initiative."[24] O'Donovan states,

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[21] Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*, pp. 172-173.
[22] Ibid., p. 135.
[23] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 44.
[24] Ibid., p. 13.

"I find myself in the world, attending to it, taking initiatives in respect of it, responsible for those initiatives."[25] Moreover, O'Donovan argues, a distinct agent "is precisely what *I am*, so that what I am responsible *for* shapes what is to become of me, for good or ill."[26] One's moral reasoning regarding the world in which they find themselves shapes not only the world but their actions, in turn, their actions create a world that shapes them. Therefore, taking responsibility for and acting in creation produces effects within oneself.

O'Donovan offers Christians a theological reflection on what it means to be a person and agential action that can help them think through their response to ecological restoration. He argues that "self-reflection is *already* active, that the self we discover in the world is an agent *before* we discover it, acting on the world already, even in the very act of reflective self-awareness through which we catch sight of it."[27] I can only take responsibility when I wake to my agency and what it means to be an active subject in-the-world. An awareness of one's agency is an acknowledgment of the "weight and significance" of their actions in the world.[28] The following section parses O'Donovan's conception of agency and human action.

3.2 The Self

The agent-self, Tranter points out, is a more significant point of emphasis for O'Donovan in the *Ethics as Theology* series compared to his previous work.[29] The self, according to O'Donovan, is a distinct agent, a self-reflective center of action and creativity. However, the self, along with world and time, "are all gifts of God," but to receive world and time as gifts requires humanity to "be agents fit for world and time."[30] As mentioned in the

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[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., p. 14.
[28] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 36.
[29] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 193.
[30] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 105.

previous chapter, O'Donovan reflects on persons who find themselves waking to a world where they are "subjects caught up in the middle of things."[31] Wakefulness, for O'Donovan, is a "summons to attend to my agency."[32] However, attending to one's agency leads to recognizing the agency of others. Moreover, one's 'self' and, therefore, their agency is a product of their being-in-community—familiar territory for ecological restoration, which requires a sense of community and the agency of others, as detailed below.

3.2.1 *Agency*

Agency consists of the ability *to do*. However, the ability *to do*, and therefore agency, is not limited to human activity. O'Donovan notes, "Doing is something that humans have in common with non-human animals: birds build nests, mammals hunt for food." [33] For O'Donovan what separates humans from the rest of the animal world is the notion of moral agency. Morality, O'Donovan states, "supposes a life of a certain kind, life of intelligence, responsibility, and freedom."[34] Moral agency, he argues, burdens the human person, a burden humanity does not place on other creatures. It is the burden of responsibility. Ecological restoration is humans taking responsibility for their ecosystems. I concur, humans are the moral agents responsible for creation. However, that does not necessarily mean only humans are moral agents. The difficulty with discussing O'Donovan's views on animals is that it feels ad hoc, that O'Donovan is just adding a thought about animals in as a way to placate what he believes his readers might want to hear. O'Donovan's concern has always been the human sphere, and as such, his thoughts on the moral life of animals are woefully underdeveloped.

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[31] Ibid., p. 3.
[32] Ibid., p. 13.
[33] Ibid., p. 3.
[34] Ibid., p. 4.

Responsibility for one's self and one's world (a world as defined phenomenologically last chapter) is unique to humans. I maintain that to behave ethically implies a responsibility to something other than myself. Ethics, O'Donovan writes, is more than "mere problem-solving."[35] Mere problem-solving suggests an objective position from which to view the world. According to O'Donovan, failing to account for the agent-self who is responsible for seeing the "possibilities for sorting out the world's difficulties" and developing "our programs for changing things … envisage the agent simply as a functionary, not as a human being with a conscience to guard and a life to live."[36] Following O'Donovan's understanding of moral agency and responsibility, there are no other creatures, besides humans, capable of solving the climate crisis. However, humanity must embrace their creatureliness among other creatures. If a solution exists to solve the current ecological crisis, it will not be found while perched on a ledge removed from the world. Instead, solutions will present themselves to agent-selves dwelling in their respective communities.

O'Donovan argues that "awakening to responsibility" is recognizing the claim laid on me.[37] In *Self, World, and Time*, he states —

> Responsibility is an awareness of ourselves as subjects of action, as those who conduct the passages of thought between world and time, who come to resolutions of which they know themselves to be the author and understand the weight and significance of what they do.[38]

It is clear to me that responsibility, as defined here, is seated in the sphere of human responsibility. However, Artinian-Kaiser recognizes that the burden of responsibility, at times, is difficult to discern. She warns that humans risk being too humble, as just another creature

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[35] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 17.
[36] Ibid., p. 18.
[37] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 30.
[38] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 36.

among creatures, bearing no responsibility, or as hubristic "lords of creation" taking "responsibility for earth's flourishing."[39] Neither of these is an appropriate role for humans in creation. Ecological restoration assumes human responsibility, and theologically guided moral reasoning denies the latter.

To be responsible, O'Donovan concludes, is to "do right, whatever right may be."[40] Responsibility, he states, is a demand—

> it binds us and forces us to ask about relative claims presented in the moral field whether they interest us or not, extracting our acknowledgment that some things have unnegotiable seriousness and reducing our convenience and utility to the status of trivialities. We find, gladly or reluctantly, that we *are* responsible, which brings the question "Why bother being good?" to a stand, not by *giving* the reason why, but by *being* the reason why.[41]

Responsibility is something humans are called to; it is a demand. Practical reasoning helps distinguish between those demands that obligate and those that distract. These are questions of value. *Being the reason why* is an answer to a different question. Mainly, to whom or what is one responsible? O'Donovan argues that responsibility is "knowledge of oneself as summoned to act in ways one did not prescribe for oneself."[42] He states that "Responsibility points to one who holds us answerable."[43] An obligation by something outside the person burdens them with responsibility. For instance, the responsibility of parenthood is due to the obligation a child demands. What the child demands are attention and care.

Furthermore, O'Donovan argues that a person is always open to the demand of responsibility, never knowing what it will ask nor its indeterminate scope.[44] As creatures,

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[39] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 31.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

humans are ultimately obligated to their Creator. Penultimately, they are obligated to creation—the call of wisdom, which is God's call. As detailed in the previous chapter, moral reasoning betrays an awareness of one's responsibility to something outside oneself. If not, there would be nothing to deliberate or reason about in the day-to-day of existence. As I argued last chapter, humankind's neglect of creation is a failure to attend to the call of wisdom, their responsibility for creation—human failure to acknowledge their responsibility leads to discord and chaos, whether it is a failure of misplaced humility or misguided hubris.

According to O'Donovan, humankind is the "object of God's demanding and perfecting love."[45] God's love demands an obligation to love God and neighbor (Mark 12 30-31; Matthew 22:37-39). God's love, O'Donovan claims, brings the self to mind because "love of God and of neighbor must not be absent-minded, but self-aware."[46] This same love of God is the "ground of our active self" and "demands the effort of existence."[47] O'Donovan understands the love of God to contain "the challenge to responsibility," a challenge "that opens up the world to intelligent action."[48] Responsibility is not a call to ruminate on one's existence; it is a call to action.

3.2.2   *Action*

Waking to one's agency is an awakening to the responsibility a person bears for their actions. As discussed in the previous chapter, O'Donovan finds practical thought "the most commonplace of human rational exercises," making action the "first and elementary of human horizons."[49] Practical thought, O'Donovan argues, is the "rational expression of our existence-

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[45] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 31.
[46] Ibid., p. 53.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 3.

towards-action."[50] It "moves to and from between the world of realities and the moment of action," correlating what is with what will be.[51] The purpose of moral thinking is the facilitation of reasonable action. An agent's actions and why they act are important to this thesis because ecological restoration is practical reasoning about the environment put into action.

When one morally reasons about their world, O'Donovan claims they seek a correlation between how things are and how one is to act.[52] As discussed last chapter, practical reason seeks purpose, "from which action flows seamlessly," beginning with waking "to our responsible agency."[53] O'Donovan argues, in waking, one comes to appreciate the created order and its goods. However, it is deliberation that moves a person to act.[54] According to David Grumett, deliberation works for O'Donovan as the "tipping point between moral (that is, practical) reason and action, and is therefore fundamental to agency."[55] He argues that deliberation bridges "the description of action's context and the resolution to act."[56] Grumett has identified a central aspect of how deliberation operates for O'Donovan; deliberation moves a person from belief to faithful action. He argues that "Deliberation and agency are not autonomous, as they are "collective, communicative, and taught."[57] Instead of diminishing personal responsibility, Grumett believes, the relational context "intensifies it."[58] Deliberation is how one moves from factual knowledge to resolute purpose. O'Donovan defines deliberation as purpose stripping away "the ideal contents of the mind" to narrow one's "focus to a course of action fit for the

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[50] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 19.
[51] Ibid., p. 31.
[52] Ibid. p. 29.
[53] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 179.
[54] Ibid. p. 179.
[55] David Grumett, "Book Review: Turning to Freedom: Oliver O'Donovan, Ethics as Theology, Vol. 1: Self, World, and Time." *The Expository Times* 125 no. 11 (2014): 564–564. https://doi.org/10.1177/0014524614524143m, p. 564.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.

next moment."[59] Furthermore, he contends that deliberation seeks "a path of life," a way through the quotidian, "an immediate opening for action."[60] It is a response to one's thrownness, a recognition of one's community and their influence on a person's habits and beliefs, which shape one's actions. Deliberation seeks purposeful action.

Humankind's purpose, according to O'Donovan, is to act. Action in O'Donovan's ethics functions as a demarcator of "an order and direction."[61] A person's action is the outward manifestation of an inward understanding of their agency. O'Donovan identifies the agent-self with the ability to be able to differentiate oneself as "the intentional subject of one's own actions, self-continuous in time."[62] But in finding the agent-self, he claims, "we seek an occasion for agency"; that is, being effective in the world is "precisely what the transcendent self was meant for."[63] However, this rather unnuanced stance leaves unresolved questions concerning the identity of those who cannot act for various reasons (e.g., infants, the infirm). However, setting that aside, O'Donovan's forceful, albeit generalized, statement regards the human animal as the sole creature capable of bringing creation under its care. What humans have, O'Donovan argues, is "The power to act" and initiate, "to bring to pass what has not been."[64] It speaks to human creativity, an essential aspect of restoration work. Foregrounding the natural law ethic and moral reasoning in the previous chapter opens the discussion for understanding the relationship between creation, human action, and ecorestoration.

Ecological restoration, when done for the benefit of creation, is a human act of giving rest, though, not the final rest of new creation. Rest, for O'Donovan, "is the completion of

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[59] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 191.
[60] Ibid., p. 220.
[61] Ibid., p. 216.
[62] Ibid., p. 33.
[63] Ibid., p. 47, 49.
[64] Ibid., p. 191.

action."[65] One completes the act of restoration when ecosystems come into their rest. Rest is not the cessation of movement or life. Rest for creation, O'Donovan argues, is "the entropy of life, the energy withheld from output and devoted to self-sustaining needs."[66] In practice, it is difficult to define what rest precisely means for creation. For a riverine ecosystem, it could mean that it is maintained within its banks and floodplains and teeming with aquatic life. Conversely, volcanic ecosystems might involve explosive magma events transforming the landscape around them through destruction, and disrupting regional (possibly global) atmospheric conditions. How then should restoration be evaluated?

I presented O'Donovan's *natural ethic* in the prior chapter to guide restoration efforts. Creation's natural meaning and purpose obligate humanity to respond responsibly to the nature of creation. For Artinian-Kaiser, purposeful action that "takes its cues from what the created world is," and "is particularly useful for exploring what Christian environmental action might look like."[67] She argues that the world "gives a certain shape to our possible responses," allowing "what the object is, or its laws, to structure our possible actions."[68] Artinian-Kaiser echoes O'Donovan's proposal that "The way the universe *is*, determines how man *ought* to behave himself in it."[69] Environmental action that coheres to creation is useful because it is not imposed by the human will. Instead, she states, "It encourages attentiveness to the reality of the workings of the natural world of which we are a part."[70] Restoration practices that turn to creation to inform environmental action are less likely to fall prey to privileging solely human interests. Artinian-Kaiser argues, "If we look around and see a created order of natural meanings

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[65] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 128.
[66] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 30.
[67] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 23
[68] Ibid., p. 143.
[69] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*. p. 17.
[70] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," pp. 23-24.

and purposes, then our way through the world will need to be marked, at the very least, by a respect for the goings-on of other creatures."[71] Though O'Donovan never considers ecological restoration and his attention to the current environmental crisis is scant, I argue that he would nonetheless see how the natural ethic applies to ecological restoration. Despite O'Donovan's overt attention to human concerns, a natural ethic driven ecological restoration recognize the same principles of a God-enchanted creation; a creation that manifests the call of God's wisdom.

3.2.3   *God's Call to Action*

Creation, as a divine act of God, is filled with God's wisdom. Humankind responds to creation by accepting God's wisdom or rejecting it, but one's actions, at times trivial, are never neutral to wisdom's call. As O'Donovan argues, "What wisdom demands is a response to the goodness of God's world, which is to say, to know it and to love it, to realize ourselves in engagement with it."[72] Attending to creation's natural meaning and purpose is how one heeds the call of God's wisdom. Errington provides a thoughtful reflection on O'Donovan's natural ethic, wisdom, and human action.

Errington understands the book of Proverbs to affirm O'Donovan's belief in the centrality of action to ethics. He envisages the book of Proverbs to elicit a form of practical knowledge. According to Errington, "It is one of the great virtues of O'Donovan's work to have clearly recognized this point: that our capacity to act reasonably derives from the nature of the world."[73] Errington argues that "Wisdom is about the way creation welcomes certain kinds of

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[71] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 143.
[72] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 48.
[73] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 197.

ethics."[74] Wisdom "At its deepest," he argues, is not exclusively a product of the mind; it also demonstrates an attunement to how the world is.[75] Errington argues that wisdom is practical knowledge "essentially connected to action."[76] Human creativity responds to the natural order or fights against it. Similar to how a wind turbine works with the natural wind patterns, while buildings constructed in a floodplain disregard the natural order of moving water. Human action that participates in the flourishing of creation is an answer to wisdom's call for creaturely obedience. Obedience to the call of God's wisdom is a matter of faith.

3.3   Phenomenological Sounding on Faith

In the previous chapter, I discussed faith in the context of Heidegger's conception of mood. Nevertheless, the question of faith is problematic on a phenomenological account, at least according to Heidegger. Conversely, for O'Donovan, the question of faith is central to his phenomenological account. In sharp contrast to Heidegger, an understanding of faith following O'Donovan is not a totalizing system of beliefs. Instead, it is opening up to the possibility that one can act and make a difference in the created order. Despite Heidegger's assertion that faith is an assent to a set of beliefs about reality, O'Donovan argues for faith as an actionable belief. Actionable faith seeks to reveal the goodness of creation. As O'Donovan understands it, Faith seeks the good from the givenness of the world. Therefore, I demonstrate how faith is doing phenomenological work in O'Donovan's account by contrasting it with Heidegger's understanding of faith.

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[74] Ibid., p. 198.
[75] Ibid., p. 195.
[76] Ibid., p. 196.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger presents theology as a "primordial interpretation of man's Being towards God, prescribed by the meaning of faith itself and remaining within it."[77] He presents theology as a self-contained systematizing of Being, where Being is a product of faith. According to Heidegger, faith is the mortal enemy of philosophy because it is restrictive, restraining humankind's view of the world.[78] He regards faith as believing in what one cannot prove.[79] Heidegger derives his definition of faith from a quote from Horace's Epistles found in a note in the preface to the 2nd edition of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. The quote reads, "'*Quod mecum ignorat, solus volt scire vide*' (What is unknown to me, that alone he wants to seem to know)."[80] According to this view, faith operates as an epistemology for understanding the truth of this world that is only accessible by faith and thus is not necessarily available to everyone. The person of faith then becomes the guardian of knowledge of the truth.

According to Heidegger, faith, as a means of existence, does not come from human persons. Instead, it is born out of revelation, particularly the revelation of Christ, the crucified God. A revelation that comes through scripture and not, according to Heidegger, lived experience. As a result, he equates theological knowledge to belief, stating, "One 'knows' about this fact only *in believing*."[81] Heidegger argues that they participate and "part-take" in faith in the crucifixion insofar as they believe in scriptural revelation. By this, Heidegger relegates faith

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[77] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 30.
[78] Martin Heidegger, "Phenomenology and Theology" trans. James G. Hart and John D. Maraldo in, *Pathmarks.* ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 39-62. p. 53.
[79] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 224, 249; In *Being and Time*, faith is defined as to think or believe. p. 538.
[80] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant. trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, eds. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511804649. p. 118.
[81] Martin Heidegger, "Phenomenology and Theology," p. 44; Here Heidegger seems to be disconnecting the historical event from the record of that event. Arguably, Christians are not merely assenting to words on a page, but rather, a more than two-thousand-year lived tradition of community experience grounded in the historicity of the crucifixion (as well as the resurrection and ascension). It is a denial that lived tradition has an ability to ground knowledge.

to belief in knowledge that comes through the text of the bible and not the lived experience of Being in Christ.

Heidegger contends that "faith can never be founded by way of a rational knowing as exercised by autonomously functioning reason."[82] Moreover, he argues that ontic belief reorients a person's existence towards God, and this reorientation is what governs their existence. Faith then, Heidegger writes, "understands itself only in believing."[83] Therefore, one cannot know anything about their experience, not in a "theoretical confirmation of [their] inner experiences."[84] Instead, they can only believe that they exist in the wake of the historicity of the cross, as represented in the text. As a result, faith, for Heidegger, is self-giving knowledge of belief; this is the positivistic science of theology.[85]

Heidegger further argues that theology reveals the totality of beings by faith, a faith which is a necessary part of the fabric of its own disclosure; this is the "*positum* that theology finds before it."[86] Furthermore, He understands faith as "the mode of existence that specifies a factical Dasein's [human person's] Christianness as a particular form of destiny."[87] As Heidegger understands it, faith reveals nothing about a person's specific existence. Instead, faith is a belief in the possibility of rebirth to an existence one "does not independently master," but where they are brought before God as a slave, an existence consummated in the history of the crucifixion.[88] Therefore, a person exists factically by residing faithfully in the revelation of

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[82] Martin Heidegger, "Phenomenology and Theology," p. 51.
[83] Ibid., p. 44.
[84] Ibid.
[85] In "Phenomenology and Theology", Heidegger argues that theology is the positivistic science of faith, of belief. Heidegger defines faith as a science (1) of belief; (2) of believing *faith*, which is the science of comportment; (3) to which faith is not only its object but also because theology itself comes out of faith; and lastly (4) theology's purpose is its justification and cultivation of itself. Theology is a circular set of beliefs, and so conceived, it is not ontological but ontic. Martin Heidegger, "Phenomenology and Theology," pp. 45-46.
[86] Ibid., p. 45.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.

that history, which is given in and disclosed by faith.[89] However, a faith, as Heidegger describes, leaves little for one to learn from creation, negating any notion of a natural ethic.

3.4   O'Donovan on Faith

O'Donovan could find much to agree with in Heidegger's description of faith, such as faith makes known truth, the crucifixion of Christ affects human existence, and one's life is to be brought before God. However, O'Donovan would undoubtedly disagree with the notion that faith is restrictive, or a belief in something unproven, at least unproven in a subjective sense of the term. Moreover, O'Donovan would not consent to theology as a circular and closed belief system. Faith, O'Donovan declares, is "a response to the summons of God, at once action and reaction, response and initiative, cognition and intention the root of action."[90] Faith, is a mood, given Heidegger's definition of a mood (see Chapter 2), meaning it is ontological. Faith is the root of action and to act is humanity's purpose.

O'Donovan understands awareness of oneself, the world, and time as the foundation of theological ethics – *faith, love, and hope*, not as separate disciplines but as the constitution of *Being-in-the-world*.[91] These ground theological ethics. However, according to O'Donovan, *faith* holds a place of priority in the Christian tradition (while *Love* is preeminent, 1 Corinthians 13:13).[92] Faith is "the prior giftedness of the active self," making faith "the first moment of divine grace."[93] Faith is a central characteristic of Christian theology. In fact, O'Donovan calls it "the moral center of the life, around which other acts cohere and find their larger justification."[94] He calls faith "the *categorical* act, the source of a life's activity, and precisely

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[89] Martin Heidegger, "Phenomenology and Theology," p. 45.
[90] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 24.
[91] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 97 ff.
[92] Ibid., pp. 105-106.
[93] Ibid., p. 105.
[94] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 26.

as such may be known from the acts that spring from it."[95] Faith and actions cannot be separated because faith is an ontological category of being human. Faith discloses the world and how one finds oneself in it.

Faith, as a *mood*, O'Donovan states, is not like love, "faith is not a designation of the divine being."[96] God is love, and creatures participate in God's love. However, faith is a characteristic of a person's agency. A posture of faith, O'Donovan argues, is the "bearing of the image of God"; it "is the agency of the creature called forth by God's agency."[97] O'Donovan views agency as "disoriented and uncertain" without God's shaping a person into an effective agent.[98] Faith, as the answer to God's call, "anchors the moral life in an awareness of self and responsibility."[99] Acting in faith regarding creation is responding to God's calling to humankind through the created order. God enables a person's faith, but it is upon that person to comport oneself to that revelation.

Contra Heidegger, who argues that faith precludes knowledge of oneself from experience, O'Donovan offers a picture of faith where the truth of this world, found in experience, is where one finds themselves. According to O'Donovan, faith is not knowledge, though it shares epistemic concerns; it is a directedness towards reality, the location of human action.[100] Faith is the ability to discern that there are good and bad objects of one's attention. These objects present a moment of indeterminacy, to which faith steps towards knowledge. For O'Donovan, "faith is self-appropriation and self-donation in knowledge, reaching to embrace the truth of the world as it has been shown to us. In being offered the truth, we are offered a

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[95] Ibid., p. 27.
[96] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 14.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 102.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid., p. 113.

grasp of ourselves as knowers and doers of the truth."[101] Faith reveals the truth of the world, as a good of God.

Moreover, O'Donovan argues that ontologically I owe my faith to "God's good world," that the world demonstrates to me that God is worthy of faithfulness.[102] Lacoste shares with O'Donovan similar reflections on faith and knowing. He argues that faith and reason are two ways of knowing the world—the latter is one humankind is endowed with, and the former must be awakened.[103] Reason refers to natural knowledge, according to Lacoste, and insofar as a person is "an animal who speaks and thinks," then "faith cannot arise without rationality."[104] Faith, I argue, is a means for navigating the world in service to the truth and call of God's wisdom.

Despite Heidegger's misgivings for scripture, O'Donovan gives significant weight to the authority of scripture, but not as a source determinative of one's action. As mentioned in the previous chapter, ethical considerations must cohere with scripture. However, the text can only provide normative guidance, but it "does not determine the concrete act *itself*."[105] If it did, O'Donovan argues, "there would be no obedience."[106] Obedience for O'Donovan is the correspondence between the truth's of scripture and the truth's of the world. As Errington notes, scripture for O'Donovan is primarily there "to give us knowledge of the 'world'."[107] Therefore, I argue that scripture is the critical instantiation of the point made in the previous chapter, that our knowledge of the world is socially mediated. Errington puts it this way:

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[101] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 113.
[102] Ibid., p. 110-111.
[103] Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*, p. 68.
[104] Ibid., p. 83.
[105] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 77.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 162.

> This is why Scripture cannot, of itself, effect for us the movement to action in time. …Scripture can tell us about *kinds*, but it cannot determine the particular act we must perform here and now. … Moral Thinking can respond to the authority of Scripture only with "a deliberated and free action."[108]

Alternatively, as O'Donovan states in "Scripture and Christian Ethics", the purpose of scripture is to provide "categories of understanding that re-frame our view of our situation and ourselves."[109] Tranter, in agreement, argues that scripture "makes perceptible demands" upon morality.[110] So that "faithful moral deliberation and discernment" are made known by the "particular direction of its attentions and the peculiar shaping of its affections."[111] By this, Tranter argues that "The Kingdom of God … for Christian ethics [becomes] action-motivating *and* action-guiding."[112] However, *contra* Heidegger's understanding, scripture for O'Donovan is not action-determining. Notwithstanding Heidegger's assertion that faith is an assent to a set of beliefs about reality, O'Donovan argues for faith as an actionable belief. Actionable faith seeks to reveal the goodness of creation. As O'Donovan understands it, Faith seeks the good from the givenness of the world—a world where the truth of God is revealed.

3.4.1 *Faith and Restoration*

How, then, does faith relate to ecological restoration? O'Donovan argues that faith finds "meaning in the world" and that God's good world calls "the wakened agent-self to practical engagement."[113] Restoration is not merely thinking about the ecological good. Restoration is action, and theologically speaking, it is action directed towards the good of God's created world. As I mentioned earlier, the act of restoration renders a moral judgment on an ecosystem.

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[108] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 162.
[109] Oliver O'Donovan, "Scripture and Christian Ethics." *Anvil* 24, no. 1 (2007): 21-29, p. 25.
[110] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 204.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 47.

Restoration attempts to reestablish an ecosystem's ecological purpose and function, implying a particular way of being for an ecosystem that has been interrupted or damaged. Restoration renders a moral judgment on an ecosystem. Restorationists, in essence, are making moral claims about the natural environment – ecosystems are an emergent system of organic and inorganic material that produces life, a moral good; ecosystems that are polluted, degraded, and exist in a state of disorder are a moral wrong.

Moral judgments, then, are predicated on actions undertaken regarding ecosystems. Restoration renders a moral judgment on an ecosystem's current state. As O'Donovan writes—

> when we speak of "morality," then, we do not speak of *what we do*, but of *how we think what we are to do*, which is to say, how *we act*…. [M]orality involves taking note of doing, making doing the object of thought, not simply by looking back at it afterwards, but by looking forward to it as a project.[114]

Faith is the acting out of one's theological commitments. O'Donovan has described faith as "the God-given and God-renewed capacity of the human mind to see the world in the light of its origin and purpose, and to determine itself as a living, active participant in what it sees."[115] Faithful restoration is the acting out of one's commitments, guided by the order found in creation.

Artinian-Kaiser argues that "faith is revealed to be intensely practical for world concerns."[116] She understands faith to grasp the realities of ecological degradation "in their contexts of the origin and purpose of creation and the human person within it," recognizing the moral agent as a participant in creation.[117] In faith, one can faithfully respond to the summons

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[114] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 3.
[115] Oliver O'Donovan, "Waking," in *Morally Awake? Admiration & Resolution in the Light of Christian Faith* (New College, Sydney: University of New South *Wales*, 2007), p. 9.
[116] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 106.
[117] Ibid., pp. 106-107.

of wisdom's calling through creation. Artinian-Kaiser believes that "faith sees the reality of redemption in Christ and greets it into the present through our response to the world."[118] For her and O'Donovan, the resurrection of Christ affirms God's created order and brings present the eschatological promise of new creation. She and O'Donovan believe God's redemptive promise is for all creation. Therefore, she argues, creation's "role in shaping moral action is assured."[119] I do find this to be a problematic assertion on O'Donovan's and Artinian-Kaiser's part. That is, I fail to grasp how the resurrection, as important as it is, makes creation's role assured in shaping moral action, any more than it already was. I contend that creation has always been a manifestation of God's calling through wisdom to shape the moral life. It does this because creation is a good of God, has always been a good of God, and therefore, has always influenced, but not controlled, the moral arc of human reasoning. The resurrection may provide eschatological promise and hope, but I fail to see how the role of creation in shaping moral action is any more assured.

Conversely, I agree with Artinian-Kaiser when she argues that ecological restoration is not participation in eschatological new creation. Instead, she argues that faith is an expression of "the reality of God and the goodness of the world does not necessarily entail an idealized view, just a judgment that the very real pain and struggle is not the final horizon."[120] Despite my misgivings towards an eschatological hope as the basis for doing restoration, I agree with Artinian-Kaiser's assertion not to treat ecological restoration as participation in new creation. Instead, she argues for ecorestoration, that "attends to what flourishing for a particular being might look like right now, how its existence might be heightened."[121] Artinian-Kaiser argues

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[118] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," pp. 105.
[119] Ibid., p. 100.
[120] Ibid., p. 126.
[121] Ibid., p. 136.

that faithful responses to ecological restoration acknowledge "God's purposes for the world and its creatures are good"; therefore, restoration "will be oriented toward affirming the goodness of the natural world."[122] Like Artinian-Kaiser, I consider restoration to be a normative practice of everydayness. However, I argue that God's purpose for creation, if one can say that, is from the moment of creation, and not on the resurrection's promise of redemption. I think there is much to affirm in Artinian-Kaiser's approach to restoration. Although, as God's divine act, creation itself is sufficient for obligating humans to respect God's order and respond to the need for restoration. God calls humanity to act, and faith is the root of that action and a response to God's call. Humans are called to respond to obligations placed on them by God's created order. To be obedient to God is to act in God's good world faithfully.

Like O'Donovan, I want to ground moral actions in the person of Christ. A fundamental tenet of Christian theology is that the incarnate Christ is the true human that human persons emulate. Christ, as the human person par exemplar, discloses what it means to be human and live authentically. O'Donovan considers the Christian life to be the "continual emergence of the "form" (*morphē*) of Christ in their midst"; a transformation and renewal of "the human life which is given in Christ is *given back* to those created for it who were lost to it."[123] Moreover, O'Donovan argues that it is "only in Christ do we apprehend that order in which we stand and that knowledge of it with which we have been endowed."[124] Freedom in Christ marks a person, making known that "the eschatologically awaited world-redemption has an anticipated reality already present."[125] It is Christ, O'Donovan suggests, that provides epistemic access to the order of creation, and it is *in-Christ*, through the Spirit that one can act faithfully. I argue the theme

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[122] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 137.
[123] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 41.
[124] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 20.
[125] Ibid., pp. 22-23.

of *Being-in-Christ*, which O'Donovan briefly introduces in *Resurrection and Moral Order*, has the potential to provide insight into how Christians might navigate human existence. However, it is underdeveloped in O'Donovan's thinking. I use this space to draw out some implications as it relates to my thesis.

3.5 Being-in

O'Donovan claims that humans are debtors to the truth of this world. Being debtors to life is more than being alive. For O'Donovan, human persons must be about the business of living, not "the life we live without trying to do so," but a striving after life, a "life we must reach out to live."[126] O'Donovan argues that humans do not live by merely being alive, such as a tree; instead, they must "appropriate life, make it their own."[127] He further claims, "We make a difference between 'life,' as such, and 'a life' which has to be lived for ourselves."[128] O'Donovan attributes this to a Spirit-directed life, "constituting us as subjects of moral experience' and "'leads' in the direction of free action."[129] Note that while the Spirit enables one as a moral being, each person is free in their moral actions. O'Donovan states, "Induction into life and action is accomplished by a word of truth addressed to us, a declaration of the way things between the world and ourselves. We are debtors to a life, a direction, and a truth."[130] Every person's coming into Being and time, is their thrownness into a life of freedom of action. A person is a debtor because their Creator has brought them into existence, but they are left to work out their own becoming. However, O'Donovan argues that it is *in-Christ* that humanity finds its proper agency.

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[126] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 5.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.

O'Donovan characterizes the freedom of *Being-in-Christ* "as participation in Christ's authority within the created order."[131] I argue O'Donovan, in writing it as *Being-in-Christ*, intentionally draws attention to the Heideggerian formulation of *Being-in*. Those acquainted with Heidegger's writings would recognize *being-in* as a prominent example of the esoteric use of hyphenated words and phrases, characteristic of Heidegger's work. I argue that O'Donovan is making use of this phrase to draw on Heidegger's meaning of *Being-in* to elucidate how he believes the Spirit makes manifest the person of Christ. Therefore, it is worth exploring what Heidegger means by being-in to see if it coheres or sheds light on what O'Donovan means by *Being-in-Christ*.

3.5.1 *Phenomenological Sounding on Being-in*

Being-in evokes a spatial image, but this is not the desired effect for Heidegger. Being-in, Heidegger tells us, can refer to "Being-in something," such as tea in a cup; however, being-in for Dasein is an ontological designation.[132] Thomas Sheehan argues that Being-in, for Heidegger, "far from having anything to do with ordinary space (within-ness), refers to our ever-operative but unthematic *engagements* with meaning-giving, without which we could not know anything as meaning*ful*."[133] Being-in is a designation that explains how a person interacts with the world around them, as Sheehan states, "both passively and actively, with meaning-giving."[134] Appropriating Being-in to elucidate *Being-in-Christ*, is to say that a person engaged by the Spirit encounters the world as meaningful through Christ, as the locus of originary

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[131] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 24.
[132] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 79.
[133] Thomas Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*." In *Interpreting Heidegger*, edited by Daniel O. Dahlstrom, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 42–68, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511974465.004, p. 57.
[134] Ibid., p. 58.

meaning. *Being-in-Christ* is a means for engaging thoughtfully with the world, in a way that reflects Christ.

Heidegger's fundamental ontology posits Being-in-the-world as a necessary component of being human. As *Being-in* has no spatial component it also means, according to Heidegger, "to reside alongside" or "to be familiar with"; b*eing-in* is to be *Being-alongside* or "absorbed in the world."[135] Being-alongside the world is Dasein's existential condition of being absorbed in the world. However, Being-alongside never means a "'side-by-side-ness' of an entity called 'Dasein' with another entity called 'world'."[136] The word 'in', Heidegger contends, derives from the word *innan*, meaning to reside, and *habitare*—to dwell.[137] For Heidegger, humans are captivated by the context in which they reside. Being-in is an existentiale of a human person; therefore, whatever Being is *in*, it is *in* it "*as its essential state*."[138] As Paul Gorner understands Dasein, humans are never meant to be "something essentially private and isolated"; instead, "Being-in-the-world is being-with-others-in-the-world." [139] For Heidegger, Being-in is a founded mode, which means that it is always attached to something else. As Gorner argues, the world is always a shared world, meaning "Relationship to others is not just a contingent fact."[140] Human existence is meant to be shared because being-in-the-world entails being-with others.[141] Being-in-the-world is to be in community.

Being-in is not a contingent property that one can either have or not have. Instead, Heidegger describes being-in as an essential relationship.[142] Richard Polt describes Being-in as

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[135] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 80.
[136] Ibid., p. 81.
[137] Ibid., p. 80.
[138] Thomas Sheehan, "Facticity and *Ereignis*." p. 57.
[139] Paul Gorner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, p. 5.
[140] Ibid., p. 5.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 84.

something inseparable from the human person. He writes that Being-in the world is not a location, "it is not just a place where Dasein happens to be – it is an inseparable part of Dasein's Being."[143] That is to say, it is a necessary part of being human. Therefore, *Being-in-Christ*, as an essential state, puts attachment to Christ at the core of being human.

Another characteristic of Being-in is what Heidegger calls de-severance. He defines de-severance as "a circumspective bringing-close—bringing something close by, in the sense of procuring it, putting it in readiness, having it to hand."[144] Heidegger is not speaking of overcoming a fixed distance; instead, it is a farness or remoteness brought close. However, it is not an elimination of distance. As David R. Cerbone argues, de-severance describes the way a person "can get close to things in terms of apprehending them, understanding them as the things they are."[145] It is, Heidegger notes, "a concernful Being towards that is brought close and de-severed."[146] This drawing close and concernful Being towards is ontological; one is constitutionally engaged with and mindful of, not something like distress or worry. It is the Spirit, as I will show below, that O'Donovan believes draws close the person of Christ. The Spirit de-severs the distance between the human person and the person of Christ.

