

The Allure of Hegelian Quietism

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Having the World in View: Essays on Kant, Hegel and Sellars, by JOHN McDOWELL, CAMBRIDGE (MASS.) AND LONDON, HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009, pp. ix + 285, 41.50 US\$.

John McDowell's *Mind and World* was widely acclaimed not only for its important contributions to contemporary debates in various areas of philosophy, but also for its novel construals of the work of great philosophers of the modern era, especially Kant and Hegel.¹ Critics also directed their attacks against both his arguments aimed at present philosophical concerns and his interpretations of the post-Kantian tradition. *Having the World in View* is a collection of his recent essays focusing on Kant, Hegel and Sellars, while a collection of his writings on other ancient and contemporary authors and on different philosophical issues is included in the companion volume, *The Engaged Intellect*.² This article deals with the first of these collections which contains his responses to some of the most important criticisms of the positions adopted in *MW*, as well as attempts at a further elaboration of his arguments and conclusions.³ Unfortunately, the limits of this review do not permit us to undertake a complete presentation of all the papers in *HWV* or to do justice to the richness of McDowell's thought.

The book is divided into four sections, the headings of which highlight the connections between the philosophers providing the main thread for McDowell's discussion: "Sellars, Kant and Intentionality", "Kantian Themes in Hegel and Sellars", "Reading Hegel" and "Sellarsian Themes". The fourteen papers distributed in these four sections span the period from 1997 (his Woodbridge Lectures at Columbia University, comprise the first section, the original subtitle of which is also adopted as a title for the whole collection) to the present (essays 12 and 13, previously unpublished, are included in the last section).

One may form the impression that the general orientation of the essays in *HWV* is more historical and exegetical than that of the essays in *EI*. However, readers will soon recognize the implementation of a common approach in both volumes, familiar from *MW*, which involves the parallel pursuit of

Careful textual exegesis and of original reconstructions of old arguments for systematic philosophical purposes. As McDowell himself puts it in his paper on “Sellars’s Thomism”, commenting on a remark by Jonathan Bennett,

For one thing, however keen we are to stress the pastness of past philosophers, we cannot clearly separate a concern with what they had to say from a willingness to treat them as interlocutors in a conversation, in which the living parties had better be at least open to the possibility that they might have something to learn from the dead. And on the other side, a responsible concern with what the dead may have to say to us now ... cannot allow us to forget differences between the milieu from which a dead philosopher as it were addresses us and the milieu from which we aim to understand him [p. 254].

In what follows, I shall try to show how a study of the essays in *HWV* allows us to retrace McDowell’s steps, from the adoption of a broadly Kantian transcendental methodological stance to the defense of a Hegelian conception of the relations between mind and world, supposedly coming closer to achieving a satisfactory “equipose between subjective and objective” [pp. 75, 79]. It is clear though that we cannot understand McDowell’s interest in the resources of German idealism or correctly assess his appropriation of positions put forth in the *Critique of Pure Reason* and in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, without taking into account his endorsement and further adjustment of the line of reasoning elaborated by Sellars in various seminal writings, especially “Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind”, *Science and Metaphysics*, and many other earlier and later papers. Thus, I will begin my analysis by concentrating on the way McDowell tries to develop Sellars’s critical response to the legacy of modern empiricism. I shall dwell on what I consider to be the most important issues raised in the texts reviewed.

I. SELLARS’S INSIGHTS AND BLINDSPOTS

Indeed, one of the main starting points of McDowell’s enterprise in *MW* was Sellars’s attack on the “Myth of the Given”. The “Givenness” at issue, taken for granted by traditional empiricists of the modern period, “...would be an availability for cognition to subjects whose getting what is supposedly Given to them does not draw on capacities required for the sort of cognition in question” [p. 256]. The effort to “avoid the Myth” obliges Sellars both to engage in a “transcendental project” enabling us to counter pernicious sceptical worries and to justify our ordinary conviction that we can “have the world in view”. Embarking upon this Kantian project gives rise to the Sellarsian “méditations hégéliennes”,⁴ which provide the basis for McDowell’s further reflections on our philosophical predicament and his suggestions for a proper solution. If, in order to explain our cognitive access to objective reality, we

can no longer appeal to the “mongrel conception” of a sense-datum, which conflates the “idea of non-concept involving sensory episodes, such as sensations of red, with the idea of non-inferential knowings that such-and-such is the case” [p. 9], we shall have to resort to a transcendental investigation akin to Kant’s, which is not “narrowly epistemological”. It is not so much a matter of casting light on the nature and the sources of our knowledge, but of understanding how to think “about intentionality – about how thought and language are directed towards the world” [p. 3]. As McDowell puts it,

