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COLLINGWOOD'S IDEA OF RE-ENACTMENT: THE POSSIBILITY OF A DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

BY

GLENN WILLIAM MALONE

B.A., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1972

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Philosophy
in the Graduate School of
The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico
May, 1978

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Glenn William Malone, M.A.
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The University of New Mexico, 1978

The "Prologue" to _Speculum Mentis_ introduces a present disorder experienced by many Europeans in the life of culture. It formulates the problem and leaves the solution to the very special characters involved in the drama.

These special characters are depicted as five definite forms of human experience. Each is essential to the problem; each contributes to the solution. In short, the coming to terms with the problem lies within each of them. The solution does not arise outside their action.

The drama ends exhibiting a new "principle of unity." Philosophy, the self-conscious form of experience, solves the present anarchy experienced in the life of culture. But if philosophy teaches history that its real subject of study is its own self, the cry arises that Collingwood has failed to differentiate between history and philosophy as forms of experience. The critic asks:

Which is it--history or philosophy that provides the new "principle of unity"? If it is history, philosophy has no function as a form. If it is philosophy, history must be some type of illusion and not a form as such.

Yet this lack of an *essential* differentiation is not a problem of systematic import to Collingwood. His aim has been the integration of intellectual experience and self-knowledge. If certain forms of experience do attain this self-knowledge, then the lack of an essential differentiation is no problem for a philosopher seeking a new "principle of unity." Nevertheless, there seems to be a question as to how history and philosophy can be distinguished as forms.

We will argue there is no *essential* difference with respect to the object of historical and philosophical experience. We will argue that the re-enactment of past experience develops this essential object in two distinguishable directions. Our study will be a defense of the thesis that Collingwood's later writings on history do not upset his earlier conception of the forms of experience presented in *Speculum Mentis.*

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PART I

THE PROBLEM OF UNITY

The "Prologue" to Speculum Mentis is a critical assessment of a disorder in the present life of European culture. In the past, the summit of medieval culture had been reached when all forms of intellectual experience had been seen as unified. A sense of harmony or wholeness had been felt; but, this sense of wholeness was not long preserved.

With the coming of the Latin renaissance, the ecclesiastical unity dissolved. Religion, the form of that unity, no longer adequately expressed the actual course of intellectual life.

A negative sort of unity had arrived. It brought art for art's sake, religion for religion's sake, and philosophy for its own sake. Thus it made a separation of the inner activities of the mind. In short, it tore the world of culture into separate realms.

To develop a new form of unity, romanticism took medieval ideas and customs as eternally good; yet, all succeeding innovations of the mind were considered eternally bad. This simple abstraction made it virtually impossible for them to see their own cultural situation as an heir to an "uneasy balance" in the life of intellect.

Collingwood's refinement of romanticism must tread a delicate path. The past and the present must not annihilate each other. One does not triumph over the other. To demand a consensus on what are the eternal ideas and values of life reveals a grave ignorance of history. To ridicule the existence of new problems and concerns reveals an even more serious ignorance as to the function of thought in history.

CHAPTER 1

DISSENSION: THE "UNEASY BALANCE" OF INTELLECTUAL FORMS

In _Speculum Mentis_, Collingwood tries to build up an idea of an activity that creates as well as integrates intellect as a whole. He assumes five definite forms of intellect: art, religion, science, history, and philosophy.[1] Moreover, he assumes that each form, as an independent use of mind, will make on its own behalf a serious claim to knowledge. Lastly, he admits that no catalog could ever be exhaustive of all possible forms of experience; nevertheless, an activity which can account for even five forms will be adequate.

Do the notions of genus and species render the desired order that Collingwood seeks? Traditional logic regards the notions of genus and species as a method for ordering a number of different things into classes. Since the idea he wants is a sort of unity, perhaps this initial suggestion can provide a clue as to how the forms relate.

If these five forms could be subsumed under the genus of a common knowledge, they would be said to share a common characteristic. The different forms of experience would be described as co-species of a particular way of knowing; each by sharing this way of knowing would imply

each other. We do find, Collingwood remarks, the activity of a specialist in the geometry of the triangle implying the activity of a specialist in the geometry of the square. But do we say that the activity of a musician implies the activity of a geometrician?[2] Between a particular science and a particular art no common genus is shared because a genus-species organization must contradict "the independence of these various fields of thought."[3] To presume otherwise, one commits the error of "pure intellectualism."[4] This error "leads us to look for syllogisms in music" and "inductions in religion." In short, no "master-science having jurisdiction over the whole field of knowledge" exists.[5] Thus the notions of genus and species do not render the kind of order Collingwood's assumptions about human experience could be consistent with.

Perhaps a "natural order" in the mental development of an individual from childhood to maturity can suggest an organization that will not infringe upon the independence of the forms. In a brief sketch, Collingwood outlines just such a "natural order." This organization in the individual seems to correspond to an organization in the history of mankind. Art seems to have been a predominate form for palaeolithic man; yet within this form man felt some "dim premonitions of religion."[6] It was not till neolithic man arrived that the religious form augmented

the aesthetic summation of human experience. This new form did not imply that neolithic man was artless; art survived, enriched and preserved by all that the religious form had to offer. Mankind's next phase displayed a scientific form of experience. Its emergence and summation of human experience followed the same source as the forms art and religion. Next we find that the historical form of experience passed its childhood phase in the eighteenth century and quickly matured in the nineteenth century. Concluding this sketch, we hear of a predominant philosophical form that dimly appears on the horizon.