Being-in reflects how one finds themselves engaging in a world full of meaning and O'Donovan is implicitly drawing on these concepts. However, readers unfamiliar with what Being-in represents might not get the full effect of his argument. Being-in represents a dwelling in the world; the world and human persons are inseparable. It is how a person finds meaning in the world. For the restorationist, Being-in brings to the fore the fact that humans are not in a

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[143] Richard Polt, *Heidegger: An Introduction*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999). p. 64.
[144] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 139-140.
[145] David R. Cerbone, "Heidegger on Space and Spatiality," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time*. ed. Mark A. Wrathall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 129-144, https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781139047289, p. 135.
[146] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 140.

container called Earth, but that the world is their concern, it is a part of them as much as they are a part of it. Being-in reveals the intimate nature human persons have with creation. Humanity's relationship to creation is ontological. That is, the world is not a stage but humankinds' way of being, it is fundamental to existence itself.

For the Christian, the Spirit brings close the person of Christ so that Christ is available in an immediate sense. It is *in-Christ* a person navigates the world; however, Christ is so close that his presence is not noticed, but shapes how one views the world. Being-in-Christ becomes a way of Being. Being-in-Christ is an essential setup for dealing with the problems I lay out in Chapter 5—specifically, the problem of neoliberalism as world-shaping horizon that views creation as something to be exploited.

3.5.2   *Being-in-Christ*

O'Donovan, in *Resurrection and Moral Order*, states that "the gift of subjective freedom must already be an aspect of our being-in-Christ, not merely a precondition or a consequence of it."[147] I am not free because I am in-Christ, nor is my being-in-Christ the reason for my freedom. Rather, to be in-Christ is to *be free*. O'Donovan claims that the freedom one experiences *is* the freedom of Christ. O'Donovan's use of being-in-Christ is clearly in the existential register as opposed to spatial. Being-in-Christ is an essential state of being human. O'Donovan is not the only theologian to draw on Heidegger's theme of being-in.

In *The Appearing of God* (translated by O'Donovan), Lacoste writes about Being-in and its function in the relationship between humans and God. Lacoste understands being-in to be concerned with the "who" and "where", but the spatial question of "where" must be understood

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[147] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 24.

in the existential. The "where" of theology anticipates a relationship to the Divine "apart from or beyond existence."[148] Being-in-God, Lacoste argues, is a "true appearance of 'being-in'" and gives rise to *true life*.[149] Lacoste's use of being-in is aimed at an eschatological realization. Lacoste sees this as giving way to an eschatological perspective of the self when face to face with God. The human person is passively open to God to the point of possibility where the "I Am" is pushed to the margins, and one is beyond asking questions about the world and existence.[150] Conversely, O'Donovan orients Being-in towards a person's daily existence and how the Spirit draws near the person of Christ.

According to O'Donovan, Being-in-Christ is how one comes to know the created order and their place in it.[151] In *Entering into Rest*, he writes that "our agency is justified solely within Christ's agency, our accomplishments sanctified in the all-embracing scope of Christ's accomplishments."[152] Human vocation and human existence find their meaning in Christ. Another example of the existential quality of being-in-Christ, found in *Self, World, and Time,* proclaims "faith in Christ the foundation of Christian existence."[153] Heidegger describes being alongside as another way to say being-in, as to be absorbed. Being-in-Christ is to be absorbed in Christ. Being-in-Christ signals one's engagement with Christ, being concerned with the concerns of Christ. O'Donovan argues that the freedom of Christ is brought near and made available to human persons.[154] In this way, being-in-Christ is a form of de-severance.

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[148] Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*, p. 172.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*, p. 173.
[151] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 19, 20, 24.
[152] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 128.
[153] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 99.
[154] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 24.

Being-in-Christ commits us to the ways of Christ; as O'Donovan claims, it is the bringing close, by the Spirit, of the freedom and authority of Christ to exercise that freedom and authority within the created order. O'Donovan argues that humans, having their Being-in-Christ, are "able for the first time to assume [their] proper place within it, the place of dominion." [155] The language of dominion is problematic and saturated with oppressive overtones. In a sermon titled "How to Be a Human Being," O'Donovan acknowledges that dominion is "misunderstood to justify irresponsible exploitation."[156] Dominion, he contends, designates the human ability to "understand and interpret."[157] Considering this, how does one use their freedom and authority in creation? As O'Donovan understands—

> Our human privilege is of knowing. We can observe the universe of creatures that do not exist for us…. Our human privilege is to conduct ourselves appropriately in such a universe, using the control that knowledge gives to secure a context not only favorable to ourselves but to the variety of creatures God has made.[158]

One's freedom and authority in Christ is not a place of dominance. Instead, it gives human persons moral responsibility for creation. As Artinian-Kaiser notes, "dominion arises not from knowledge but misknowledge, and that knowledge of an object fosters admiration and love."[159]

It is within this freedom found in Christ O'Donovan claims that humans, as moral agents, "interpret new situations," making decisions as a means of exercising authority. Freedom, for O'Donovan, is the exercise of agency, and "one is called to it."[160] In freedom, humanity is called to make decisions in a world that is not of their making. Nonetheless, a world

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[155] Ibid.
[156] Oliver O'Donovan, "How to Be a Human Being," in *The Word in Small Boats: Sermons from Oxford*, ed. Andy Draycott (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2010). p. 136.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 159.
[160] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 13.

in which decisions "are thrust upon us" is "a world that is as it is, not as we might have wished it to be."[161] If one is to respond faithfully, their decisions might best be served by Being-in-Christ.

While not noting the phenomenological connection, Being-in as an articulation of the de-severed human person dwelling inseparably with the word and in O'Donovan's use with Christ, Artinian-Kaiser argues that being in Christ through the Spirit is essential for formulating a theological response to environmental degradation and ecological restoration. It is through the Spirit that one can respond in love and wisdom to the created order in Christ. Through what she calls the "ministry of the Holy Spirit" is the "vision of Christian moral responses to degradation through restoration."[162] She argues, "In Christ, love and wisdom came together so that what was offered was a redemption that constituted the affirmation and fulfilment of creaturely goodness, which was pronounced in the beginning."[163] By the Spirit, one can orient themselves to the world in Christ's love and wisdom. Acting in love and wisdom "does not impose a reality upon the world"; instead, a person expresses love and wisdom when engaging the world for what it is and what it needs.[164] For Artinian-Kaiser, the work of Christ and the Spirit reflects God's promise to redeem and transform creation, representing God's affinity for creation, and, as a result, restoration is a "work of discernment, with respect to what the natural world is, and what it requires."[165] Therefore, a life in-Christ, through the Spirit, takes seriously the prospect of acting in love as a means for understanding how one should live in and respond to the created order. It is a call to share in Christ's love for the world.

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[161] Ibid.
[162] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 111.
[163] Ibid., p. 180.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid., p. 112.

To be human is to act in the "sphere of responsibility and action," the world, intending one's actions to carry into the future a reflection of the moral inclinations of the person.[166] This is what O'Donovan believes to be the "essential sense" persons are the image of God.[167] Authentic human love is conformed to God's love, as image bearers, and to love like Christ, one must have the truth of the object of its love, which at its heart is an understanding of the object of its love.[168] It is a *letting be*, that in love allows beings to be seen and loved for what they are. As O'Donovan states, the "love of the material world is good if it is built upon a recognition of what material goods are and what they are good for."[169] A correct love of the world is a love that interprets creation consistent with the divine self-communication encountered in the world. Being transformed to the life of Christ, Being-in-Christ, is how humans fulfil their potential.

For O'Donovan, humans achieve authenticity when they conform to the true image of God, which is Christ. O'Donovan believes that human agency, which we have in freedom, "is our being of the image of God."[170] God's call on humankind, as image bearers "entrusted with worldly dominion in knowing and loving," only comes to them "*through* the created world."[171] He argues that it reaches us through the call of wisdom.[172] Humans experience, conceive of and communicate meaning as something first given as God's gift.[173] The original meaning, therefore, lies in the intentions of the Creator. One does not confer meaning on the world, but meaning resides in creation, a "meaning that originates with the Creator and Redeemer of a

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166 Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 34.
167 Ibid.
168 Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 236.
169 Ibid.
170 Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 14.
171 Ibid., p. 100.
172 Ibid., pp. 100-101.
173 Ibid., p. 170.

meaningful world."[174] Instead, humankind is called to communicate meaning. In being the image, humans are the communicative self-reflexive agent that gives voice to and interpret the reciprocity of the given and giving that occurs between all created beings. O'Donovan states, "There is no meaning that is not actually meant, *by* somebody *for* somebody. The communication of meaning *offers* the reference to reality to some determinate audience or readership."[175] Communication is meant for a community.

3.6   Being-in-Community

So far, in this chapter, I have looked at the 'I' in more detail and how the agent-self relates to restoration. However, an essential component of ecological restoration is the role communities play. In the previous chapter, I introduced the concept that O'Donovan's 'I' can never be separated from the 'We'. Realizing that everyone is just one among many, is a core aspect of wakefulness. As O'Donovan states, "A secure sense of 'I,' no longer as nothing but as something, arises precisely from its place within the 'we'."[176] Additionally, he writes that what it means to be a self is to be "a subject of action constituted not by a nature but by a place within a community of persons."[177] For O'Donovan, what makes a person a *self* is not entirely from within. Instead, it comes from being with others. As O'Donovan argues, "Behind the 'I' with which we wrestle so hard there is a 'we' in whose vision we seek to participate."[178] To question one's beliefs, motives, or knowledge is to question the community that first gave us those ideas. There is no separating what the 'I' is from the 'We'. Furthermore, he claims, the "search for wisdom" depends upon thinking "of ourselves alongside others as a members of a

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[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid., p. 165.
[176] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 43.
[177] Ibid., p. 44.
[178] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 58.

community."[179] Communities remind a person that their most existential feature is *being-in-the-world*.

The world one wakes to when they wake to self. One's self-awareness of its agency is juxtaposed with the agency of others. Communities have the potential to be the eschatological expression of God's love for the world, according to O'Donovan. He argues that humanity is "Not called to life in a vacuum but to life in the world."[180] Errington adds, that while faith is "awakened by the call of God," it is the world that "give[s] it form and focus."[181] Faithfulness is always faithfulness in-the-world, to which humans are responsible to both the created order and God. According to Errington, "Awareness of the self is redeemed as faith."[182] Faith requires an understanding of the agency of the self in-the-world, but a self in-the-world whose agency is turned towards the will of God. Consider this quote from O'Donovan, "the truth of the self in the world is as a neighbored self, alongside another who is "like" self. Sustained attention to the truth of the world grasps hold of this elementary relation of self to neighbor."[183] Turning one's attention to the world is to attend to one's neighbor. An obedient response to God's call is one of love. A love that acknowledges the reality of the created order, an order from which the self emerges. The created order also contains the created other, which is not other at all. As O'Donovan understands it, the self is absorbed in other-selves. He argues that consciously forgoing "some finite good" for oneself to acknowledge the neighbor's (or God's) claim on the good is to "affirm ourselves as agents."[184] The extreme version is placed on the lips of Jesus by the author of John's Gospel (15:13)—"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life

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[179] Ibid.
[180] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 112.
[181] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 165.
[182] Ibid., p. 164.
[183] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 83.
[184] Ibid., p. 21.

for one's friends." The locus of the self is as a person absorbed in their community in a posture of love, seeking the good of the other.

Errington sees in O'Donovan's reasoning an eschatological aspect of love. He argues that, for O'Donovan, "Action also *seeks* love, which becomes a real anticipation of eternity in the life of the present community."[185] Tranter sees something similar in O'Donovan's account of action, love, and community. He argues that O'Donovan's eschatological take on love views communities as the manifestation of "eschatology's import for ethics."[186] O'Donovan, in *Entering into Rest*, contends that "Community alone can tell us of the universal order yet to arrive."[187] Communities, albeit imperfectly, anticipate the Kingdom of God by delighting in and accepting the accomplishment of others, representing "a most perfect fulfilling of agency within a greater agency communicated by one to another."[188] Communities accomplish this by effectively reasoning well together.

Capizzi's review of O'Donovan's *Entering into Rest* also notes the eschatological nature of community in O'Donovan's work. Capizzi argues that O'Donovan understands the task of moral theology is to pique one's moral imagination to consider the ends of action "ordered towards a happiness understood only by reference to eschatology and community."[189] In this sense, the task of moral theology is "always communal."[190] According to Capizzi, O'Donovan is arguing that if acts are to be considered a good, they need to be intelligible. O'Donovan writes, "I make a claim to the community not only about my understanding of the relationship

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[185] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 175.
[186] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 223.
[187] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 5.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Joseph E. Capizzi, "Giant: Review of Oliver O'Donovan's Ethics as Theology," p. 174.
[190] Ibid., p. 175.

of my act to some good, but also about the community's capacity to understand my act."[191] Though I should point out that it does not mean they will understand the reason for a particular act, just that the act is comprehensible as an action for some purpose. One's actions are shared communal experiences, where even solitary acts are acknowledged to draw on the community that is the backdrop to these acts and experiences.

Conversely, O'Donovan argues that communities are a "relation of relations," and there are shared "common interests," even if community members do not acknowledge the shared nature of these interests or the other community members.[192] However, in this case, the communal identity breaks down, as a shared common interest does not equate to community. Arguably, this happens in environments with shared resources. Community members might exert control of that shared interest with little regard for how it affects others in their non-acknowledged community. Only when individuals "are interested in one another as fellow members" does a community become "*conscious of itself*."[193] Capizzi notes that this is what allows communities to judge actions. He argues, "Judgments about the meaning of acts occur in communities."[194] *Being-in-community* recognizes that actions are never fully isolated, no matter how myopic they are. Actions have either been affected by or affect a community. The process of ecological restoration requires communities to accept communal relations alongside their shared interests.

The challenge is demonstrating that ecosystems and non-human animals are also a part of human communities. If Christian communities desire to reflect an eschatological community of love, they might consider extending their actions to incorporate the good of the non-human

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[191] Ibid.
[192] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 47.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Joseph E. Capizzi, "Giant: Review of Oliver O'Donovan's Ethics as Theology," p. 175.

community members. Regarding environmental concerns, Tranter affirms readings of O'Donovan that view his work as "compatible with" ecological concerns.[195] He sees promise in interpretations of O'Donovan's work, like Artinian-Kaiser's, that see the "construal of redemption as the total restoration of the created order … as a doctrinal premise for moral theology's interest in realities beyond the human creature."[196] According to Tranter, there is reason to envisage O'Donovan's ethical approach to a normative moral theology "to be buttressed by the assertion of nature's vindication in the resurrection and thereafter its strong eschatological continuity."[197] Artinian-Kaiser argues that the call of love is the only proper response in light of God's eschatological promise to redeem and transform all creation. To respond in love to creation is to "bring forth the good so that the created order may be seen for what it is; the beloved world of God."[198] Communities are an *ecclesia* of God's love, reciprocating that love with creation. As stated in the introduction, I am less inclined to underpin restoration practices with eschatological reasoning. I argue that humans practice restoration because they are capable, culpable creatures given to love what God loves. However, love has an eschatological aspect, as it first comes from God, and in that sense, love's eschatological end nurtures a person's appreciation and affirmation of the created order.

God's love of the world is prior to his eschatological promise to redeem it. Creation exists in love before it rests in hope, and humanity is called to respond in faith. A world of goods manifests God's love for creation, and by extension, for humankind. To this end, people are obligated to love God and love creation. O'Donovan argues that in belonging to a "world in which the good is good; I, too, am indebted to the goodness of the good…. And from this

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[195] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 87.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 188.

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appreciation of my love of what is good, there is born gratitude."[199] To love the good is to admire the good as something good for oneself. However, to love the good is to recognize that it is just not *good-for-me*. Instead, it broadens one's view to attend to the world of goods; goods, not because they are goods for them, but because they are goods as God's created good.

Similarly, restoration ecologist Eric Higgs argues that "restoration is successful only to the extent that the life of the human community is changed to reflect the health of the restored ecosystem. In other words, we are engaged in a reciprocal relationship with ecosystems that are close to us."[200] Attending to the world broadens one's community to which one belongs and participates in the gift of God's love. God is the First Good, and according to O'Donovan, "divine goodness is an idea we cannot think through without reference to the goods of creation."[201] Creation is God's first communicative act. Consequently, O'Donovan argues that it is "preposterous to suppose" that we could know God's goodness apart "from the communication of creaturely goods."[202] Knowledge of God as good is imparted through God's good creation. If one is to convey God as good to others, it will be through their love expressed in love for God's creaturely goods; that is, God's communicated Good, the world.

3.7   Moral Communication

Communication is the basis for community. It is the foundation for creating shared value. In ecological restoration, one communicates what they believe the value of creation to be by what they choose to restore and towards what end. If creation's voice is the self-communication of God, then our reception of that communication is an invitation to

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[199] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 118.
[200] Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design*, p. 222.
[201] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 118.
[202] Ibid.

participation. O'Donovan argues that "Attending to what is said is our first concrete moral undertaking, the material form in which we exercise responsibility for self-disposal."[203] He argues that "To communicate is to embrace a structure of meaning in which the particular is located within the common—not abandoning its particular fulfillments, but finding them in, and not apart from, the fulfillments of others."[204] When applied to creation, the natural order is communication; it is one's responsibility to listen and respond appropriately. The purpose of communication, of any sort, is to communicate the reality of creation truthfully.

When I communicate the reality of this world, I am not communicating the Truth. The Truth, O'Donovan argues "is the disclosure of God's works in Christ."[205] what I communicate is a reference to the Truth, which I hope to do truthfully. However, I must remain open to the possibility that I am incorrect or that my communication is unclear. Creation, as an ethical framework, is a referent to the divine Truth. Human communication is not divine; it can fail to make known the truth of reality adequately. However, creation is the self-communicating act of God. O'Donovan argues that God "has shaped a world to ground our being, a covenanted sphere of communication between himself and ourselves, evoking agency and practical reason among us."[206] According to O'Donovan, it is an exercise of God's authority, but not one of control. Authority, as he defines it, is "an *event in which a reality is communicated to practical reason by a social communication*."[207] Creation is God's social self-communicating act, and restoration is human participation in the authority of the event. Because O'Donovan states, authority is both of God (Romans 13:1), and "of the world".[208] Applying O'Donovan's

[203] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 132.
[204] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 48.
[205] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 113.
[206] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 57.
[207] Ibid., p. 53.
[208] Ibid., p. 57.

reasoning, when humans wrest that authority from its social communicative context, they are no longer communicating with the self-communicative Good of God. Instead, creation becomes something to have authority over, in the form of control. I demonstrate this in chapter 5.

O'Donovan recognizes that human communication is only as capable as its aptness to represent reality as it is. In communicating truthfully about the nature of creation, one acts prudentially as a moral agent. Failure to do so is a moral failure. The focus of human communication is often a communication of how one values their self or others, including how one values their environment. The communication of value is of particular interest to the restoration community. When people communicate falsely or to ends other than those given by the truth of creation, they fail morally. Failure to communicate truth and act according to our authentic selves is a failure to live out one's *Being-in-Christ*. The question of value communication is not solely a theological one. It represents a bridge between theology and what is often seen as 'secular' interests, such as science and ecological restoration.

3.8   The Role of Restorationists

3.8.1   *Values and the Problem of 'Is-Ought'*

Questions about community and values are overlapping concerns for both the theologian and ecological restorationist. Theologians and ethicists, such as O'Donovan and ecological restorationists, run up against the problem between fact and value or, as David Hume framed it, the distinction between 'is' and 'ought'.[209] O'Donovan proposes that Hume is not suggesting "a direct avowal of the fact-value divide."[210] Rather, according to O'Donovan, where Hume

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[209] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 23.; David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature: Being an Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects*. (Auckland: Floating Press, 2009), p. 715.
[210] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 23.

perceives moral writers to have failed to explain how one moves from facts to values, Hume believes he has succeeded. [211] O'Donovan, slightly hedging, argues that Hume's is-ought distinction "is probably not from fact to value but from value to obligation."[212] O'Donovan is convinced that Hume was concerned about "the question of the good and the right."[213] While O'Donovan mentions this argument in *Self, World, and Time*, he more fully articulates his position in his 2007 New College lecture "Waking". He writes—

> There are, of course, such things as bare facts that do not determine value-judgments; we shall have something to say about their status next time. But there are a great number of other truths about the world, expressed with the verb "is", which do determine our value-judgments. The right way, I believe, to understand the movement of thought that Hume observed is not in terms of "fact" and "value", but in terms of the "good" and the "right", where "good" points to something real about the world which we appreciate, "right" points to something we are to do.[214]

O'Donovan suggests that while not all facts about the world lay a claim upon human actions, there are facts that obligate humankind to do the 'right' thing. For the thing in question is a good of the world. According to O'Donovan, one's admiration of the good stirs resolve to do what is right.[215] O'Donovan shares this sentiment in *Resurrection and Moral Order*, stating, "The way the Universe is, determines how man *ought* to behave himself in it."[216] The way the world is creates a horizon for human behaviour and concerns. However, Artinian-Kaiser warns that while one should be cautious of moving too hastily "from facts about nature to moral claims," it is equally wrought to divide the *is* and *ought*, as it imperils creation "whereby nothing in what the natural world is necessarily requires our respect."[217] The way the world is may not

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[211] Ibid., p. 24.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Oliver O'Donovan, "Waking," p. 1.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 17.
[217] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 102.

mean that this is the way it ought to be. Neverthelesss, there are ways the natural world is that places a moral obligation on the way a person comports to creation.

If creation has something to say, how does one hear it? Looking back at the previous chapter, it is discernment found through reflection and deliberation that wakes one to their responsibility. Errington, following O'Donovan, argues that responsibility is the experience of the "weightiness" of moving "from value to obligation."[218] It is a movement from simple awareness to an obligation to act. For Errington, the awareness of value and obligation "is a journey from *world* to *time*."[219] Regarding ecorestoration, the question of *is-ought* or *goods-right* is a question of facts about the world; it is also a question of time. It asks what has been, but more importantly, it asks what will be. It is more than a recognition of the good and one's responsibility towards it, but a responsibility directed towards the future. The obligation is towards a future that does not exist but needs to be brought into existence. Thinking temporally about restoration (detailed in the next chapter) broadens the scope of one's obligations and enlarges one's horizon.

3.8.2 *Restoration, Restorationists, and Values*

David M. Martin argues that ecological restoration is typically understood as what restoration does, recovering ecological function. However, equally as important is "why we restore ecosystems," which he states is "to achieve common values and beliefs."[220] According to Martin, ecorestoration goals are centred around shared values, but which ones and whose values? Values, Martin writes, "can be inherent or instrumental, and can cover social,

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[218] Andrew Errington, *Every Good Path*, p. 159.
[219] Ibid.
[220] David M. Martin, "Ecological Restoration Should Be Redefined for the Twenty-First Century," *Restoration Ecology* 25, no. 5, (2017): 668–73, https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.12554, pp. 668-669.

environmental, economic, cultural, moral, political, or religious contexts and meanings."[221] According to Richard J. Hobbs, "Deciding on restoration objectives involves a set of values, including the ethical and philosophical bases for our actions, concepts of "good" restoration, its aims, and humanity's place in nature."[222] To that, I would add theological reasons for Christians and other religious groups.

Restorationists and ecotheologians share overlapping concerns when it comes to valuing creation. Restoration is value-driven as restorationists must choose how and what to restore, questions that scientific inquiry cannot always answer. Scientists have noted that "Making informed choices about whether and how to restore ecological systems will involve more than science."[223] Sustainability leaders David P. Robertson and R. Bruce Hill argue that "Ecological science cannot identify one of these many possible conditions of nature as being better than another without invoking some value system that answers the question 'better for what purpose?' There are many possible natures many of which possess health, integrity, diversity, and other desirable qualities."[224] A degraded ecosystem represents an opportunity to restore a set of functions or goals that fulfill the practice of restoration. That possibility can also be understood as a set of values. Restoration practitioners restore ecosystems to meet any number of criteria and those criteria reflect individual, organizational, or political values, or some combination thereof. Arguably, acknowledging that restoration practices reflect values is important for undertaking effective restoration practices. As Robertson and Hill argue, "if we want the environment to be a certain way, we must actively manage for the conditions we

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[221] David M. Martin, "Ecological Restoration Should Be Redefined for the Twenty-First Century," p. 669.
[222] Richard J. Hobbs et al., "Restoration Ecology: The Challenge of Social Values and Expectations" p. 43.
[223] Lee Failing, Robin Gregory, and Paul Higgins, "Science, Uncertainty, and Values in Ecological Restoration: A Case Study in Structured Decision-Making and Adaptive Management," *Restoration Ecology* 21, no. 4, (2013): 422–30, p. 422.
[224] David P. Robertson and Bruce Hull. "Beyond Biology: Toward a More Public Ecology for Conservation," *Conservation Biology* 15, no. 4, (2001): 970–79. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3061316, p. 971.

desire." [225] The difficulty arises when practitioners are unaware of those values because restoration practices might not adequately restore ecosystems. That restoration is value-driven may surprise some who believe it is solely driven by science.

Andre F. Clewell, along with James Aronson, argue that what motivates individuals to practice the arduous task of restoration is their values. The answers to the question "why do you practice ecorestoration?" that come most readily are "the urgency of the threat to ecosystems, the environment, and the planet."[226] However, they argue, "Many would add that assisting ecological recovery fulfills other deep-seated values, satisfies diverse aspirations, and gives meaning to their lives."[227] Restoration values are subject and objective, individual and collective, with the best restoration practices fulfilling all four.[228] Scientific principles inform restoration practices, but what motivates scientists is their values. As Clewell and Aronson argue that while individuals may become interested in restoration because they took a university course or were offered a job, "The chances are that we took that course or considered that job because it resonated with our yearnings to fulfill" one or more personal values — reconnecting with nature, responding to the environmental crisis, and a oneness with creation.[229] These values share a consonance with O'Donovan's call to wake to self, world, and time. Theologians and restorationists share a value-driven approach to existence and participation in it, though how they ground their values may differ.

Mark A. Davis and Lawrence B. Slobodkin argue that restoration ecologists often, and probably unintentionally, "disguise their values as science."[230] They argue that statements such

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."[225] David P. Robertson and Bruce Hull. "Beyond Biology."
[226] Andre F. Clewell and James Aronson, *Ecological Restoration*, p. 15.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Ibid., pp. 16-18.
[229] Ibid., p. 21.
[728] Richard J. Hobbs et al., "Restoration Ecology," p. 44.

as ecosystem health, ecological integrity, damaged or repaired while sounding scientific are "ultimately value-laden statements."[231] Davis and Lawrence suggest that scientists should be upfront about their values. "When we say we want to restore an ecosystem's health or integrity, we are really saying that we prefer an ecosystem of a particular type."[232] Even characterizing an ecosystem as healthy or degraded "is a value-based assessment, not scientific."[233] Moreover, the idea that humans can design ecosystems to fill particular desires may exhibit the same hubris that led to ecosystem degradation in the first place.[234]

Likewise, Eric Higgs pushes back against the idea that the practice of ecological restoration is strictly a scientific undertaking. Instead, he argues that community participation, "the relationship between ecological and cultural restoration," and the role of aesthetics in restoration shifts the question from "What is good ecological restoration? into a moral as well as technical question."[235] He considers the moral question integral to restoration practices, stating, "Failure to achieve clarity on moral and cultural considerations will hinder ecological restoration's potential to generate healthy relationships between the people and the land."[236] According to Higgs, there is "little hostility" towards discussing the moral implications of restoration; however, restoration ecologists "have little time."[237] The question of values has long been a core component of theological discourse, including topics concerning the environment. However, when it comes to ecological restoration, theologians have yet to take up the task with any urgency. Given the UN declaration that restoration is key to thwarting the

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[231] Ibid.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Ibid., p. 47.
[235] Eric S. Higgs, "What Is Good Ecological Restoration?" *Conservation Biology* 11, no. 2, (1997): 338–48, https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1523-1739.1997.95311.x, p. 339.
[236] Ibid.
[237] Ibid.

worst of climate change and that restoration is value-laden, theologians would do well to take it seriously.

As I discussed in the last chapter, O'Donovan argues that the *truth of this world* is the basis for moral awareness. Moral awareness is waking to the implications of the *good* derived from the created order.[238] One principle for O'Donovan that shapes human action in the world is the discipline of prudence. Prudence, he suggests, allows one to "discern the system of moral laws" from the affective admiration of "the goods of the created order."[239] Prudence being "excellent deliberation," focused on moving from moral reflection to purposeful concrete actions.[240] Moral reflection alone does not yield moral laws. Rather, "moral reflection as such knows no 'laws'; it discovers ordered goods, but not imperatives."[241] Prudence "recognizes the normative implications of value" and allows one to apprehend "the order as directive, as a normative order that lays claim on our freedom to act."[242] Following O'Donovan, Christians thinking about restoration do well to consider how the created order can inform the practice of ecological restoration.

3.8.3 *Are Restorationists Faking Nature?*

Some environmental ethicists, notably Eric Katz, argue that ecological restoration is another form of environmental harm. Katz contends that human choice over the environment is more of the same human domination over creation paradigm, albeit under the guise of science

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[238] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 195.
[239] Ibid.
[240] Ibid., p. 193.
[241] Ibid., p. 195.
[242] Ibid.

and technology. He argues that humans presume to control nature and natural processes via technology better than nature itself.[243] In a biting critique, Katz writes:

> Has anyone found this criterion of intervention yet? I wish I knew what it was, so I could act with perfect respect towards all the autonomous subjects that I encounter. But until we come a lot closer to determining this standard, I believe it is dangerous to articulate a positive vision of the human role for intervention in the natural world.[244]

It is Katz's position that nature is to be left alone. The belief that humans can intervene in creation and creation can still be natural results from human arrogance. The argument that Katz advances is dualistic, treating humans and their artifacts as distinct from nature. Katz does not deny that humans are a part of the natural world; he levels his overall critique at the products of human ingenuity. As opposed to other creatures, he argues that humans create artifacts, which are all "outside the realm of naturally occurring entities, processes, and systems."[245] Therefore, Katz contends, a restored system is no less a human artifact.

The question of value raised by the restorationist at the beginning of this chapter is why Katz argues that restoration is another form of human oppression and domination of nature. In light of some restoration work occurring under the umbrella of *ecosystem services*, Katz is correct to protest. It is Katz's conviction that "when we intervene, we attempt to mold the natural world to suit our needs."[246] Conversely, I consider doing nothing to still represent a human choice and, therefore, the necessary choice is often intervening to improve degraded ecosystems. Still, Katz's critique raises awareness about the human role in restoration and

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[243] Eric Katz, "Anne Frank's Tree: Thoughts on Domination and the Paradox of Progress," *Ethics Place and Environment* 13, no. 3 (2010): 283-293, https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/1366879X.2010.516498, p. 286.

[244] Eric Katz, "Understanding Moral Limits in the Duality of Artifacts and Nature: A Reply to Critics," *Ethics and the Environment* 7, no. 1 (2002): 138-146, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40339028, p. 143.

[245] Ibid., p. 141.

[246] Ibid., p. 144.

warns of failing to include all creatures in restoration plans. As Katz states, understanding that restoration is a human project and "we must not treat nature as a commodity for the furtherance of human satisfaction."[247]

Likewise, in *Faking Nature*, Robert Elliot argues that if nature's value can be restored, there is little incentive not to destroy it. The argument goes "that the replacement of lost value allegedly compensates for the fact of their earlier loss."[248] If the natural value is readily replaceable, then natural value pales in comparison to economic value. As Elliot states, "Once the restoration of natural values is guaranteed, the economic values become decisive."[249] Elliot calls the restoration of natural values the replacement thesis.[250] If nature is easily restored, there is no genuine competing interest between those who wish to exploit resources for monetary gain and those who fight to keep nature away from the industrial complex. Restoration, if true, would be a useful tool in the toolbox of developers and resource extractors. However, as Elliot notes, restoration is never about replacement. He writes, "For instance, it will be no easy feat to re-create intricate rock formations [in the case of mining restoration], including such things as distinctive patterns of weather and colouration."[251] Conversely, even if a complete replacement were possible, Elliot believes something is still lost.

Elliot argues "that natural values can never be fully restored, not even in principle."[252] As a thought experiment, he proposes two identical islands, one as a product of ecological history and the other as a new technological and cultural artifact. It is Elliot's view that the first

[247] Eric Katz, "Understanding Moral Limits in the Duality of Artifacts and Nature."

[248] Robert Elliot, *Faking Nature: The Ethics of Environmental Restoration*. (Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 1997), http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bham/detail.action?docID=165130, p. 75.

[249] Ibid.

[250] Ibid., p. 76.

[251] Ibid., p. 77.

[252] Ibid., p. 78.

island has a relational value, meaning the value of the natural island has "value-adding properties"; that is, "The particular history or genesis of something can be among those characteristics or properties upon which the value of that thing is directly based."[253] As Artinian-Kaiser notes, for Elliot, degrading or despoiling natural environments is to be avoided, even if restoration could fully restore an ecosystem (which it cannot), because historical continuity is valuable, such that "an interruption in this continuity,… constitutes a disruption of its value."[254] Furthermore, she argues that while Elliot's positions could be used to argue that human activity is unnatural, his critique "is important to retain … if only to remind humankind of its place in the world."[255] I agree, restoration is not an excuse to degrade creation, as a scientific get-out-of-jail-free card. Humanity is not the demiurge of creation; its place in creation is being a creature. The exploitation of the world and the forgetting of place has led to humankind's disruptive practices imperiling the created order.

Much of the natural environment is at the point of needing intervention to counter degradation. Ecological restoration, as a practice, implies that there is a particular way of being for an ecosystem. Not only is the act of restoration a levelling of moral judgment but the means and reasons one chooses to restore ecosystems are also moral judgments. It speaks to social and cultural values. What one chooses to restore and to what ends that restoration serves are morally significant. Therefore, the human person is a significant aspect of restoration, and interrogating the human person to understand their place in creation helps determine how to mitigate anthropocentrism's harmful aspects. However, one is sensible to mind Katz's and Elliot's

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[253] Ibid., p. 80.
[254] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 60.
[255] Ibid.

critique of the potential hubris of ecological restoration practices. Communities play a role in limiting human hubris by refracting knowledge generationally and from diverse perspectives.

Therefore, situating the human person in creation helps one understand a human person's role in restoration and how humankind might learn to dwell in creation. Ecological restoration speaks to what humankind values. Dave Egan, Evan Hjerpe, and Jesse Abrams argue in *Human Dimensions of Ecological Restoration* that people are innately a part of ecological restoration projects as "learned amateurs, or volunteers, or as the general public affected by the results of restoration projects."[256] They argue, "Ecological restoration is a human practice, and because it is, people matter."[257] Moreover, Egan et al. contend that ignoring the human factor, because it either counters the myth of scientific objectivity or the preservationist myth of wilderness, "is nothing short of absurd" and "counterproductive to work that needs to be done to protect and restore the environment and humankind's role as steward of it."[258] The sheer number of issues to consider when restoring ecosystems magnifies the human role in restoration. Ecological restoration is a decision regarding which values to consider when restoring degraded ecosystems.

There is no eliminating the human decision from ecological restoration; one can only aim to shape those decisions regarding the whole. Stuart K. Allison calls it "the problem of choice."[259] Allison, a professor of biology and conservation, argues that, in the future, all ecosystems will depend on human choice; humans will choose "to preserve, restore, or continue

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[256] Dave Egan, Evan Hjerpe, and Jesse Abrams, "Why People Mater in Ecological Restoration" in *Human Dimensions of Ecological Restoration*. eds. Dave Egan, Evan Hjerpe, and Jesse Abrams, (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2011), p. 2.
[257] Ibid., p. 1.
[258] Ibid., pp. 2-3.
[259] Stuart K. Allison, "You Can't Not Choose: Embracing the Role of Choice in Ecological Restoration," *Restoration Ecology* 15, no. 4, (2007): 601–5, You Can't Not Choose: Embracing the Role of Choice in Ecological Restoration, p. 602.

to develop habitat."[260] It is not a matter of whether humans have the right to choose how to interact with their environment. Humans have been choosing how they interact with their environment since they emerged on the African plains roughly 250,000 years ago.[261] According to Allison, human choice is central to restoration; if restoration work is to move forward, then "we must embrace the role of human choice in ecological restoration."[262] How, then, does one decide restoration goals given the diversity of human objectives? Any question of value is innately based on a person's reason to act, their goals, and their conception of what is good restoration.[263] For Christians, thinking through restoration I encourage them to see the self-communicating good of God, the created order, as the ground of actions and goals.