Sellars’s “sense-impression inference” is a piece of transcendental philosophy, in the following sense: it is directed towards showing our entitlement to conceive subjective occurrences as possessing objective purport [...] The explanation Sellars envisages is transcendental because it is needed ... in order to vindicate the legitimacy of the apparatus – the talk of experiences as actualizations of conceptual capacities, which as such “contain” claims, but in a distinctively sensory way – in terms of which we enable ourselves to conceive experiences as ostensibly of *objects* at all [p. 17].

Sellars realizes that Kant’s account of the joint work of our mental faculties points in the direction of the right solution and refers to a passage from the “Clue to the Discovery of All Pure Concepts of the Understanding” of the *Critique* where it is asserted that, “The same function which gives unity to the various representations in a *judgment* also gives unity to the mere synthesis of various representations in an *intuition*; and this unity, in its most general expression, we entitle concept of the understanding” [A79/B104-5]. It is thus recognized that Kantian intuitions, immediate representations at the level of sensibility, already involve the operation of the understanding, the faculty of concepts. Hence, they can be conceived as “actualizations of conceptual capacities with a suitable ‘logical’ togetherness” [p. 33], the paradigmatic exercise of which provides judgments with the same togetherness.

Now, in the Woodbridge lectures, McDowell focuses on what he describes as Sellars’s “master thought” in “Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind”, according to which we can “as it were, draw a line”, separating whatever “states or episodes occur in people’s lives”, which we characterize as belonging to the “logical space of reasons”, from all those that we do not [pp. 4-5]. McDowell takes Sellars to task, because, although Sellars warns against the temptation to think that whatever is characterized as falling below the line “can fulfil tasks that can be fulfilled only by above-the-line characterizations” [p. 5], he seems to believe that a transcendental role should be assigned to “sheer receptivity” functioning as an external constraint. In “Sensory Consciousness in Kant and in Sellars” [pp. 108-26], where he places emphasis on Sellars’s more sophisticated views, regarding in particular the correct construal of the role of productive imagination in Kant’s analysis,⁵ McDowell retracts this criticism. However, he still tries to expose several serious “blind

spots” which prevented Sellars from fully appropriating and developing the Kantian and Hegelian lessons that he was able to draw on in his attempts to debunk the Myth of the Given.

Thus, although apparently acknowledging that sensibility and understanding do not simply collaborate, but are rather intertwined in our mental activity, in a way that does not allow us to isolate their distinctive contributions completely, Sellars still tries to identify sensational components of experience, originally deprived of intentionality, and deplores the absence in the Kantian picture of a “purely sensational spatiality”. Here, McDowell insists that in order to explain the experience of rational animals that makes cognition possible we need not and should not appeal to any “constructions in sensibility” performed independently from the actualization of conceptual capacities. As he puts it, in the intuition of “a translucent pink cube”,

...the conceptual representation partly expressible, by, say, “this pink cube” already belongs to sensibility no less than to the understanding. An episode or state with content like that is itself a shaping of sensory consciousness. What the productive imagination generates is a unity involving both sensibility and understanding –not an amalgam, however intimately bound together, of components that belong severally to sensibility and understanding [p. 124].

Sellars is apparently unable to subscribe fully to such a Kantian account of experience as “receptivity ... [in which] certain conceptual capacities [are] passively drawn into operation”,⁶ thus enabling us to avoid the Myth of the Given, without jettisoning the central tenets of a “reformed” empiricism [p. 223]. He endorses a “disputable interpretation of the idea ... that to have its objective purport conceptual activity must be constrained from outside itself”, and thus believes that Kant should have drawn a more clear cut distinction “between the radically non-conceptual character of sense and the conceptual character of the synthesis of apprehension in intuition...” [pp. 124-5]. His commitment to a scientific outlook, which makes him privilege the “scientific image” of man-in-the-world over the “manifest image”, explains his dualistic understanding of rationality and animal nature and does not leave much room for a proper appreciation of the idea that the deliverances of the senses of human, rational animals are directly informed by their higher mental faculty.