But it is the order of human experience that fascinates Collingwood not the historical sketch itself. Thus he reduces a sketch to a practical formula:

> Even if we only recognized three terms, and made a series by alternating them, ABCABCABC . . . , there would be no repetition, for the second A would not be the mere first A again, but A modified by having been developed through B out of C the third A would be A modified by the same process in the second degree; and so on.[7]

Let us make the first A stand for an aesthetic form of experience. The second A, according to serial arrangement, will be no mere repetition of the first, but a modification of that first form brought about by the accumulated experience of B and C. Likewise, if B stands for a religious form of experience and C for a scientific one, the second and third degrees do not exhibit these forms

as mere repetitions. These augmentations of a form in its serial arrangement are brought about by the accumulated experience of the past. With this kind of order established as a practical formula, Collingwood is ready to unfold the dramatic life of intellect as a whole. He now proceeds to show how the mind, by turning back upon its accumulated experience, augments the very forms he has assumed.

NOTES

Part I--Chapter 1

[1] Robin George Collingwood, Speculum Mentis (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 39.

[2] Ibid., p. 48.

[3] Ibid., p. 49.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., p. 52.

[7] Ibid., p. 55.

CHAPTER 2

SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Collingwood says of art: it is the "non-assertive, non-logical attitude" immediately characterizing aesthetic experience.[8] Its form of intellect is "pure intuition." Caring not at all for the reality or unreality of its object, "pure intuition" reveals no evident discrimination between 'fact' and 'fancy.' Thus Collingwood writes "whenever the artist says see he means imagine."[9] If the activity of seeing becomes distinguishable from the activity of imagining, this differentiation within "pure intuition" would imply another form of intellect. It must be admitted that "pure intuition" as art's aesthetic form contradicts itself in its very expression. The artist says something which according to a "non-assertive, non-logical attitude" cannot be expressed or meant. If a child says that he sees ghosts and unicorns, he merely means, he imagines them. But to declare or affirm that we strictly imagine ghosts and unicorns is to presuppose our having made a distinction between 'fact' and 'fancy.' The form of "pure intuition" cannot make this logical distinction. Thus for the truth of its experience to be expressed, the form of aesthetic experience must be modified by some other form.

Yet the emerging truth of aesthetic consciousness will initially show merely a "primitive grade of religious experience."[10] An aesthetic form modified by a primitive religious consciousness will not show a mere repetition of itself in its serial development. The aesthetic form taken to the second degree reveals an attitude that asserts the reality of all fantasies.[11] It is now difficult to distinguish between the "seer" of ghosts and the fairies and the "believer" in ghosts and fairies.[12] Only if intellect goes through a further process of disbelieving in some fantasies can the religious consciousness emerge as independent of the aesthetic consciousness. This independence requires that the religious form of intellect exaggerate the significance of its own truth. Religion to be itself must assert the reality of some fantasies and the unreality of others. Collingwood calls religion the "polarized activity of assertion-denial as applied to the world of fantasies."[13]

Yet as long as religion confuses symbol with reality, Collingwood argues it, like art, stops the serial development of human experience. Due to their indispensable ways of thinking, both ignore that thought or conceptualization is the end of imagery and language. Religion and art take the object of language literally. The progressive uncovering of the "life of thought" is selfishly arrested.

The "life of thought" refers to that form which "has freed itself not from language but from the opacity of language."[14] "What is really developing is not bare expression," Collingwood says, "but expressed thought."[15]

This "life of thought" does not initially convey a form of conceptualization purified of all imagery. A primitive form of conceptualization arises bearing all the traces of religious imagery. Collingwood tells us:

> The early Greek scientists were trying to replace a world of religious imagery with a world of intelligible concepts. These concepts, like the gods they superseded, were suspended above the sensible world in a heaven of their own; for, precisely because the dualism of the religious consciousness was not overcome, the secret of science was found in the absolute distinction between the universal and its particulars, the world of thought and the world of sense.[16]

Abstract concepts assert the reality of a world of universals and assert the unreality of a world of sense. Universals are essential truths--i.e., timeless principles concerning the nature of what is. Particulars being caught up in the perishing flow of change are nonessential. Particulars are not merely distinguished but removed from the "life of thought." We cannot contemplate that which lacks being, which lacks substance. Here the religious dualism persists since the world of particulars derives from the image of a mean existence and the world of universals derives from the image of a lofty heaven. But

once thought recognizes that the world of universals and the world of particulars are not independent from its own power to create them, an attempt to overcome this dualism begins.

Induction is an attempt to overcome this dualism through the synthesis of "natural fact." The empirical scientist "sees" fact as those particular instances or exemplifications of the Abstract concept. Collingwood describes "natural fact" in this manner:

> The empirical scientist respects fact, but it is a peculiar kind of fact that he respects; it is fact not as it grows, tangled up in the undergrowth of the everyday world, but fact passed through the sieve of his own abstract methods, fact refined and expurgated, the fact of the laboratory.[17]

The empirical scientist ignores the fact of the "everyday world" or what can be called the brute fact prior to any methodological treatment. Induction classifies its phenomena. Its way of thinking needs to abstract the particulars of sense-experience from the world of sense. Furthermore, it can abstract from these various classes of particulars a few universals, <u>viz</u>., a few generalizations or law-like statements. Admittedly, induction overlaps with the Abstract concept. Yet induction claims its independence from the Abstract concept since it alleges to synthesize thought and the world of sense.