3.9   Conclusion

The importance of the human role in restoration can be overemphasized, but it cannot be overstated. Humans alone are responsible for the current ecological crisis and for restoring the damage done. Human values and choices undergird restoration, underscoring the importance of the human role in creation. Creation's value is a shared concern for theologians and restorationists. Therefore, theologians have an opportunity to explore the theological connections to ecological restoration practices. Moreover, Christians wanting to think theologically about ecological restoration might consider how they convey their *Being-in-Christ* through faithful actions towards creation. Thinking with O'Donovan wakes the person to their responsibility to the created order as members of an ecological community. Waking also alerts the person to anthropocentric ways of doing restoration, encouraging restorationists

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[260] Ibid.
[261] Stuart K. Allison, "You Can't Not Choose", p. 603.
[262] Ibid., pp. 604-605.
[263] Richard J. Hobbs et al., "Restoration Ecology," p. 43.

to turn to creation and a natural ethic to limit overly human concerns that seek the benefit of humankind over other creatures. Faithful human action places the created order in priority.

Temporality is another area of overlap between theologians and restorationists. The question of action is a question about temporality. Action is always action in the present; however, thoughtful action responds to the past while thinking towards a future reality. In the following chapter, I discuss the relationship between human action, restoration, and temporality. The concept of timescales and temporality is a significant component of restoration work. Thinking theologically about temporal action is an insightful exercise for Christians considering ecorestoration practices.

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4 A Time of Restoration

4.1 Introduction

The historicality of the environment is an important aspect of ecological restoration. The past is constitutive for ecosystems. The 2019 "International Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration", (the Standards; 2016, 2019), lists six key concepts identifying the best practices for ecological restoration. The first key concept is the identification of reference ecosystems. The Standards state, "a fundamental principle of ecological restoration is the identification of an appropriate reference model, commonly referred to as a reference system."[1] The reference system should represent the ecosystem where possible as it existed before degradation. Reference systems include contemporary analogous ecosystems and historical information.[2] However, and rightly so, the Standards recognize that practitioners need to consider climate change and other environmental pressures.[3] The concept of a historical reference, or baseline, is an attempt to minimize the natural human bias. It represents a temporal horizon that frames ecological restoration targets.

I suggest that restoration is already mobilizing temporal frameworks for normative ecological practices. Moreover, temporality is often discussed in terms that give rise to a particular mythos that direct the goals of restoration. Ecorestoration emphasizes grand narratives, which point to historical settings, often described as pre-industrial; these are narratives of wilderness, Edenic landscapes, and noble savages. These myths become the horizon of restoration—a horizon aimed squarely at the past. However, restoration work is a

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[1] George D. Gann et al., "International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration," 2nd edition. *Restoration Ecology* (2019): S1-S46, https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.13035, p. 11.
[2] Ibid., p. 12.
[3] Ibid., p. 11.

future-oriented endeavor; it aims to shape future conditions. In this chapter, I challenge those narrative histories, and demonstrate a more holistic temporal approach to restoration.

Temporality is the final theme of O'Donovan's waking metaphor. His work on temporality offers valuable insights for understanding the complex relationship between ecological restoration and time. Thinking temporally alongside O'Donovan allows a person to consider the connectedness of the past, present, and future. In O'Donovan's exploration of the relationship between time and human agency, he emphasizes the importance of recognizing the temporal dimensions of our moral and ethical frameworks. Moral reasoning is accountable to the available future, while attuning to the present makes available the ability to responsibly act on future possibilities. That is, the immediate future is the sphere of action that a person acts into, while in the present they deliberate on the past to direct future actions. Nevertheless, placing a primacy on the future, still recognizes that temporality consists of the past, present, and future working in concert to shape a world and the relations within it.

O'Donovan's work reminds us that this restoration must be guided not only by our present interests but also by a concern for the well-being of future generations. His conception of temporality provides a valuable framework for understanding the temporal dimensions of ecological restoration. By emphasizing the importance of considering the interests of future generations and viewing restoration efforts as a means of fulfilling our responsibilities to creation, his work can help guide ethical and effective restoration practices that promote long-term ecological health and sustainability.

4.2   History as Grand Narrative

The narrative mythos of restoration can be summed up as a distorted view of what is typical for restoration goals as a result of history's primacy. Historicism impacts restoration

because it prioritizes the past and relies heavily on science and technology, which restricts restoration techniques. Lesser forms of restoration, frequently motivated by human-centered desires, result when science and technology are prioritized over the order of creation. The mixing of historicism, narrative, and science and technology is what one can call a Grand Narrative.

Grand narratives captivate the imagination and influence how people see their relationship to creation, in turn, these narrative mythoi can affect what is normative for restoration practices. Lisa Sideris has written on the difficulties of grand narratives. She argues that proponents of grand narratives evoke a new cosmology where "cutting-edge scientific knowledge [is] the primary vehicle for restoring enchantment, wonder, meaning and value to the natural world."[4] Meaning is no longer found by heeding the call of wisdom in nature. Instead, scientific knowledge is the focus of humankind's awe and wonder. Grand narratives elevate "abstract, expert knowledge above our lived experience of the world."[5] In that sense, they undermine one's facticity. Moreover, Sideris argues, big history cosmologies attempt to gather "entities together as a cosmic community governed by the same patterns and principles."[6] What Sideris is describing can be called historicism. The term historicism has several definitions, and I discuss this subject in more detail below. However, in a broad sense, there are historical processes that behave as immutable laws which are determinative for history and historical phenomena.

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[4] Lisa H. Sideris, *Consecrating Science: Wonder, Knowledge, and the Natural World*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), p. 1.
[5] Ibid., p. 8.
[6] Ibid., p. 28.

The result of this cosmic gathering of "human history into a seamless narrative," she states, is that it "forecloses surprise and novelty."[7] In effect, it kills creativity. Human actions no longer actively shape their immediate future. The question Sideris puts forth is "If wonder is a rich and complex tapestry, which strands do we wish to carry forward into a future seemingly defined by ubiquitous human presence and transformation of the natural world?"[8] In other words, will one listen to the creative lure of God's wonder, wonder paired with the call of wisdom, or will they be left staring dumbstruck and gawking at scientific achievement, inhabiting a world where they no longer help shape the future, but instead, are merely compelled towards it?

According to Sideris, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, "science partially merged with the tradition of natural theology that sought to glorify God in the details by finding in nature myriad examples of God's intricate design."[9] It was "wonder at the divine mind behind nature's order and intricacy."[10] However, unlike natural philosophers, the big history cosmology traded wonder for God's created order for "a dubious form of wonder" where wonder is "a response to knowledge obtained through scientific investigation."[11] Sideris notes that Robert Boyle and Rachel Carter separately warned that scientific hubris and human pride in technology wrongfully stole praise from God and positioned humans as taking over many of God's functions.[12]

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[7] Lisa H. Sideris, *Consecrating Science*, p. 28.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid., p. 34.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., p. 20.
[12] Ibid., p. 25.

Furthermore, she argues that turning wonder towards scientific achievement, rather than creation, "engender[s] idolatry, vanity, and pride, or self-deification."[13] Certain aspects of ecological restoration may fall prey to the consequences of this form of historicism. The privileging of science and technology over creation's order leads to lesser forms of restoration, often driven by human-focused desires. Historicism affects restoration by placing primacy on the past and relying heavily on technology and science in ways that limit restoration practices. The primacy of history has led to distorted views of what is normative for restoration goals, which can be summed up as the narrative mythos of restoration.

4.3   Historicism

The question of history and historical landscapes is an essential feature of ecological restoration. However, there is concern about a type of eco-historicism that places too much emphasis on an ecosystem's history. According to Mark Bevir, the term *historicism* "is the idea that human life can be understood only historically."[14] Paul Hamilton, in his book *Historicism: The New Critical Idiom*, traces the history of the term *historicism*.[15] In it, he argues that historicism "emerges in reaction to the practice of deducing from first principles truths about how people are obliged to organize themselves socially and politically."[16] *Contra* O'Donovan's approach, which emphasizes natural laws, historicists, according to Hamilton, "oppose this tradition."[17] Instead, he argues that they insist "human nature is too various for such legislation to be universally applicable."[18] Conversely, O'Donovan argues that not all social order can be classified as laws or natural laws, to do so would be an affront to "the gospel's call to discern

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[13] Lisa H. Sideris, *Consecrating Science*, p. 25.
[14] Mark Bevir, "Historicism and Critique," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 45, no. 2, (2016): 227–45, p. 228.
[15] Paul Hamilton, *Historicism* 2nd Edition, (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 2.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

the sign of the times."[19] However, he argues that historicism makes just such a refusal by "asserting that while all ages are different, no age is more different than any other."[20] Or as Robert D'Amico states in *Historicism and Knowledge*, "Historicism is a position about the limits of knowledge, how human knowledge is always a "captive" of its historical situation."[21] Similarly, O'Donovan argues that historicism leads to history being the "categorical matrix for all meaning and value."[22] He argues for the non-negotiability of the created order, as it is "the given totality of order," which is a world and is the "presupposition of historical existence."[23] Creation is not subject to the whims of history; it is the ground of history, at least from the factical experience of humankind.

O'Donovan maintains that the appeal to historicism, as he defines it, attempts to do away with moral concepts, which it does by appealing to history. Actions, individually or collectively, are narrated by the past as given.[24] Actions naturally follow from the actions which preceded them, and therefore, there are no decisions to make. O'Donovan calls it purposeless action, "which is no action at all."[25] Action for O'Donovan is something one contemplates out of potential futures and then acts. Furthermore, he argues that to act into the indeterminacy of the future, one needs a "certain practical rationality"; they must know what it is they are doing, therefore, the need for moral concepts.[26] All that one can glean from the narrative of historicism are past experiences.[27] Historicism, for O'Donovan, represents a sin against time (see section 3.3).

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[19] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. xv.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Robert D'Amico, *Historicism and Knowledge*. (New York: Routledge, 2016), p. x.
[22] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 60.
[23] Ibid., pp. 60-61.
[24] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 230.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid., p. 231.
[27] Ibid.

Artinian-Kaiser, in agreement with O'Donovan, argues that if morality "is a feature of history" driven by a "goal within history" it is not possible for something outside history to command "one's moral attention" (e.g. God).[28] Moral action, she contends, is equivalent to "the ends a society has laid out for itself," and therefore subject to the whims of history.[29] O'Donovan states it like this, historicism "could not take the tension between natural order and time with sufficient seriousness."[30] History, he writes, is "the *reconciliation* of good and time: the progress of time does not reduce the goods of nature to meaningless and vanity, but allows of a succession with its own meaning, congruent to nature but not identical with it."[31] O'Donovan's interpretation of historicism argues that ordinary time is understood as the "primary dimension of reality" and as the source of reality, the "quasi-natural unfolding of events" to be projected on the indeterminant future.[32] The progression of history is the ultimate source of understanding and meaning. Holger Zaborowski, who mentions O'Donovan's critique of historicism, argues that "historicism ironically tends to eradicate history."[33] It is historicism's failure to recognize "that the historical is contingent," and not determined "by the laws of progress" nor is it "utterly random."[34] Later in this chapter, I argue that one cannot attend to the future as merely an extension of the past. The immediate future takes primacy as the locus of a person's action.

Tranter comments, that O'Donovan's critique of historicism seeks a balance between nature and history as a solution between creation ethics and kingdom ethics. O'Donovan in "The Natural Ethic" argues that Christian ethics must avoid both "a static naturalism and an

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[28] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 123.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 232.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid., p. 230.
[33] Holger Zaborowski, *Robert Spaemann's Philosophy of the Human Person*, p. 218, note 49.
[34] Ibid.

unbridled historicism."[35] Unbridled historicism is the "indeterminate belief in progress."[36] Progress here represents ideas such as grand narratives, which are eschatological in outlook, where "Value and meaning now arise from the very fact of transformation itself; there is no other criterion, other than the simple fact of change, by which we can judge good and evil."[37] O'Donovan concedes progress gives rise to a "general optimism," but it is a "'salvation history' without salvation."[38] It is never "history as the restoring of what was lost, the recovery of things as they were always supposed to be."[39] What O'Donovan tries to balance is the tightrope between nature and history, by reflecting on the steadfastness of creation, and its timeless affirmation of the structure of reality—the timeless call of God's wisdom.

Tranter highlights the fact that the idea of restoration and recovery is at the heart of salvation history, the kingdom ethics of God's redemptive plan.[40] Furthermore, he finds O'Donovan's critique of historicism "insightful" noting "that historicism makes genuine hope impossible."[41] I argue that hope is also a guiding hermeneutic for ecological restoration. It is the presumption that right actions directed at ecological goods will offer up restorative modes of practice for the flourishing of ecosystems. Conversely, if the future is what directly results from the past, there is little chance for real possibility, and possibility is that which makes room for hope. Instead, of hope and possibility, historicists desire "ironclad certainty."[42] Tranter argues that O'Donovan's critique is that historicism "alters humankind's conduct towards nature for the worse."[43] The desire for certainty leads to the need for control. If there are no

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[35] Oliver O'Donovan, "The Natural Ethic," p. 29.
[36] Ibid., p. 27.
[37] Ibid., p. 29.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 25.
[41] Ibid., p. 26.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid., p. 61.

longer objective ends, but only ends subjected to time's capriciousness and determined by human culture, it may lead to the human urge to manipulate creation's order.[44] Ecological restoration must also balance the tension between history and nature's order, and necessary targeted interventions and human hubris.

God's calling is temporally framed. O'Donovan argues that "God's call to us to serve him is the content of our responsibility; it is the security our competence may command in the face of the imprisoning facticity of the past and the dizzying indeterminacy of the future."[45] O'Donovan writes of wisdom's calling as a "call of the world's temporal openness to knowledge, a call addressed to our powers of living through time."[46] It is to echo the prophets's call of Here I am, in the Hebrew bible, with O'Donovan's "Here I come!"[47] Here I Come! speaks of action and agency, extending, as O'Donovan argues, the moment of God's calling "into world and time, revealing us to ourselves as susceptible of realization and growth within a temporally distended world."[48] Historicism, he argues, "shuts and bolts the door against the future *as a horizon of action*, by substituting a narratable present, i.e., the past horizon of the present."[49] The grand history limits human conduct by arguing that "*what has come to be*" is the natural end of the narrative of "just-having-come-to-be of the present" which directs one's "'where things are going'."[50] Furthermore, it impedes creativity by reinforcing "a movement of regression, shrinking back from the danger of action in conformity to the patterns of behaviour that prevail around us."[51] Conversely, God's call, the call of wisdom, presents itself "on the

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[44] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 61.
[45] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 38.
[46] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 100.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., p. 233.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.

horizon of possibility," always an arm's reach away, such that "our arrivals cannot be final."[52] A lure beckoning human response to draw closer to God. Not to imply, he states, "that if we cannot know with finality, we cannot know at all."[53] Instead, one might recognize that in seeking God's wisdom in creation, a process without completion because of its temporal nature, one comes to seize upon their responsibility and agency as the proper response to striving after God's wisdom. Tracing O'Donovan's logic, even if restorationists fail to recognize the call of creation as belonging to God, they still answer the call out of love for the created order, and in doing so, they open up new horizons of possibility for degraded ecosystems. They do this despite not knowing, with any certainty, how ecosystems will respond and adapt in time to the restorationists' activity.

O'Donovan argues that "Historicism denies that such a universal order exists."[54] If this is the case then natural ethics as the basis for moral reasoning is problematic. The goal here is to recognize the importance of past events and their influence on the present and future. Conversely, the future is pregnant with possibility and not confined to the past. O'Donovan, in *Resurrection and Moral Order*, presents historicism as an expression of "the thesis that all teleology is historical teleology." [55] Ends, according to O'Donovan are reduced to a "development in time."[56] Therefore, "Nothing can have a 'point', unless it is a historical point; there is no point in the regularities of nature."[57] Historicism reduces the call of wisdom, the good of God's created order, as something to be "superseded," and replaced with "the end of history."[58] The difficulty here, is that meaning is only understood as part of a historical process,

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52 Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 101.
53 Ibid.
54 Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 67.
55 Ibid., p. 58.
56 Ibid.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.

whose value is found in their "being raw material for transformation." [59] Historicism, understood as such, foreshadows what Heidegger calls the Being of Technology, detailed in the following chapter. O'Donovan's critique of historicism pushes back against the idea of a *grand narrative*, such as those espoused by theologians like Teilhard de Chardin and his evolutionary cosmology.

4.4   The Myth of Eden

When thinking through Christian theology, temporality, and the environment, one place to start is *in the beginning*. The creation myth, in the opening chapters of Genesis, for many Christians, is the place to understand humanity's role in creation. The concept of Eden as the paradigm of perfected nature has transcended its religious roots. Eden as perfected creation is well understood in the popular realm. For example, author and filmmaker Michael Crichton says this of the environmental movement:

> [E]nvironmentalism is in fact the 21st century remapping of traditional Judeo-Christian beliefs and myths. There's an initial Eden, a paradise, a state of grace and unity with nature, there's a fall from grace into a state of pollution, as a result of eating from the tree of knowledge, and as a result of our actions there is judgment day coming for us all.[60]

Eden has come to represent creaturely perfection, something lost, and something to strive for. In recent Western history, Eden has become synonymous with wilderness. Scottish naturalist John Muir, who played a significant role in establishing national parks in the United States, writes of Yosemite— "parks fair as Eden, —places in which one might expect to meet angels rather than bears."[61] Likewise, Higgs argues that a prominent view in North America is that

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[59] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 59.
[60] Michael Crichton, "Remarks to the Common Wealth Club," (2003), https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~kw/crichton.html, p. 1.
[61] John Muir, *Our National Parks*. www.guttenber.org, (2019).

"The ideal landscape is the untouched landscape—the Garden of Eden."[62] However, the Edenic myth presents an unrealistic picture of creation. It is problematic because it pushes the narrative that humans are not a part of nature. If it is untouched and wild, then it is untouched and untamed by human hands.

Carol Merchant describes this as "The Recovery of Eden story," which has captivated "the mainstream narrative of Western Culture."[63] Merchant claims that "The Garden of Eden story has shaped Western Culture since earliest times and the American world since the 1600s."[64] The historicizing story of perfected creation and its loss has guided Western culture from early on. Compelling "humans to recover Eden by turning wilderness into garden, 'female' nature into civilized society, and indigenous folkways into modern culture." [65] Debatably, the Eden narrative, lifted from the opening chapters of the bible, is an influential metaphor for many thinking about the environment, loss, and what restoration should look like. The solution for many, Merchant says, has been to turn to "Science, technology, and capitalism," which provide "the tools" and "male agency the power and impetus."[66] According to Merchant, two narratives are operating; one a narrative of decline, a fall from Edenic perfection, and the other a narrative of progress, a restoration of Eden. I contend these narratives unduly influence restoration practices, often operating simultaneously. Edenic myths set unrealistic representations of nature, while human hubris attempts to re-create myth through science and technology. The consequences of historicism and grand narratives detailed in this

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[62] Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design*, p. 86.
[63] Carolyn Merchant, *Reinventing Eden: The Fate of Nature in Western Culture*, (New York: Routledge, 2013), https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bham/detail.action?docID=1154281, p. 2.
[64] Ibid., p. 1.
[65] Ibid., p. 2.
[66] Ibid.

chapter will play out in the next. For now, I focus on the role history and how the past has influenced the way one thinks about the environment and restoration.

4.5   The Myths of Restoration

4.5.1   *The Wilderness Myth*

In this section, I explore the negative effect historical narratives have on how people view creation. Like Merchant, J. Baird Callicott suggests that the normative target of ecological restoration has been the "pre-settlement" (pre-colonization) condition, first introduced by Aldo Leopold.[67] Callicott argues that two myths fuel the prospect of restoring to a pre-settlement condition: "the colonial myth of wilderness" and the "scientific myth of Clementsian equilibrium ecology."[68] Each of these mythos has the potential to negatively affect how a person understands creation and their role in it.

The wilderness myth, as Callicott outlines, is the supposition that the Western Hemisphere existed in a pristine condition before its "discovery" by Christopher Columbus. According to the wilderness myth, indigenous populations were few in number, "too technologically backwards or too environmentally ethical" to have contributed to any significant degradation of the pristine ecological conditions.[69] As Merchant notes, early colonizers "saw the New World through the image of the Genesis 2 narrative. They expected to find Eden in the New World."[70] Alongside the narrative of an Eden restored by the 'New World', is the narrative of progress. Merchant argues that the colonizers expected to find a land that had "the potential to become a paradise, but require[ing] "'improvement'."[71] A land "in a

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[67] J. Baird Callicott, "Postmodern Ecological Restoration," p. 302.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., p. 303.
[70] Carolyn Merchant, *Reinventing Eden*, p. 82
[71] Ibid.

state of 'savagery' without letters or metal technologies."[72] It is reflective of the entanglement of technology, progress, and grand narrative, and the idea that science can move nature toward a paradisiacal state.

Conversely, in his seminal paper, "The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492", William M. Denevan argues that the indigenous people group's impact "was neither benign nor localized and ephemeral, nor were resources always used in a sound ecological way."[73] Often alongside the myth of wilderness, is the idea of the noble savage, a group of people who are purer and closer to creation; that is, not technologically advanced. Both myths incorrectly inform current restoration practices. The interpretation of indigenous populations as 'closer to nature' is extremely flawed. Indigenous populations were quite large, and their "activity throughout the Americas modified forest extent and composition, created and expanded grasslands, and rearranged microrelief via countless artificial earthworks. Agricultural fields were common, as were houses and towns and roads and trails."[74] All of which had local impacts on soil, microclimate, hydrology, and wildlife.

The origin of the myth, Denevan writes, "cannot be laid at the feet of Columbus," who described these regions as densely populated and wholly cultivated. Rather, Denevan argues that later European observers (1750-1850) described the wilderness as vast and empty, thus inventing the wilderness myth. What later observers encountered seemed empty and wild only because of the eradication of indigenous populations, with estimates being upwards of 90 percent of the population.[75] As a result of the decimation of indigenous peoples, "fields had

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[72] Carolyn Merchant, *Reinventing Eden*, p. 82.
[73] William M. Denevan, "The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82, no. 3 (1992): 369–385, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1992.tb01965.x, p. 370.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid., p. 371.

been abandoned, while settlements vanished, forests recovered, and savannas retreated."[76] The

myth conceals the impacts indigenous populations had on their ecological habitats, perpetuating

the Edenic myth. As a type of historicism, it negates the meaningful relationship that humankind

has always had with creation. It perpetuates the hurtful narrative that a pristine creation is one

without humans.

Despite a broader appreciation for the impact of indigenous populations on ecosystems

in today's ecological circles, the myth still lingers. Nicole M. Evans and Mark A. Davis argue

that much of the consideration for incorporating indigenous knowledge in restoration projects

is as a means for re-establishing cultural restoration (incorporating sociocultural goals in

ecological restoration). However, Evans and Davis argue that there still exists an "incertitude

about the status of people in ecological patterns and processes."[77] Directing their critique at the

2016 (the Standard), they argue that the Standards incorrectly interpret certain human activities,

within an ecosystem, as a natural variation; and second, they argue that relegating cultural

ecosystems to rehabilitation, instead of restoration, perpetuates the wilderness myth, thus

"privileging colonial visions of naturalness." [78] Narratives, such as these, set unrealistic

expectations and burdens on restorationists to restore the myth, and are not as clear a guide for

restoration as some may think.

For instance, the Standards describe cultural ecosystems, ecosystems that develop

alongside human and natural processes, as being within the bounds of natural variation. The

Standards (2019) define cultural ecosystems as such:

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[76] William M. Denevan, "The Pristine Myth," p. 379.
[77] Nicole M. Evans and Mark A. Davis, "What about cultural ecosystems? Opportunities for cultural considerations in the "International Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration": What about cultural ecosystems?," *Restoration Ecology* 26, no. 4(2018): 612–617, https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.12714, p. 612.
[78] Ibid., p. 613.

The extent to which native ecosystems are the result of human modification is variable and often unclear; but it is well understood that extensive modifications have occurred and been maintained by traditional practices that are similar to natural disturbances. For example, the existence of grassy openings found within forests is often attributed to burning by Indigenous peoples. Where such human-utilized grassland ecosystems exhibit species and biophysical characteristics similar to those occurring in natural fire-maintained savannas and grasslands, such human-utilized areas should be considered native ecosystems.[79]

The question Evans and Davis raise is a good one, where does one draw the line? Which cultural ecosystems are understood to be natural and which are not? If the Standards accept climate and ecosystem changes driven by the forest fires and deforestation of indigenous peoples as natural, then, according to Evans and Davis, current anthropogenic climate change is also natural.[80] The Standards attempt to address this concern, arguing that pre-industrial practices are within the natural variant or are a native ecosystem. I argue that this cannot be the case.

For instance, an important paper in the field of geomorphology demonstrated how European settlers in America changed the entire riverine system of the United States's east coast by introducing low-head dams.[81] Rivers went from multi-channel or braided channelled streams, due to the work of industrious beavers, to the single-channel streams that persist today.[82] Many of these communities and their dams would all be considered pre-industrial and they have had long-lasting impacts on the rivers one sees today. I do not believe the Standards would describe this as a cultural ecosystem, but by their definition, it is. I think this way of thinking about culture ecosystems has regretful broader implications; that is, indigenous people

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[79] George D. Gann et al., "International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration," p. S14.

[80] Nicole M. Evans and Mark A. Davis, "What about cultural ecosystems?" p. 613.

[81] Robert C. Walter and Dorothy J. Merritts. "Natural Streams and the Legacy of Water-Powered Mills." *Science* 319, no. 5861 (2008): 299–304, https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1151716.

[82] Ibid.

must be closer to nature, more a part of nature, than the technologically advanced colonizers—the myth of the noble savage.

As Denevan's research demonstrates, indigenous peoples significantly altered their ecosystems so much so, in many cases, it is difficult to consider these ecosystems natural. Similarly, Evans and Davis highlight several anthropomorphic alterations by indigenous populations, arguing it is unclear how they can be considered natural or equivalent to natural ecosystems.[83] Indeed, post-industrial changes have dramatically altered the environment on a much faster time scale and greater extent, but it does not follow that everything prior to industrialization is natural. In an attempt to deal with pre-industrial degradation outside the bounds of natural variation, the Standards prescribe rehabilitation, which brings me to Evans and Davis's second concern.

Evans and Davis's apprehension is that the Standards' goal of rehabilitation, rather than restoration for cultural ecosystems, potentially leads to policies favoring "colonial societies' 'natural' *restoration* over indigenous societies' cultural rehabilitation," as the Standards prescribe rehabilitation where cultural ecosystems fall outside the natural variant. [84] Rehabilitation is an ambiguous idiom that "aim[s] to restore ecosystem functioning rather than biodiversity and integrity of a designated native reference system." [85] A rehabilitation designation potentially places restoration goals for cultural ecosystems such as forests, fisheries, and agricultural regions on par with utility corridors, mines, quarries, and oil and gas drilling sites.[86] Furthermore, as I will discuss in the next chapter, it exposes cultural ecosystems

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[83] Nicole M. Evans and Mark A. Davis, "What about cultural ecosystems?" p. 613.
[84] Ibid.
[85] George D. Gann et al., "International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration," p. S22, Box 9.
[86] Ibid., p. S24.

to neoliberal exploitation as rehabilitation aims to restore certain ecosystem functions instead of flourishing; the Standards link ecosystem function to ecosystem services in the categories of forestry and agriculture.[87]

Moreover, Evans and Davis argue that ecological restoration often involves using indigenous management practices (burn regimes, harvest restrictions, and habitat protection) by non-indigenous practitioners. As a result, indigenous management practices are decontextualized, with indigenous knowledge confined to the realm of beliefs, thus not as authoritative as "science". In doing so, practitioners wrest meaning from its facticality, scientifically sanitizing indigenous knowledge, and decoupling it from its historical or current complexity. The danger, they warn, is that indigenous knowledge is not necessarily concerned with practices regarded as "conservation-oriented by the standards or ecological sciences."[88] Furthermore, they argue, an ecological restoration framework should concern itself with the effects of anthropogenic ecosystem degradation rather than a mythical naturalness predicated on a pre- and post-industrial divide.[89]

In *Restoration and History*, Dave Tomblin focusing on current restoration practices undertaken by or in cooperation with indigenous peoples of North America., notes that "Indigenous people's cultural traditions challenge Western notions of ecological restoration."[90] He argues that the Western approach to ecological restoration, which emphasizes scientific knowledge and a return to a pre-industrial state, is challenged by indigenous cultural traditions.

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[87] George D. Gann et al., "International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration," p. S24.
[88] Nicole M. Evans and Mark A. Davis, "What about cultural ecosystems?" p. 615.
[89] Ibid.
[90] David Tomblin, "American Indian Restoration," in *Restoration and History: The Search for a Usable Environmental Pas*t, ed. Marcus Hall. (Florence: Routledge, 2010). http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csu/detail.action?docID=465483, p. 182.

Despite European conceptions of the Americas as "'wilderness'—a landscape free of systematic human interventions"; indigenous civilizations "perceived themselves as living in a managed, cultural landscape."[91] Moreover, present restoration practices do not have "plans to take their societies back to 1492."[92] Likewise, Jan E. Dizard argues that the evidence for Native American populations "having a profound impact on both the flora and fauna of the Americas has steadily risen."[93] For many indigenous peoples, restoration "is not solely about returning to the past; it is about dealing with the present and creating a sustainable future."[94] Their focus is not on a pristine wilderness instead, while remediating the same environmental hazards as everyone else, their focus is on "adapting ecological restoration for the local needs of each tribe."[95]

The Wilderness myth is an artifact of historicism and grand narratives. It is an overemphasis on the past and a misguided view of progress. Ecological restoration practices might be best served to focus on the future, especially considering the impact of climate change. It is vital not to separate ecological restoration from the threat of climate change, whose impacts are now and yet to come, to use an eschatological idiom. These threats represent opportunities in the immediate future to step in and act.

4.5.2 *The Clementsian Myth*

The second myth Callicott introduces is the Clementsian myth of equilibrium, named after the late ecologist Fredrick Clements. According to Callicott, for Clements, the world was divided into "biomes," which consisted of distinct plant "formation," called a "climax" as it

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[91] David Tomblin, "American Indian Restoration," p. 182.
[92] Ibid., p. 183.
[93] Jan, E. Dizard, in *Restoration and History: The Search for a Usable Environmental Past*, ed. Marcus Hall. (Florence: Routledge, 2010) http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csu/detail.action?docID=465483, p. 156.
[94] David Tomblin, "American Indian Restoration," p. 183.
[95] Ibid.

was climate dependent and assumed to be stable.[96] In the absence of considerable anthropogenic impacts, these biomes would remain stable. In the case of non-human disturbances such as catastrophic events (e.g. hurricane, tornado, fire, volcano), what would follow is a set of "successional stages" until the "climax community" is reestablished.[97] Clement also held the belief that indigenous populations were too small to disrupt the equilibrium of climax communities. On the other hand, Clement considered European-Americans as an artificial external disturbance destroying climax communities. Moreover, they disrupt successional stages and stall the reestablishment of climax communities.[98] Note the explicit dualism, at least for the European-Americans.

Callicott argues that the Clementsian equilibrium view of nature has been replaced by what he calls "a postmodern neo-Gleasonian 'flux-of-nature' or 'shifting' paradigm." [99] Gleasonian, after Henry Gleason, who argued that what first appears as "tightly integrated ecological unit[s]" are opportunistic assemblages adapted to similar environmental conditions.[100] Callicott embraces a dynamic understanding of creation, one with no explicit telos. He argues that by moving on from the myth of equilibrium, ecologists have a firmer grasp on the fundamental ecosystem processes, including "disturbance regimes."[101] Callicott suggests that the upshot of this view, as opposed to classical restoration, is that there is no need to seize on any one ecological snapshot in an "ever-changing ecological odyssey."[102]

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[96] J. Baird Callicott, "Postmodern Ecological Restoration: Choosing Appropriate Temporal and Spatial Scales," in *Hand of the Philosophy of Ecology*, *Vol. 11*, eds. Kevin deLaplante, Bryson Brown, and Kent A. Peacock, (Waltham: North Holland, 2011): 301–326, https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1016/B978-0-444-51673-2.50012-1, p. 303.
[97] Ibid., p. 303.
[98] Ibid., p. 304.
[99] Ibid., p. 306.
[100] Ibid., pp. 305-306.
[101] Ibid., p. 306.
[102] Ibid., p. 307.

The proposition that one can return an ecosystem to an Edenic, pristine condition is a flawed enterprise. Creation, both animate and inanimate, is ever-arising, participating in propagating life. The dispelled myths of equilibrium and wilderness disrupt the spatio-temporal horizon of restoration. For Callicott, restoration is a question of temporal scale. Temporal scales, Callicott argues, are "defined by processes"; evolutionary scales involve evolutionary processes, historical scales-historical processes, geologic scales-geologic processes, and ecological scales include ecological processes.[103] Callicott asserts that ecological processes equate to temporal scales. In the end, Callicott admittedly conforms to the "conventional target and norm for ecological restoration," the Holocene epoch (approximately the last 11,500 to 12,000 years); only his justification is different.[104] For Callicott, ecological processes occurring within a temporal span guide restoration methods instead of specific moments in time. It affords restorationists a broader range of freedom when considering historical baselines. For Callicott, this incorporates the dynamism of ecology while providing basic constraints on restoration referents. I argue the constraints are necessary to avoid arguments that usurp the flux-of-nature paradigm, arguments that assert if anthropogenic and natural disturbances are historically ubiquitous, then why bother with restoration at all?[105]

Nevertheless, Callicott's approach concerns itself with linear time, looking to the past for present restoration goals. Restoration in the face of impending ecological disasters brought on by the threat of climate change requires a more encompassing temporality. I assert that O'Donovan's understanding of time and temporality is well-suited for addressing ecological

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[103] Rebecca Bliege Bird, and Dale Nimmo, "Restore the Lost Ecological Functions of People." *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 2, no. 7 (2018): 1050–52, DOI:10.1038/s41559-018-0576-5, p. 311.
[104] J. Baird Callicott, "Postmodern Ecological Restoration," p. 315.
[105] Ibid., p. 320.

restoration. Furthermore, it promotes an ecological flourishing approach to degradation as opposed to the traditional understanding of restoration.

4.6 Waking to Time

According to O'Donovan, humans exist "*with the consciousness* of time."[106] He argues that one's "particular time," their temporal context "determines *how* they emerge"; knowing "There are predecessors, who determined the actualities and possibilities of their time, and there are successors, whose experiences of time they will not share."[107] Waking to the temporality of existence is an awareness that each person is born into a specific place and time within the movement of history. It is to wake to one's existence as fleeting, their significance as momentary, and the call of death as imminent. For O'Donovan, "To face our time actively is always to face in one direction, the future."[108] Moral thinking, O'Donovan argues, is also "always opening towards the future."[109] Thinking about the past is an opportunity for moral reflection, but thinking morally about the future is to morally consider one's actions in the world. In waking to the world and self, a person awoke to their agency and responsibility. Waking to time reminds a person that they must attend to what went before and is yet to come.

I understand temporality to make space for action in the world. Conversely, it is also time that constrains one's actions. O'Donovan argues that while the future is open to a person, it is only "the *next moment* into which we may venture our living and acting, the moment which presents itself as a possibility."[110] Nonetheless, it would be irresponsible to fixate on the present at the detriment of understanding the context in which they were born and the future that lies

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[106] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 216.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 120.
[109] Ibid., p. 93.
[110] Ibid., p. 15.

forever ahead. To think temporally is to think phenomenologically about time, a dominant theme of Heidegger's philosophy. Thinking in extended time provides context and dimension to one's temporal moment. The awareness of extended time gives meaning and makes significant one's actions in the world.