In other papers on Sellarsian themes, including “The Constitutive Ideal of Rationality” and “Sellars’s Thomism”, McDowell discusses at length the problems arising out of Sellars’s unfortunate insistence on a “non relational conception of intentionality” and on the separation of the order of significance from the real order of things. These problems are due to his faulty construal of the properties of both linguistic objects and mental acts, which McDowell summarizes as follows:

Picturing relations are relevant to the significance of intellectual words, the intentionality of intellectual episodes. But Sellars thinks it is crucially important not to conflate the significance of ordinary words or the intentionality of intellectual episodes, the significance of mental words, with their standing in picturing relations to things in the real order ... [He] insists that the significance of linguistic items, literally or in the extended sense in which talk of the significance of linguistic items is a way of capturing the “aboutness” of inner episodes, does not consist in their standing in relations to things in the real order [p. 244-5].

“Aboutness”, significance and normativity are thus thought by Sellars to be constituted at the level of linguistic, norm-governed practices, while “in considering picturing relations between language and the world”, linguistic episodes are conceived as “happenings in the norm-free realm of nature – as vocalizations or inscribings – possessing their natural causes and effects, but not conceived in terms of the significance of the words that figure in them”. According to such an account, we are supposed to be able to study “natural-linguistic objects”, abstracting “from the fact that the bits of language that figure in them are governed by the norms that form the frame within which those bits of language would stand revealed as significant” [p. 246].

McDowell criticizes Sellars for “assuming that a relational difference between a pair of intellectual acts could only be an extrinsic difference”, thus missing something that both Tarski and Davidson were clearly able to understand:

If we conceive the semantics of intellectual words in a Tarskian way, as involving relations between elements in the intellectual order and elements in the real order, with the relations fraught with “oughts” ultimately reflecting the demands of the constitutive ideal of rationality, that yields ... a conception according to which intellectual acts, mental acts, can differ intrinsically *in* being related ... to different things [pp. 219-20].

It looks, then, as if Sellars is held captive by a metaphysical image with dualistic implications, which reflects the tension between his two central insights, “first that meaning and intentionality come into view only in a context that is normatively organized, and, second, that reality as is contemplated by the sciences of nature is norm-free” [p. 255]. Nonetheless, we do not have to embrace such a conception if we jettison the idea of a reality which is norm-free at all levels.

In any case, what we should retain is the spirit of the Sellarsian epistemological enterprise. In “Why Is Sellars’s Essay Called ‘*Empiricism* and the Philosophy of Mind?’”, [pp. 221-38] McDowell argues persuasively that *pace* Brandom, Sellars is not eager to reject all forms of empiricism and defends a non-traditional, “minimal empiricism, transcendently slanted”.⁷ His reading of Hegel gives him the opportunity to explore a conception of metaphysics supposedly best suited for this peculiar transcendental epistemology.

II. RADICALIZING KANT AND DOMESTICATING HEGEL

When we concentrate on Kant's explanation of the function of unity making the common operation of sensibility and understanding possible we come across the role of the "I think" featured in the Transcendental Deduction, more particularly in the version of the second edition of the *Critique*. We realize that,

Kant's account of objective purport centers on self-conscious intellectual activity. And it is obvious how this could seem to point towards a Hegelian idealism, according to which the very idea of objectivity is to be understood in terms of the freely self-determining operations of a self-conscious intelligence [p. 72].

There is no wonder then that Hegel praises Kant for his attempt to show in the second half of the B Deduction that "the original synthetic unity of apperception is recognized also as the principle of the figurative synthesis, i.e. of the forms of intuition; space and time are themselves conceived as synthetic unities" [p. 188]. In this respect, McDowell follows Robert Pippin in highlighting Hegel's indebtedness to Kant's theory concerning the contribution of the mind to the constitution of reality [pp. 188ff].

Now, McDowell wants to stress the aspect of "passivity" or "receptivity" characterizing the faculty of sensibility, without however denying that intuitions, which necessarily involve the actualization of conceptual capacities, are thus "manifestations of apperceptive spontaneity" [p. 189]. What, however, makes him prefer Hegel's radical form of idealism to Kant's moderate transcendental variety, is mainly the fact that,

Kant's whole construction is dragged down, by the transcendental idealism about space and time that is at its foundation, into being a subjective idealism. [...] According to transcendental idealism, our capacities to know things reach only so far, and beyond that boundary there is something we cannot know: namely whether things themselves are really spatially and temporally ordered. If we cannot know whether things themselves are really spatially ordered, that undermines the possibility of recognizing as knowledge the supposed knowledge we are supposed to be able to achieve within the boundary. That in turn ensures that the Deduction cannot succeed in vindicating a genuine objectivity for the requirements of the understanding. [Even according to a "two-aspect" as opposed to a "two-world" interpretation of his idealism] Kant makes the spatial and temporal organization of things as objects of experience into a mere reflection of a fact about us" [pp. 78-9].