Since thought and the world of sense are interwoven prior to any analytic separation in the Abstract concept,

induction's aim to synthesize the two worlds can be only an illusion. Induction's error is its forgetting that the positing of two worlds is made in reflection and their existence has no foundation in reality. Therefore any synthesis of two abstractions will have no object in concrete reality. In the article "Sensation and Thought," Collingwood exposes the imaginary character of this synthesis.

Supposedly within the scientific phase of experience, a purely sensuous object and a purely intellectual object exist. Accordingly, Collingwood describes each of them as follows:

> First, knowledge as a whole is identified with sensation, and thus the object of knowledge is falsely explained as being the "object of sensation," and so we get the idea of sense-datum.
> ....
> Secondly, knowledge as a whole is identified with thought, and thus, the object of knowledge being identified with an alleged "object of thought," we get the idea of a universal.[18]

The task of synthesis may appear appropriate because the two objects (sense-datum and universal) are here separately posited in reflection. Yet this task of synthesis is an aberration since the ideas of sense-datum and universal are the analytic by-products of reflection and not the concrete determinations of actuality. If we can remember that for the purposes of induction we have merely assumed two objects of knowledge, we are free to return to the

ground of concrete experience. If the "life of thought" is to gain by its freedom, it must not arrest itself at this stage of induction. It must seriously heed the warning not to falsify reality by forgetting the fact "as it grows, tangled up in the undergrowth of the everyday world."

The real object of experience is not a bare instance of some law nor is it something outside the world of sense. On the contrary, it is the very structure of the world of sense. This object manifests itself in perception. Collingwood's account of perception is unlike the traditional view of sensory-perception in which the 'data' is said to be independent and fixed. In contrast, perception relies upon memory to fix its attention on its immediate field of experience. Once attention is focused, perception becomes a way of grasping "the object as a whole of front and back, top and bottom, past, present, and future."[19] Consequently, "historical fact" is the product of a certain mind thinking over what is not immediately present to sense. Now, a certain mind thinking over something is not just "anything thinking about anything, or anything somehow getting itself thought about."[20] In other words, we bring the whole of our intellectual experience, meaning the sum of our past experience, with us in the process of perceiving.

Yet Collingwood remarks that to associate this object with perception may at first appear odd. Have we

not assumed all along that the forms employ perception? Indeed art, religion and science perceive an object, but each form stops before the full depth of that object's meaning so as to create a life and world of its own. If we want to think artistically, religiously, or scientifically, we must adapt our thought to whatever depth of meaning these forms of experience exhibit. In short, we must see the world from their points of view.

Art completely identifies perception's object with an imaginary world of experience. Thus the full depth of that object's meaning is ignored for the sake of "imagery." Religion exclusively identifies perception's object with a world of symbols. Thus the full depth of that object's meaning is ignored for the sake of "bare expression." Science identifies perception's object alternately between a purely intellectual object and a purely sensuous object. In one instance, the full depth of meaning is ignored for the sake of "universals" in the other "empirical generalizations." The historian cannot hope to think in any of these worlds in ways to which they are not structured. He must know where to stop in experience before he can feel at home in any of them.

But the historian cannot attain this feeling at home. He does not recognize the "arrests" in experience as his own experience. History falsely understands these

"arrests" as "various countries" on a map of knowledge.[21] It posits these forms in an external manner. The forms are objects 'outside.' This is a false understanding for the very reason that this map of the mind is a deceiving sketch of the country. In reality, this map turns "out to be variously-distorted versions of one and the same country."[22] With this insight, the transition from the historical to the philosophical form is made, and we should add the inner separation of the activities of the mind unified. Under these five forms all experience becomes self-conscious experience. Self-consciousness finds one country, a home in all experience.

From the viewpoint of philosophy (self-consciousness), all these forms of experience appear as arrests in the full experience of one mind. Philosophy informs us that art, religion, science, and history have all been stages determining what exactly is evolving in this "life of thought." Thought departed and under definite organizing structures of experience differentiated its forms. Thought, in the absolute form of self-consciousness, now reproduces its forms and recognizes itself as the one having done the wandering.

Philosophy is needed to correct the error of positing the forms in an external manner--i.e., history's own error of not seeing that the real subject it treats

is its own self. In Speculum Mentis, Collingwood seems to feel that a philosophical form is required. But if self-consciousness teaches history that the real nature of its activity is philosophical, will not the independence of history collapse? History will have no life and world of its own? It is this question which makes us turn to Collingwood's later works for an answer. We want to know if history is a genuine form or some type of illusion.

NOTES

Part I--Chapter 2

[8] Robin George Collingwood, Speculum Mentis (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 60.

[9] Ibid., p. 61.

[10] Ibid., p. 113.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid., p. 114.

[14] Ibid., p. 159.

[15] Ibid., p. 156.

[16] Ibid., p. 161.

[17] Ibid., p. 203.

[18] Robin George Collingwood, "Sensation and Thought," The Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XXIV (1923-1924), p. 57.

[19] Speculum Mentis, p. 212.

[20] Ibid., p. 202.

[21] Ibid., p. 309.

[22] Ibid.

PART II

SELF-KNOWLEDGE: HISTORY OR PHILOSOPHY?