4.6.1 *Phenomenological Temporality*

Like Augustine, Heidegger also asks what is time? And what has Being to do with time? In *Being and Time*, Heidegger states that his intention "is the Interpretation of *time* as the possible horizon for any understanding of Being."[111] Heidegger's view of temporality is notoriously difficult. As Hubert L. Dreyfus comments, "Although the chapters on originary temporality [in *Being and Time*] are an essential part of Heidegger's project, his account leads him so far from the phenomenon of everyday temporality that I did not feel I could give a satisfactory interpretation of the material."[112] He regards Heidegger's Division II in *Being and Time* to "have some errors so serious as to block any consistent reading."[113] However, he notes that Heidegger's later lectures on time and temporality helped smooth over some of the more challenging parts of the text. Therefore, I only identify the basics of Heidegger's view on temporality in as much as it sheds light on O'Donovan's conception of time and temporality.

Heidegger contends that from the "dawn of Western European thinking," Being is synonymous with presencing — "Presencing, presence speaks of the present."[114] Being, to be, is to be present, to exist. Being, as presence, according to Heidegger, is determined by time,

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[111] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 19.
[112] Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991), p. viii.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Martin Heidegger, *On Time and Being*. 1st ed. trans, Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 2.

and "the present, together with past and future, forms the character of time."[115] The Being of time is the 'now', the "character of time which is always and constantly presencing [*anwesend*]."[116] Therefore, to be is to be present, presencing, and thus in time, *temporal*.

Time governs many of the aspects of everydayness. Everydayness has its purchase in time. Time gives birth to history, as specific events happened at this time and not another. Heidegger argues that time, as such, has an "ontological function" as "it is ordinarily understood." [117] Time, or temporality, then, Heidegger states, is "the horizon for all understanding of Being."[118] Dasein's Being finds its meaning in temporality. But temporality is also the condition which makes historicality possible as a temporal kind of Being which Dasein itself possesses, regardless of whether or how Dasein is an entity in time. Historicality, as a determinate character, is previous to what is called 'history' (world-historical historizing).[119]

How then can Dasein be determined by time? Is Dasein's historicality, as a constitutive condition, prior to history? Early in *Being and Time*, Heidegger pushes against the ordinary understanding of time. He writes, if time is to be understood "*as the horizon for the understanding of Being*," then time must be "distinguished from the way in which it is ordinarily understood."[120] Time, as commonly understood, is the time of the everyday, the movement of historical time. As Johannes Achill Niederhauser states, "ordinary time is the time of passing homogenous now-states: $t_1, t_2, \ldots t_x$."[121] Time in this sense, is a tensed time, as in the past,

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[115] Ibid.

[116] Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the problem of metaphysics*. 5th ed., Studies in Continental Thought, trans. Richard Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977). p. 169.

[117] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 39.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Ibid., p. 41.

[120] Ibid., p. 39.

[121] Johannes, A. Niederhauser, *Heidegger on Death and Being*, p. 42.

present, and future. According to Niederhauser, the past, present, and future are often understood as "separate from one another…. Nonetheless, Heidegger takes the ordinary modes to be indicative of the unity of Dasein's ecstatic temporality, for they are derivative of the primordial ecstatic unity of temporality."[122] The *temporality*, in which humankind finds its meaning is not time in the ordinary sense of the word. Instead, it is primordial, "the '*ecstasies*' of temporality."[123] Temporality, if it is to be constitutive of Dasein, must be a primordial temporality. Temporality itself is not an entity but a temporality that temporalizes itself.[124] Heidegger describes it as "*the primordial 'out-side-of-itself' in and for itself*."[125] According to Heidegger, the future, the having-been, and the present, "the '*ecstases*' of temporality" comprise temporality. [126] The term *ecstases*, like existence, means *standing out*, a manifestation.[127] *Contra* historical or ordinary time, the *ecstases* do not "flow" into one another. Instead, they exist *equiprimordially*, as separate yet contemporaneous. That is, the ecstases of past, present, and future exist together at the same time. Carol J. White defines the ecstases as having no "time-measurable relationships to one another."[128]

Ecstatic time should not be thought of as time, in the ordinary sense, existing all at once. As Niederhauser states, ecstatic time does not pass, nor can it be measured; instead, it "*arises and gives*," it is "time in excess of itself," a time which "structures any presence."[129] Time and temporality, as Heidegger understands them, are not the same. Heidegger notes, the future is

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[122] Johannes, A. Niederhauser, *Heidegger on Death and Being*, p. 42.
[123] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 377.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid., p. 377.
[127] Carol J. White, *Time and Death: Heidegger's Analysis of Finitude*, ed. Mark Ralkowski, (Florence: Taylor & Francis, 2005), p. 96.
[128] Ibid., p. 97.
[129] Johannes, A. Niederhauser, *Heidegger on Death and Being*, p. 43.

not something coming into being, as in, "*not yet…*[but] which will be for the first time."[130] Ecstatic time is not the sequential movement of now moments; "the future is *not later* than the having-been, and the having-been is *not earlier* than the present."[131] Therefore, according to Heidegger, "The character of 'having been' arises from the future, and in such a way that the future which 'has been' (or better, which "is in the process of having been") releases from itself the Present."[132] The future made present as having been is what Heidegger calls *temporality*.[133]

O'Donovan relies on the concept of the *ecstases of temporality*. Ecstatic temporality provides a framework for thinking about ecological restoration practices. Restoration needs to be a forward-looking enterprise, that understands its past, and in the present works to accomplish future ecological goals. Temporality calls into question the way restorationists conceive of the role of temporality in restoration. As I expressed in the first half of this chapter, restoration is steeped in narratival history that is embedded in restoration practices. Ecstatic temporality challenges the linear nature of time and restoration.

4.7   O'Donovan's Temporality

For O'Donovan, there is no state of human consciousness where a "pure awareness" of self, world, and time present themselves in a "fixed order"[134]; instead, self, world, and time "are co-eventual."[135] "The world passes temporally and is thus patent to action; action is realized in world-engagement and thus in time; time is a measured action and so frames the objective world."[136] The order given to this co-relation is "given by the goal of action."[137] Last chapter I

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[130] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 373.
[131] Ibid., p. 401.
[132] Ibid., p. 374.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 19.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.

discussed how *doing* is the focus of morality, and while all creatures *do*, humans, O'Donovan writes, make "doing the object of thought, not simply by looking back at it afterwards, but by looking forward to it as a project."[138] Making doing the focus of moral reflection leads to the formation of "concrete purposes, from which action flows seamlessly."[139]

O'Donovan, like Heidegger, views temporality as constitutive of the human person. He argues that "we encounter the self in the future, not yet realized, offered in the moment available for action, unique to us and different from all others."[140] Likewise, Lacoste argues, "The only relation I have to myself or anything else in the world is a temporal relation."[141] Moreover, he states, "we do not exist in isolation from the series of presents before and after, but live *through* the experience of present, past, and future self all at once. There is no other experience of the self to be had."[142] For O'Donovan, time "opens before us, and demands that we step into the future to meet it. Deliberation is the response of thought to this opening, thought reaching forward to the immediate future."[143] O'Donovan argues that the horizon of the present moment "is the points at which past and future meet"; stating that "the present is simply a moment of coming together and opening up, when what we *have* faces what we *may* be."[144] The present is the somewhat illusory locus of the givenness of the past and the grasping at future potential. Illusory in the sense that life is constantly flowing from past to future, and the present is just one's subjective attunement to existence.

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[138] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 3.
[139] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 179.
[140] Ibid., p. 222.
[141] Jean-Yves Lacoste, *The Appearing of God*, p. 161.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 180.
[144] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 15.

Attunement to the movement of existence is what I mean by waking to one's time. Temporality gives agency to a person – agency is the ability to act on the potentiality of the future. It is the responsibility of human persons to deliberate on the future to form purposes and to respond to the call of God's wisdom and the created order. Bretherton describes O'Donovan's description of temporality as necessary for Christian ethics as moral judgements need to be temporally oriented, always "looking backwards and forward" in time.[145] Bretherton understands a theologically accountable Christian ethics to involve themselves with an "interpretation of the times" that, in bringing to bear "philosophical and social critique[s]" is "ever mindful of the intuitive sympathy we feel for the mores of our time over those of times past."[146] At the same time, while one's ethical pursuits might be best served with a future-facing orientation the past is not to be neglected, nor is one expected to be overly deferential to the past. As Bretherton notes in his essay "Anglican Political Theology," O'Donovan's natural ethic demonstrates how "close attention to, participation in, and open-hearted wonder about the world around us can generate imaginative and regenerative proposals for inhabiting creation."[147] The world, on this reading, "can be brought into conversation with and re-imagined through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ."[148] Bretherton concludes, "it is neither reason nor nature but culture and history that divide humans from each other."[149] To that, I would add that culture and history likewise may separate humankind from creation.

As temporal beings, the temporal aspect of existence holds sway over human activity, constraining the moral imagination. Therefore, Bretherton suggests that what is needed is "a

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[145] Luke Bretherton, "Book Review: Oliver O'Donovan," p. 366.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Luke Bretherton, "Anglican Political Theology," in *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Theology*. eds. William T. Cavanaugh and Peter Manley Scott (Newark: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2019), p. 166.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.

conversion of our imagination and a change of practice."[150] He argues, that O'Donovan's view of creation in *Self, World, and Time*, echoes that of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a leader of the British Romantic movement. Coleridge understood creation "as an open yet unfinished cosmos, the value of which is not objectively given but depends on the human capacity to participate in it via symbolic processes of meaning making."[151] Coleridge, according to Bretherton, rejects "overly abstract kinds of reasoning" where humans are "spectators" and "spectral beings alienated from any concrete form of life."[152] Likewise, John Wyatt, in his review of *Entering into Rest*, also sees something similar in O'Donovan's ethics. Wyatt describes O'Donovan's ethics as a critique of "ethical discussion which abstracts the moral agent from all particularities of time, space, and narrative history."[153] He argues that ethical thinking "oriented towards practical action," is thinking that is alongside "the narrative structure of human life," particularly, "our human orientation towards the future."[154] The created order's temporal structure allows human persons agency and directed actions. Moral thinking requires waking and attuning to creation's temporal structure.

4.7.1 *Temporality and Deliberation*

While returning an object to a previous state or condition is one interpretation of ecological restoration, deliberating about the future is also the task of ecological restoration. Restoration is the re-alignment of a current ecological trajectory towards a future possibility of being. O'Donovan argues that the futures take up residency in the present. Future moments are

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[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid., p. 166.

[152] Ibid.

[153] John Wyatt, "Entering into Rest: Ethics as Theology, Volume III." *The New Bioethics* 25, no. 2, (2019): 199–201, https://doi.org/10.1080/20502877.2019.1606149, p. 200.

[154] Ibid.

brought into existence alongside the present, "because it is now, before we act, that we confront it and may deliberate about it."[155]

Deliberation contemplates future possibilities to actualize, to bring about a future reality. O'Donovan argues, "the only time of *practical* immediacy is this future moment … a future moment because we must still act into it … it is also the present, because it is now, before we act, that we confront it and may deliberate about it."[156] Action is directed at the immediate future, not what to "the future that *will in fact transpire*."[157] The future is where out of the multiplicity of becoming, a way of being emerges and is made concrete. Nor is it directed at the *absolute future*, "the future that winds up future, present and past in the appearing of Christ and the judgement of God on History."[158] The absolute future is beyond human concern; it is the immediate future, a future eventually consumed in the absolute future, that invokes one's concern. The moment we deliberate about and are responsible for O'Donovan calls the future-present.[159] O'Donovan writes:

> The focus of deliberation is not on these futures but on the immediate future, the forward-looking present, the future as it beckons to the present, the present as it opens to the future. To define this moment more precisely: it is the *available* future, the possibility that lies open to our action.[160]

Moral reasoning acknowledges its responsibility to the future by considering the available possibilities, and staying attuned to the present empowers individuals to act responsibly toward shaping those future possibilities. O'Donovan urges a person to make "use of this moment of time to do something, however modest, that is worthwhile and responsible, something to endure

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[155] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 16.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Ibid., p. 17.

before the throne of judgement."[161] Deliberation seeks prudent action. Prudent action is action that serves the virtue of love "in relating experience to new challenges."[162] Prudence, O'Donovan argues, is "an intellectual service of love in vigilant attention to the perils and promises lying hidden about our paths."[163] The prudent person is called to "keep straight the path of [their] feet," so that their "ways will be sure" (Proverbs 4:26). For O'Donovan, the reality of the world is "an order perceived in love," and prudence "brings this order to bear on the future of horizon of action."[164] Prudent deliberation, for O'Donovan, is deliberation that seeks the good of God's created order, resulting in action attuned to creation.

However, the practice of restoration is limited to the *near* future, as a consequence of the dynamic nature of ecology, the future is primarily opaque, shrouded in its multiplicity of becoming. At the same time, Artinian-Kaiser argues, that "The provisionality of human knowledge *from within* created order and history suggests to me the need for a kind of conservatism when it comes to restoring ecosystems."[165] The temporal nature of human existence means that history limits human ingenuity. She extends temporality's limiting factor to science as well, noting that, "Today's ground-breaking scientific model…will in time give way to other models."[166] Therefore, humankind's resourcefulness "requires alertness, attentiveness, and openness to new insights, while at the same time holding them loosely."[167] In other words, humanity must wake in the fullest sense.

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[161] Ibid.
[162] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 194.
[163] Ibid.
[164] Ibid., p. 195.
[165] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 158; She states being influenced by the work of Donna Haraway here. Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 183–201.
[166] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 158.
[167] Ibid.

4.7.2 *Temporality and Action*

I detailed in previous chapters how practical reason concerns itself with everydayness. O'Donovan invites his reader to view ethics, not as something abstract, but grounded in the concreteness of existence. Practical reason, through reflection and deliberation, engages the created order in meaningful action. O'Donovan describes practical reason as "unidirectional, moving from a point established to a point still to be attained. It moves to and fro between the world of realities and the moment of action."[168] Human existence is "a task of coordinating memory and intention, of negotiating a successful passage from past to future."[169] While action is future-directed, at the same time it is dependent on the past. The past provides context to the present; it defines and gives reasons for current circumstances. The present is not distinct from the past; it is instead an acute awareness of the manifestation of past actions. O'Donovan states that—

> Action depends for its intelligibility upon a strong continuity with the past, a context given from past to present, since the future we face is countless and underdetermined. All we think we know about the present and future is borrowed light from the past.[170]

The present is the moral consequences of past decisions and subsequent actions. The present does not exist as an independent slice of space-time. Instead, it is the liminal between concrete occurrences and future possibilities. O'Donovan argues that humans exist "*with the consciousness of time,*" resulting in their "particular time determin[ing] *how* they emerge, knowing their own span of life as differently located in time from the span of other people."[171] It is to this moment of time one is given to act. It is the call of wisdom out of the goods of the

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[168] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 30.
[169] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 194.
[170] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 41.
[171] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, 216.

created order that humankind, when attuned, directs their action, individually and collectively. O'Donovan writes,

> Among the goods that we appreciate, we seek just *one* good which will provide what is lacking in our general appreciation, one which will allow a precise determination of a practical purpose. It is a good of a specific kind, *an action* (which not all, or even most goods are), an action that is *possible* (not already performed and so actual), and that is possible to perform *at the moment of time* defined by the immediate future-present horizon (not possible only at some other time or by some other agent; …[172]

Human devotion to the ordered goods of God is an invitation to action in pursuit of those goods. However, it asks the question – *How does one know which goods to pursue?* Not all desired goods are *good-for-me*. Conversely, *good-for-me* does not mean good for all. The good to seek, O'Donovan argues, is the one of the possible goods that coheres "with actual goods, good action by their context in good relations of time and proximity, and so on."[173] Purposeful action is context-dependent and directed towards a good that coheres to the created order. Artinian-Kaiser argues that humans lack "a vantage point from which to view the relations between time and space."[174] The lack of an objectional vantage point reflects the temporal situatedness of humankind's provisional knowledge. Knowledge of the world, she contends, is dependent upon one's engagement with their particular historical location.

In appropriating O'Donovan's natural ethics, I ask Christians wanting to think about ecological restoration and the current environmental crisis to consider whose responsibility is restoration and the created order? It seems apparent to me that humans are the only creatures capable of restoration. While the introduction of beavers may 'restore' a fluvial ecosystem, this is not an initiative that beavers can undertake by their own volition. Humans are capable of

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[172] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 181.
[173] Ibid., pp. 181-182.
[174] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 157.

reflecting on the state of creation and acting in response. Conversely, the human aspect is the dilemma of restoration, as humans are responsible for much of the ecological crisis and at the same time tasked with the solution. A solution that seeks a *good-for-all* and not necessarily a *good-for-me*.

Regarding ecological restoration, when one looks at a contaminated soil or stream whose upland human-induced activities have dictated channel morphology (form), they see the past made present. If they claim that a stream is degraded, then they render a moral judgment from their given and limited historical location on past actions. Likewise, future consequences render a verdict upon one's present-day actions. Therefore, one must attend to future concerns in light of present conditions, but it is not the present that judges a person. The present holds the past to account but says nothing about the immediate moment; instead, the present is the moment of moral reasoning and action. From the present, we deliberate about the immediate future, which, O'Donovan argues, places a demand of unquestionable responsibility for it on human persons.[175] The present has already rendered judgment on past environmental failures, and somewhere in the future, a judgement awaits humankind's present actions. Humanity's past has placed an undue burden on the environment, leading to extreme degradation locally and climate disasters globally.

4.8   Temporality and Restoration

At the beginning of this chapter, I highlighted two problems with the reference systems, the wilderness myth, and the myth of equilibrium. I begin this section with a discussion of temporality, historical referents, and ecosystem restoration. Higgs, whose own work focuses on historical and cultural impacts on restoration ecology, argues that ecological restoration

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[175] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 16.

requires a clear understanding of objectives. I rely on Higgs throughout this section as his work adequately represents the classical approach to restoration.

Higgs contends that the questions needing to be answered are questions concerning specific outcomes and how can a person best proxy the place being restored. Moreover, Higgs states that to restore is "to consider *what a thing is and what it means*."[176] He believes that the "primary value of restoration" is "reflecting deeply on appropriate actions."[177] Higgs lands on some of the questions O'Donovan is pursuing, the nature of things, where do they get their meaning and how to morally reason. For Higgs, answers to these questions involve history:

> The idea of restoring something is to return it to a prior condition, however specified. Any robust restoration project must consider changes over time, which embeds historical meaning deep within practical matters. History helps us understand that restoration is itself a dynamic practice…. What it will mean fifty years is almost certainly going to be different from its sense today. Defining it now, and in the future, requires an understanding of various tendencies that have become apparent through practice.

In Higgs's approach to restoration, as with many restorationists, there are hints of historicism. The question is not if the past is essential to restoration; the question is how much weight should one give the past regarding future ecosystem conditions? How can ecological restorationists navigate historical fidelity and informed but not specific ecological environments?

For Higgs, in *Nature by Design: people, natural process, and ecological restoration*, he argues for the centrality of history to restoration. He contends that historicity, or historical fidelity, attends to nostalgia, continuity, and depth of time.[178] Nostalgia, for Higgs, is the belief that ecological spaces, specifically those that have "avoided the ravages of development," are

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[176] Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design*, p. 41.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid., p. 131.

superior to what now exists and should be brought back.[179] He adds that restoration reflects "a bittersweet longing for something lost."[180] It is not debatable whether pristine ecosystems are superior to degraded ones; if they existed, that most certainly would be the case. However, Higgs's appeal to nostalgia reflects, on some level, an appeal to the wilderness myth mentioned above. The idea that, at least in the Americas, nature existed in the recent past as unspoiled by human contact; and that this pristine condition should be the goal of ecological restoration.

The second characteristic of history, Higgs identifies, is continuity. Higgs asserts that one's understanding of the world comes through experience, to which Heidegger and O'Donovan would agree. However, Higgs sees the past as a limiting factor on how one should go about restoration. Ecosystems derive their value, he says, due to a person's experience of continuity with an ecosystem. He concludes then that this connection with the past is what keeps practitioners from restoring nature to present interests; "historical knowledge provides the inspiration."[181] Artinian-Kaiser agrees with Higgs's focus on the importance of history to restoration. She affirms that "the historical parameter" of restoration "cannot be disposed of without restoration becoming a different practice."[182] I disagree, but even if this is the case, then so be it. Restoration, in the face of climate change and extensive anthropogenic driven environmental harms must turn its attention to the future. While ecologic history is important, future oriented practices are best adapted to climate change and the environing world. Restoration is the workings of human ingenuity, imagination and making, all of which are inherently future-forward, even if the past plays an important role.

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[179] Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design*, p. 143.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid., p. 146.
[182] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 47.

Finally, Higgs recognizes time as an integral component of history. Continuity, Higgs argues, produces time-depth. Depth speaks to "the reach of history," encompassing not just the passage of time but the cultural entanglements between people and their ecosystems.[183] Depth is a means of scaling continuity and revealing when something is unusual and worth preserving. Furthermore, the longer an ecosystem has survived without significant human-induced alterations, the rarer it is; "Depth depends on rarity."[184] Rarity, for Higgs, is an object, as a result of its scarcity, is deemed valuable. The rarer the ecosystem, the more value it has.[185]

Time, for Higgs, is operating in the ordinary sense of the word. Higgs acknowledges that time is culturally variable in its expression. Nonetheless, with the standardization of time, time is considered to flow from past to present, connecting the past to the future.[186] Higgs' conception of time as a straightforward linear approach to temporality leads him to conclude that the future is formed out of one's reflection on the past alongside their current actions.[187]

The upshot Higgs proposes is that restoration projects derive their value through nostalgia, continuity, and time-depth, all of which are invariably linked.[188] They form a historical narrative, and narratives provide a means for reconciling conflicting ideas over restoration by normalizing the solutions.[189] For Higgs, restoration is putting right what was lost to time and degradation; and if that definition holds, then "restoration must depend on historic fidelity."[190] Higgs has not wavered from his position. In his article "The Changing Role of

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[183] Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design*, p. 154.
[184] Ibid., p. 155.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid., p. 146.
[187] Ibid., p. 147.
[188] Ibid., p. 156.
[189] Dominic McAfee, Heidi K. Alleway, and Seand D. Connell, "Environmental Solutions Sparked by Environmental History", *Conservation Biology* 34, no. 2, (2020): 386–394, https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/cobi.13403, p. 387.
[190] Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design*, p. 157.

History in Restoration Ecology," Higgs states that in the face of rapid environmental changes, "the role of history becomes more important, not less, in finding appropriate responses to rapidly changing cultural and ecological conditions."[191]

How, then, do history and time play out in the practice of restoration—through the reliance on reference systems, also called baselines? Higgs argues for the term 'reference information'. His choice of the term reference information, as opposed to baselines or benchmarks, is that reference information does not imply rigidity or fixed points.[192] Higgs believes restoration still needs to exhibit flexibility in recovering ecosystems. Reference information can come in many forms, such as a reference site, baseline studies, historical data, paleoecology, and control plots are a few examples.[193] According to a study by Mihoub et al., temporal baselines are necessary means for measuring change over time, framing objectives, and setting attainable goals. They contend that the lack of effective baselines hinders practitioners' understanding of progress, biodiversity, and change over time.[194] Classical restoration is guilty of an appeal to historicism for predicting the future, which is becoming more complex with climate change and other human-induced environmental impacts. I am not arguing that historical referents should be done away with or are unnecessary. What I am suggesting is that restoration needs to be more focused on the future.

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[191] Eric Higgs, et al. "The Changing Role of History in Restoration Ecology," *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 12, no. 9 (2014): 499–506, doi: 10.1890/110267, p. 499.

[192] Eric Higgs, *Nature by Design*, p. 158.

[193] Ibid.

[194] Jean-Baptiste Mihoub et al., "Setting Temporal Baselines for Biodiversity: The Limits of Available Monitoring Data for Capturing the Full Impact of Anthropogenic Pressures," *Scientific Reports* 7, no. 1 (2017): 1-11, DOI:10.1038/srep41591 pp. 1-2.

4.9   History and Restoration

Madelon F. Case and Lauren M. Hallett, in their article "Multiple Meanings of History in Restoration", put forth a perspective on history and restoration that considers a view of temporality more in line with O'Donovan's. They argue that restoration has always been stuck between two poles, historical fidelity and forward-looking. Historical fidelity, as previously mentioned, is returning an ecosystem to a former species composition, structure, or function.[195] Conversely, forward-looking restoration prioritizes "active intervention for a better future."[196] It is acting into the freedom of the immediate future in order to bring about a change in the course of events.

In this article, Case and Hallet argue "that restoring for the future need not mean looking away from the past, but rather the appropriateness of *historical fidelity*."[197] Historical fidelity, they argue, must be balanced with *historical knowledge* (scientific and cultural knowledge) and "*historical events*: all that has happened in a place, know and unknown."[198] Historical events are one's thrownness, as discussed in chapter one. As I quoted O'Donovan earlier, it is "our coming-to to what is already happening and to how we are already placed."[199] Historical events and historical knowledge shape the way one understands historical fidelity.

According to Case and Hallett, ecological restoration is dependent upon "accurate knowledge of past ecosystem characteristics and variability."[200] Historical knowledge allows restorationists to align current activities with desired restoration outcomes. Knowledge,

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[195] Madelon F. Case, and Lauren M. Hallett. "Multiple Meanings of History in Restoration," *Restoration Ecology* 29, no. 5 (2021): 1-5, DOI: 10.1111/rec.13411, p. 1.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 2.
[200] Madelon F. Case, and Lauren M. Hallett. "Multiple Meanings of History in Restoration," p. 2.

however, is not unidirectional, from past ecosystems to present actions. Instead, it is reciprocal, with restoration activities helping to inform how one understands an ecosystem. They argue, "Feedbacks between historical knowledge and historical fidelity are particularly important in restoring human connections to ecosystems." [201] It is historical knowledge that "informs historical fidelity" of not only how an ecosystem may have looked in the past "but also what management practices and cultural values should guide the goals of restoration."[202] The past is informative, but the future has primacy; also note that the discussion of value is important, as detailed in chapter 3. The past is information that can be used as a tool but should not determine the future.

Historical knowledge assists in ecological restoration but so do historical events. As Case and Hallett discuss, "historical events have shaped or biased the availability of knowledge."[203] The difficulty is that ecosystem "records of their own past" can be hard to determine.[204] They argue that "Past events set the stage for how challenging degradation may be to reverse," citing that "Histories of land use and biological invasions … may aid or hinder restoration efforts."[205] These past events reference baselines—temporal and historical contexts for determining what historical knowledge should guide a return to historical fidelity. An obstacle to historical fidelity when it comes to historical events is the idea of a shifting baseline.

The shifting baseline refers to how one understands the reference point for establishing historical fidelity. Fisheries biologist Daniel Pauly is credited with coining the term 'shifting

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[201] Madelon F. Case, and Lauren M. Hallett. "Multiple Meanings of History in Restoration," p. 2.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid., p. 2.
[204] Ibid., p. 3.
[205] Ibid.

baseline syndrome'.[206] Shifting baseline syndrome is "a gradual change in the accepted norms for the condition of the natural environment due to a lack of past information or lack of experience of past conditions." [207] The shifting baseline documents how "each human generation accepts as a baseline assumption the ecosystem and landscape configuration that occurred at the beginning of their career [such as a commercial fisherman] or childhood, and therefore uses these as baselines to evaluate ongoing change."[208] Masashi Soga and Kevin J. Gaston argue that shifting baseline syndrome occurs due to a lack of awareness of the gradual degradation of the environment over time. They list as causes the "loss of interaction with the natural environment" and "lack of familiarity with the natural environment."[209] They argues this is especially true for children and those who "spend considerably less time interacting with the natural environment that did previous generations."[210] In a sense, the shifting baseline syndrome represents the growing alienation of humankind from the rest of creation, particularly for those in the West. A continued alienation from creation is potentially problematic for a natural ethic and could explain why many in the West look to technology and science to inform them on how to be human rather than the created order.

Shifting baselines are one issue with restoration practices that overly rely on history. Case and Hallett argue that historical fidelity is difficult to achieve given that the lack of historical knowledge and past historical events "stand in the way of achieving historical

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[206] Daniel Pauly, "Anecdotes and the Shifting Baseline Syndrome of Fisheries." *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* 10, no. 10 (1995): 430, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0169-5347(00)89171-5, p. 430.

[207] Masashi Soga, and Kevin J Gaston, "Shifting Baseline Syndrome: Causes, Consequences, and Implications." *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 16, no. 4 (2018): 222–30. https://doi.org/10.1002/fee.1794. p. 222.

[208] Luis Balaguer et al., "The Historical Reference in Restoration Ecology: Re-defining a Cornerstone Concept," *Biological Conservation*. 176, (2014): 12–20, https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2014.05.007, p. 15.

[209] Masashi Soga, and Kevin J Gaston. "Shifting Baseline Syndrome," p. 224.

[210] Ibid.

fidelity."[211] What Case and Haller ask restorationists to consider that while history will always play a role in restoration, "Restoration, ultimately, is defined by the future we envision for ecosystems, in the face of new challenges but also opportunities."[212] Moving towards future-forward looking ecological restoration allows restorationists "to move beyond the limitations and legacies of past events."[213]

Similarly, Coleman et al. argue that restoration should rely less on "historic states that are putatively adapted to extant environmental conditions."[214] They claim that "ongoing habitat deterioration and climate change is outpacing" species adaptation, exacerbating the problem of using historical information to address future conditions .[215] The lack of species adaptation, Coleman et al. argues, is "challenging the assumption that restoration" needs to be loyal to historic fidelity.[216] Instead, they suggest that restoration is best served when focused on the future. In this article they propose that restoration turn its attention to "improving or redesigning properties of lost habitats to withstand predicted future conditions."[217] By emphasizing future conditions, Coleman et al. believe restoration efforts can be more successful. They suggest that restorationists to consider "anticipatory actions (prior to loss) to proactively boost resilience and adaptive capacity" for future conditions.[218] Furthermore, Coleman et al. argue that "the failure to consider and prepare" for future conditions is "an ethical decision with potentially serious environmental consequences of inaction."[219] As O'Donovan contends, historicism,

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[211] Madelon F. Case, and Lauren M. Hallett. "Multiple Meanings of History in Restoration," p. 4.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Melinda A. Coleman et al., "Restore or Redefine: Future Trajectories for Restoration," *Frontiers in Marine Science* 7, (2020), doi:10.3389/fmars.2020.00237. p. 2.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Ibid., p. 9.

even in this limited sense, dispenses with moral concepts. Conversely, future oriented restoration takes up the moral question with each new day. The question is no longer whether to intervene but how to intervene in a way that is attuned to the created order.

Restorationists, if they are to indeed seek the good of creation, might consider following O'Donovan when he states that one's actions might be "mediated by the past," but they are "not determined by the past. Action asserts freedom against sheer facticity…. That we should be more than creatures of our past, more than mere continuers of it."[220] Restorationists are agents acting in freedom to envision a future that while tethered to the past it is not limited to it. Ecological restoration is an act of love grounded in the concept of hope—a hope they desire to provide future generations. Similarly, ecological restoration is based on an idea that the future can be different than the past. According to O'Donovan as agents, human persons are moving "through a determined world to an undetermined possibility in exercise of its freedom to realize possibility in the world by action."[221] Restorationists, are no less such agents, and are called to act into the immediate future to assist ecosystem recovery. Though never assured of future ecological certainties, future-forward restoration practices acknowledge that temporality and not time is at the heart of creation's reality.

4.9.1 *The Sin of the Present*

O'Donovan, in *Finding and Seeking*, presents *anxiety* as a way humans sin against time. However, this is not anxiety as commonly understood. O'Donovan is attempting to work within a phenomenological framework, detailed in Chapter 4. For O'Donovan, anxiety manifests in four distinct ways, greed, impatience, consequentialism, and the aforementioned historicism.

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[220] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, pp. 41-42.
[221] Ibid., p. 19.

These four ways are how one sins in response to the ontological angst, referred to as anxiety. In the ensuing section, I discuss the sins of impatience and consequentialism, and their relationship to a prominent method of stream restoration.

According to O'Donovan, sin is not a substance nor does it have its own *being*. Instead, sin represents the disappointing way humans fail to live up to their Being. O'Donovan, quoting Maximus the Confessor, writes that sin is a "*failure of operation*" for creation to achieve its ends.[222] One can sin against creation and fail to see Christ as the heart of creation (to borrow Rowan Williams' phrase). To sin against creation, is for humankind to purpose creation after their ends, with little regard for divine ends.

Consequentialism (utilitarianism), defined by O'Donovan, is "the positing in thought of a future best possible outcome" and working backwards from there.[223] "It is a sin of deliberate thought, masquerading as prudence."[224] Acts of restoration that take temporality seriously can fall victim to the sin of consequentialism. Consequentialism instrumentalizes and universalizes ends. According to O'Donovan, it instrumentalizes "by reducing each act to a work of production."[225] That is, the end, becomes the object of production, and "the value of which can be substituted as a norm for the quality of an action that produced it."[226] Restoration practices are often production driven toward some end that does necessarily predict ecological vitality, as I argue later.

The one aspect of universalism I want to highlight is the idea, as O'Donovan describes it, of postulating "universal outcomes on a single and simple scale."[227] The scale O'Donovan

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[222] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 15.
[223] Ibid., pp. 201-202.
[224] Ibid., p. 201.
[225] Ibid., p. 202.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid., p. 203.

suggests is happiness; however, he states, "it can be called anything at all."[228] The term, as applied to restoration, could be called aesthetically pleasing. The term becomes a "homogenizing measure" by which the stream ecology is not judged on overall stream health. Instead, stream networks are measured according to how they look. Arguably stream restoration proposes to restore ecological vitality but quickly settles for pleasing aesthetics, which "perpetuates a false sense of optimism about the feasibility of ecologically restoring" degraded fluvial ecosystems.[229] It creates a false sense of beauty, one that appeals to the visual sense, but fails to promote ecological flourishing.

Impatience, O'Donovan argues, is the sin of refusing "to wait on God's time."[230] Regarding creation and restoration, it is a failure that denies creation its own becoming—a denial of natural creaturely progression. Restoration, as discussed previously, is an act of intervention. Intervention in itself is not the sin of impatience. Most restorationists aim to restore an ecosystem so that it becomes generative and self-sustaining. However, as I demonstrate below, some forms of restoration are meant to fix in place, to slow or stop nature's dynamism. Restoration can also be misguided in overemphasizing present problems without properly considering future or past concerns. O'Donovan believes impatience to have "a sense of the present that blocks out the future … which has taken an advance on the future, already resplendent with the glow of completion."[231] I argue that certain forms of stream restoration do just that, bringing into being a fixed state, cutting off the ambiguity of the future, in turn,

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[228] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 203.
[229] Kristan Cockerill and William P. Anderson, "Creating False Images: Stream Restoration in an Urban Setting." *JAWRA Journal of the American Water Resources Association* 50, no. 2 (2014): 468–82, https://doi.org/10.1111/jawr.12131, p. 470.
[230] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 175.
[231] Ibid.

denying creation the freedom to become. Instead, it displays a form of human hubris that dictates what form a stream channel should take.

The French historian François Hartog details another sin against time, the sin of presentism. Presentism speaks to an omnipresent, which "is generally called 'short-termism' … the sense that only the present exists, a present characterized at once by the tyranny of the instant and by the treadmill of an unending nows."[232] O'Donovan urges one not to get caught up in the moment of *now*. The *now*, he writes, "cannot be the time of a performance, for a performance is extended through time and 'now' has no extent."[233] It is a warning not to confuse the urgent with the important. One cannot act into the now nor seriously consider the plight of the immediate. The urgent traps a person in the moment, the now, pushing off the importance of considering the future. O'Donovan's position concerning what to make of the present resonates with Hartog's presentism.