Actually, many philosophers, including Sellars [p. 125], consider Hegel's speculative idealism as an extravagant metaphysical fancy that must be avoided at all costs, because it compromises the independence of reality from thought. McDowell tries to counter such objections, put forth directly or indi-

rectly by Michael Friedman [pp. 81-2] and Michael Ayers [pp. 140-4]. He argues that it is not Kant's transcendental idealism, but Hegel's idealism properly construed, that achieves "an equipoise between subjective and objective" [p. 75] and "fully coheres with the realism of common sense" [pp. 141-2]. "The self-realization of the Concept is the unfolding of thought and as such subjective. But it is equally the self-revelation of reality and as such objective" [p. 194]. "If we reconceive Kant's sensibility-related requirements as a 'moment' within the self-realization of the Concept, we can no longer take the forms of thought, the forms instantiated in the self-realization of the Concept, to be pure, in the sense of being independent of the availability of objects to our senses. [...] we are liberated from the apparent need to do what the Deduction sets out to do" [p. 195].

Kant's conception is vitiated by the acceptance of "externalities", of the constraints of a reality extending "outside" a boundary only within which objective knowledge is supposedly attainable. However, we cannot appeal to a limitation "imposed by the truism that things are knowable by us only in so far as they conform to the conditions of our knowing them. Kant handles what should be that truism so as to depict it as imposing a real limitation, as a truism could not do" [p. 79]. Thus, although McDowell acknowledges the fact that Hegel "takes the theme of self-determining subjectivity to an extreme with his talk of absolute knowledge as the free self-realization of the Concept" [p. 91], he insists that we may interpret Hegelian idealism as "coinciding with empirical realism", "if it is strictly thought out", in the sense specified in Wittgenstein's *Notebooks* and the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* [p. 141]. Moreover, in his "The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self: Towards a Heterodox Reading of 'Lordship and Bondage' in Hegel's *Phenomenology*" McDowell puts forth an allegorical interpretation, according to which "'Lordship and Bondage' describes a failure and then a temporary success at integrating, within a single individual, a consciousness aiming to affirm itself as spontaneously apperceptive and a consciousness that is conceived as immersed in life in the world" [p. 165].

Finally, McDowell discusses in detail Pippin's criticism of his own approach to nature and human second nature, including Pippin's response to his reply [pp. 185-203]. The most important difference between his construal of Hegel's thought and the reading proposed by Pippin is the fact that McDowell believes we must endorse a realist account of norms – which he regards as compatible with the Hegelian conception of freedom and self-legislation. Pippin opts for a social constructivist reading, but argues that the developmental character of the *Phenomenology* secures a progressive conception of "self-imposed normative authority" that allows us to eschew relativism. Thus, McDowell does not jettison the moderate realism already defended in his earlier writings, which is supposed to provide the most plausible account of normative

reasons eschewing both communal constructivism and pre-critical Platonism [pp. 172-4, 182-4, 201-4].⁸

III. MCDOWELL'S POSITIONS REFINED

In the last paper of the collection ("Avoiding the Myth of the Given"), McDowell undertakes a further refinement of some of his own central positions put forth in *MW*. Responding to Charles Travis' criticisms, he points out that he no longer believes that the content of the experience of rational animals is always *propositional*. Nevertheless, he still takes it to be *conceptual*. Once more drawing on Kantian notions, he introduces the idea of a "categorially unified", "intuitional content" which is not propositionally articulated, unlike the "discursive content" that can be attributed to judgments. Intuitions taken by themselves may not represent "things as so", but they do "enable judgments that are knowledgeable".

Though they are not discursive, intuitions have content of a sort that embodies an immediate potential for exploiting the same content in knowledgeable judgments. Intuitions immediately reveal things to be the way they would be judged to be in those judgments [p. 267].

If we wanted to use the Sellarsian metaphor describing experiences as "making" or "containing claims", we would say that,

...If experiences are intuitions, that is similarly wrong in the letter but right in spirit. Intuitions do not have the sort of content claims have. But intuitions immediately reveal things to be as they would be claimed to be in claims that would be no more than a discursive exploitation of some of the content of the intuition [p. 267].