In the Idea of History, Collingwood believes that an independent form of historical thinking is to have: (a) a systematic body of knowledge, (b) a specific subject matter, (c) a specific methodology, and lastly (d) an intrinsic value. As a systematic body of knowledge, history is to be "a science, or answering of questions."[23] Possessing a specific subject matter, history is to be "concerned with human actions in the past."[24] Having its own methodology, history is to be "pursued by interpretation of evidence."[25] As an activity of general worth to mankind, history is to be performed "for the sake of human self-knowledge."[26] These four characteristics of an independent historical form of experience are manifested within four stages of the development of historical thinking. In outline, these stages are as follows:

1. The 'direct recording' phase of one's perception or of another's perception of events as they have happened

2. The 'scissors-and-paste' phase of study which repeats whatever has been recorded concerning past events

3. The 'critical' phase of study which establishes a set of criteria for

determining the historicity of events and accounts of past events

4. The 'scientific' phase of study which criticizes the presuppositions from which critical history derives its notion of historicity

In our following exposition of these stages, we shall select thinkers whose conceptions of history best show these four characteristics of a genuine or independent form of intellect.

NOTES

Part II

[23] Robin George Collingwood, The Idea of History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 10.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

CHAPTER 1

GREEK HISTORIOGRAPHY

From the early practice of history, Collingwood finds the 'direct recording' phase originating with Herodotus in the fifth century B.C. Because the object of perception was thought of as marked by "violent catastrophic changes from one state of things to its opposite," knowledge of such an object was commonly declared unattainable.[27] Knowledge of any genuine sort had to possess an object marked by some kind of enduring quality. Only a form of activity capable of possessing such an object could merit the name knowledge.

All the same, Herodotus cultivated a science which could know the recent past. To have knowledge of this recent past was to elicit either from oneself or from another a "criticized recollection."[28] Testimony had to be critically cross-questioned before it could serve as evidence that such and such had happened .

Obviously, this process of interrogation placed the investigator on his guard against all inconsistent statements. The eyewitness providing the testimony may have a "<u>prima facie</u> recollection"; nonetheless, the one seeking an answer to his question must acquire a "criticized

recollection."[29] Herodotus needed to force his eyewitness to explore his memory. Collingwood finds this type of exploration sharing a certain likeness with the Socratic method of midwifery. Indeed, Socrates too had participated in the search for wisdom and knowledge by eliciting consistent definitions for the common notions of his day. His manner of proceeding usually drew forth more and more precise answers to more and more specific questions. But the historian found interrogation to have a peculiar limitation. The science of his finding answers to his questions was restricted to the "living memory" of a single generation. Questions put to this "living memory" could warrant only valid answers concerning events directly experienced in the past. Those more remote parts of the past outside anyone's direct experience remained tales and legends about heroes, gods and god-like men.

Faced with this restriction, Herodotus naturally exhibited a naive faith towards the more remote past. For other Greek historians, this restriction caused a change in the direction of the 'direct recording' phase of history. Instead of a concern with the past for its own sake, the direction of historical study became more and more an endeavor with the present and the future in mind. The problem of how to extend the scope of history so as to treat critically those more remote parts of the past was forgotten.

Collingwood finds Thucydides' conception of history following this change of direction. He feels that Thucydides was more inspired by Hippocrates and the empirical school of Greek science than by Herodotus and the Socratic tradition. Thucydides wanted to study the approximate causes for actions and events. If we compare his own opinions upon his study's value and method, I think, we will clearly see the difference between his own aim and that of Herodotus. In the first chapter of The Peloponnesian War, he gives this opinion of his study:

> . . . but if it be judged useful by those inquirers who desire an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the interpretation of the future, which in the course of human things must resemble if it does not reflect it I shall be content.[30]

Later, Thucydides furnishes this description of his method:

> . . . so my habit has been to make the speakers say what was in my opinion demanded of them by the various occasions, of course adhering as closely as possible to the general sense of what they really said.[31]

Can he reconcile his promise to give "an exact knowledge of the past" with his habit of reckoning the words of the speakers not according to "what they really said" but according to the "general sense" demanded by "the various occasions"? Collingwood thinks he cannot. Because he could not resist the ahistorical tendency of Greek thought, Thucydides showed an indifference towards a study of the past for its own sake. Collingwood concludes by saying

because Herodotus' attainment of historical knowledge was "so strongly counter to the current of Greek thought," he accurately speaking stood alone.[32] Although the 'direct recording' phase of history was restricted by the "living memory" of a single generation and though the question of how to extend the scope of history so as to treat critically those more remote parts of the past was forgotten, later phases of history's development reconsidered these problems in the light of a new conception of history's subject matter. Let us turn to these later phases and describe their new conception of history's subject matter.

NOTES

Part II--Chapter 1

[27] *The Idea of History*, p. 22.

[28] Ibid., p. 25.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1952), p. 354.

[31] Ibid.

[32] *The Idea of History*, p. 28.

CHAPTER 2

ROMAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

The extension of history's scope into the more remote parts of the past was undertaken during the Greco-Roman era. A reliance on the accounts of 'authorities' became necessary and Collingwood describes this sort of compilation as a 'scissors-and-paste' affair. Collingwood finds this new approach as resulting in "A patch-work history whose materials were drawn from 'authorities,' that is, from the works of previous historians who had already written the histories of particular times."[33] Compilation was as much a step forward as it was a step backward. It gave to the writing of history a universality which was lacking in particular histories; yet, a reliance on 'authorities' with no means to test the truth of their assertions was a far inferior manner of proceeding than that found in particular histories which rested fact upon direct recordings. In short, Greco-Roman compilation jeopardized history's claim to knowledge since the accounts of 'authorities' could not be systematically cross-questioned.