> One way or another, what the present cannot be is a *period of* time, with dimension and extension. As soon as we sandwich it in between past and future, it disappears into nothingness. It is fleeting, an indeterminable moment of transition of what-is-not-yet to what-is-over-and-done-with. We find ourselves like salmon leaping in the stream, the present being our point of purchase on our upstream journey, disposing of the past and appropriating the future. Constituted, in Heidegger's expression, by its "horizon," the points at which past and future meet in interface, our hold on the present is simply a moment of coming together and opening up, when what we *have* been faces what we *may* be.[234]

O'Donovan rejects the idea of a present moment in time. He prompts the reader to not "be tempted by the present tense evoked by the word "today" to renounce an interest in the future."[235] The present is where the past opens to the future, making available the next moment

[232] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time*. trans. by Saskia Brown. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015) http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bham/detail.action?docID=1835954, pp. xiv-xv.
[233] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 146.
[234] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 15.
[235] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 145.

to act. The present represents a state of reflectivity and anticipation. It is the perch from which one acts into the immediate future, hopefully with eager resolve to bring about a thoughtful change. Restoration, at its core, is temporal, requiring reflection on the past and future. However, it cannot fall victim to the trappings of presentism or historicism. If it does, it neglects the future that restoration is intended to bring about. Restoration is often touted as being about the future; however, it is often overly beholden to a past existence not emulated in the present. Living only in the present can be a problem for restorationists. Living in the present runs the risk of giving in to the urgent rather than prudent deliberation that is future-forward. Stream restoration is one form of restoration that commits several sins against time. In the remainder of this chapter and the next, I will critique the form of stream restoration that I argue provides an example of restoration that fails in several ways to attune to creation or a natural ethic. Stream restoration is characteristic of a temporal frame that is past and present focus, with scant attention paid to future considerations.

4.10 Natural Channel Design

Natural Channel Design (NCD) is a stream restoration method developed by David Rosgen. Rosgen developed the stream classification system by quantifying and categorizing the dynamic relationship between river form and fluvial processes. He argues that NCD allows for predicting a river's behaviour based on river form by extrapolating stream characteristics from a similar stream in order to provide a is consistent and reproducible standardized reference frame for communication between professional disciplines.[236]

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[236] David L. Rosgen, "A Classification of Natural Rivers," *Catena* 22, no. 3 (1994): 169–199, doi:10.1016/0341-8162(94)90001-9, p. 170.

Natural Channel Design classifies streams based on four levels of morphological assessment to provide "the physical, hydrologic, sedimentological, and geomorphic context" that link the driving forces and channel response.[237] As Rosgen correctly identifies, river form and fluvial processes are related. As defined by NCD, the goal of river restoration "is to establish the physical, chemical, and biological functions of the river system that are self-regulating and emulate the natural stable form."[238] A naturally stable form is a stream whose "dimension, pattern, and profile of river channels" remain steady over time.[239] Rosgen states that one of NCD's "primary assumptions" is that space-for-time substitutions assess spatial and temporal changes to a fluvial network and "select the appropriate stream succession scenarios and states."[240] The space-for-time approach in geomorphology attempts to capture spatially distributed geomorphic transitions in the landscape that, under certain conditions, transgress from "young" to "old".[241] The space-for-time substitution suggests that landform evolution occurs in developmental stages, and thus, under the right circumstances, "the study of spatial processes is equivalent to the study of time processes."[242] An easier way to state it is that streams undergo physical changes to their form as time passes, which can be predictive and used to justify restoration based on stream forms. For Rosgen, stream form represents changes to channel morphology over time and, therefore, is a proxy for time.

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[237] David L. Rosgen, "Natural Channel Design: Fundamental Concepts, Assumptions, and Methods," in *Geophysical Monograph Series*. eds. Andrew Simon, Sean J. Bennet, and Janine M. Castro (Washington, D.C.: American Geophysical Union, 2011): 69–93. doi:10.1029/2010G, p. 78.

[238] Ibid., p. 70.

[239] Ibid.

[240] Ibid., p. 74

[241] Huang, X. et al., "Space-for-time Substitution in Geomorphology: A Critical Review and Conceptual Framework," *Journal of Geographical Sciences* 29, no. 10 (2019): 1670–1680, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11442-019-1684-0, p. 1672.

[242] Ibid.

Rosgen also argues that form is a proxy for fluvial processes. Moreover, Rosgen argues that channel formal as a proxy for time allows practitioners to "predict a river's behaviour from its appearance."[243] He justifies the space-for-time approach through data collected up and downstream of the degraded channel. As opposed to theoretical or modelled data, Rosgen argues that NCD uses real-world data, "actual channel response…to forecast changes spatially (upstream and downstream) and over time (based on similar time-trend rates)."[244] Therefore, he believes anticipating or predicting morphological changes is appropriate, arguing that similar processes lead to similar results.[245] Nonetheless, it shares with historicism the idea that the future can be read directly from the past.

Natural Channel Design uses reference reaches (undisturbed sections of stream length) to determine a suitable channel morphology for the stream needing restoration. Rosgen and NCD transpose a "stable channel morphology in a particular valley type" onto a degraded channel as the desired form for the restored stream.[246] The use of reference reaches places the temporal emphasis on the present. Rosgen rightly rejects the noFtion of restoration as a return to "the pristine and undisturbed 'pre-white settlement' conditions," opting instead for emulating "natural stable rivers."[247] Natural Channel Design considers historical changes in channel morphology. However, Rosgen argues that one must study landscape and stream evolution

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[243] David L. Rosgen, "A classification of natural rivers," p. 170.

[244] David L. Rosgen, "Discussion on "Critical Evaluation of How the Rosgen Classification and Associated 'Natural Channel Design' Methods Fail to Integrate and Quantify Fluvial Processes and Channel Responses" by A. Simon, M. Doyle, M. Kondolf, F.D. Shields Jr., B. Rhoads, and M. McPhillips," *Journal of the American Water Resources Association* 44, no. 3 (2008): 782-792. doi:10.1111/j.1752-1688.2008.00169.x, p. 790.

[245] Ibid.

[246] David L. Rosgen, "The Reference Reach: A Blueprint for Natural Channel Design." In *Wetlands Engineering & River Restoration Conference*. ed. Donald F. Hayes, March 22-27, 1998, Denver, Colorado, United States, 1009–1016. 10.1061/9780784403822, p. 1010.

[247] David L. Rosgen, "Natural Channel Design," p. 70.

processes that produce 'stable' reference reaches.[248] He does not look to historical stream forms but present-day analogues that can function as a reference stream. Nevertheless, detractors of Rosgen and NCD argue that his classification approach, which assumes that future behaviour can be predicted from its channel form, is a "historical approach to geomorphology."[249] Simon et al. refer to Rosgen's time-independent, form approach to restoration as a "snapshot" of the temporal dimension of stream morphology, which ignores the open nature of fluvial systems.[250] It is a denial of creation's dynamism. Moreover, they argue that NCD fails to grasp the temporal nature of rivers by failing to grasp that fluvial processes are scale-dependent, which form-based approaches may not adequately address.

Natural Channel Design reflects O'Donovan's definition of historicism as historical teleology. It is a fluvial historical teleology, albeit in a subtle way. It is essentially taking historical processes to determine future stream form. Natural Channel Design treats modern stream form as a proxy for fluvial geomorphic processes, with little regard for the important historical features that drove those changes. The only thing worthy of meaning is the present-day channel form and not necessarily the process that influenced that shape. What NCD fails to adequately capture is how human activities fashioned a stream's morphology. For example, increased impervious cover such as parking lots and buildings leads to increased runoff causing higher flows and more frequent flooding and erosion.

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[248] Ibid.

[249] Melanie J. Small and Martin W. Doyle, "Historical Perspectives on River Restoration Design in the USA," *Progress in Physical Geography: Earth and Environment* 36, no. 2 (2012): 138–153, https://doi.org/10.1177/0309133311425400, p. 148.

[250] Andrew Simon et al., "Critical Evaluation of How the Rosgen Classification and Associated 'Natural Channel Design' Methods Fail to Integrate and Quantify Fluvial Processes and Channel Responses," *Journal of the American Water Resources Association 43*, no. 5 (2007), 1117-1131, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-1688.2007.00091.x, p. 1126.

Rebecca Lave recounts a favourite example of Rosgen's, which he provided in personal communication with Lave.[251]

> I've got some guy standing on the bank with his barn about to fall in the river saying, 'Hey, what can you do to help me?' I'm gonna have to make a decision. It may be the wrong decision, but you have to do something. You don't have the luxury of saying, 'Let me study this for ten years.' You've gotta make some calls.[252]

It is easy to be sympathetic to the barn owner's plight. To do nothing would be detrimental to the barn owner. According to Lave, many experts argue that NCD is overly interventionist and that streams will heal if left alone. Conversely, Rosgen and his supporters argue that critics of NCD are "closing their eyes to reality" and that "refraining from action is a luxury we rarely have."[253] Lave contends that Rosgen's critique of a noninterventionist approach as naïve has some merit.[254] Not only is there the barn to consider but there are also federal and state regulations that require excess sediment from erosion to be addressed to maintain water quality. Lave contends that while this may be the best practice in an ideal world, the reality is that stream restoration is a billion-dollar-a-year business in high demand.[255] Even if NCD is not directly responsible for promoting the idea that streams require engineering, NCD's focus on stability and that rivers should not erode has led to the perception that eroding channels are unstable and need fixing.[256] Though at times the best restoration practice may be to do nothing; nevertheless, non-intervention, while appealing, is not always appropriate, making interventionist methods

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[251] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams: Stream Restoration, Neoliberalism, and the Future of Environmental Science*. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012), https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bham/reader.action?docID=1222471&ppg=15, p. 69.
[252] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams*, p. 69.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid.
[255] Ibid., p. 65.
[256] Bruce L. Rhoads, *River Dynamics: Geomorphology to Support Management*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), doi:10.1017/9781108164108, p. 392.

necessary. However, this does not mean one should surrender to the urgency of the now. Instead, the focus of restoration needs to be called into question.

Anthropologist Joseph Masco calls this the crisis in crisis. Rosgen perpetuates, what Masco calls "the radical presentism of crisis talk, the focus on stabilizing a present condition rather than engaging the multiple temporalities at stake in a world" made up of interconnected entities.[257] The crisis of the barn's potential collapse into the river is the urgent demand of the now. The only way for Rosgen and NCD to respond is to stabilize the bank. However, bank stabilization is an example of falling victim to the urgent and while potentially ignoring the causes driving the bank erosion. Rosgen and NCD place the demands of the present ahead of any future concern.

The solution for Rosgen and NCD regarding the barn and the riverbank is to stabilize the river's banks. Rosgen's appeal to emotion creates a false binary—that the only solution is to stabilize the bank or let the barn collapse into the river. For instance, could one not also move the barn? Rosgen and proponents of NCD are correct; immediate action is needed. O'Donovan would agree, as moral reasoning requires action. Recalling from earlier, O'Donovan regards the ability to deliberate implies a responsibility. Deliberation, in this sense, means that one can affect the outcome of an action. There are plenty of immediate future possibilities a person could deliberate over that they have no responsibility for, as one cannot act in a way that affects the outcome. Since a person can deliberate over the barn and the river, they have a responsibility to act. In Rosgen's example, what to do about the barn is the immediate future requiring action. For Rosgen, the focus is the 'now' moment of the barn. Following O'Donovan, the focus is on

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[257] Joseph Masco, "The Crisis in Crisis." *Current Anthropology* 58, no. S15 (2017): S65–S76. https://doi.org/10.1086/688695, p. S73.

a broader future horizon incorporating more of the landscape into the deliberative process and subsequent action. Rosgen's horizon is limited to the pressing need of the barn. Rosgen and NCD are subjected to the impatience of the present. Not only do they submit to the urgency of the 'now,' but the method of bank stabilization also imposes the sin of immediacy on the river.

Channel stabilization is a priority for NCD practitioners when it comes to stream restoration. Rosgen defines a stable stream as one that maintains its pattern and profile without aggrading or degrading and transports the flow and sediment produced in its catchment area.[258] In other words, streams should not change unless their flow regime and sediment load change. These changes would reflect alterations in the broader landscape. Rosgen is critical of engineering practices aimed at hardening the stream banks (e.g., rip-rap, concrete, levee construction, channelization, and floodplain encroachment). River stability, Rosgen insists, "does not mean 'fixed' in place; 'hardening' of the channel boundary including the streambed and banks is *not* an objective related to the NCD approach to river restoration."[259] Instead, Rosgen purports to support a dynamic equilibrium; while scouring and erosion occur due to environmental changes, there remains a balance between the sediment load and sediment carrying capacity. Therefore, the stream remains 'stable,' even as it adjusts.[260] However, what instructors and practitioners of NCD promote is a stream that does not move. Lave argues that if a dynamic equilibrium is the norm for NCD projects, then they "should fail as soon as they experience a flow of a magnitude sufficient to trigger adjustment of the reengineered

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[258] David L. Rosgen, "The Reference Reach," p. 1010.
[259] David L. Rosgen, "Natural Channel Design," p. 71.
[260] Ibid.

channel."[261] However, she argues that Rosgen and NCD practitioners intend for the stream channel not to move.

Lave, who attended a Rosgen class, reports that "Despite his explicit insistence on dynamic equilibrium, the implicit message…was that properly designed and implemented channels don't move."[262] However, unlike bank hardening methods, NCD uses natural materials (e.g., boulders, logs, rootwads) to stabilize stream channels.[263] Some of the goals of these "softer" methods are: maintain a stable channel, river competence (again to maintain stability), "ensure stability of structure," aesthetically pleasing, and "less costly."[264] Nevertheless, these 'softer' materials are not deformable, meaning, Lave states, "they don't move well with the channel."[265] Ironically, Ellen Wohl points out that restoration goals often incorporate re-meandering of the channel that leads to secondary circulations, reintroducing bank erosion and bend migration, while at the same time including structures to limit these natural processes.[266] The goal of "capital 'S' stability," Lave argues, "is in direct contradiction of the current scientific consensus, which emphasizes rivers as dynamic systems."[267]

Meandering rivers are Earth's most common channel pattern, with meander characteristics intrinsic to fluid dynamics (e.g., ocean currents, tidal flows, and glaciers).[268]

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[261] Rebecca Lave, "The Controversy Over Natural Channel Design: Substantive Explanations and Potential Avenues for Resolution," JAWRA Journal of the American Water Resources Association 45, no. 6 (2009): 1519-1532, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-1688.2009.00385.x, p. 1527.

[262] Ibid.

[263] Rosgen, D. L. (2001) "The Cross-Vane, W-Weir and J-Hook Vane Structures...Their Description, Design and Application for Stream Stabilization and River Restoration," in *Wetlands Engineering & River Restoration 2001*. (American Society of Civil Engineers, 2001): 1–22 Reno, Nevada, United States, doi:10.1061/40581(2001)72. p. 8

[264] Ibid p. 4.

[265] Rebecca Lave, "The Controversy Over Natural Channel Design," p. 1528.

[266] Ellen Wohl, Stuart N. Lane, and Andrew C. Wilcox, "The Science and Practice of River Restoration," *Water Resources Research* 51, no. 8 (2015): 5974–5997. doi:10.1002/2014WR016874. p. 5982.

[267] Rebecca Lave, "The Controversy Over Natural Channel Design," p. 1528.

[268] Janet M. Hooke, "River Meandering," in *Treatise on Geomorphology*. ed. Ellen Wohl (San Diego, Academic Press, 2013), 260-288. doi:10.1016/B978-0-12-374739-6.00226-8, p. 260.

Moreover, meanders are significant drivers of landscape evolution, "very important for their ecological and biodiversity" and "important indicators of environmental change and response."[269] Conversely, a straight channel is unstable and "deforms in to a meandering pattern."[270] The inherent instability means that there is often a continuous evolutionary process to meandering. A stream that moves back and forth across the valley bottom is participating in creation that reflects the call of wisdom, the dynamism of creaturely becoming. Movement is the natural mode of existence; in phenomenological terms, channel migration is an existential of a river.

By fixing channels in place, NCD practitioners subject streams and rivers to the urgency of the present. Rosgen and others are concerned with the immediacy of the present, and by fixing a channel in place, they wrest possibility from the future and force the present upon all future conditions. It is a severing of the stream from its potential. Rivers, in particular, reveal temporality. They begin as a spring and cutting their way to the valley bottom and eventually to the sea. It forms its bed, not from its past but by pushing into its future. The erosion of bank channels, often due to past influences, is always a move towards a future state of being. It is constantly forging its future channel, which gives rise to its past. Rivers and streams can only exist inauthentically in body and temporality as a result of being subjected to futility by the will of the those who subjected it. A stream can only concern itself with the future, but humanity can subject it to its past and present by forcing it to conform to a historical condition or by fixing its present state as a way of controlling its future behavior.

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[269] Ibid., pp. 261-262.
[270] Bruce L. Rhoads, *River Dynamics*, p. 198.

4.11 Conclusion

In short, O'Donovan's approach emphasizes the crucial role of forward-thinking in shaping a better future. By appreciating the interplay between past, present, and future, individuals can move beyond mere urgency-driven decision-making. In recognizing the fleeting and indeterminate nature of the present, one can embrace a state of reflectivity and anticipation, using the present as a perch to act thoughtfully and purposefully in shaping the future. His position highlights the importance of taking a future-forward perspective on ecological restoration. By considering the future when making decisions about ecological restoration, individuals can ensure that their actions are result from prudent deliberation about the immediate future. Conversely, in the next and final chapter, I examine how sins against self, world, and time have failed to honor creation as the divine gift of existence and lead to a surrendering to the impatience and urgency of the now. Human social structures have turned to what Heidegger calls the Being of Technology for navigating the human relation to creation. O'Donovan follows Heidegger and his critique of modernity. In the following chapter I explore these themes regarding the neoliberalization of economics, science, and ecological restoration.

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5   The Question Concerning Technology, Neoliberalism,
and the Theological Key

5.1   Introduction

I begin with a quote by Eugene McCarraher that articulates my point in this final

chapter. It reads, "The market is an ontology, a way of deciding not only what is right and

wrong, but what is real and what is unreal. And that's exactly the kind of power we used to

attribute to God."[1] Heidegger and O'Donovan warn of the essence of technology that reduces

all in its purview to a 'resource' to be consumed. The essence of technology is an idea that

O'Donovan and others have described as Heidegger's most significant contribution to

philosophy. I argue that neoliberalism is the modern-day manifestation of the essence of

technology. Moreover, neoliberalism is a world-shaping horizon that can be described as an

anti-God way of framing creation that subverts the call of God's wisdom. To counter

neoliberalism, human agents must, *in-Christ*, answer the call of God's wisdom through

reflection, deliberation, and faithful action.

I begin with a case study that demonstrates the problem in ecological restoration and

why this approach of phenomenological theology to restoration is important. After that I detail

what is meant by the essence of technology and how it relates to neoliberalism. Suffice it to

say, neoliberalism and technology reduce creation to a resource to be exploited. The former

understands creation in terms of economic markets. However, these types of horizons are

antithetical to a life of Spirit and *Being-in-Christ*. They constitute sins against self, world, and

time. Theological ethics, I argue provides the key to counter the subversive nature of

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[1] Peter Mommsen, Interview with Eugen McCarraher, The Plough Podcast, May 29, 2023.
https://www.plough.com/en/podcast. Eugen McCarraher is the author of *The Enchantments of Mammon: How Capitalism Became the Religion of Modernity* (2019).

neoliberalism, which bends governments, institutions, education, and the sciences, including ecological restoration, to the will of economic markets. I end with a discussion of Ecosystem Services, a widespread tool for ecological restoration, and how it, often unwittingly, succumbs to neoliberal tenets.

5.2   Natural Channel Design and the Neoliberalization of Stream Restoration

Human alteration of rivers is not a new practice. Humans have historically manipulated fluvial processes and forms for agriculture, transportation, water supply, and food. More recently, river alterations have been for aesthetic and recreational purposes. However, the predominant justifications for managing rivers are transportation and protecting against loss of life and property from floods.[2] Human modifications have led to "more uniform, physically simplified, and ecologically less diverse and functional river corridors."[3] In a US context, the dominant methodology for restoring riverine reaches is Natural Channel Design. As a reminder from the last chapter, NCD is a stream restoration method that incorporates scientific and ethical tenets and ecosystem services' approach to restoration. Government agencies and private industries widely employ NCD as the primary river restoration method, especially in the Eastern United States.

Lave argues that prior management of fluvial networks led to tens of thousands of kilometers of channelized, leveed, and dammed riverine reaches. The mismanagement of rivers and the rise of environmentalism, beginning in the US in the late 1960s and spreading globally, sparked opposition to these draconian engineering methods.[4] By the mid-1980s, stream restoration, the flagship of the restoration industry, was surging, and so was the "demand for

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[2] Ellen Wohl, Stuart N. Lane, and Andrew C. Wilcox, "The Science and Practice of River Restoration," p. 5976.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams*, p. 46.

standards of practice and accredited training."[5] According to Lave, the American university system failed to step in. Instead, academia emphasized the "complexity and the particularity of stream systems," insinuating that developing standards of practice was pointless.[6] Despite the increasing public demand for restoration and the expanding market, there was no means or knowledge to organize the burgeoning industry. As a result, Rosgen and his controversial stream restoration methodology, NCD, filled the void. A method that is the product of neoliberal epistemology and governance.

According to Lave, stream restoration directly reflects the neoliberal science regime. She argues that river scientists are transitioning their work to align with neoliberal funding agendas, developing markets spurred by governmental regulation and the popularity of Rosgen himself. Lave labels Rosgen as the "embodiment of neoliberal trends."[7] Rosgen benefits from a marketable void in the industry, and the privatization of knowledge and knowledge production, central tenets of neoliberal science regimes, as I discuss below.

Neoliberalism is broadly defined as an economic hegemony that views the world as a marketplace. Neoliberalism promotes the democratization of knowledge to the extent that it is commodifiable and marketable. Furthermore, neoliberal governance encourages the privatization of regulation. As Lave argues, neoliberal environmental governance emphasizes reregulating environmental protection and policies by relying on economic markets to limit environmental degradation.[8] The Clean Water Act, according to Lave, while not its purpose, played a significant factor in expanding the restoration industry. Though arguably not a neoliberal policy, the Clean Water Act made stream restoration part of its regulatory provisions

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[5] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams*, p. 14.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., p. 17
[8] Ibid., p. 101.

for some permits which required channelization, culverts, or stream re-location.[9] As a result, federal policies need a structured framework to assess these new permit requirements. Rosgen and Natural Channel Design provide such a framework, giving easy-to-follow criteria for assessing stream restoration "success". Natural Channel Design delivers "a shared terminology that allows practitioners to communicate effectively and quickly grasp the key morphological characteristics of a stream system."[10] Government agencies at the US federal and state level have sent thousands of employees to attend NCD courses. Furthermore, government funding and regulatory agencies require using NCD for their projects.[11]

The widespread adoption of NCD has led to considerable pushback from academics, as many disagree with the Rosgen method asserting that it inadequately deals with the overall ecological health of fluvial ecosystems.[12] Instead, Rosgen's method favours channel form as the critical parameter for stream restoration practices. Rosgen's method is an example of technological thinking, which considers creation as something to be measured and studied apart from its whole. Natural Channel Design attempts to circumvent understanding ecosystem relationships by equating them to form. Form becomes a means of enframing; a Heideggerian term for treating creation as raw material to be consumed.

One of the fungible tools of stream restoration is mitigation banking. stream restoration, now usurped by the neoliberal markets of mitigation banking, makes restoration itself an act of creating standing-reserves (see below). Martin Doyle and Andrew Yates define mitigation banking, or bio-diversity offsetting, as the purchase of habitat—land, streams, wetlands— for

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[9] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams*, p. 97.
[10] Ibid., p. 92.
[11] Ibid., p. 97.
[12] The disagreement between academia and Natural Channel Design proponents is known as the Rosgen Wars. A 'war' fought across academic journals and conferences. The Rosgen Wars are well documented in Lave's book for those interested.

enhancement, which can be turned into credits to be sold or traded to offset ecological degradation or destruction at another site. The practice of mitigation banking intends to bring down the cost of regulation. For-profit companies create or restore ecological habitats to which regulators assign credits. Mitigation banks sell these credits to developers who purchase them to offset environmental damage.[13] Restoring the function and viability of an ecosystem is not the primary objective. Instead, the aim of mitigation banking is, storing up restored streams, to eventually sell for profit. Reserves are banked, sold, and traded for the sole purpose of offsetting ecological loss elsewhere. Even in the act of restoration, the entity is an object, a resource consumed for human needs. Natural Channel Design not only fits the neoliberal agenda to privatize and commodify knowledge, but it also helped create a profitable market known as stream mitigation banking.

Lave argues that stream mitigation banking is "the most visible form of neoliberal market-based environmental management" in the stream restoration industry.[14] According to Doyle and Yates, mitigation banking is an ecosystem service market that intends to result in no-net-loss.[15] Initially, regulators used economic markets to ensure no-net-loss for wetland ecological functions. Ecological function captures "a bundle of ecosystem services such as nutrient retention, flood attenuation, and wildlife habitat."[16] However, these prove challenging to measure, and the size of the wetland area became a surrogate for ecological function.[17] For stream mitigation banking, the length of stream reach replaces ecological function. According to Lave, the means of measurement to ensure no-net-loss for stream mitigation is where

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[13] Martin W. Doyle and Andrew J. Yates, "Stream Ecosystem Service Markets Under No-Net-Loss Regulation," *Ecological Economics* 69, (2010): 820–827, doi:10.1016/j.ecolecon.2009.10.006, p. 821.
[14] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams*, p. 101.
[15] Martin W. Doyle and Andrew J. Yates, "Stream Ecosystem Service Markets," p. 821.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.

neoliberal environmental management meets neoliberal environmental science.[18] It is also the space that Rosgen and NCD occupy. Stream mitigation banking requires simple-to-follow metrics to make an ecosystem a marketable commodity.

Morgan Robertson notes that there are two complications to be overcome when marketizing ecosystems.[19] The first is the problem of measurement. Robertson argues that the development of abstracted standardized measurements is a vital component of economic markets. Conversely, "nothing has vexed the banking community so much as the task of creating abstract generalizable *measures* of the commodity that they sell."[20] It has proven too difficult for scientist to develop ecosystem services in an abstract unit that retain value across space.[21] Second, is the problem of governance. Mitigation banking requires negotiated input from regulators, developers, and bankers. Furthermore, Robertson contends, "there is a lack of clear dominance among scales of state governance, scales of market activity, and scales of ecological process, the result of which has been the creation of a haphazard spatial patchwork of regulatory regimes." [22] Robertson directs his critique at wetland mitigation banking. However, it is applicable to stream mitigation banking, which modelled itself after wetland mitigation banking. As Lave states, unlike wetland banking, this process was relatively simple for stream mitigation banking.

Natural Channel Design was already established as a spatially transferable metric before the first mitigation bank was in operation. Rosgen's method delivers, however controversial, a

[18] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams,* p. 102.
[19] Morgan M. Robertson, "The Neoliberalization of Ecosystem Services: Wetland Mitigation Banking and Problems in Environmental Governance", *Geoforum* 35, no. 3 (2004): 361–373, doi:10.1016/j.geoforum.2003.06.002, p. 362.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Morgan M. Robertson, "The Neoliberalization of Ecosystem Services," p. 362.

solution for these problems in stream mitigation banking. Natural Channel design, according to Lave, "provides a relatively simple bundled metric for converting the messy reality of streams into easily tradable commodities." [23] Furthermore, Lave contends that stream mitigation banking could not function without NCD's commodified metrics.[24] For example, if a developer seeks to destroy four hundred meters of E4 channel (a channel form classification meant to describe a stream's shape), that developer needs to purchase at least four hundred meters of E4 credits (some states require more than a one-to-one ratio). Consequently, Lave argues, regulators pay insufficient attention to the scale and functions of the ecosystem to be destroyed and the functions provided by the restored channel.[25] Natural Channel Design stresses channel form as a substitution for stream processes. Insofar as the channel's form is correct, the ecological function will follow. Form-centric stream restoration is known as the "Field of Dreams hypotheses."[26]

Natural Channel Design is an easily applicable and marketable means for doing restoration, an integral aspect of neoliberal science, by emphasizing applied work to meet market demands.[27] Conversely, one of Lave's complaints is that before Rosgen academics were not interested in solving practical problems regarding applied projects. However, the success of Rosgen's NCD has even moved his critics to adopt market-focused applied research.[28] To circumvent what they believe is incorrect with Rosgen's methods, university academics and agency scientists develop more applied research and educational systems and short course series

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[23] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams*, p. 102.
[24] Ibid., p. 103; Lave states that despite Natural Channel Design's centrality to stream mitigation banking, "Rosgen himself argues that it was not designed for such use." p. 102.
[25] Ibid., p. 102.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., p. 101.
[28] Ibid., p. 103.

that imitate the NCD approach.[29] In other words, to combat what academics and scientists believe to be bad science, they, too, must bend their knee to the markets and neoliberalism. Neoliberalism, therefore, still provides the means for environmental management. Arguably even if these methods provide a more effective means of approaching stream restoration than NCD, they still ensure development will continue to progress with as little infringement as possible. The outcome is one where neoliberalism subjugates regulatory measures to continue exploiting the environment and ecological communities through privatization and governance.[30]

5.3   What is Neoliberalism?

Neoliberalism, at minimum, refers to the "new political, economic, and social arrangements within society that emphasize market relations, re-tasking the role of the state, and individual responsibility."[31] Moreover, it is the "extension of competitive markets into all areas of life, including the economy, politics, and society."[32] These two definitions reflect how I want neoliberalism to be understood throughout this thesis—as the extension of competitive markets into all aspects of political, economic, and social relationships, by emphasizing market relationships through valuation, and tasking governance with maintaining the markets, while deflecting responsibility through hyper-individualization.

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[29] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams*, p. 103.

[30] Rosemary-Clarie, Collard, Jessica Dempsey, and James Rowe James, "Re-Regulating Socioecologies Under Neoliberalism," in *The Handbook of Neoliberalism.* eds. Simon Springer, Kean Birch, and Julie MacLeavy (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016): 469-479, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bham/detail.action?docID=4586301, p. 470.

[31] Simon Springer, Kean Birch, and Julie MacLeavy, "An Introduction to Neoliberalism," in *The Handbook of Neoliberalism.* eds. Simon Springer, Kean Birch, and Julie MacLeavy (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016): 2-14, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bham/detail.action?docID=4586301, p. 2.

[32] Ibid.

Neoliberalism's roots go back to 1947 and the foundation of the Mont Pèlerin Society, a small group of notable academics, economists, philosophers, and historians. [33] Milton Friedman, an early proponent of neoliberalism, and member of the Mont Pèlerin Society, believes competition protects consumers from exploitation by introducing competition. Neoliberalism, he argues, presents competition in every facet of the market economy, amongst producers, between employers (to protect employees and property owners), and lastly, competition among consumers protects businesses.[34]

A more critical account would suggest neoliberalism views the world as something to be marketized and exploited. To quote David Kotsko at length, neoliberalism is—

> an account of human nature where economic competition is the highest value leads to a political theory where the prime duty of the state is to enable, and indeed mandate, such competition, and the result is a world wherein individuals, firms, and states are all continually constrained to express themselves via economic competition. This means that neoliberalism tends to create a world in which neoliberalism is "true."[35]

Neoliberalism "reveals" the world as competitive markets, marketizing all aspects of the sociopolitical spectrum. Moreover, William Davies argues that persons or structures need not participate in markets. Neoliberalism already "judges them and measures them *as if* they were acting in a market."[36] Davies states, neoliberalism forgoes the "liberal conceit of separate economic, social, and political spheres, evaluating all three according to a single economic logic."[37] Peter Bloom calls neoliberalism the reification of greed and impatience, incentivizing

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[33] David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 19-20.

[34] Milton Friedman, "Neoliberalism and Its Prospects, February 17, 1951," Collected Works of Milton Friedman Project records, Hoover Institution Library & Archives, https://miltonfriedman.hoover.org:8443/objects/57816/neoliberalism-and-its-prospects, p. 3.

[35] Adam Kotsko, *Neoliberalism's Demons: On the Political Theology of Late Capital*. (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2018), p. 38.

[36] William Davies, *The Limits of Neoliberalism: Authority, Sovereignty and the Logic of Competition.* (London: SAGE Publications, 2014), p. 31.

[37] Ibid., p. 3.

the drive for profit and personal gain at all costs to maintain the expansion of capitalism.[38] Davies describes the endgame of neoliberalism as the collapse of normative authority "into empirical inequalities in economic power," an untenable system in which it collapses without the acquisition of "new reserves of power," which continue to enforce the neoliberal agenda.[39] Neoliberalism is no longer an economic model. Instead, it is a way of ordering the world around global markets and arguably shaping much of its socioeconomic policies.

Instead of seeing creation for its natural resources (which it certainly does), neoliberalism thematizes creation, including humans, as capital, echoing the familiar warning of Heidegger that humanity will be considered a resource alongside the rest of creation (see section 4.4 below). By judging persons, institutions, and nature through the lens of economic markets, neoliberalism reveals beings as objects to be used and exploited. As a result, neoliberalism claims humankind and its institutional structures as a means of disclosure; enframing creation and humanity as standing-reserves. There is an assumption here that humans turn over their agency to the neoliberal order. It is a rejection of wisdom's call, a failure to act as one *in-Christ*.

Critics of neoliberalism associate it with widening social inequality, global underdevelopment, and deepening political authoritarianism. So how does neoliberalism move from an economic theory meant to maintain an egalitarian frame of power and economic mobility, as envisioned by Friedman, to a means of securing power and wealth for the elite? Harvey attributes it to neoliberalism's lack of internal coherence. He argues that neoclassical economics does not adequately balance the "political commitment to ideals of individual

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[38] Peter Bloom, *The Ethics of Neoliberalism: The Business of Making Capitalism Moral*. (London: Routledge, 2017), p. 9.
[39] William Davies, *The Limits of Neoliberalism*, p. 38.

freedom" and its desire for state governance (even if coercively) to defend "private property,

individual liberties, and entrepreneurial freedoms."[40] Neoliberal philosophy's internal

competing interests often make the state the ward of the economy. The inconsistent ethos of

neoliberalism renders the praxis of neoliberalism unrecognizable from its theoretical aims.[41]

Nonetheless, Harvey argues that neoliberalism's theoretical aims of "dignity and individual

freedom" are seductively powerful ideals.[42] The appeal to individual freedom, less government

oversight, pro-economic growth, pro-corporation, and overall promise of a thriving global

market has driven its policies' popularity.

Neoliberalism, in short order, has managed to spread globally, influencing much of the

world's economy. Peter Bloom, in *The Ethics of Neoliberalism: The Business of Making*

Capitalism Moral, states:

> Even more troubling is the perceived total intrusion of capitalism into our very
> consciousness and sense of self. It is not just that the market concretely dominates
> social, political and economic relations. It also extends and shapes the way we see
> the world, the way we reason and the way we make moral judgments.[43]

Neoliberalism, as diagnosed can lead to the marketization of everyday existence, which reduces

Being-in-the-world to economic values. As O'Donovan argues, the social and political require

governing dogmas that see the world through staunch statistical and scientific horizons.

Neoliberalism does just this. Furthermore, political reasoning, he argues, "cannot be insulated

from the collective yearning for strength and security."[44] Neoliberal ideology purports to offer

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[40] David Harvey, A Brief History of Neoliberalism, p. 21.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., p. 5.
[43] Peter Bloom, The Ethics of Neoliberalism, p. 1.
[44] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 110.

such strength and security by extending competitive markets into all arenas of life. Neoliberalism structures the world through economic horizons.