In Kantian terms, it should be realized that,

An object is present to a subject in an intuition whether or not the "I think" accompanies any of the intuition's content. But any of the content of an intuition must be able to be accompanied by the "I think" [p. 266].

Hence, we should resist *both* crediting experiences with propositional content *and* considering them as consisting of "mere sensibility", totally devoid of intentionality, and "bringing our surroundings into view" without our conceptual capacities being drawn into operation at all. In fact, it may seem to us that we are confronted by a dilemma: *either* our experiences possess propositional content *or* they consist of mere sensibility, devoid of intentionality. Philosophers such as Travis, who accept the latter horn, cannot avoid

the Myth of the Given. However, McDowell argues that the dilemma is false and must be rejected.

Now, one would like to know more about the different kinds of intuitional unity that are encountered in our experience and their exact relations with corresponding kinds of propositional unity attained at the level of judgments. McDowell gestures in this direction by remarking that we do not need to follow Kant in his inventory of forms of judgments and of propositional unity and by suggesting that we explore the distinctive ways in which different concepts capture the categorial forms unifying our intuitions and informing our particular grasp of common sensibles. He cites an example from Michael Thompson who tries to identify types of content pertaining to animal life [pp. 260-1].

In any case, what does not change in McDowell's Sellarsian analysis of perceptual experience and knowledge, is the idea that despite "similarities between our sub-personal cognitive machinery and the cognitive machinery of non rational animals [...] rational animals are special in having epistemic standings to which it is essential that they are available to apperception" [p. 272]. Still, one may complain that the issue of continuity between the forms of experience of non rational animals and the "shaping of sensory consciousness" of human beings has not been properly addressed and elucidated.

IV. CONCLUSIONS – THE QUIETIST INTENT OF McDOWELL'S PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

Here, we can close our survey of McDowell's essays in *HWV* by venturing some concluding remarks. We cannot aspire to adjudicate all his major claims and evaluate the intricate arguments mounted to support them. Such a task would involve a detailed reconstruction of his reasoning in the different forms it assumes in particular essays and a scrutiny of the reasons for and against the adoption of several premisses. We shall limit ourselves to indicating a direction for a further examination and assessment of these premisses. What is most important for our purposes, is perhaps a clear understanding of the main features of the common strategy animating all the sections of the book. I believe that we will not be able to judge properly the most serious objections that could be addressed to him at various points, if we do not isolate the key assumptions underlying his overall approach.

In fact, the proper way to deal with the Myth of the Given, exposed by Sellars, is by avoiding it through a transcendental account of the presuppositions of intelligible experience, rather than by confronting it directly and by having to choose between the horns of the dilemmas besetting traditional epistemology. However, according to McDowell, such a transcendental approach has to respect and safeguard the truisms of a commonsensical aware-

ness of our position in the world. This means that it should not only debunk unreasonable sceptical doubts and alleviate the worry that our thoughts may lack objective purport, but also that it should not leave any room for controversial metaphysical constructions.

Indeed, what is not difficult to trace in *HWV*, as in most of his previous work, is the therapeutic and quietist intent of McDowell's philosophical enterprise.⁹ He insists on the supposedly "truistic" character of apparently objectionable claims, such as those concerning the identity of the world described in Wittgenstein's words, "as everything that is the case" with "what we can think", and the reality of normative reasons to which we display responsiveness. His aim is not to seek some kind of knowledge, but rather to cure us of philosophical anxieties, aggravated by idle metaphysical theorizing, and to try to bring us back to the recognition of commonsensical truths we knew all along.

It is this intent that makes him attempt to relieve the unresolved tensions in the writings of Sellars, to uphold a Sellarsian "minimal empiricism" and epistemological internalism against Brandom's interpretation of "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind", inspired by a grand scale, unwarranted rationalist vision.¹⁰ It is the same spirit that leads him to criticize Kant for lapsing in the direction of subjective idealism and to prefer Hegel's absolute version, which is supposed to make overcoming apparently unbridgeable dichotomies inherited from the modern tradition possible. Thus, Hegel is presented as aiming to convey,

...a clear-sighted awareness of groundlessness, bringing with it the understanding that *all* such attempts at grounding are misguided. Hegel aims to liberate us from the felt need to have philosophy fill what, when we feel the need, presents itself as an alarming void: the supposed need that expresses itself as an empiricist foundationalism or in a rationalistic postulation of insight into the independently constituted intelligible structure of reality, or in a transcendental grounding for a conceptual scheme. Or ... in a developmental story conceived as a successor and counterpart to transcendental grounding [p. 184].