If the more remote past was for Herodotus a collection of tales and legends, it became apparent during

the Greco-Roman era that only human action ought to be the subject matter proper of history. All the same, human action was conceived under the notions of 'substance' and 'accident.' The 'substance' was that which is prior and independent to the 'accident.' The 'substance' of human action is a man's character and the 'accident' of human action is its quantity, quality, place, and relation. Unfortunately, Greco-Roman historians placed too exclusive a significance on human character and too little significance on history. This was a mistake because a knowledge of how action is actually carried out is equally as important as a knowledge of the actor's character. Failing to see the interplay of action and character, the Greco-Roman historian could build up no idea of a self-modifying activity in the subject matter proper to history. On the importance of this idea, Collingwood is adamant for he believes that a dynamic notion of human nature must supersede a substantialistic one before a subject matter proper to history can emerge.

Early Christian thought introduced a more dynamic conception of action than that introduced by the Greco-Roman culture. God is an eternal substance, but His being is exclusively His acts. Men can know God through the natural and human processes which reveal His being. All the same, Divinity transcends human action. God's will

overrules human will. Divinity demonstrates its "transcendence" by enlisting human action for its own Divine ends.

If Greco-Roman "substantialism" was ahistorical in that the historian one-sidedly looked at the character of his agent and ignored his action, the Christian idea of "transcendence" was no less ahistorical in that the historian saw lifeless puppets upon a Divine stage. Collingwood concludes that for either historian "the actual detail of human actions became . . . relatively unimportant, and they neglected that prime duty of the historian, a willingness to bestow infinite pains on discovering what actually happened."[34]

Although the 'scissors-and-paste' phase of history procured a vast wealth of written materials, it was still unable to treat critically the past accounts of what had happened. Indeed, its definite conception of history's proper subject matter was a step forward in establishing a principle upon which some set of criteria could be used for such a critical treatment of the past, but its conception of human action was itself incompatible with the details concerning what really had happened in the past. Let us now turn to that next phase of history which reconsiders these problems in the light of new thought.

NOTES

Part II--Chapter 2

[33] *The Idea of History*, p. 33.

[34] Ibid., p. 55.

CHAPTER 3

EUROPEAN HISTORIOGRAPHY: THE CRITICAL PHASE

Did compilation bring any assurance that the 'authorities' were trustworthy? Obviously, the careful reader could discriminate between the better and worst accounts of the past. Yet there must be some general set of criteria by which the historian is guided in determining the historicity of an event.

At the start of the 'critical' phase of history, we find Francis Bacon selecting "direct memory" as the criterion for determining the historicity of an event. Those persons who had managed matters of state were trustworthy because they could, as historians, directly recall those past events in detail.[35] In contrast, Bacon has "no taste" for the "letters of affairs" collected by men outside the direct management of them.[36] He has no liking for outside 'authorities' because their accounts do not rest upon a "direct memory" of past events.

But how is the historian primarily working with a "patch-work history" to correct the deficiencies and fallacies of his predecessors? Since Bacon's criterion is not established for the products of 'scissors-and-paste' history, it cannot answer our question.

A Cartesian school of historiography, guided by the rules of method laid down by Descartes, tries to advance an answer to our question. These rules of method justifying criticism of past accounts were as follows:

(1) Descartes' own implicit rule, that no authority must induce us to believe what we know cannot have happened;
(2) the rule that different authorities must be confronted with each other and harmonized;
(3) the rule that written authorities must be checked by the use of non-literary evidence.[37]

These rules of method brought many thinkers to the gateway of doing 'scientific' history. All the same, the use of these rules along with the presuppositions of natural science kept them from apprehending the real historical sequences in history.

In another direction, Collingwood finds that Giambattista Vico developed a unique idea of history. He thought that man could fully understand history since man was the creator of its subject matter. Since man does not create nature, nature can be fully known only by its Creator. Vico's New Science marked this essential distinction between history and nature. The history of man and society made its own subject matter and history was the form which made this subject matter intelligible.

It was just this idea of history that the Cartesian school of 'critical' historians failed to advance because the subject matter of history was posited only in its

externality. This external aspect of the subject matter was appropriate given their presuppositions. But the real historical subject matter could be partially understood only scientifically. This was forgotten when the presuppositions of natural science became the predominant ideas in the 'Age of Enlightenment.' Since Vico did not leave a school of thought except for a meagre number of thinkers who developed some of his ideas in a modified fashion, it was not surprising that a study of man and society would be pursued with the help of principles taken from thinkers like Newton and Locke.

Indeed, Montesquieu's idea of a science of man and society is a good illustration of this sort of attitude in the 'Age of Enlightenment.' He deserves credit, Collingwood says, for recognizing the differences among races and traditions.[38] Yet Collingwood qualifies his praise by saying that these differences in man and society were conceived of as no more than external adaptions to physical environments.[39] As the stimuli vary, according to the factors of geography and climate, so will the manner of men and society display a corresponding variation. If human behavior is entirely determined by physical factors, the nature of man and society would be understood only when a science of human behavior was founded upon the principles and laws of physical nature.

This idea of a science of man and society was the antithesis of that earlier conception presented by Vico. Montesquieu had no conception of history as making itself its own subject matter. He pushed aside the possibility that natural man himself had changed. There was merely an external history of what happened to man under certain environmental conditions. Collingwood concludes, saying: "History so conceived would become a kind of natural history of man, or anthropology, where institutions appear not as free inventions of human reason in the course of its development, but as the necessary effects of natural causes."[40]

Knowledge of the actual historical sequences required a much different body of presuppositions than those of natural science. This need acutely arose within the romantic movement of the nineteenth century. Let us now turn to this next phase of history which reveals a struggle against the reigning ideas of natural science.