In Chapter 2, I argue for love as the foundational mood that reveals and orders God's good world. In reciprocating the love first given of God, a person wakes to the world's order and its value as God's creation. By accepting the givenness of love, one comes to love the world. The mood of love transforms one's understanding of creation and attunes themselves to wisdom's divine order. Conversely, neoliberalism is a restructuring of the Creator creation relationship. As an agenda, neoliberalism's ordering has never been about straight implementation. Instead, it has often progressed through fits and starts, the antithesis of order.

Neoliberalism uses "situated struggles and conflicts" implemented "through trial-and-error experimentation" leading to "aggravated stress, political conflict, or outright crisis" to construct economic politics and policies.[45] As Bloom states – "neoliberalism was meant to fundamentally alter society and in the process completely marketize both the economy and ethics."[46] Furthermore, Bloom laments that "the ceaseless drive for profit over-shadowed basic human wants, leaving communities devastated and individuals increasingly desperate and hopeless."[47] However, the end of neoliberalism's coercive design, is the restructuring of relationships between goods and persons, governments and citizens, and nation-states through discord.

For O'Donovan, neoliberalism points to the constructivist myth of modernity, that of individualism. He is opposed to two types of what he calls the constructivist myth. That "the

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[45] Damien Cahill, Melinda Cooper, Marijn Konings, David Primrose, *The SAGE Handbook of Neoliberalism.* (London: SAGE Publications, 2018), p. 13.
[46] Peter Bloom, *The Ethics of Neoliberalism*, p. 15.
[47] Ibid., p. 81.

individual constructed society," alternatively, "society constructed the individual." [48] For O'Donovan, Christianity "can settle with neither myth, for it takes neither pole for granted."[49] According to O'Donovan, neoliberalism places the individual "at the foundations of everything" to secure freedom.[50] However, he argues that neoliberalism "denied itself a way of describing and elaborating the *conditions* of individual freedom."[51] Neoliberalism as a form of freedom becomes "a private energy lying behind all social forms, an undifferentiated impulse with no lived dimensions."[52] Here it awakens vestiges of Heidegger's *essence of Technology*. Neoliberalism manifests many of the worries Heidegger and O'Donovan share about the essence of technology. Furthermore, the essence of technology goes a long way to explain the tacit and subversive nature of neoliberalism. In fact, I argue, neoliberalism is, if not the essence of technology's zenith, it is its latest manifestation.

5.4   Technology

O'Donovan, on the one hand, does not write extensively on the dangers of technology; on the other hand, it is a theme that continues to work its way into his writings. However, what he does write can be directly attributed to his understanding of Heidegger's view of technology. O'Donovan describes Heidegger's thoughts on technology as his "greatest contribution to the understanding of modernity."[53] In *Resurrection and Moral Order*, O'Donovan reveals his indebtedness "to the Heideggerians, who have constantly pointed to the Middle Ages as the watershed from which flows the modern mind."[54] It is telling that this statement is found in a

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[48] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 59.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., p. 75.
[54] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 18.

note in O'Donovan's section on *the natural ethic*, detailed in the second chapter. In it, he expresses the idea that humankind imposes its morality and ethic on nature, disregarding the "divinely-given order of things in which human nature itself is located."[55] As a Being in its own right, technology will also neglect the divine order and impose its own ethic on creation.

I return to O'Donovan's views on technology below, but to summarize, O'Donovan's thinking parallels much of Heidegger's. He warns of how technology impacts one's self-understanding. He raises concerns over humankind and technological adeptness in altering the essential characteristics of human existence, not merely daily routines. O'Donovan contends that technological culture, or thinking, is overcome with the idea of making. That is, society is obsessed with its ability to create. Technological societies see creation as raw material. Creation is no longer a fellow creature but something desired and consumed by humankind. Given how consistent and Heideggerian O'Donovan's position has been about technology, it is appropriate to provide Heidegger's technological context, if, albeit, a lengthy treatment.

5.4.1   *Phenomenological Sounding on Heidegger's Essence of Technology*

I acknowledge from the outset, that while Heidegger's critique of modernity and technology has been impactful and far-reaching given its appeal to numerous academic disciplines, nevertheless, in recent years, it has come to light the extent to which Heidegger's antisemitism is directly tied to his critique of technology. For instance, Richard Wolin writes this of Heidegger—

> Consequently, in *Anmerkungen I–V*, Heidegger characterized the Holocaust as "essentially"—that is, when viewed from the standpoint of the history of Being—an act of "Jewish self-annihilation." Ultimately, the Jews bore responsibility for

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[55] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 16.

their own industrialized mass murder, since, as the leading "carriers" of modern technology, they had, in the death camps, fittingly died by their own hand.[56]

Heidegger willingness to blame Jewish people for their genocide is a witness to his depravity. To be clear, Heidegger is not merely blaming the Jews for their own death. He is also arguing a metaphysical point. That "Jewishness" is the appropriation of "the mechanism of domination", and when it "struggles against what is Jewish [as in the Jews], the *zenith of self-annihilation has been achieved*." [57] The metaphysical Jewishness, for Heidegger, was equivalent with "Western Metaphysics," "technology", and "Enframing", the last being what he calls the *essence of technology*, and is the subject of much of this chapter.[58] Jewishness is a revealing of the essence of technology, the same essence of technology that carries out their genocide.

The unfortunate difficulty lies in Heidegger's influence over the critique of modernity. As Don Ihde states, "No historical or critical look at the philosophy of technology could afford to ignore Heidegger."[59] As reprehensible as Heidegger's views are, the reception of his work is widespread. I also do not believe that most scholars critiquing modernity have operated with the same antisemitic views held by Heidegger. I certainly do not believe O'Donovan does. Therefore, I endeavour to understand O'Donovan and others as they understood Heidegger's critique of technology and modernity.

Heidegger entreats his reader to question because "Questioning builds a way." [60] Questioning, he argues, frees the reader to awaken and experience the essence of technology.

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[56] Richard Wolin, *Heidegger in Ruins*, pp. 91-92.
[57] Ibid., p. 92.
[58] Ibid., p. 93.
[59] Michael Zimmerman, *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, p. x.
[60] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. trans. William Lovitt (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977), p. 3.

Heidegger wishes the reader to interrogate not the technology of the everyday but the *essence of technology*. He writes:

> Technology is not equivalent to the essence of technology. When we are seeking the essence of "tree," we have to become aware that That which pervades every tree, as tree, is not itself a tree that can be encountered among all the other trees. Likewise, the essence of technology is by no means anything technological.[61]

There is a *thatness* which suffuses all technology, and it is that *thatness* Heidegger is questioning after. To ignore the "essence of technology" by regarding technology, in the everyday sense, as neutral is to "remain unfree and chained to technology … we are delivered over to it in the worst possible way when we regard it as something neutral."[62] Unlike the essence of a tree, Heidegger describes the essence of technology in the pejorative, using terms such as forcing, ravishing, challenging, and dominating, implying a violent violation of nature.[63]

Heidegger states that technology is commonly, and incorrectly, defined as a human activity meant to serve some end, often called the instrumental definition. A definition, Heidegger argues, that is "so uncannily correct it even holds for modern technology."[64] Daniel O. Dahlstrom argues that Heidegger views pre-modern technology as synonymous with artisan, craft, or handmade.[65] It reflects a more intimate relationship between the person and the object produced. Conversely, Dahlstrom asserts that modern technology, for Heidegger, "is what

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[61] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 4.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Richard Rojcewicz, *The Gods and Technology: A Reading of Heidegger*. SUNY Series in Theology and Continental Thought. (Albany: State University of New York Press. 2006), p. 71.
[64] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 4.
[65] Daniel. O. Dahlstrom, "Im-position: Heidegger's Analysis of the Essence of Modern Technology," in *Heidegger on Technology*. Routledge Studies in Twentieth-Century Philosophy, ed. Aaron James Wendland, Christopher Merwin, and Christos Hadjioannou, (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2018): 39-56, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315561226, p. 47.

disturbs us … and appears incomparable to all earlier technology."[66] The act of revealing is somewhat ambiguous, but it is never neutral. It is always in service to something other than itself, and whatever that other is determines whether it is a positive or negative revealing. I opened this chapter with the dilemma of serving God or money (other objects could be substituted for money). Likewise, ecorestoration can serve a variety of things, and whatever it serves, determines whether it has positive or negative value.

For instance, Dahlstrom maintains that Heidegger believes pre-modern technology to work more naturally in unison with creation; they "make do with the nature around them."[67] On the other hand, modern technology insists that creation "is completely what human beings want to make of it."[68] As Heidegger writes, modern technology "is a man-made means to an end established by man."[69] It reflects the desire to dominate creation and manipulate it for human ends. However, Heidegger argues that the "will to mastery" only increases as "technology threatens to slip from human control."[70] What started as humankind's attempt to manipulate creation leaves humanity subjected to the technology it sought to control. As Dahlstrom argues, humans are "positioned and challenged to disclose nature or better natural energies in what amounts to an assault on them."[71] Modern technology is a way of ordering the world through imposition. How does technology move from being an instrument to world-shaping? It does this by revealing the world through dominance and control; instead of working within the created order, modern technology seeks to establish its own order. World shaping is characteristic of the essence of technology, an essential point for later in this chapter.

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[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid., p. 48.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 5.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Daniel. O. Dahlstrom, "Im-position," p. 48.

The essence of technology may have its roots in the same history as pre-modern technology. However, it is distinct with its own means of revealing. Heidegger argues, "If we inquire, step by step, into what technology, represented as means, actually is, then we shall arrive at revealing."[72] The essence of technology has little to do with its instrumental use. Instead, Heidegger proclaims technology to be "no mere means. Technology is a way of revealing. [and] If we give heed to this, then another whole realm for the essence of technology will open itself up to us. It is the realm of revealing, i.e., of truth."[73] Truth, here, does not refer to a correctness of one's thinking or a correspondence to a particular reality; instead, truth is revealing. Pre-modern technology revealed the essence of an object in its letting-be, in bringing-forth something already present and attuned to the created order. Modern technology imposes itself on creation, and challenges it to bring forth that, while innately present, is not natural. Philosopher of technology Andrew Feenberg puts it like this:

> The craftsman gathers the elements—form, matter, finality—and thereby brings out the "truth" of his materials. Modern technology "de-worlds" its materials and "summons" (*Herausfordern*) nature to submit to extrinsic demands. Instead of a world of authentic things capable of gathering a rich variety of contexts and meanings, we are left with an "objectless" heap of functions.[74]

Technology strips creation of its meaning and orders creation around its own ends. The German term Feenberg translates as 'summons' (*Herausfordern*), is the word Heidegger uses for challenging. Challenging, for Heidegger, "puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such."[75] As I discuss below, neoliberalism views creation through the lens of challenging, which will be an essential aspect of the relationship

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[72] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 12.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Andrew Feenberg, *Questioning Technology*. (London: Routledge, 1999), doi.org/10.4324/9780203022313, p. 184.
[75] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 14.

between ecorestoration, neoliberalism, and theological ethics. Heidegger distinguishes between the revealing of pre-modern technology and the challenging of modern technology. He asks whether or not windmills challenge the created order by demanding energy from the wind. His conclusion—

> No. Its sails do indeed turn in the wind; they are left entirely to the wind's blowing. But the windmill does not unlock energy from the air currents in order to store it. In contrast, a tract of land is challenged into the putting out of coal and ore. The earth now reveals itself as a coal mining district, the soil as a mineral deposit.[76]

For Heidegger, it is not whether to use technology or if technology harnesses creation. Instead, it is how modern technology views creation as a resource to be used and little else. It asserts a mastery of creation that it does not deserve. The idea that technology demands of creation an exacting burden that, once delivered, is a resource to be stored and later consumed, Heidegger calls this *Gestell* or enframing.

Enframing sees all things as "basically the same raw material."[77] It removes distinctions between creatures, reducing them to their ability to be used by Technology. Philosopher and Heidegger translator Richard Rojcewicz argues that, according to Heidegger, enframing reveals the earth as its minerals, the air and the river as power sources.[78] Enframing is "that way of revealing which holds sway in the essence of modern technology and which is itself nothing technological."[79] How does enframing reveal creation if it is nothing technological? It does so as the essence of technology ordering creation to its demands. Humans are unavoidably responsible for the challenging of creation. As Heidegger argues, it is humankind that enframing challenges; it gathers human persons "to order the self-revealing as standing-

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[76] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 14.
[77] Michael E. Zimmerman, *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity: Technology, Politics, and Art*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 216.
[78] Richard Rojcewicz, *The Gods and Technology*, p. 77.
[79] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 20.

reserve."[80] For Heidegger, enframing, as the essence of technology, in its world forming, "has already claimed man and has done so in an unbiased way. That which has already claimed man and has done so, so decisively that he can only be man at any given time as the one so claimed."[81] Not only has the essence of technology turned creation into a standing-reserve, but it has also shaped humans into a standing-reserve. Heidegger states it this way—

> The forester who, in the wood, measures the felled timber and to all appearances walks the same forest path in the same way as did his grandfather is today commanded by profit-making in the lumber industry, whether he knows it or not. He is made subordinate to the orderability of cellulose, which for its part is challenged forth by the need for paper, which is then delivered to newspapers and illustrated magazines. The latter, in their turn, set public opinion to swallowing what is printed, so that a set configuration of opinion becomes available on demand.[82]

Heidegger recognizes the growing economic driver behind the essence of technology, which is essential for understanding neoliberalism as a form of the essence of technology. However, his concern here is the way enframing manipulates humankind into the forgetting of Being. It strips humanity of its agency while giving the appearance that humans and their desire are in control. According to Heidegger, when human persons desire and treat "nature as an area of [their] own conceiving," it is because they have "already been claimed by a way of revealing that challenges him to approach nature as an object of research, until even the object disappears into the objectlessness of standing-reserve."[83] Creation is no longer a world, everything becomes consumable, such that, it is no longer a tree or a rock, its history erased, its contribution to life go unnoticed, nature is only their to be demanded of and expended in pursuit of human desire.

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[80] Ibid., p. 19.
[81] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 18.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., p. 19.

Michael E. Zimmerman argues that modern technology sees creation as something to oppress and order to one's will, exploiting creation's resources for human wants and desires. He understands Heidegger's view of modern technology to display a disregard for nature "as something to be imposed on, something to be ordered about at will."[84] Creation appears to be at the disposal of human, "merely there to satisfy human wants and desires, merely there to be ravished and wasted."[85] Likewise, as Richard Rojcewicz argues, humankind does not see creation as disposable *because* of its mines, dams, or turbines. Instead, it is because humans first see it as a resource that they come to dominate and consume it. Rojcewicz writes, "Nature is exploited because it is disclosed as something exploitable; the disclosure of the exploitable possibilities precedes the actual exploiting."[86] It is because the essence of technology has shaped human understanding to see creation as an object to fulfill human desire. Moreover, Heidegger warns of enframing leading to a forgetting of Being by thrusting humanity "into the danger of the surrender of his free essence."[87] O'Donovan would call this a sin against the self, a forgetting of agency, which I detail in the section below.

Not everyone agrees with Heidegger's take on technology. Andrew Feenberg denies that technology has an essence (technological essentialism). Instead, he claims that Heidegger is an ahistorical essentialist, meaning that technology is abstracted from its particular context. Furthermore, Feenberg denies substantivist technological essentialism, which asserts that technology is autonomous and separate from society. He is concerned that this entails a fatalistic attitude toward technology and is too pessimistic an attitude in an increasingly technological world.

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[84] Michael E. Zimmerman, *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, p. 207.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Richard Rojcewicz, *The Gods and Technology*, p. 77.
[87] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 32.

Feenberg rejects the claim that technology is an autonomous subject operating outside culture. For Feenberg, Heidegger's approach is 'very gloomy', depicting technological innovation as biased towards domination.[88] He defines this view as *essentialism*, the idea that there is only one *Being* of Technology, "and it is 'responsible for the chief problems of modern civilization.'"[89] He contends that this "conception of technology is incompatible with the extension of democracy to the technical sphere."[90] Feenberg states, "Insofar as we continue to see the technical and the social as separate domains, important aspects of these dimensions of our existence will remain beyond our reach as a democratic society."[91] His worry is that if society relinquishes authority to technology, one that it does not possess itself, then any attempt to govern technology will ultimately fail; this is a growing concern in the field of artificial intelligence. As Feenberg understands it, this approach negates the historical movement of technology as evolving alongside society. In doing so, Heidegger fails to see how technology can address socially contextualized problems or needs. Indicating, Feenberg argues, that there is 'no room for a different technological future.'[92] Creation is doomed to the dominance of technology.

However, Heidegger does not appear to believe what Feenberg attributes to him. Instead, enframing, the *essence of technology*, at first is laid squarely at the feet of humanity. As Hans Ruin states, enframing is not external to the human person or their will; it is the way the will is oriented.[93] According to Ruin, Heidegger characterizes enframing this way to highlight that it *is not* fatalistic. Instead, it is a manner of thinking, that is, technologically

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[88] Andrew Feenberg, *Questioning Technology*, p. 3.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid., p. vii.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid., p. 16.
[93] Hans Ruin, "*Ge-stell*: Enframing as the Essence of Technology," in *Key concepts*, ed. Brett W. Davis (New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 192.

thinking, and therefore, changing one's thinking can free humankind from the challenging presented by the enframing of the *essence of technology*.[94] Ruin, argues that Heidegger believes traditional Greek metaphysical thinking "understands and thus conceptually constructs being according to a model of production."[95] This realization, Ruin suggests, is that technological thinking is "the inner urge towards mastery."[96] Conversely, he states that awareness of technological thinking can lead to freedom. Ruin argues that addressing the question of technological thinking provides a means for questioning "the essence of technology in a new way."[97]

Likewise, Iain Thomson argues that Heidegger's critique directs attention to how modern technology is "revealing expressions of the disturbing historical direction" that humanity has freely turned its Being over to the essence of technology.[98] Conversely, Heidegger argues, that in the face of the threat of enframing exists "the possible arising of the saving power."[99] Therefore, humankind is not fated to submit to the *essence of technology*. In this sense, it is an awakening to the forgetting of Being, a reclaiming of humanity, as the appropriated clearing, as the means by which truth presences. Waking to one's world, self, and time is the beginning of the process by which one comes to question those vary structures as they were given to them in their thrownness. Thinking theologically, it takes back from technology or neoliberalism the authority about what is right and wrong or real and unreal, posed by the question at the beginning of this chapter, and metaphorically returns it to God. I say metaphorically, because that authority was always God's. Instead, one chooses to who's

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[94] Hans Ruin, "*Ge-stell*," p. 192.
[95] Ibid., p. 185.
[96] Ibid., p. 192.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ian Thomson, *Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 75.
[99] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 32.

for-the-sake-of they are to direct their practical reason and moral actions. For those interested in ecological restoration, excavating the nature of the essence of technology raises an awareness of the problematic nature of restoration practices that utilize economic language and methods. Furthermore, it illuminates the relationship between the essence of technology and neoliberalism. Neoliberalism, I argue in Chapter 5, is the modern manifestation of the essence of Technology. Understanding their relationship clarifies the negative impact neoliberal policies have on creation and their influence over ecological practices. Neoliberalism, like Technology, is a world-shaping force that threatens the integrity of creation.

5.4.2 *O'Donovan on Technology*

O'Donovan has discussed Heidegger's views on technology, in *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology*, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, the *Ethics as Theology* series, but the book he draws on Heidegger's critique of modern technology the most is *Begotten or Made?*. In *Begotten or Made?*, the question front and center for O'Donovan is the bioethics of human procreation, a topic not addressed here. What is discussed is O'Donovan's thoughts on the technological culture, which gives rise to what he sees as bioethical debates.

Like Heidegger, O'Donovan's concern is not technology *per se* but technologies' ability to change not only "the conditions of our human existence, but its essential characteristics."[100] As a rebuttal to this statement, Gordon R. Dunstan argues that while O'Donovan "believes that technology has this capacity, and he deplores it. Whether many practitioners believe that they can do any such thing, or even want to, he does not seem to have asked."[101] Dunstan's scathing

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[100] Oliver O'Donovan, *Begotten or Made?*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. v.
[101] Gordon R. Dunstan, "Oliver O'Donovan. Begotten or Made? Pp. Ix 88. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), £2.50." *Religious Studies* 21, no. 3 (1985): 415–16. doi:10.1017/S0034412500017492. p. 416.

review (1985) of O'Donovan's book and his position on *in vitro* fertilization, would be well received today. He pushes back against the idea that one can move from Nicene and Chalcedonian formulations of Jesus, to then "apply this formula to human procreation, to call the unassisted process 'begetting' and the assisted 'making', and then to censure the second because it differs in some features from the first."[102] The merits of O'Donovan's or Dunstan's claims are not a topic of this thesis. However, Dunstan's critique highlights the way Heidegger and O'Donovan's rejection of "technology" can be misunderstood. It is not about the material act of making or the instrumental use of technology. They are attempting to get at the motivation or the *essence* that commands how one uses technology. Arguably, O'Donovan often over simplifies the arguments by painting with too broad a brush and frequently overgeneralized examples. That being said, O'Donovan's use of Heidegger's critique of technology offers a way for a person to understand how neoliberalism operates as a subversive and hegemonic economic horizon.

A technological culture, O'Donovan argues, is obsessed with making. A technological culture, he believes, conditions societies to view "everything it does as a form of instrumental making."[103] Tranter argues that the forefront of O'Donovan's reading is that the "givenness [of nature] is contrasted with our technological culture's construal of all activity as making."[104] The problem, O'Donovan argues, is that in a technological culture—

> The fate of a society which sees, wherever it looks, nothing but the products of
> the human will, is that it fails, when it does see some aspect of human activity
> which is not a matter of construction, to recognize the significance of what it

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[102] Gordon R. Dunstan, "Oliver O'Donovan. Begotten or Made? p. 416.
[103] Oliver O'Donovan, *Begotten or Made*, p. 3.
[104] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 28.

sees and to think about it appropriately. This blindness in the realm of thought
is the heart of what it is to be a technological culture.[105]

Humans in a technological culture fail to see creation and its order as something other than their own doing. Like Heidegger, O'Donovan argues that this type of society views everything as "raw material."[106]

In *Begotten or Made?*, O'Donovan credits George Grant as influencing his thinking on technology. Grant argues that it is an "obvious fact" that the "technological society develops within a capitalist framework and that will have significant effect on what we are and what we will become."[107] It is a recognition of the subversive nature both technology and capitalism play in human societies. Moreover, he states that technological society's horizon is the "progress in techniques," and technology is seen as the means even for those whose end is "some overreaching vision of human good."[108] According to Grant, the motivation behind the instrumental use of technology is to put it in service for some social good.

Furthermore, he argues that technological societies ground their value in the human will. He argues, that the modernist approach rejects the idea that freedom and value can "be discovered in 'nature' because in the light of modern science nature is objectively conceived as indifference to value."[109] There is no place for a creation enchanted with the divine call of wisdom. Where then does value and freedom come? Grant states, for moderns "we have no standards by which to judge particular techniques, except standards welling up with our faith in technical expansion."[110] Faith in technology turns society's freedom and value over to

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[105] Oliver O'Donovan, *Begotten or Made*, p. 3.
[106] Ibid.
[107] George Grant, *Collected Works of George Grant: Vol. 3 (1960-1969)*. eds. Athur Davis and Henry Roper (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005) p. 494.
[108] Ibid., p. 495.
[109] Ibid., p. 496.
[110] Ibid., p. 498.

technology. Grant highlights how technology moves from an instrument to the essence of technology, and the arbitrator of the social horizon.

The essence of technology is always present while remaining concealed, subverting actual goods for the lesser goods of the technological will. What consequence does Grant foresee? He contends that "The purpose of action becomes the building of the universal and homogenous state", where a person is "free and equal and increasingly able to realise their concrete individuality."[111] On the surface, that appears like a well-intentioned and worthy goal. However, Grant argues, that this "moral striving … is inextricably bound" to the "pursuit of those sciences" which are concerned with "the mastery of human and non-human nature."[112] It is a way to eliminate "chance"; it is a means of control "which leads us back to judge every human situation as being solvable in terms of technology."[113] All technology is a matter of human making; however, technological societies then abdicate their authority and responsibility to the essence of technology.

Like Katz's argument from Chapter 2, O'Donovan argues, "If there is no category in thought for an action which is not artifactual, then there is no restraint in action which can preserve phenomena which are not artificial."[114] In the technological culture, there are no boundaries to technical intervention because everything is a product of human making. The technological society neglects to consider "the inappropriateness of technical intervention in certain types of activity."[115] According to O'Donovan, the technological mindset imperils humanity and nature by envisaging a creation to be consumed and manipulated into human

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[111] Ibid., p. 497.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid., p. 498.
[114] Oliver O'Donovan, *Begotten or Made*, p. 3.
[115] Ibid.

artifacts, depriving humans of "the reality of a world which we have not made or imagined, but which simply confronts us to evoke our love, fear, and worship."[116] It blinds humanity to the created order that points to the divine. Instead, they place themselves in the seat of the divine, ordering creation around their desires. Ecological restoration falls victim to both of O'Donovan's warnings: it can become an artifact of human making, with restoration projects often being treated as nothing more than raw material for economic gain (e.g., mitigation banking, ecosystem services). The critique leveled here will prove relevant to types of ecological restoration later in this chapter.

O'Donovan, like Heidegger, believes enframing to be detrimental to existence and the created order. In *The Desire of the Nations*, O'Donovan argues that the technological society operates "in obedience to no rational purpose."[117] Crediting Heidegger, he writes:

> Those who have made 'technology' the centre of their account of modernity (often under Heidegger's famous essay 'Die Frage nach der Technik') have meant by the term not the technological *achievements* of the age, but the mutation of *practical reasoning* into 'technique'. Set from free obedience to comprehensible ends of actions, confronting all reality as disposable material, its primary imperative is manipulation. …it becomes a self-posited organising principle, which controls our experience of the world by defining illusion and reality for public purposes.[118]

Practical reason is what connects one's actions with the way the world is. Reasoning well is to align one's actions with the created order. Conversely, practical reason when subordinate to the essence of technology, it is subjected to the order of making. No longer is reason attuned to the divine order of creation. Instead, practical reason renders the created order as a resource to be consumed. As Artinian-Kaiser notes, "there is always the looming danger of creativity

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[116] Ibid.
[117] Oliver O'Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the roots of Political Theology*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 247.
[118] Ibid.

reflecting not the reality of creation but human aspirations for control via technology."[119] Reality is substituted for the vision of the maker.

O'Donovan understands the rise of the technological society to be directly related to the decoupling of humanity from "religion, society, and nature."[120] He argues that "Technology drives its social significance from the fact that by it man has discovered new freedoms from necessity."[121] What at times has been called the technological revolution, O'Donovan contends, is a revolution in more than name only; it "expresses a mass desire to mould the future in a new shape."[122] For O'Donovan, the immediate future is the realm of reason's action. Technology is a new theology of making that places human desire in the role of the creator. In a technological society, the essence of technology replaces deliberation with the ease of making. No longer does humanity have to consider the created order when it can shape nature into its image of the future.

According to Gerald P. McKenny "The assumption that order is merely what the human mind and will impose on the world is what bothers O'Donovan most."[123] As McKenny understands it, O'Donovan's conception of human action falls into two categories — "acting properly understood, which recognizes generic and teleological orders as created by God and respects them as such, and making, which treats created things as unformed matter available for human fashioning."[124] As Heidegger notes, if enframing is that which challenges forth "the ordering of the real as standing-reserve," it is a "destining that starts man upon a way of

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[119] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 6.
[120] Oliver O'Donovan, *Begotten or Made*, p. 6.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Oliver O'Donovan, *Begotten or Made*, p. 12.
[123] Gerald McKenny, "Evolution, Biotechnology, and the Normative Significance of Created Order." *Toronto Journal of Theology* 31, no .1 (2015): 15–26, https://doi.org/10.3138/tjt.3151, p. 18.
[124] Ibid.

revealing."[125] Enframing becomes a controlling entity that constrains humankind's horizon regarding creation. O'Donovan echoes this sentiment, arguing that it is not that humans use technology. It is how technology alters human perception of reality, where everything they do is "a kind of mechanical production."[126] The essence of technology separates humanity from a more primordial relationship with creation while tethering it to the technological society and making as a means of salvation. Technology is no longer merely instrumental; it is world-shaping.

At the center of O'Donovan's concern regarding enframing is how one accounts of the created order as something "'for the sake of' other things."[127] For the sake of refers to creation's relatedness. Again, this invokes ideas revolving around ends and service. If one must choose this day who to follow, or for what end to be in service of, then the for-the-sake-of is of particular importance. In this focused study, it represents a choice between the Good of creation in its givenness from God, or as a malleable object void of value until humans decide its purpose. Questions, such as, why does a person or group of persons decide to restore an ecosystem? Or what value or motivation is driving them? are brought into sharper focus. The reason a person acts, in most situations, are moral in character. That is, actions, often reflect a person's belief about what is important to them; action in service *for-the-sake-of* an end. From a theological perspective, does one heed the call of God's wisdom in creation, or do they answer the call of Mammon? I briefly mentioned the notion of being *for-the-sake-of* in chapter two, but now it deserves more attention, which brings us to the second phenomenological sounding of this chapter.

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[125] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 31.
[126] Oliver O'Donovan, *Begotten or Made*, p. 73.
[127] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 77.

5.4.3 *Phenomenological Sounding on the For-The-Sake-Of*

At least, as Heidegger understands it, the importance is not the instrument (e.g., hammer), nor is it the *in-order-to* (e.g., hammering), but the *towards-which* and the *for-which* the thing is used (e.g., building a house).[128] Heidegger writes:

> But the totality of involvements itself goes back ultimately to a "towards-which" in which there is *no* further involvement…. The primary 'towards-which' is a "for-the-sake-of-which". But the 'for-the-sake-of' always pertains to the Being of *Dasein*, for which, in its Being, that very Being is essentially an *issue*.[129]

Equipment refers to any entity, and the totality of equipment is equal to a world, as defined in chapter 2. Any entity, human or otherwise, does not exist outside the context of a world. In Heidegger's ontology of entities, objects do not exist in solitude — "Taken strictly, there 'is' no such thing as *an* equipment. To the Being of any equipment there always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is."[130] For Heidegger, the Being of equipment "always belongs to the totality of equipment."[131] Equipment, or things, refers to what one encounters in their dealings in the world, and Heidegger argues "equipment is essentially 'something in-order-to'."[132] According to the metaphysician Graham Harman, the in-order-to is a "totalizing force," which Heidegger calls a *world*.[133] Likewise, philosopher John Haugeland argues that, for Heidegger, to be an entity is to be in a set of referential relationships. He states, "Being a screwdriver, like being a chess-king, is being that which plays a certain role, in relation to other things with inner-determined roles."[134] He maintains that the totality of

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[128] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 99.
[129] Ibid., pp. 116-17.
[130] Ibid., p. 97
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Graham Harman, *Tool-Being: Heidegger and the Metaphysics of Objects*. (Chicago: Open Court, 2002), p. 3.
[134] John Haugeland, "Heidegger on Being a person," *Nous* 16, no. 1 (1982), https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.2307/2215406, p. 18.

equipment encompasses "everything with which we ordinarily work, cope, or bother (except other people), this totality is tantamount, in fact, to the everyday world."[135]

Pre-modern technology's world, *contra* modern technology, was more attuned to creation, revealing humanity's connectedness to nature. For example, the subsistence farmer juxtaposed the to mechanized industrial farming. These are what Heidegger calls "simple craft conditions."[136] That is, products from nature have "an assignment to the person who is to use it or wear it."[137] It is not a form of making, in the domineering sense, as is the case of the industrial farm, but a creative letting-be that draws from nature. A totality of equipment begins with nature and ends in a product that unites the person to their world. Enframing does just the opposite. It treats creation as a resource to be consumed, and it is the sin against the self that makes enframing possible, according to O'Donovan. The phenomenological sounding on *for-the-sake-of* draws the restorationist's attention to the connectedness of creation, and how restoration practices need to attend to creation as a whole — restoration as a *letting-be* of ecological systems. It requires one to reflect on f*or-the-sake-of* what purpose they are acting. For restoration, it asks why are you restoring and to whose benefit. It can reveal whose purpose is being served, is it creation? Or is it the neoliberal economic policies that lead to the consumption of creation for economic gains?.

5.5   O'Donovan and the Sin Against the Self

Enframing's treatment of creation as consumable begins with misrepresenting the ordering of the *for-the-sake-of*. O'Donovan, like Heidegger, understands ordering to be an

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[135] Ibid.
[136] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 100.
[137] Ibid.

accounting of "how a thing is "for the sake of" (*propter*) other things."[138] *For-the-sake-of*

properly understood, O'Donovan argues, is to love "one good 'for the sake of' another," valuing

"the ontological relation of the two," revealing "a reflective expression in act."[139] According to

O'Donovan, an adequately ordered *for-the-sake-of* is an act of loving discernment that elevates

a way of being and acting in the world of goods. He argues,

> The world of goods is joined up, and when we see one, we see others through that one. The one has a meaning in itself, justifying a particular action to realize it; at the same time it mediates a wider meaning, justifying us in devoting our lives to exploring and branching out from it…. The human search for meaning moves from level to level seeking a more comprehensive meaning that justifies more, and the ordering of goods is an account of those levels of comprehensiveness.[140]

A *for-the-sake-of*, for instance, that views the world through the Spirit draws the love of Christ

into itself. It continues to seek that love through the call of wisdom out of the created order.

One recognizes that the goods of creation first come from the divine good of God. It seeks

meaning out of the natural world instead of imposing meaning on it. However, when the for-

the-sake-of is perverted, it gives into selfish desire. O'Donovan argues that this elevates "one

good at the cost of the other."[141] Furthermore, he states, it instrumentalizes creation, dissecting

the relation of goods. It renders one good in service to another, and O'Donovan believes this to

be "the pure case of exploitation."[142] The end result of the technological society is exploitation

of God's created order in pursuit of human desire.

In chapter 2, I discussed O'Donovan's thoughts on desire, where he argues that desire

can be self-limiting by focusing one's energy on their own needs while neglecting those around

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[138] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 77.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 77.
[142] Ibid.

them, including creation. He calls desire an "inconclusive guide." [143] Desire leads one astray, and only through deliberation can one distinguish between desire for its own sake and a desire that is an actual Good. Enframing negates deliberation because it is a totalizing force that provides the object of desire while simultaneously providing the desire from the start. As a world shaper, the essence of technology dictates what is desirable, ending the need for deliberation, purpose and thoughtful action that ethics demands. Enframing, in its world ordering, sets itself against God's created order. Arguably, it is an anti-figure, as one against God and creation. It places human desire as the highest ideal, a desire given to humanity through enframing. Enframing leads to sin against the self, which is the forgetting of agency.

In *Finding and Seeking*, O'Donovan writes about the sin against the self. In it, he describes this sin as the denial of "what God is calling us to be."[144] O'Donovan speaks of living by the flesh, which he says is a life "self-enclosed within its own immanence."[145] O'Donovan, whether intentionally or not, resonates with Heidegger's idea that enframing gives rise to the delusion that humanity exalts themselves "to the posture of lord of the earth."[146] Moreover, everything they encounter "exists only insofar as it is [their] construct."[147] Enframing provides one last delusion, that "It seems as though man everywhere and always encounters only himself." [148] For O'Donovan, living in the flesh means living servile to "anthropological dynamics, not only sensuous impulses but intellectual and emotional needs, too, and psychological or social pressures."[149] Both with O'Donovan's *life of the flesh* and Heidegger's enframing is the idea that though humans may carry out their actions, something else directs

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[143] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 27.
[144] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 20.
[145] Ibid., p. 14.
[146] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 27.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 14.

where their energies are directed. It is giving into desire that leads to the forgetting of being or, as O'Donovan would say, the forgetting of agency.