Unfortunately, one may not be satisfied by the quietist Hegelian approach advocated by McDowell. To begin with, one may adopt a much more positive attitude towards metaphysical theorizing as a whole and question the need for a diagnostic and therapeutic treatment of philosophical problems. Moreover, even if one shares such a conception of philosophy, one may still wonder whether McDowell's attempt to domesticate Hegel's speculative idealism, by showing that it does not necessarily imply a contentious metaphysics which threatens the independence of reality, is exegetically plausible and philosophically fruitful. On the contrary, it may be thought that Kant's transcendental idealism provides a better grasp of the relations between mind and

world, and imposes epistemological humility thanks to an important insight into human finitude, totally absent from the Hegelian picture.

However, these are broad issues that cannot be pursued in the context of this review. Whatever our opinion may be about the prospects of the innocuous Hegelianism sketched in *HWV*, there is no doubt that the study of McDowell's papers will enhance our understanding not only of his particular positions, but of a whole range of debates related to contemporary epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of language and mind and metaethics. The volume offers a sample of philosophical work of the finest quality.¹¹

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NOTES

¹ J. McDowell, *Mind and World*, 2nd edition, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996. Abbreviated below as *MW*.

² J. McDowell, *Having the Word in View*, Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2009; *The Engaged Intellect*, Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2009. Abbreviated below, respectively as *HWV* and *EI*.

³ Unless otherwise noted, page numbers in the text refer to *HWV*.

⁴ Wilfrid Sellars, "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" (1956), reprinted (with some added footnotes) in his *Science, Perception and Reality*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963, §20, p. 148.

⁵ As they are presented in "The Role of the Imagination in Kant's Theory of Experience", published in Sellars, *Kant's Transcendental Metaphysics: Sellars' Cassirer Lectures Notes and Other Essays*, Jeffrey F. Sicha (ed.), Atascadero, Calif.: Ridgeview, 2002.

⁶ J. McDowell, "Experiencing the World", in *EI*, p. 252.

⁷ John McDowell, "Responses", in N. Smith (ed.), *Reading McDowell: On Mind and World*, London: Routledge, 2002, p. 287.

⁸ Concerning realist construals of Kant's and Hegel's conception of morality, see Robert Stern "Freedom, Self-Legislation and Morality in Kant and Hegel: Constructivist vs Realist Accounts", in Espen Hammer (ed.), *German Idealism: Contemporary Perspectives*, London and New York: Routledge, 2007, pp. 245-66.

⁹ I emphasize the importance of this aspect of McDowell's thought in my "On McDowell's Conception of the 'Transcendental'", *Teorema*, vol. XXV/1 (2006), pp. 35-58. See also the critical discussion in my "Varieties of Quietism", *Philosophical Inquiry*, vol. 30 (2008), pp. 157-175. For a recent explicit endorsement of a quietist attitude towards philosophical problems by McDowell himself, see his "Wittgensteinian

Quietism”, *Common Knowledge*, vol. 15:3 (2009), pp. 365-372. (Thanks to Miltos Theodosiou for drawing my attention to this paper.)

¹⁰ Concerning the different varieties of Hegelianism in the work of contemporary analytic philosophers, see also Paul Redding, *Analytic Philosophy and the Return of Hegelian Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. (For a survey of the development of McDowell’s positions, see pp. 21-55).

¹¹ I would like to thank Costas Pagondiotis and Ángel García Rodríguez for their comments on earlier drafts of this article.

RESUMEN

Tomando como guía el ataque de Sellars al Mito de lo Dado, este artículo se centra en la interpretación de McDowell del desarrollo y la elaboración hecha por Hegel de las principales tesis epistemológicas de Kant. Así, se subrayan los elementos principales de la interpretación de corte quietista que hace McDowell del idealismo hegeliano, y se cuestiona su valoración positiva de un supuesto equilibrio satisfactorio entre subjetivo y objetivo.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Mito de lo Dado, intencionalidad, empirismo transcendental, idealismo, quietismo.*

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on McDowell’s interpretation of Hegel’s elaboration and development of Kant’s central epistemological positions in the light of the Sellarsian attack on the Myth of the Given. It highlights the main points of McDowell’s quietist construal of Hegelian idealism and questions his positive assessment of a supposedly satisfactory equipoise between subjective and objective.

KEYWORDS: *Myth of the Given, Intentionality, Transcendental Empiricism, Idealism, Quietism.*