NOTES

Part II--Chapter 3

[35]Francis Bacon, Advancement of Learning (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1952), p. 38.

[36]Ibid., p. 38.

[37]The Idea of History, p. 62.

[38]Ibid., p. 78.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid., p. 79.

CHAPTER 4

EUROPEAN HISTORIOGRAPHY: HISTORICITY

The Romantic reaction to the 'critical' phase of history best comes to light in the studies of Herder. Herder saw human nature not as everywhere and at everytime the same, but as something needing special investigation in specific cases.[41] This meant that specific characteristics pertained to particular races; that human nature was not a "datum," as it had been for the _philosophes_, but a "problem."[42]

Nonetheless, Herder fails to supply a historical account of man and society. In respect to his treatment of the past, Collingwood remarks, no idea is posited "of a people's character as having been made what it is by that people's historical experience."[43] If to think historically requires the conception of a people as making its own character, then it is a mistake to ignore the concrete thought and experience implicit yet not revealed in their written and unwritten record of the past. This sort of mistake leads to empiricism since the thinking involved exhibits a peculiar impotence before the evidence of the past.

Another thinker of this early Romantic reaction is Fichte. Fichte, according to Collingwood, possesses the idea "of a people's character as having been made . . . by that people's historical experience."[44] Yet Collingwood criticizes the way Fichte determines a past people's historical experience. Collingwood says his error "was to think that history could be reconstructed on a purely *a priori* basis without reliance on empirical evidence."[45] His mistake was to deduce the most prominent facts about men and society from purely *a priori* principles. Before Fichte, Vico had fallen into a similar error, according to Collingwood, ". . . even Vico thought that historical facts could be deduced *a priori* in the absence of positive evidence."[46]

Feeling that this manner of proceeding would open the door to a sort of skepticism concerning the possibility of our having historical knowledge, the historian must reject this purely deductive methodology from the domain of history. But this rejection causes a more radical type of empiricism to arise in history. This empiricism argues: if we can only eliminate those *a priori* elements, then the danger of skepticism can be avoided. To this end, the arrangement of empirical data was to be carefully separated from any logical or interpretative processes of our thought. Historical events must be seen as unfolding

by themselves. After all it was thought, history was a process evolving bit by bit before its observers. Any framework for the events ought solely to serve as an impartial demonstration. To insure the utmost impartiality, we need only to gather the data and display it in its own arrangement before the community of historians. Most importantly, we must not attempt to offer any interpretation of the data; we need only to point to its sheer quantity to convince our audience that our history has demonstrated itself.

This sort of empiricism falls into an opposite philosophical error to that committed by Fichte.[47] Perhaps the one-sidedness of each can be surpassed once these methodologies are seen as analytic abstractions. Indeed, they are false reflections of historical practice. Real historical thinking combines interpretation with the use of positive evidence. In this regard, Collingwood remarks:

> Hegel himself avoided both those errors. Like Kant he distinguishes pure _a priori_ knowledge from knowing containing _a priori_ elements, and he regarded history as an instance not of the former but of the latter.[48]

Admittedly, we can find Hegel himself alerting the reader to this kind of knowing in his "Introduction" to _The Philosophy of History_. He tells his reader:

> As our first condition we must therefore state that we apprehend the historical faithfully. In such general terms, however, as "faithfully"

> and "apprehend" lies an ambiguity. Even the average and mediocre historian, who perhaps believes and pretends that he is merely receptive, merely surrendering himself to the data, is not passive in his thinking. He brings his categories with him and sees the data through them.[49]

If Hegel is criticizing the myth of the historically given, it is not because he plans to deduce history from purely a priori principles (the error of Vico and Fichte). Surely such a move, if it were Hegel's intent, would clear the way for historical skepticism. Instead Hegel wants the historian to be aware of the ambiguity of letting the past speak for itself (the error of empiricism). There are as many sorts of data as there are "categories" for apprehending them. Consequently, we can arrive at many interpretations of the past. If the "historical fact" reflects nothing else but a continuous play of human passions which seem to be leading nowhere, this picture is due to the sorts of "categories" the historian brings to the data. If Reason is found to rule the course of man and society, this interpretation is due to the power and scope of the historian's idea of Reason.

Hegel's contribution to historiography seems to be his recognition that certain presuppositions of thought underlie all phases of thinking historically. The 'critical' phase of history was not aware of its own relative presuppositions--i.e., those of the natural science of its

day. It is proper that the genuineness or historicity of events need be determined by some set of criteria; yet, we much know that whatever establishes historicity at a given time can be reconsidered in the light of new thought. In the 'critical' phase of history, the historicity of an event was established by a set of criteria derived from the "universal laws" of nature, e.g., the laws of succession, the psychological laws of human nature, and the general law concerning the uniformity of nature. Surely, the "historical fact" will reflect, for thinkers employing such presuppositions, a quite different understanding of the past than that understanding had by medieval thinkers. But the 'critical' phase was too quick to say: knowledge of 'what really happened' in the past must now replace those past tales of 'ignorance' and 'illusion.' They were too fixed in their own presuppositions to comprehend the concrete thought and experience of the past.