5.5.1 *Phenomenological Sounding on the Forgetting of Being*

O'Donovan calls the forgetting of being, a concept borrowed from Heidegger, "the great danger of human existence."[150] In their article "Heidegger and the History of Philosophy, " Hans-Georg Gadamer and Karen Campbell argue that Heidegger's forgetfulness of being is rooted in Western metaphysics from Plato to its culmination in the essence of technology. The forgetting of being is "the destiny of being."[151] It is to mistake being for Being, a destiny of being. Heidegger describes it as tradition, historicality, metaphysics, and enframing, whatever sets itself above everything else as the adjudicator of Being. Heidegger argues that enframing accomplishes this by positioning itself above creation, leaving everything "unsafeguarded" and "truthless."[152] Moreover, "Enframing disguises even this, its disguising, just as the forgetting of something forgets itself and is drawing away in the wake of forgetful oblivion."[153] Enframing hides itself in its hiding of the tree as lumber and the mountain as a coal mine. As Heidegger stated, humans participate in the enframing first by forgetting their relationship to all of creation. They forget they are Beings-in-the-world; they only see their world, leaving creation at humanity's mercy. Heidegger writes—

> Thus left, humanity replenishes its "world" on the basis of the latest needs and aims, and fills out that world by means of proposing and planning. From these human beings then take their standards, forgetting beings as a whole. Humans persist in these standards and continually supply themselves with new standards,

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[150] Ibid., p. 76.

[151] Hans-Georg Gadamer and Karen Campbell. "Heidegger and the History of Philosophy." *The Monist* 64, no. 4(1981): 434–44, http://www.jstor.org/stable/27902717, p. 439.

[152] Martin Heidegger, "The Turning," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. trans. William Lovitt (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977), p. 46.

[153] Martin Heidegger, "The Turning," p. 46.

yet without considering either the ground for taking up standards or the essence of what gives the standard.[154]

It begins with humans taking themselves as the arbitrator of meaning and doing what they see as right in their own eyes—eventually leading to the forgetting of Being, reducing humans to resources to be exploited.

O'Donovan believes that the forgetting of being is a sin against the self, beginning with the advance of technology that starts with the contesting of nature.[155] The forgetting of being is, in earnest, the forgetting of agency; it is turning oneself and one's ability to deliberate and act over to another. Sins against the self are a failure, O'Donovan argues, "which consists essentially in refusing responsible agency, a failure to think morally, a passive-reactive immanence that is deaf to the call of God to act and to live for him."[156] It is the failure to heed the call of wisdom that speaks out of creation. It is a failure to see the divine in the created order or to reflect upon the God who gave creation its order. According to O'Donovan, it is a "failure of faith which forms the horizon of our moral life."[157] Faith, as mentioned in chapter 3 is the root of action. It is to answer the call of God's wisdom. Faith grounds moral awareness, agency, and responsibility. A sin is a form of evil that results in the "failure of being."[158] Sin is a failed action, according to O'Donovan, that fails to achieve one's objective ends. It is a failure of humanity to live attuned to the created order.

The sin against the self is a failure of faith. As O'Donovan writes, it is to "act and think as though we were not agents, but disposed of by outside forces …. We decline, as it were to

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[154] Martin Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth" trans. John Sallis in, *Pathmarks.* ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 136-154, p. 149.
[155] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 76.
[156] Ibid., p. 20.
[157] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 20.
[158] Ibid., p. 15.

exist."[159] Technology and neoliberalism are just such outside forces, leading to the forgetting of agency. In the forgetting, humans also lose sight of the created order; creation, including humans, becomes the standing-reserve, a resource to be consumed. Understanding how one loses their agency through the forgetting of being, allows a person to question why they act and to what ends. As restorationists, waking to the forgetting of being allows one to reframe the questions that motivate ecological restoration practices. Conversely, I argue that the essence of technology, as exhibited by neoliberal ideals, shapes the why and how of several current ecological restoration practices.

5.6   Neoliberalism

5.6.1   *From Technology to Neoliberalism and the Theological Key*

Neoliberalism is the fulfillment of the essence of technology for the current age. As mentioned in this chapter, Heidegger alludes to the economic ends of the essence of technology when he argues that the forester is now "commanded by profit-making."[160] As I shall detail below, neoliberalism views the world as a standing-reserve, particularly a standing-economic-reserve. However, the key to understanding the relationship is theological in shape. Neoliberalism, very broadly speaking, is a political theology. It is political in that it is horizon-forming and world-shaping. It is theological in that is meaning-making and value driven.

According to O'Donovan, the central question regarding political theology is that of authority, which Christians place in Jesus and the kingdom of God.[161] Political theology, he argues, is "an analogy grounded in reality—between the acts of God and human acts, both of them taking place within the one public history which is theatre of God's saving purpose and

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[159] Ibid., p. 20.
[160] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 18.
[161] Oliver O'Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations*.

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mankind's social undertakings."[162] In his essay "The Boldness of Analogy," Eric Gregory argues that O'Donovan's understanding of political theology is not one of univocity, where the political and the divine speak as one.[163] Rather, Gregory contends, human actions "reflect the soul's orientation to the transcendent good."[164] O'Donovan warns of a political theology grounded in human making "the act of 'transforming'" turning political theology "in a technological direction" subjected to "Western progress," which he argues is an unsuitable means for championing the "marginalised classes."[165] Creation is not usually considered a marginalized class; however, it suffers from being ostracized from social concerns, seen as tangential to human existence at best, and an impediment to progress at worst. It is the same worry Heidegger shares, the notion that enframing moves society towards so-called progress.

Authentic human action is a result of being reformed by the act of Christ. As argued in Chapter 3, for O'Donovan, it is not just any human action. Instead, it is the epistemic work done through the revelation of the Spirit, drawing near the Being of Christ, and it is in-Christ that humankind's actions reflect the divine. Human actions best reflect an attunement to the divine when they share a consonance with the reality of God's good world. It is the creaturely answering of wisdom's call from within the created order. Creation suffers when humans fail to answer that call, or worse, attune their ways towards anti-God authorities. Humans attempting to grasp the authority of world-shaping often find themselves in the shadow of principalities and powers. What begins with humans seeking objects of their desire ends with falling victim to enframing itself.

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[162] Ibid. p. 2.
[163] Eric Gregory, "The Boldness of Analogy," in *The Authority of the Gospel: Explorations in Moral and Political Theology in Honor of Oliver O'Donovan*. eds. Robert Song and Brent Waters (Grand Rapids: Wiliam B. Eerdmans, 2015): 72-85, p. 79.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Oliver O'Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations,* p. 12.

In *Christian Ethics in a Technological Age*, Brock argues that technology is political and theological. Technology's political process is not about the artifact itself but how technology embodies the "collective judgements about what it is meaningful to do or make."[166] There is an intention, an ethos, which stands behind technology, and influences how one uses the technological artifact. According to Brock, as an instrument, technology is a historical and living process filled with "uncertainty and ambiguity" but also promise.[167] Theologically, he states, is the question of "how this collective discussion might come to discover the true good and aim of its activity."[168] Brock argues, however, that the question belies an assumption that there exists "commonly accepted beliefs about what good action looks like."[169] However, given the breadth of beliefs about the good, it leaves individuals and collective groups to ask themselves what good a particular technology is aimed at or how they might use it for a specific end. Never mind the political ends that may lie behind the technology.

Brock's response to living ethically in the technological age is to place Christ at the center. He argues that Christian ethics is best served to answer the questions posed by a technological society when it relies "not on a set of formal principles or general observations, but on the living lordship of Jesus Christ."[170] Brock states that the confession of Christ crucified, "allows a targeting and rooting out of everything in the believer that sets itself against Christ."[171] As a result, he believes this "turns humans out of themselves, making them responsive and responsible to others."[172] Brock's Christ crucified epistemology resonates with O'Donovan's *Being-in-Christ*. Be it Christ crucified or Christ resurrected they both place the

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[166] Brian Brock, *Christian Ethics in a Technological Age*. (Grand Rapids: Wiliam B. Eerdmans, 2010), p. 11.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid. p. 170.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Ibid.

value of creation at the Christ event of death and resurrection. For Christians, the way to navigate a technological society is to place Christ at the center.

David Kotsko, in his book *Neoliberalism's Demons: on the Political Theology of Late Capital*, defines political theology as "a holistic, genealogical inquiry into the structures and sources of legitimacy in a particular historical moment."[173] Like, O'Donovan, Kotsko's political theology is concerned with the basis and function of authority for the current historical moment, late-stage capitalism. For Kotsko, political theology "is political because it investigates institutions and practices of governance … and it is theological because it deals with questions of meaning and value."[174] As I discussed in Chapter 3, questions of meaning and value are concerns for restoration and theology alike, though more at home in the theological register. It is a form of theology because "it is a discourse that aims to reshape the world."[175] Neoliberalism, he argues, provides the horizon for demarcating one's understanding of the world. The difficulty with technology and neoliberalism, from the point of a Christian natural ethic, is that they disrupt the natural order. A creation subjected to a different reference than God's divine will reflects, not the transcendent Good of God but the goods of an anti-God. Humanity participates in subjecting creation, by serving their desire for the world. O'Donovan calls this a sin against the world.

O'Donovan describes sins against the world as folly. He states it is "a failure to know what we love, and to love what we know, rightly."[176] Folly is an intentional disregard for practical reason born out of creation, at least at first. Enframing, whether of the technological variety or neoliberal in form, eventually directs those who first directed it. According to

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[173] Adam Kotsko, *Neoliberalism's Demons,* p. 128.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid., p. 7.
[176] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 81.

O'Donovan, "Folly cannot be set down to *lack of goodwill*."[177] More poignantly, he calls it "an objective failure to live in right relationship to the world."[178] However, it is more than an occasional failure; it is a lapse in attunement to the world. Human persons attuned to God's will for creation act out of the existential mood of love, a love directed outwards to the world. Folly, O'Donovan argues, is a failure to steadfastly love "the truth of the world."[179] It is the sin of inattention. Recall that faith is acting out of love, a love that comes first from God. The sin of folly is "the inability to reconcile ourselves with the world as we understand it."[180] Therefore, what shapes one's understanding of the world, be it theology or neoliberalism, directly impacts how a person finds themselves in the world. O'Donovan argues that "loving attention to the world" situates the person concretely in their world, and "attention to the truth of the world" upholds the relationship of Being-in-the-world. [181] However, this means having one's understanding shaped by the created order as illuminated by theology.

5.6.2   *Phenomenological Sounding on Anxiety*

Previously, I discussed Heidegger and O'Donovan's conception of moods (see Chapter 3). In this chapter, I detail the mood of anxiety. Anxiety, Heidegger argues, discloses the human person. Similarly, O'Donovan acknowledges that anxiety is an existential awareness, a way of knowing ourselves.[182] Heidegger's interest in understanding anxiety is not the feeling of being anxious *per se*. Instead, he is examining the revelatory nature of anxiety. Katherine Withy argues that, for Heidegger, anxiety is "a breakdown that reveals something."[183] One's feeling

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[177] Ibid., p. 82.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid., p. 83.
[180] Ibid., p. 84.
[181] Ibid., p. 83.
[182] Ibid., p. 12.
[183] Katherine Withy, *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*, p. 3.

of anxiousness is originary angst not when it discloses a part of my Being. Anxiety for Heidegger, is waking to one's finitude, to death. In waking to death, the person is unsettled, but this unsettling can lead to one taking hold of their potentiality. Anxiety or angst is an ontological part of being human. Anxiety, as discussed in this section and the following, can lead to differing outcomes. It can set a person on the trajectory of authenticity, living the faith-full life, or one can collapse back into a world of inauthenticity. For the purpose of this thesis, a world of neoliberal greed. Anxiety asks of the individual, in what or whom do they place their future security.

According to Heidegger, anxiety fixates on a particular something; "anxiety is anxiousness about Being-in-the-world."[184] Angst is not fear. Fear for Heidegger is fear of something. Angst, on the other hand, is anxiety in the face of the insignificance, manifest in "the nothing and nowhere."[185] Heidegger argues,

> In that in the face of which one has anxiety, the 'It is nothing and nowhere' becomes manifest. The obstinacy of the "nothing and nowhere within-the-world" means as a phenomenon that *the world as such is that in the face of which one has anxiety*. The utter insignificance which makes itself known in the "nothing and nowhere", does not signify that the world is absent, but tells us that entities within-the-world are of so little importance in themselves that on the basis of this *insignificance* of what is within-the-world, the world in its worldhood is all that still obtrudes itself.[186]

Angst wakes a person to the world around them, meaning "that *Being-in-the-world itself is the face of which anxiety is anxious*."[187] Again, this is an ontological angst, not to be confused with the common understanding of anxiety. Angst reveals the world as something that is both *there and not there*. One is wakened to their circumstances and sets of relations. As Safranski notes,

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[184] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 232.
[185] Ibid., p. 231.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 232.

Anxiety "breaks the bond to fellow beings and lets the individual drop out of his familiar relationships with the world."[188] Angst then, is the first step towards freedom, according to Heidegger; it individualizes a person.

Anxiety wakes a person from their fallen condition. For Heidegger, fallenness is *not* "the Fall of Man" nor is it a secularized moral philosophy of anthropology. Fallenness is an existential or ontological feature of Dasein's Being-in-the-world. In their everydayness, humans live in a state of *falling-into-the-world*. Falling is a move away from one's self as a self-determining being. John Caputo observes that fallenness is drifting away from a "proper self-understanding, and to interpret itself in light of the public understanding."[189] Fallenness is one's usual way of being in the world; it is uncritically collapsing into the world of average everydayness. Heidegger contends that a person's falling is a consequence of "fleeing in the face of itself," and Being-in-the-world is the face from which a person flees.[190] Heidegger addresses the way the world is disclosed as a world.[191] In Heidegger's understanding, anxiety individuates a person from how they typically understand themselves. Instead of being another entity in the world, anxiety awakens a sense of meaning-making in a person.[192] In doing so, Withy states that one awakes to their "inability to grasp [their] own ground."[193] Instead, Heidegger shows that "anxiety throws Dasein back upon that which it is anxious about—its authentic potentiality-for-Being-in-the-world."[194]

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[188] Rüdiger Safranski, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*, p. 152.
[189] John D. Caputo, "Husserl, Heidegger and the Question of a Hermeneutic Phenomenology," p. 169.
[190] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 230.
[191] Ibid., p. 232.
[192] Katherine Withy, *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*, p. 67.
[193] Ibid., p. 77.
[194] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 232.

As Withy writes, anxiety is "a state-of-mind makes manifest 'how one is'; in the mood of anxiety, one feels '*uncanny*'."[195] *Contra* fallenness, which in Heidegger's words, "brings tranquillized self-assurance," a feeling of "Being-at-home," uncanniness is "not-being-at-home in the world."[196] Uncanniness is the primordial openness given to humanity. Uncanniness, according to Withy, "belongs to Dasein's thrownness."[197] However, uncanniness is a threat to Dasein that comes from Dasein. Uncanniness threatens Dasein's openness, as Dasein never fully opens to its ground due to being thrown.[198] Therefore, humans never feel entirely at home in the world. Nevertheless, uncanniness is a positive experience, insofar as it awakens us from "complacency and conformity," freeing one to self-determination.[199]

Withy, expounding on Heidegger, argues that uncanniness reveals a type of *telos*, particularly sense-making. For Withy to be a sense-maker means all things must hang together meaningfully. If this is the case, then people are burdened with responsibility.

> Dasein is a sense-maker, and the world is that in terms of which it makes sense of things. Thus Dasein is responsible for involvement and significance—for arranging things in relationships of in-orders-to and for-the-sakes-of-which…. So when significance and involvement show up in angst, they show up as my burdens, my responsibility.[200]

Human persons, which is true for restorationists, are to let the *truth* be and become in the world—its telos is the worlding of a world. However, as Withy notes, for each case of a human person, they can do as they will.

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[195] Katherine Withy, *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*, p. 4.
[196] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 233.
[197] Katherine Withy, *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*, p. 93.
[198] Ibid., pp. 93-94.
[199] Ibid., p. 4, 66.
[200] Ibid., p. 67.

Safranski makes a similar argument to Withy, stating that anxiety "confronts us with the "being possible" that we are ourselves."[201] He argues that "the moment of anxiety" is the revealing of authentic Being.[202] As Heidegger argues, "anxiety discloses Dasein *as Being-possible*."[203] To be authentic is to choose to be oneself. Heidegger writes, "Dasein is in each case essentially its own possibility, it *can*, in its very Being, 'choose' itself and win itself…. But only in so far as it is essentially something which can be *authentic*—that is, something of its own."[204]For Heidegger, the authentic person is one who chooses to actualize certain possible ways of being based on their desires, not those of the world. To the extent it is concerned with its Being, Dasein exists as a state of possibilities. However, this is not a mental state of planning and carrying forth; instead, it is a primordial condition of Dasein. Inasmuch as Dasein is extant, Dasein is always ever projecting. According to Caputo, Heidegger employs a "fundamentally Husserlian notion, that to understand something is to know how to project it in the right terms."[205] As Heidegger tells it, projection is understanding, understanding insofar as it "*is the existential Being of Dasein's own potentiality-for-Being; and it is so in such a way that this Being discloses in itself what its Being is capable of.*"[206] That is to say, in disclosing or revealing itself to itself, plumbing the depths of one's subjective human possibility, a person can only choose to actualize distinct possibilities from a finite subset of inchoate primordial possibilities.

However, this is where Heidegger's phenomenology can only take the Christian thinker so far, the potentiality for Being is "Anxiety in the face of death."[207] It is the recognition of one's finitude, for Heidegger, that wakes a person to their authentic potentiality of Being. That

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201 Rüdiger Safranski, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*, p. 163.
202 Ibid.
203 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 232.
204 Ibid., p. 68.
205 John D. Caputo, "Husserl, Heidegger and the Question of a Hermeneutic Phenomenology," pp. 169-70.
206 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 184.
207 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 295.

is, what it means to truly be human. He argues that "the full existential-ontological conception of death may now be defined as follows: *death, as the end of Dasein, is Dasein's ownmost possibility—non-relational, certain and as such indefinite, not to be outstripped*."[208] Johannes Niederhauser argues that death, for Heidegger, allows the human person to *transcend* and move out into the world"; it is where a person "receives its meaning."[209] Anxiety brings to the fore "the relativity of all meaning and recognizes his or her own mortality."[210] For Heidegger, death becomes a means of liberation, wakening one to their ownmost possibility of Being.

Death, according to Heidegger, is what wakes the human person to living authentically, to be fully human. Facing death may make one's finitude real, but according to O'Donovan it is in Spirit that draws near Christ and allows a person to find their *Being-in-Christ*. Turning towards Christ and away from fallenness is a drawing near, a *Being-in-Christ*, framing one's horizon for navigating the world. O'Donovan demonstrates how Christians might think through the concept of anxiety and human existence.

5.6.3   *O'Donovan on Anxiety*

O'Donovan, argues that fear is a mode of anxiety that shows up when faced with "action and its perilous opportunities."[211] Like Heidegger, O'Donovan recognizes that anxiety is an existential of Being. However, O'Donovan and Heidegger differ in a meaningful way. Anxiety becomes fear in the face of an uncertain but oncoming future.[212]

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[208] Ibid., p. 303.
[209] Johannes, A. Niederhauser, *Heidegger on Death and Being*, p. 3.
[210] Peter Jackson, and Jonathan Everts, "Anxiety as Social Practice," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 42, no. 11 (2010): pp. 2791-2806, https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1068/a4385, p. 2796.
[211] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 173.
[212] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 298.

Anxiety awakens a person to their finitude of being. However, insofar as death is conceived in the existential register, it quickens a person to live into possibility. For Heidegger, death is final; it is the end. Therefore, to live to the fullest is to do so by waking to one's finitude. Conversely, for O'Donovan, and many Christians, death is not the end. Instead, it is an eschatological beginning. Anxiety, then, cannot ultimately be waking to death, though it might encompass it. O'Donovan believes Heidegger's resolve towards death to be a "sleight of hand."[213] He argues that the problem with Heidegger's position is that confronting "death with our eyes open" is "precisely the difficulty."[214] Death, for O'Donovan, is not something a person can take into their ends of action.

O'Donovan's phenomenological conception of anxiety is unfortunately flawed. He incorrectly identifies anxiety with fear. He confuses the ontological with the ontic, conflating fear and the primordial openness of originary angst. O'Donovan's claim that anxiety is "a species of fear" demonstrates that he either misunderstands phenomenological angst, or that he is not as careful with his language as one would hope.[215] He writes that as fear, anxiety is another form of sin against time because fear is always directed at a future set of events.[216] Moreover, O'Donovan describes anxiety as "the fear we experience specifically in the face of action and its perilous opportunities."[217] The categorization of anxiety as fear does not hold to the phenomenological tradition. For Heidegger, in falling towards the world and fleeing in the face of their perceived groundlessness and possibility of being, Dasein flees in fear (in the ontic sense). Ontic fear, Heidegger notes, "is anxiety, fallen into the 'world', inauthentic, and, as

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[213] Oliver O'Donovan, *Entering into Rest*, p. 209.
[214] Ibid.
[215] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 173.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 173.

such, hidden from itself."[218] Fear is a response to anxiety, to the openness of human existence and the challenge of meaning making. One can choose to turn into the world, to find meaning in the denial of Being and agency through inauthentic living. Or one can turn to Spirit and find their Being in the person of Christ; this is the question posed here—for who or what does one choose to live, and move, and have their Being.

Nevertheless, like Heidegger, O'Donovan believes that anxiety can serve a positive function. In this sense, O'Donovan is attempting to work with the phenomenological concept of angst, because he recognizes anxiety as openness and the location of meaning making. To be anxiety-free, he states, is to disregard the peril of opportunity, "either inertly forgetful of our agency or failing to appreciate how our fate must hang on it."[219] Living anxiety free suggests a person is not attuned to creation, to the importance of one's actions and the possible consequences of failed actions or merely failing to act. Conversely, it is confident action that "must be won *by* deliberation *out of* anxiety."[220] Anxiety wakes a person to the need to act, and one must answer that anxiety with deliberative moral reasoning.

Moral thinking, O'Donovan argues, concerns itself with how one's actions contribute to the flourishing of life.[221] Anxiety reveals itself when I think thoughtfully about my actions in the face of the question – *what should I do?*[222] The question assumes responsibility for a course of action, making one aware of their meaning making ability. Of course, not all actions are morally significant for the flourishing of life. Nonetheless, moral thinking must understand its agency, as moral reasoning is self-directed.[223] A person can choose to strive for prudent

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[218] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 234.
[219] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 173.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 33.
[222] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 173.
[223] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 34.

action amidst fallenness or declare it too difficult and remain fallen. As thrown, one can never entirely escape their fallenness. However, O'Donovan reminds his readers that moral life is the distinct moments of action that make up a life.[224] Life is full of moral distinctions, and the difficult task is to take up the moral debate in the face of the status quo. It is easier to stay within the horizon of enframing than challenge the sociopolitical problems of the present age. The realm of anxiety, according to O'Donovan, is the space where an answer has yet to be given.[225] It is the revealing of the openness of human persons. The question all must answer to the intractable problem of climate change and ecological peril is, is the problem too big and resign themselves to do nothing, or will society answer confidently with deliberation and moral reasoning leading to resolved prudent action?

The hyper-consumptive nature of neoliberalism operates with the fundamental belief that consumption can continue at its current level or increase. Neoliberalism makes impatience a horizon for viewing its world. It banks on technocratic market-oriented solutions to solve any future problems that arise, whether they be a depletion of resources or environmental harm. Ecosystem services function within the neoliberal paradigm foisting market solutions on ecosystem restoration. Moreover, the reification of greed that comes with neoliberalism means humankind is no longer self-directed. O'Donovan speaks of moral intelligence, a conscious reflection on one's actions. One's moral intelligence, however, can be easily "mislocated, falsely framed within a material set of presuppositions, improvised around bare factual determinants."[226] Misallocated moral intelligence leads to what O'Donovan calls baseless foundations, ungrounded moral discourse. These baseless foundations weigh a person down

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[224] Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order*, p. 183.
[225] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 173.
[226] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 4.

with unnecessary obligations, debt, and anxiety.[227] Neoliberalism is this sort of baseless foundation.

Anxiety manifests in several ways as an existential, two of which O'Donovan identifies as greed and impatience. Greed and impatience are an inauthentic response to the openness of originary angst. These types of responses demonstrate a falling into inauthenticity. As O'Donovan states, greed is a manifestation of anxiety, all too easily caught up in one's material resources. A person resigns their agency to a "simple creature of material forces."[228] It reduces one's temporality to the present moment, decontextualizing the person. Overly focusing on one's current needs is at the heart of neoliberalism. It is an unduly consumptive nature feeding the desires of the moment. Consumption, as such, becomes greed as fear builds, and consumption becomes accumulation. Accumulation, O'Donovan argues, serves no purpose but to possess.[229] Possession is at the root of treating nature as a standing-reserve. Moreover, he writes, "And of all forms of avarice, accumulation of abstract wealth bears on its face most plainly our anxious quarrel with time."[230] Stock-piling a standing-reserve betrays a fear of not having enough or someone else having more. Neoliberalism has exported the standing-reserve to a global level, particularly regarding sources of energy. Neoliberal ideology robs the future to meet the desires of the present.

Greed and impatience are bound together. Impatience, as a sin of time in the form of historicity, was discussed in Chapter 4. Anxiety revealed in impatience is the immediacy of the present, cutting off any concern for the future. According to O'Donovan, the present "takes an

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[227] Ibid.
[228] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 174.
[229] Ibid., p. 175.
[230] Ibid.

advance on the promise of the future."[231] O'Donovan argues that impatience only appears to be attentive to future concerns, instead revealing one's uncertainty in the future.[232] Impatience "has to get in first and wrench the future of its futurity…. A consuming anxiety that the future will not deliver what we expect from it."[233] Again, O'Donovan uses the term anxiety, as the response to originary angst, to reflect how one inauthentically respond to the openness of existence. Instead, humans are called to live in Spirit as *Beings-in-Christ,* and in-Christ one is called to fear not. I understand that, in this context, as not to live outside the created order. Ignoring the call of Wisdom leads to the desire to consume and enframe creation. It is an attempt to do for oneself what God has already provided to all, leading to the exploitation of other humans, non-human creatures, and creation itself.

5.7   Neoliberal ethics

Neoliberalism inhabits the anti-God persona by creating a world in its image, giving it order and an ethic. In Chapter 2, I discussed O'Donovan's conception of ethics as a discipline concerned with the good and bad reasons for action. As O'Donovan understands them, ethics are normative and inform one's agency. Neoliberalism is also concerned with reasons for acting. However, *contra* O'Donovan, neoliberal ethics, while attempting to be normative, present only a pretense of agency. Neoliberalism places the individual ahead of the collective, offering a false sense of self-directedness. It does so in order to place any moral or ethical failure upon the capitalist subject. For example, unemployment and racism are "not systemic problems of capitalism but rather attributable to individual moral failings."[234] As Bloom states, "the ethical power of neoliberalism is, thus, grounded in the empowerment it offers individuals to

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[231] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 175.
[232] Ibid., p.176.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Peter Bloom, *The Ethics of Neoliberalism*, p. 45.

politically, institutionally and even personally ethically reform this system even as they are denied the opportunity to fundamentally alter it or replace it."[235] That is the pretense of neoliberal ethics regarding agency. The neoliberal agenda limits a person's freedom. Bloom continues with what he calls the paradox of neoliberal ethics. The hyper-capitalist neoliberal agenda has wrought a variety of immoral and unethical outcomes and, therefore, relies on non-market ethics to correct these woes. Conversely, to moralize the neoliberal agenda would mean the end of neoliberalism. Thus, as for the ethical paradox:

> It signifies an almost pathological obsession with balancing the economic needs of fiscal responsibility with the social longings for ethical responsibility. In a rather perverse manner, this echoes the vaunted virtuous cycle increasingly put forward by business experts and policymakers in which *proper financial incentives* [emphasis added] and management can be used to encourage the creation of socially just and environmentally friendly markets.[236]

Though it depends upon the individuals and institutions to police themselves, they are only allowed to do so within the existing confines of the neoliberal agenda. Davies contends that neoliberalism is built on competition, which, as Davies claims, argues "in favour of competition and competitiveness is necessarily to argue in favour of inequality, given that competitive activity is defined partly by the fact that it pursues an unequal outcome."[237] Kotsko claims that neoliberalism is "an account of human nature, in which the highest virtue is economic competition" and the "prime duty of the state is to enable, and indeed mandate, such competition, and the result is a world wherein individuals, firms, and states are all continually constrained to express themselves via economic competition."[238] Thus, a system that thrives off

[235] Ibid., p. 53.
[236] Ibid., p. 167.
[237] William Davies, *The Limits of Neoliberalism*, p. 43.
[238] Adam Kotsko, *Neoliberalism's* Demons, p. 38.

inequality asks its participants to increase equality while constraining them to continue aligning with neoliberal ideology.

Bloom writes, "at a deeper level, neoliberalism represents the virtuous cycle of history—on whose good intentions lead societies even further down the path to social ruin."[239] He further states that modern capitalism is "vampire-like" in its ability to feast off individual and institutional desires to do good, "draining people of their highest ideals for their own fiscal and social profits."[240] The audacious proposition that neoliberalism puts forth is that "those who would seem to have the least political, social or economic agency—everyday workers, the unemployed and vulnerable minorities, for instance. They are now tasked with acting ethically and, in so doing, ensuring capitalism's morality overall." [241] Kotsko contends that "neoliberalism makes demons of us all, confronting us with forced choices that serve to redirect the blame for social problems onto the ostensible poor decision making of individuals … [therefore,] the current state of things is what we have all collectively chosen." [242] Neoliberalism's virtues do the opposite of what O'Donovan argues virtue is to do, that is, guard "against too narrow an understanding of our own responsibilities, a preoccupation with decision-making that shrinks the moral field to a sequence of raw "situations," moral vacuums that suck our action into them by the claims they lay upon us."[243] Virtue, he argues, is intended to allow a person to see themselves "as part of a moral community."[244] However, the moral good they seek is a shared Good, where another's achievement is as meaningful as one's own.

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[239] Peter Bloom, *The Ethics of Neoliberalism*, p. 167.
[240] Ibid., p. 171.
[241] Ibid., p. 52.
[242] Adam Kotsko, *Neoliberalism's Demons*, pp. 2-3.
[243] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 89.
[244] Ibid.

Moreover, neoliberalism has caused much of the ecological peril faced today, and it has also tasked itself with the remedy—the proverbial fox guarding the henhouse. Bloom argues that neoliberalism attempts to balance the gross distortion of markets for economic gain on one side of the ledger and ethics on the other. Ethical concerns are meant to improve the neoliberal agenda without jeopardizing the overall objective of wealth accumulation. Therefore, the outcome of any ethical correction is never at odds with neoliberalism in any real sense and does not inhibit the agenda. However, if I understand O'Donovan correctly, there is no ledger to be settled. Ethics are not a thing to be placed in a balance; you cannot separate ethics from actions or goals. Ethics is concerned with the reasons why a person acts. A person cannot behave immorally in one situation and balance it with an "equally" morally good action. Ethics is a framework for judging one's actions. Where O'Donovan believes moral actions can bring about moral goods, neoliberal ethics attempt only to permit actions that do not challenge the neoliberal agenda. Neoliberal ethics are a framework not to judge the rightness of an action but to dictate those actions. Therefore, actions are intended to have as little effect as possible on the immediate economic future. The realm of ecological restoration has not escaped the influence of neoliberalism. Ecological restoration has not escaped the influence of neoliberalism. Restoration practices are meant to maintain the trajectory of economic growth.

Neoliberalism purports to maintain a "sustainable capitalism" and a "responsible market" to countermand the global threat to the environment.[245] Conversely, neoliberalism sets boundaries around its constituents and institutions, both subversive and coercive, often in subtle ways. Boundary conditions are, in many cases, instituted under the guise of laws and policies. Lave contends that public science is the "target of neoliberal policy reforms in many parts of

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[245] Peter Bloom, *The Ethics of Neoliberalism*, p. 28.

the world, including the United States, Western Europe, Japan, and China."[246] Neoliberal policy reforms are particularly acute in Ecosystem Services (ES), where science uses markets to value ecosystems. Proponents of ES include "practitioners, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), policy makers at different levels, and scientists," resulting in the widespread implementation of ES approaches.[247] The demand for ES requires both public and private decision-makers to properly evaluate the worth of the environment by appraising them according to established market standards.

Neoliberalism, as an ideology, has never been solely about the "free market"; instead, neoliberalism seeks to control and engineer the markets to suit its economic policies. Therefore, "state-directed coercion" is enacted to maintain the "politico-economic order" by resisting "impulses towards greater equality and democratization."[248] Without question, "the neoliberal era involves creating the regulatory conditions for further exploitation of natural resources; the innovation of private and voluntary forms of governance; and regulations that transform environmental problems into market-like solutions."[249] Rather than de-regulate, much of what occurs is re-regulation, a re-organization of the purpose and practice of regulatory bodies. Specifically, in the case of this project, environmental regulations. Environmental regulations are moulded not to impede economic development.

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[246] Rebecca Lave, *Fields and Streams*, p. 15.

[247] Paul Sukhdev, Forward to *Ecosystem Services: Global Issues, Local Practices*, eds. Sander Jacobs, Nicholas Dendoncker, Hans Keune, (Saint Louis: Elsevier; 2013): xiii-xvi, doi:10.1016/C2013-0-00600-7, p. xiii.

[248] Ian Bruff, "Neoliberalism and Authoritarianism," in *The Handbook of Neoliberalism.* eds. Simon Springer, Kean Birch, and Julie MacLeavy (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016): 107-117, p. 107.

[249] Rosemary-Clarie, Collard, Jessica Dempsey, and James Rowe James, "Re-Regulating Socioecologies," p. 470.

5.8 Neoliberalism and Science

Like the last chapter, I finish with a discussion for those Christians working in restoration or those who want to think about how the discussion to this point interacts with ecological restoration practices. Before discussing restoration practices, it helps to understand how neoliberal agendas have influenced science—a discipline at the heart of ecological restoration. Also, like the last chapter, the material necessitates a decisive switch in tone.

Good science, O'Donovan argue, "encourages awareness of the reductive nature of experimental inquiry and consciousness of the virtues and values that underlie it." [250] Neoliberalism, while reductive, could never reveal the values that underlie it. Doing so would alert the populace to the reality of its own enframing. Conversely, wisdom also reveals creation through science; however, in doing so, it makes its values knowable. Wisdom is an apocalypse of the divine, while neoliberalism is an attempt to conceal the created order of God. O'Donovan argues that Heidegger, in "The Age of the World-Picture", "had in mind the role of natural-scientific interpretations of reality." [251] In this essay, Heidegger expresses the idea that "the essential phenomena of the modern age is its science," which he closely associates with the essence of technology. [252] According to O'Donovan, "A 'scientific' world-picture structures thought around abstract hermeneutic keys, affording a unified and encompassing view of reality apt for social uses." [253] Science arguably is itself a political theology. It can shape a world, assigning meaning and value. O'Donovan asserts that late-modernity is given over to the "idea of a public truth maintained by constitutional *fiat*, this secularism of a society that prides itself

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[250] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 80.
[251] Ibid., p. 110.
[252] Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. trans. William Lovitt (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977): 115-154, p. 116.
[253] Oliver O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, p. 110.

on 'knowing the science'."[254] However, in a neoliberal-ordered world, knowing the science is not an avenue for truth. At least not a truth that aligns with the truth of creation. If neoliberalism enframes creation, that is, it shapes the way the world is, and if science is meant to describe how the world is, then the scientific frame is neoliberal and neoliberalism is the marketization of creation. The truth science reveals will be a truth the neoliberal agenda desires.