In reaction, many romantics resisted the narrowness of this 'critical' phase by setting out to recapture those 'ignorant' and 'illusory' tales of the past. If such past events lacked historicity for the 'critical' historians and were rejected wholesale from history proper, the romantics took such events as the very stuff of history. Indeed, romanticism was a love for the literature, manners, customs, and monuments of the middle ages. But besides

being an outpouring of emotion, this movement directed its better minds towards an understanding of men and society in their unique concreteness. This unique concreteness expresses the idea of a "knowing containing *a priori* elements." This is a conception of how thought and the world of sense are interwoven prior to any analytic treatments. It is on the plane of the "everyday world" that history provides its own criterion for determining the historicity of an event.

But does history have a methodology? Collingwood says that the interpretation of evidence is the proper way in which a historian organizes his thought, but the picture of the past he produces should never be taken as absolute. As long as new discoveries (fresh evidence) indicate difficulties in his picture of the past, he needs to pursue interpretation. Thus his manner of proceeding should warn him not to want to conclude in matters where knowledge is a constantly shifting picture of the past. But if history has its own methodology, will not this fact contradict Collingwood's idea that the "historical fact" can be known prior to any analytic treatments?

In this respect, the *a priori* element of historical knowledge keeps Collingwood's conception of historical thinking consistent. There are matters where truth can be established and the event can be known *a priori*.

Collingwood calls this sort of knowing the re-enactment of past experience, and he calls its sort of truth self-knowledge.

If there are such elements in historical knowledge, how can we be sure about their truth? If a past experience can be re-enacted in the mind of the historian, Collingwood says that this re-enactment proves the historicity of that event. If an event cannot be re-enacted, that event is not historical in character. Re-enactment apprehends the *a priori* element in thinking historically. Thus the *a priori* element can be known prior to any historical methods or analytic treatments. In order to determine whether re-enactment of past experience is at all possible, we must now answer the question: is it possible to re-think events that no longer exist? If re-enactment is possible, how can we be sure that its character is historical and not some type of thought exclusively our own?

NOTES

Part II-Chapter 4

[41] Bacon, Advancement of Learning, p. 91.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid., p. 117.

[46] Collingwood, Speculum Mentis, p. 216.

[47] The Idea of History, p. 118.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Hegel, Reason in History (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc., 1953), p. 13.

PART III

RE-ENACTMENT: THE BASIS OF A DIFFERENTIATION

In this section, we will show that Hayden V. White's understanding of Collingwood's view of history as avoiding the reefs of empiricism and positivism only to shipwreck upon the ground of philosophy is an oversimplified evaluation of his Idea of History.[50] Neither will we grant that the absence of a strict differentiation between the objects of history and philosophy causes any systematic problem for Collingwood.[51] All the same, there seems to be a question as to how a development of past thought or experience takes place if there is no essential difference between the objects of history and philosophy. Though there is no essential difference between their objects, we will argue the two forms organize themselves differently.

History organizes its problems and concerns in a backward looking manner. The past thoughts or experiences re-enacted are not free. They are "incapsulated" in the historian's 'secondary' life. Philosophy organizes its problems and concerns in a forward looking manner. Those same thoughts or experiences now take on new problems and concerns in a 'real' life context. Hence we will argue that history does not cease to exist once the object of

its peculiar thought recognizes itself as the real subject of its own thinking. The form of experience changes, but the object endures. Philosophy, the new form, develops the past experience in the light of present problems and concerns.

NOTES

Part III

[50]Hayden V. White, "Collingwood and Toynbee: Transitions in English Historical Thought," _English Miscellany_, VIII (1957), 147-178.

[51]Nathan Rotenstreich, "Historicism and Philosophy: Reflections on R. G. Collingwood," _Revue internationale de philosophie_, XI (1957), 405.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORY AS LOOKING BACKWARD

In a section of the Idea of History called "History as a Re-enactment of Past Experience," Collingwood tries to prove, notwithstanding the arguments of an imaginary critic, that history is a genuine form of experience, not some illusion. Can the historian really claim knowledge of an event which no longer is? An imaginary objector has claimed that re-enactment (the re-thinking of past experience) is asserting either too little or too much. It asserts too little if the historian is merely thinking about a thought or experience which, as his thought or experience, only resembles that past thought or experience.

This first objection to re-enactment denies that past thought or experience is capable of sustaining itself within the general flux of things. We can only get at past thoughts in an external fashion either by referring to them as before-and-after or by finding them here-and-there. But the reality, that is, their unique concreteness is irretrievable. Temporality gnaws away at the actual content of any past experience. Thus the objector denies re-enactment's claim to re-think the very same thought or experience. We merely possess a thought or experience

that resembles another. But resemblance cannot give us any exact knowledge as to our thinking the very <u>same</u> thought or experience. Thus resemblance is too weak a relation between thoughts for asserting knowledge.

In reply, Collingwood questions the very actuality of this kind of epistemological relation in historical thinking. Is resemblance an accurate account? Resemblance implies that all thoughts or experiences are like mental states. Admittedly, mental states are marked by their momentariness. Indeed, a series of momentary experiences exhibits no two mental states as being the same. Having then passing moments of life and death, all mental states can no more than resemble each other. Yet Collingwood asks: has the objector perhaps confused the subjectivity of immediate experience with the subjectivity that has itself as its own proper object of thought?

Collingwood is insisting that if an event is historical, it must exhibit some quality of reflectiveness or purposiveness. In short, outside of self-consciousness or purposiveness all other experience, all feelings, instincts, drives, and mental states are not to be considered the proper subject matters for re-enactment. The subjectivity of immediate experience cannot provide re-enactment with an <u>essential</u> object of knowledge. At first glance, Collingwood may appear to be rigidly defining

what is and what is not the proper realm of history. All the same, he avoids taking a dogmatic position for he does allow another form of intellect the authority to study the immediacy of subjectivity. Feelings, instincts, drives, and mental states may be best studied by natural science. More importantly, he avoids a reductist position for he will not attempt, owing to his rigid definition of what can be re-enacted, to reduce all aspects of nature to historical comprehension.