The sciences have not escaped the purview of neoliberal policies. Neoliberalism postures itself towards science in several ways. As an epistemic mechanism, neoliberalism is inimical towards science and institutions of knowledge production that exist to serve the public good.[255] Neoliberalism promotes the commercialization and privatization of science in order to support a marketplace for ideas, shifting the focus of many environmental regulatory bodies. Furthermore, the competitive market philosophy motivates regulators to ease environmental regulations perceived as hindrances to economic growth and adapt market-based solutions to environmental problems (e. g., cap and trade, mitigation banking).[256]

O'Donovan notes that economics was one of the first studies of human actions to be understood from a scientific perspective.[257] Neoliberalism expounds on the idea that economics can be understood scientifically, juxtaposing that the entire world can be understood economically, including science. Neoliberal science aims to replace the notion of a public good with commodified assets—the marketplace of ideas—to serve the financial goals of corporate and individual customers. [258] According to neoliberal proponents, no human, scientist or

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[254] Ibid., p. 111.
[255] David Tyfield, "Science, Innovation, and Neoliberalism," in *The Handbook of Neoliberalism.* eds. Simon Springer, Kean Birch, and Julie MacLeavy (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016): 340-350, p. 343.
[256] Rosemary-Clarie, Collard, Jessica Dempsey, and James Rowe James, "Re-Regulating Socioecologies," p. 470.
[257] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p.70.
[258] David Tyfield, "Science, Innovation, and Neoliberalism," p. 343.

otherwise, can rival the wisdom of economic markets. The market's assimilation of information from the "wisdom of the crowds" flattens the distinctions between expert and neophyte—the "democratization of knowledge."[259] However, democratized knowledge is only made available insofar as everyone "equally prostrate[s] themselves before a Market, which will then supply them with truth in the fullness of time."[260] Economic and policy professor Philip Mirowski argues,

> It is no longer a matter of what you know; rather, success these days is your ability to position yourself with regard to the gatekeepers of what is known. Knowledge is everywhere hedged round with walls, legal prohibitions, and high market barriers breached only by those blessed with riches required to be enrolled into the elect circles of modern science.[261]

There is a gatekeeping to knowledge about creation and scientific processes. Restrictions to knowledge of this sort, inhibits the ability for people to even question the horizon they are given (their thrownness). Likewise, Lave argues that neoliberalism's epistemic claims are its keystone; therefore, "in neoliberal thought and increasingly in neoliberal science policy, university professors and researchers are viewed as at best embarrassingly misguided in their truth claims, and at worst actively harmful to the proper functioning of society."[262] Moreover, in neoliberal sciences, knowledge is viewed as undercapitalized; therefore, appropriating scientific knowledge "can restart the process of capital accumulation." [263] However, the commodification of knowledge entails that scientific goods need to produce a profit more than they serve the public good. The neoliberal horizon becomes the horizon for all.

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[259] Philip Mirowski, "The Future(s) of Open Science," *Social Studies of Science* 48, no. 2 (2018): 171–203, p. 188.

[260] Ibid.

[261] Ibid.

[262] Rebecca Lave, "Neoliberalism and the Production of Environmental Knowledge," *Environment and Society* 3, no. 1 (2012): 19-38, https://doi.org/10.3167/ares.2012.030103, p. 21.

[263] Ibid., p. 24.

O'Donovan warns of falling victim to the need to answer every question immediately. Instead, human existence requires "a critical measure," of which science can be one, "to provide us with a direction for intelligent questioning."[264] One must be careful not to allow science to quiet wisdom's call from out of creation. According to O'Donovan, it is the role of practical reason to help navigate creation. It is practical reason that "looks for a word, a word that makes attention to the world intelligible, a word that will maintain the coherence and intelligence of the world as it finds its way through it, a word of God."[265] Practical reason responds to the call of wisdom. Moreover, Christ is the key to Christian epistemic access to how the world is, which humans access through the Spirit. The difficulty with this statement, is that it appears to argue that only Christians have "true" knowledge of the world, which is certainly not the case. Instead, the Spirit helps in the way a person interprets the truth of creation, as a gift of God, with its own ends, while practical reason is available to all.

Elizabeth Popp Berman moves beyond the neoliberal paradigm, arguing for an overall economization of science and technology in the United States (US) context. Berman acknowledges that while neoliberal ideology drives much of US policy decisions, some policies and policymakers argue for government *intervention* in what they deem the "market failure in science."[266] Even so, she claims that the latter further encourages the marketisation of science.[267] According to Berman, neoliberalism is the "idealization of the market," and the role of government is to create and uphold the markets.[268] Whereas economization refers to

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[264] Oliver O'Donovan, *Self, World, and Time*, p. 12.
[265] Ibid.
[266] Elizabeth Popp Berman, "Not Just Neoliberalism: Economization in US Science and Technology Policy," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 39, no. 3 (2014): 397–431, https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243913509123, p. 398.
[267] Ibid., p. 398.
[268] Ibid., p. 399.

increased political attention to the economy and that there are broader inputs the government can manipulate to bolster the economy.[269]

Unlike neoliberalism, the economization of science and technology is justified by contending that the state should intervene to solve problems in sectors where markets have failed (e. g., scientific research), and not by encouraging the privatization of public services or free markets. Furthermore, Berman argues that "economization is completely compatible with neoliberal and state-interventionist approaches to governance." [270] Neoliberalism, while ambiguous, is considered politically polarizing, while economization, Berman states, is "popular across the political spectrum" and is viewed as "technocratic and politically neutral."[271] However, economization reduces resources and sways policies for science and technology away from efforts to solve national scientific and technological needs favoring economic ends.[272]

Berman argues that when policies are market-driven, other goals are displaced, such as solving noneconomic problems. Moreover, she writes, "economic ends have the capacity to displace other kinds of ends not only because of their near universal appeal…but because our collective faith that we have … the knowledge required to make policy decisions that will achieve those goals."[273] In other words, policymakers view economic ends as easily achievable low-hanging fruit. The idea is that economic improvement will benefit society as a whole. However, as Berman notes, "economization has costs"; financial goals "can come at the expense of equally valuable—and more achievable—goals: good, cost effective science that

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[269] Ibid.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Ibid., p. 400.
[272] Ibid., pp. 400-01.
[273] Ibid., p. 420.

expands our knowledge base and helps us solve critical technological problems."[274] While it is important to note that not all market-based solutions are neoliberal in their origin or agenda, in the end, it may be a distinction without a difference. Whether it be neoliberalism or state interventionist approaches, the economization of science is occurring across the political spectrum.

Neoliberalism exacts institutional change by utilizing markets, which are assumed to be "natural, neutral and efficient," as the "main means to allocate resources."[275] Like the worry expressed by some scientists in chapter 3, that scientists need to be transparent about their underlying values, neoliberalism intentionally disguises its values. The value neoliberalism is covering over is greed. As Levidow, Papaioannou, and Birch argue, neoliberalization of the environment leads to markets created exclusively for the purpose of extracting benefits from the environment. Technological advances "redesign resources as commodities for appropriation and sale…. Such frameworks neoliberalize the environment: in the name of protecting natural resources, they are more readily appropriated and exchanged for value that will enhance the resource and thus sustainability."[276] However, according to Levidow et al., greater efficiency leads to further plundering of natural resources instead of promoting sustainability. Neoliberalism conceals its exploitation in the rhetoric of greater productivity and efficiency meant to reduce dependence on natural resources.[277] Therefore, neoliberal solutions position themselves as environmental exploiter and savior. Levidow et al. argue that neoliberals fetishize extending markets linked to technological fixes as the best avenue for addressing sustainability

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[274] Ibid., p. 421.
[275] Lew Levidow, Theo Papaioannou, and Kean Birch, "Neoliberalizing Technoscience and Environment: EU Policy for Competitive Sustainable Biofuels," in *Neoliberalism and Technoscience: Critical Assessments*. eds. Luigi Pellizzoni and Ylönen Marja, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012): 159-186, p. 160.
[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid.

problems.[278] In doing so, sustainability issues are framed as a "technical inefficiency, to be overcome by technoscientific innovations." [279] Thus, technoscientific innovations are "celebrated for greater efficiency" while facilitating exploitation—the result of enframing and seeing creation as a standing-reserve. [280]

While proponents of neoliberalism often tout deregulation and smaller governance as positive aspects of their agenda, re-regulation and government safeguarding of the markets are at the heart of market-based regulation. Rather than deregulate, much of what occurs is re-regulation, a re-organization of the purpose and practice of regulatory bodies. Neoliberal environmental regulations, sometimes called "free-market environmentalism", employ market-based mechanisms to administer environmental protections.[281] Environmental regulations are molded not to impede economic development. Instead, neoliberalism manufactures the regulatory conditions leading to the further exploitation of natural resources. The exploitation and plunder of the environment are aided, at times, by the institutions and regulations meant to protect them. Neoliberal regulations look at the cost-benefit analysis, economic incentives, subsidies, and taxes, to regulate environmental protections. [282] Examples of neoliberal regulatory solutions include cap-and-trade, mitigation banking, and biodiversity offsetting. Neoliberals preserve their agenda by offloading governance via privatization or volunteerism and regulating environmental problems with market-based solutions. [283] Environmental governance is enthralled with "the doctrine of liberal environmentalism," which asserts that

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[278] Ibid.," p. 163.
[279] Ibid.
[280] Ibid.
[281] Jason J. Czarnezki and Katherine Fiedler "The Neoliberal Turn in Environmental Regulation," *Utah Law Review*. no. 1 (2016): 1-40, p. 1.
[282] Ibid., p. 4.
[283] Rosemary-Clarie, Collard, Jessica Dempsey, and James Rowe James, "Re-Regulating Socioecologies," p. 470.

concern for the environment and economic growth are compatible. [284] By the end of the twentieth century, the "sustainable development" mantra replaced the idea that financial markets and environmental care were diametrically opposed; markets and the environment were no longer at odds. Instead, markets are "entrenched in mainstream environmental policy."[285]

As it stands, neoliberalism co-opts many of the institutions and persons empowered to preserve the health of our natural surroundings to maintain the hyper-capitalist consumption of the planet while maintaining an ethical gloss of resistance. Neil Gunningham and Darren Sinclair write — "the dominance of neoliberalism had resulted in the relative emasculation of formerly powerful environmental regulators and in which third parties such as NGOs [non-government organizations] and business were increasingly filling the 'regulatory space' formerly occupied by the state."[286] The stark realities of neoliberalism paint a bleak picture for combating the growing effects of climate change and environmental degradation. I am not saying that all practitioners or institutions are feigning care for shared ecological systems. Instead, I believe that neoliberalism has infiltrated all aspects of the social, political, and economic arenas, with its presence often unnoticed and so intrinsic to the system that to eliminate it would be institutional suicide.

5.9 Ecosystem Services

How does it all play out when it comes to ecological restoration? What happens when society sins against self, world, and time? Current trends seek to monetize ecosystem services and argue that markets, policies, or societies rarely consider ecosystem services and its

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[284] Karen Bakker, "The Limits of 'Neoliberal Natures': Debating Green Neoliberalism." *Progress in Human Geography* 34, no.6 (2010): 715–735, https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132510376849, p. 726.
[285] Ibid.
[286] Neil Gunningham and Darren Sinclair, "Smart regulation," in *Regulatory Theory: Foundations and Applications*. ed. Peter Drahos (Acton: ANU Pres, 2017): 133–148, 10.22459/RT.02.2017, p. 134.

relationship to human well-being on their own accord. By monetizing ecosystem services, the value of an ecosystem is appraised and incorporated into projects and policies, raising awareness about ecosystem services' importance to human well-being.[287] In 2005, The Millennium Ecological Assessment argued that safeguarding ecological services around the globe would ensure environmental sustainability and benefit human health long term.[288] Ecosystem Services (ES) are a market-based approach that seeks to monetize an ecosystem's value as they relate to anthropocentric concerns. As a method, ES engages ecological restoration from an economic standpoint. As a result, ES is well situated to be coopted by neoliberal economic policies. The seminal paper by Constanza et al. (2008) defined ecosystem services as the "benefits human populations derive, directly or indirectly, from ecosystem functions" (e.g., habitat, ecosystem properties and processes).[289] Similarly, N. Small, M. Munday, and I. Durance state that "functioning ecosystems provide a range of services essential to support economic performance and human welfare."[290] Proponents of ES argue that monetizing ecosystem goods and services can secure more efficient trade-offs between societal demands and scarce resources.[291] However, one must be careful not to desire the world as something to possess. A desire seeded in self-fulfillment is a source of pride. It is to see what is good in one's eye and a desire to make it their own.

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[287] Inge Liekens et al., "Ecosystem Services and Their Monetary Value," in *Ecosystem Services: Global Issues, Local Practices*, eds. Sander Jacobs, Nicholas Dendoncker, Hans Keune, (Saint Louis: Elsevier; 2013): 13-28, doi:10.1016/C2013-0-00600-7, p. 13.

[288] Carlos Corvalán, Simon Hales, and Anthony J. McMichael, eds., *Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Health Synthesis*. A Report for the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. (Washington D. C.: Island Press, 2005), p. 10.

[289] Robert Costanza et al., "The Value of the World's Ecosystem Services and Natural Capital," *Nature* 387, no. 66309 (1997): 253–60. https://doi.org/10.1038/387253a0. p. 253.

[290] Natalie Small, Max Munday, and Isabelle Durance, "The Challenge of Valuing Ecosystem Services That Have No Material Benefits," *Global Environmental Change* 44, (2017): 57–67, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2017.03.005, p. 58.

[291] Peter J. H. van Beukering, Roy Brouwer, and Mark J. Koetse, "Economic Values of Ecosystem Services," in *Ecosystem Services: From Concept to Practice.* eds. Jetske A. Bouma and Peter J. H. van Beukering (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2015): 89–107.

According to Lave and Doyle, the concept of ES originated with ecologists treating ecosystems as a black box of inputs and outputs. Ecologists began to study ecosystem function alongside ecosystem communities and structure. The shifting focus in ecological studies to ES came with the increasing use of "capitalistic metaphors to raise environmental awareness."[292] Moreover, Lave and Doyle argue that including capitalistic language made ecosystem services transmissible rhetoric squared with the neoliberal market regulatory reform. Thus, what began as a means to raise environmental awareness, became the method for cementing market-based regulatory management, including compensatory mitigation.[293] The result is ecosystems as purveyors of "free" goods, often beneficial to humans rather than ecological communities. The loss of these free goods means replacing them would be an actual cost.

Supporters of ES claim that it provides a context for raising environmental awareness, environmental accounting, designing incentives, and aids in quantifying economic compensation during the litigation process due to environmental damage.[294] At its core, ES is a value system. As Costanza et al. argue, valuation is central to managing ecological systems. An economic analysis by Costanza et al. concludes that "if ecosystem services were actually paid for in terms of their value contribution to the global economy, the global price would be very different."[295] However, in a later study, Costanza argues that valuation is a societal issue. Societies choose how they want to value ecosystems.[296] Subsequently, something is valued, not in itself, Costanza notes, but in an entity's ability to contribute to specific goals or objectives.[297]

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[292] Rebecca Lave and Martin Doyle, *Streams of Revenue: The Restoration Economy and the Ecosystems it Creates*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2020). p. 55.

[293] Ibid., p. 56.

[294] Nicholas Dendoncker et al., "Inclusive Ecosystem Services Valuation," in *Ecosystem Services: Global Issues, Local Practices*, eds. Sander Jacobs, Nicholas Dendoncker, Hans Keune, (Saint Louis: Elsevier; 2013): 3-12, doi:10.1016/C2013-0-00600-7.

[295] Robert Costanza et al., "The Value of the World's Ecosystem Services and Natural Capital," p. 14.

[296] Robert Costanza, "Social Goals and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services." *Ecosystems* 3, no. 1 (2000): 4–10.

[297] Ibid., p. 7.

Furthermore, he argues that there should be three goals for managing economic systems concerning the planet's various ecosystems and their value: sustainability, distributional fairness (resource and properties), and efficient allocation of marketable and nonmarketable resources, including ecosystem services.[298] However, this is a difficult task in a global economy.

Despite the widespread implementation of ES, it is not without criticism from restorationists. One such critique is the ability of ecosystem services to place a value on non-material benefits. The goal of monetizing ecosystem services is to determine the total economic value of an ecosystem, incorporating use and non-use values. While valuing beneficial aspects of nature is more readily applicable to economic markets, non-use services (e.g., aesthetic experience) arguably have no material value and, thus, are harder to slot in economic models. As Small et al. states that since "non-material benefits are by definition intangible and subjective,…quantifying the supply of these is difficult."[299] Furthermore, Small et al. argue that the "strong focus" of many widely used ecosystem services models (e.g., cascading models) on the benefits humans obtain from ecosystems, "inadvertently a materialistic and solely economic approach to ecosystem management, taking non-material valuation of ecosystem services altogether out of the equation."[300] Failure to account for the non-material benefits ecosystems provide fails to understand the dynamic relationships between ecosystem members, including humans.

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[298] Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[299] Small, N., M. Munday, and I. Durance. 2017. "The Challenge of Valuing Ecosystem Services That Have No Material Benefits." *Global Environmental Change* 44 (May): 57–67. p. 60; for a more in-depth discussion of non-material services see S.P. James. "Cultural ecosystem services: a critical assessment". *Ethics Policy Environ.*, 18 (2015). pp. 338-350.

[300] Ibid., p. 59.

An article by Schröter et al. presents several well-known critiques offered by those writing on ecological restoration. The first is the idea that ecosystem services is overly anthropocentric to the "exclusion of the intrinsic value of different entities."[301] Brekessey et al. argue that not only does ecosystem services not promote intrinsic value, "there is evidence it can *undermine* intrinsic values."[302] Secondly, Schröter et al. argues that ecosystem services nurture "an exploitative human-nature relationship." The claim critics exert is that ES will further make people "consumers that are increasingly separated and alienated from nature."[303] The human nature relationship is reduced to something transactional and sanitized.

Conversely, I am not arguing that all ecosystem services approaches to restoration are incorrect or unethical. It may be that ecosystem services plays a role as a means for assessing the value of an ecosystem. For instance, Payments for Ecosystem Services is a method that pays landholders to conserve their land rather than develop it. Inadvertently these projects are often limited in scope and have drawbacks (e.g., loss of potential jobs).[304] A second example is litigation practices that make compensation a requirement for environmental damages. Another approach to restoration, using ES, attempts to account for ecosystem dynamics. Trait-based restoration understands the relationship between an ecosystem and its constituents by focusing on traits and function. Trait-based approaches measure characteristics, such as seed mass, and how it relates to corresponding ecosystem functions, such as competition or colonization.[305]

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[301] Matthias Schröter et al., "Ecosystem Services as a Contested Concept: A Synthesis of Critique and Counter-Arguments," *Conservation Letters* 7, no. 6 (2018): 514–523, https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12091, p. 515.

[302] Sarah A. Bekessy et al., "Ask Not What Nature Can Do for You: A Critique of Ecosystem Services as a Communication Strategy." *Biological Conservation* 224, (2018): 71–74, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2018.05.017, p. 72.

[303] Matthias Schröter et al., "Ecosystem Services as a Contested Concept," p. 515.

[304] Salzman, James, Genevieve Bennett, Nathaniel Carroll, Allie Goldstein, and Michael Jenkins. 2018. "The Global Status and Trends of Payments for Ecosystem Services." *Nature Sustainability* 1 (3): 136–44.

[305] Marcos B. Carlucci et al., "Functional Traits and Ecosystem Services in Ecological Restoration," *Restoration Ecology* 28, no. 6 (2020): 1372–1383, https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.13279. p. 1373.

However, even trait-based ES, which recognizes the complexity of ecosystems, opts for the generalization and simplification of ecosystems, selecting traits beneficial to humans. [306] Consequently, the ability to simplify and generalize makes ecosystem services adaptable and appealing to neoliberalism—a dominant capitalistic economic model.

5.10 Conclusion

It has not been my goal to establish a restoration methodology for doing ecological restoration. That is a debate ongoing in practice and universities around the world. Neither, has it been to avoid how Christians might respond to ecological degradation and certain restoration practices. I have endeavoured to show how O'Donovan's ethics can inform how one thinks about the practice of restoration. More importantly, however, O'Donovan's *Ethics as Theology* series challenges Christians to think about who they are, their responsibilities to God and creature alike, and the time they have on this planet. O'Donovan thinks through the facticity of existence and encourages his reader to do the same. If one were to figure that out, restoration practices would follow suit. However, I would be remiss not to at least explore a response to ecological restoration.

Tranter argues that O'Donovan's thoughts in *Begotten or Made?*, read in light of his "The Natural Ethics," demonstrates "the prominence of creation and providence in O'Donovan's thoughts" and the importance of discerning the two. [307] O'Donovan encourages Christians to "confess their faith in the natural order as the good creation of God." [308] Doing so, he argues, acknowledges there is a limit to human making and 'the employment of technology'.

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[306] Peter van Bodegum and Timothy Price, "A Traits-based Approach to Quantifying Ecosystem Services," in *Ecosystem Services: From Concept to Practice.* eds. Jetske A. Bouma and Peter J. H. van Beukering (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2015): 41-64, p. 42.

[307] Samuel Tranter, *Oliver O'Donovan's Moral Theology*, p. 29.

[308] Oliver O'Donovan, *Begotten or Made*, p. 12.

It is the recognition that creation is God's making, and "it is complete, whole and satisfying."[309]

For O'Donovan, it also acknowledges that the future is not knowable by human finite minds, not in any absolute sense. Human persons are called to act in to the immediate future, confessing "their faith in the providence of God as the ruling power of history."[310] A person is called to act with prudence and deliberation, resolved that their knowledge is limited. However, reasoning well allows one to know that their actions are "fashioned rightly in response to the reality which actually confronts the agent as he acts."[311]

Artinian-Kaiser highlights this worry of manipulating creation technologically when it comes to restoration. She argues that "there is always the looming danger of creativity reflecting not the reality of creation but human aspirations for control via technology."[312] Artinian-Kaiser does not read O'Donovan in light of Heidegger; nevertheless, she recognizes this ill-fitted way of viewing the world as something to manipulate for human desire, which is the beginning of enframing. For Artinian-Kaiser the concern is that technological fixes encourage the idea that humans are distinct from nature, by minimizing their interaction with nature. Furthermore, she senses the potential of technologies to undermine social and cultural goals.[313] She argues that O'Donovan poses "a way of thinking beyond the biological/artifactual binary that, at the same time, also closes off the idea of human control of nature that so worries Katz."[314] As argued, O'Donovan warns of humans elevating their desire to the point that their form of making is manipulation and oppression. Artinian-Kaiser sees in O'Donovan "a Christian way of moving through the world, a way that affirms the natural world as the good and valuable creation of

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[309] Ibid.
[310] Ibid., p. 13.
[311] Ibid.
[312] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 6.
[313] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 52.
[314] Ibid., p. 146.

God."[315] O'Donovan's attention to the natural order allows a person to navigate creation as fellow creatures, while disposing of "the notion of human control of the natural world and opens up a space for action that is not simply biological or artifactual."[316] While it may not alleviate Katz's concerns, detailed in chapter 3, it at least encourages human's to take their cues from creation in an attempt to limit human's from engineering a world of their making. According to Artinian-Kaiser, and as I have argued throughout, "O'Donovan offers a way of being in the world that moves beyond observation and appreciation but stops short of manipulation and control."[317] Therefore, restoration can never be solely about human desire and making. However, neither will it be void of it, as humans are creatures of ecosystems.

Artinian-Kaiser believes that restored ecosystems avoid Katz's critique of being human artifacts—

> because the human being is not the law of being either for the heron that feeds by the river or for the fish that spawn there. These creatures lie beyond our summons and beyond our control, as the voice out of the whirlwind in Job 38 so forcefully reminds us. This suggests to me that 'doing' comes closer to articulating the middle space of ecological restoration, a space that is neither a biological act nor a strictly artifactual one.[318]

Arguably, waking to human hubris while remaining aware of the impact human activity has on the world is an underlying theme of my thesis. It is waking to world, self, and time as gifts of God. Humans are neither lords of creation nor mere subjects to it. Instead, humans occupy the liminal space between the divine and the created. Humans have the power to manipulate worlds. However, they lack the wisdom to do it on their own. Thankfully, God has not left humanity without a guide or creation without a voice. Humankind must be willing to listen to the divine

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[315] Ibid., p. 147.
[316] Ibid.
[317] Ibid.
[318] Rebecca G. Artinian-Kaiser, "The Resurrection and the Restoration of Nature," p. 148.

call of wisdom out of creation and attune themselves to their world and time. Creation serves

as God's guide; one's job is to listen.

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6 Conclusion

6.1 Summary and Contributions to the Field

The UN declaration on "The Decade of Restoration" underscores, and that is not strong enough a term, the importance of addressing the current ecological crisis, if creation is to avoid the worst effects of climate change. Ecological restoration is an essential tool in the efforts to curb harms perpetrated on ecosystems, mostly by humans. The central question this thesis set out to answer is how Christians could think theologically about ecological restoration. My approach to answering this question was multifaceted, addressing various concerns—a shared world, subjectivity, and temporal limits, which represent a node in the God-creature-world relationship.

One of the distinguishing features of this thesis is the application of O'Donovan's work to ecological restoration. As I stated in the introduction, there has been limited engagement with Christian theologians and ecological restoration. One of the reasons I chose this topic is the dearth of theological engagement with ecological restoration. Though ecological restoration is an often-discussed topic in the broader scope of climate change and environmental degradation theologians have yet to adequately address the subject.

In this thesis, I proposed that O'Donovan's theological ethics apply phenomenological concepts, and enable a bottom-up look at the practice of restoration—what I might call a dirt under the fingernail perspective. O'Donovan's ethic, rooted in world, self, and time is grounded in the facticity of creation. Artinian-Kaiser was the first, to my knowledge, to engage O'Donovan's work and the field of ecological restoration. My thesis presents a counter perspective to Artinian-Kaiser's or a bookend to her more top-down theology. Artinian-Kaiser's engagement with O'Donovan's, primarily focused on *Resurrection and Moral Order*,

by utilizing his newest series, *Ethics as Theology*. The *Ethics as Theology* series, other than *Self, World and Time*, was released after the conclusion of Artinian-Kaiser's study.

In my study, I proposed that creation is a suitable place to begin one's approach to ethics and ethical discourse. She argues that the resurrection of Christ as an affirmation of the created order and an acknowledgment of creation's openness to transformation, including the transformation of the human person. For Artinian-Kaiser, restoration practices are a means of loving creation and affirming it as a gift of God. Although similar, I intended to demonstrate that the sacred is not necessarily averse to the profane. I advanced the discussion by moving beyond systematic theological discourse concerning the environment and ethics to the practical application of O'Donovan's theological ethics to the restoration principles and practice of stream restoration.

Gretel Van Wieren was one of the first to explore the topic of ecological restoration and theology. Similar to Van Wieren, I recognize ecorestoration has implications for Christian ethics. However, I differ in that Van Wieren understands restoration and the Christian tradition to form an environmental ethic, while I argued that creation and Christian theology and ethics are a symbiotic signpost to the divine will and wisdom of God. Furthermore, my approach differs from Van Wieren's, in that my focus is a critique of ecological restoration practices and how certain practices do not reflect a Christian ethic. I held up a mirror to the practice of stream restoration and show how it has been distorted by over-emphasizing human concerns and a failing to recognize the relationships in the created order.

In sum, I have shown that O'Donovan's metaphor of waking illuminates the interconnectedness of self, world, and time. I argue that waking reveals a person's obligation to God and creation. O'Donovan's theological ethics have proved a fruitful means for thinking about the created order and how the world *is*, that is, the world's facticity, informs how one

should act toward creation. I proposed that O'Donovan's theological ethics provide a phenomenological epistemology for understanding one's moral obligations to their world. It is access to the self-communicative good of God, the divine order of creation. The ethics argued in this thesis offer a guide for how one might respond to the call of God's wisdom. The call of wisdom speaks to one's moral responsibility, as liminal beings, for creation. I suggested that ecological restoration is a means for acknowledging one's responsibility for creation and to God.

I contend that humans, as morally obligated creatures, take on a distinct role in the divine order. That is, they are responsible for their actions in ways other creatures are not. Responsibility for creation necessitates that a person understands their place in the created order so that they can heed wisdom's call. In this study, I have demonstrated how humans play an oversized role in ecological restoration because they are the only creatures who can *restore* ecosystems. As a result, how humans choose to value creation and what narratives they allow to be their guide are important. If one chooses to value aspects of the environment that benefit humans to the detriment of other creatures, then flourishing suffers. Therefore, human actions need to be guided by practical reason. Through reflection and deliberation, practical reasoning provides purpose expressed through meaningful actions that are in accord with the created order. Thinking theologically about a shared world, subjectivity, and temporal limits about ecological restoration, leads to restoration practices that promote overall ecological flourishing and not merely aspects of ecosystems that primarily benefit human flourishing.

I argued that theological phenomenological ethics is a countervailing method to the anxiety (ontic) inducing neoliberalism by appealing to the moods of *faith, hope, and love*. Faith is more than belief; it is a means of world disclosure through human agency. Faith is reflected in actions that demonstrate one's moral awareness and obligation of and to a world. For the

purpose of my thesis, a faith-seeking understanding is a faith that embraces the truth of creation and responds to the call of wisdom. I maintained that thinking theologically about faith and ecorestoration is to recognize restoration practices as actions directed towards the good of God. Faith is the acting out of one's theological commitments and in the case of ecological restoration, it is acting in a way that participates in the flourishing of the created order, as opposed to only human desires.

An important idea in this thesis, is that hope is a guiding hermeneutic for ecological restoration. It is the presumption that right actions, directed at ecological goods, will offer up restorative modes of practice for the flourishing of ecosystems. I have proposed that hope grounds present actions in a future possibility of restoration. For ecological restoration, is the restoration of ecosystem functions and ecological self-determination. Hope is the promise of ecological rest, the entropic rest of ecosystem self-sustainability, and the cessation of human restoration practices. Hope is the promise that humans will once again find their place in the ecosystems of creation. Not as one who dominates but as one who participates in the flourishing of creation.

Love, I have argued, is what structures one's understanding of a world. It makes room for the flourishing of self-determining ecosystems. However, it is God's love made manifest in us. I suggest that love, as a hermeneutic, transforms the human gaze from desire to rejoicing in the created order. It reveals the divine in creation by answering wisdom's call. I argue that if love is the guiding principle for restoration practices, then ecosystem flourishing is the natural outcome.

Furthermore, I demonstrated that an important aspect of circumventing anthropocentric reasoning in restoration is recognizing the temporal nature of creation. Creation is dynamic; therefore, there is no perfect ecological ideal to restore. Thinking along these lines has led to

the Edenic and wilderness mythos that view creation as pristine and distinct from humans. Ecological restoration often embodies these types of historicism by placing too much emphasis on historical conditions. Restoration that fails to think temporally can lead to neglect of the dynamic nature of creation, and this is a failure to respect the divine order and wisdom's call. I highlighted how past, present, and future must be considered together, but the future takes primacy. Human action is always directed to the immediate future. It is to what O'Donovan calls the future-present that a person is morally obligated. In using O'Donovan's temporal framing, I suggested that thinking theologically about restoration promotes future-oriented restoration practices that promote long-term ecological health and sustainability.

In this thesis, I demonstrated that there are repercussions for not waking to self, world, and time. The failure to recognize the human role in creation has led to a lack of responsibility towards and domination over creation. Disregarding the call of God's wisdom and the divine order of creation is at the heart of ecological exploitation. Following O'Donovan, I argued against the technological society that sees creation as the realm of human making. I argued that human hubris and technological thinking leads to envisaging creation as a resource to exploit for human benefit. I maintain that neoliberalism reflects a similar manner of thinking. As an ideology, neoliberalism is world-forming and desires to shape the world into economic markets. Creation is no longer seen as the good gift of God. Instead, it is a mere means to achieve economic ends. I have claimed that neoliberalism is an anti-figure that subverts the divine order for economic order. That is, neoliberalism evaluates creation through an economic lens, and humans are the only creatures who primarily benefit from the economic valuation of creation. I argued that neoliberalism causes one to sin against world, self, and time. Unfortunately, neoliberalism has also subverted the ends of ecological restoration. Neoliberal restoration views creation as a commodity to be traded in the form of ecosystem service, mitigation credits, or

banking. Stream restoration is a particularly good example of neoliberal ecological restoration. The result is that neoliberal restoration, in its commodification of creation, makes possible future ecosystem exploitation. Thinking theologically about creation and ecological restoration means rejecting restoration practices that often overly benefit human purposes. It means being willing to forgo certain benefits gained from creation to achieve overall ecological flourishing.

6.2   Future Work

Phenomenology, as the study of objects and how they present themselves, seeks to understand creation in its creatureliness. Similarly, O'Donovan's *Ethics as Theology* series presents Christian ethics as concerned with lived experience. While others have noted that this series is phenomenological in content, I have sought to demonstrate how substantially O'Donovan is indebted to phenomenology. Moreover, I claimed that understanding how O'Donovan is utilizing phenomenological concepts elucidates his theological ethics. I was limited in representing O'Donovan's full engagement with phenomenology in this series due to my primary focus being on its import for ecological restoration. However, I was able to highlight how the phenomenological underpinnings illuminate O'Donovan's work and its application for ecological restoration. In general, O'Donovan does not make these phenomenological connections for his readers and this can obscure some of the finer points of his ethics. I aimed to examine the phenomenology of self, world, and time, and how they inform how one might think about ecological restoration. However, other less-developed phenomenological themes can be advanced in future work. For instance, there is room for further elaboration of O'Donovan's use of Heidegger's conception of moods, especially concerning *hope* and how it shapes present actions.

Another avenue of exploration I find intriguing is the life in Spirit as a pneumatological phenomenology. Pneumatological phenomenology is a topic worthy of academic exploration.

However, to have done so at this time would have taken me far afield of the topic of ecological restoration. For many Christians, the Spirit of Christ is a guiding and transforming reality of the Christian experience. Therefore, a life in the Spirit, that is, *in-Christ*, is not one of ethereality, but facticity, and therefore, arguably open to exploration through the discipline of phenomenology. I feel like my contributions here are a jumping-off point for a larger theological conversation on *Being-in-Christ* and the implications phenomenology has on a life lived in Spirit.

Lastly, what is of fundamental importance to this thesis, is demonstrating that O'Donovan's theological ethics can provide a critique of current ecological restoration practices, specifically stream restoration. Theological thinking has practical import for ecological restoration practices. Those engaged in theological ethics can provide meaningful insight into how practitioners conceptualize their restoration practices, which speaks again to future scholarly work. I have limited my critique to that of stream restoration. However, this is just one field of ecological restoration. I also did not offer much in the way of alternatives to current ecological practices. A follow-up to this project would be to suggest restoration methods that more closely align themselves with the created order and Christian ethics.

Regarding ecological restoration, other forms of restoration could benefit from a critique of restoration practices. For example, attempts to prevent coastline erosion utilize methods (e.g., beach re-nourishment, bank hardening) antithetical to the ethics discussed in this thesis. On the other hand, future work might explore methods, such as Novel Ecosystems and Landscape Restoration, that may more closely align with the values expressed here.

To close, ecological restoration must extend its horizon past the immediate object of concern, the degraded environment, to a horizon encompassing the cause of the degradation, which may not be immediately attached to the ecosystem in need of restoration. Moreover, it

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must attend to the abstract and the concrete, the cultures and systems that sustain and, in some cases, support the degradation of the environment. The proposition that the entire global economy should be upended and reset is daunting. It feels impossible. However, it will happen. When the world transitions from the current state of ecological systems to a post-climate change ecology, the entire sociopolitical networks that govern the world will have dramatically altered. Do present governing bodies want to do this proactively or retroactively? The latter is sure to prove more chaotic and haphazard, causing extreme distress to much of the global population. Conversely, a proactive stance will not eliminate the impacts of this dramatic upheaval; however, positively acting into the future makes a more stable transition possible.

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