This last point should be stressed for it shows where Collingwood departs from the influence of Croce. Collingwood's discrimination between the two types of subjectivity and his granting one authority to each will not allow him to reduce natural events to historical nor historical events to natural. Denying this differenciation of the objects of knowledge, Croce had viewed historical knowledge at the base of all knowledge.[52] In particular, he contended that if science and history were found differentiated, this could point only to our having made and accepted an artificial distinction between spirit and matter. Croce's approach seeks an all-embracing unity of spirit and matter. In short, the difference between spirit and matter is not, as it is for Collingwood, the result of an essential difference between their objects of knowledge.

Collingwood separates himself from Croce in how he sees the relationship of natural science and history. He will not even grant a partial understanding of a natural event historically; yet, he will allow for a partial understanding of a historical event scientifically. Thus between natural science and history there is an overlapping relationship and not an all-embracing unity of one form of experience or the other.

Although Collingwood seems to have made a case for an independent object of re-enactment, may we still not question whether the act of re-enactment claims for itself too much. This second objection asserts that if the historian is claiming that he is re-thinking a 'past' thought or experience, what at most he can claim to be thinking is his own thought or experience. Is the activity of re-enacting past thought or experience claiming something which in the nature of the activity itself cannot be realized.

It is now argued that if the historian asserts a re-enactment, he must be under some illusion since what he really means to assert is the coherence of his own thoughts. If a re-enactment claims to be historical, the objector says that it can do so only by ignoring the nature of its own thought. Collingwood tells us that the objector really says two things:

> First, he is saying that mere re-enactment of another's thought does not make historical knowledge; we must also know that we are re-enacting it. Secondly, he is arguing that this addition, the knowledge that we are re-enacting a past thought, is in the nature of the case impossible, since the thought as re-enacted is now awareness of it as an element in our own experience.[53]

Collingwood's Autobiography can furnish us with a background from which this paradox surrounding re-enactment can be better understood. There is a section in this work where Collingwood recalls his youthful studies of the battle of Trafalgar.[54] He tells us that the thoughts and experiences of Lord Nelson can be re-enacted by anyone who comes to the study of that battle. But if we think for a moment that "the ships were driven by steam and armed with long-range breach-loading guns," our thinking has wandered "outside the region of history altogether."[55] We must be aware of the other regions of experience and know how their thought organizes experience differently. This way we avoid giving an erroneous account of our own experience. But does history as a form of experience cease to exist once we are aware that we think the thoughts of Nelson?

This is the objector's second criticism of re-enactment. It can either mean that thinking historically is an indispensable condition that ". . . must exist first, but ceases to exist when that thing (self-knowledge) comes

into existence. . ."; or that thinking historically is indispensable in that it ". . . must exist so long as that thing (self-knowledge) exists."[56] To this first interpretation of the criticism, Collingwood refuses any validity. He believes that knowing what Nelson actually thought at the battle of Trafalgar reveals something about a mind that is capable of thinking Nelson's thought, namely, it knows itself as thinking historically. Thus Collingwood grants validity to the second interpretation if it means that history must exist as long as self-knowledge exists. We come to know our own thoughts and experiences in coming to think historically. But if the second interpretation means we only come to know our own thoughts and experiences and this is the true account of thinking historically, then Collingwood is prepared to reject it.

In his Autobiography, Collingwood draws a distinction between thought which operates within a primary series and thought which functions within a historical region. The first plane of thought he calls his "real life" and the second he calls his "secondary life." The primary series is his own surface thinking about things and events in the immediate context of his own time and place. Once he switches to that "secondary life," he is no longer thinking in the immediate context of his experience. Collingwood describes the type of transition as follows:

> I plunge beneath the surface of my mind, and there live a life in which I not merely think about Nelson but am Nelson, and thus in thinking about Nelson think about myself.[57]

Collingwood does not deceive himself about being Nelson or any other historical agent. He means to say that he takes the immediacy of his experience into his "secondary life," into historical re-enactment. But "being" Nelson is not the proper subject matter found "incapsulated" within his "secondary life." The reality of Collingwood's own context envelops his thinking historically, and his "real life" informs him that "Trafalgar happened ninety years ago" and that he is not Nelson but "a little boy in a jersey."[58] Whatever thoughts Nelson had, they have become a "secondary life" sustained within the "real life" of Collingwood. Their being so bound prevents them from overflowing into his "real life"; while, their being sustained makes it possible to re-think them. Thus the activity of re-enactment is no less than a knowledge about ourselves. In re-thinking what Nelson thought, Collingwood is thinking it for himself. Knowing that Nelson thought it, Collingwood knows that he is capable of thinking it. The discovery of what he is capable of thinking or experiencing is the discovery of what sort of man he is.[59] Yet in his re-enactment, what sort of man is Collingwood? Is he a naval warfare genius? Is he an English patriot? How can it be that he is whatever Nelson thought?

In answer to these questions, Collingwood would simply assert that past thought or experience possesses an enduring quality which gives re-enactment its *a priori* character. In the *Idea of History*, he tells us:

> The peculiarity of thought is that, in addition to occurring here and now in this context, it can sustain itself through a change of context and revive in a different one. This power to sustain and revive itself is what makes an act of thought more than a mere "event" or "situation" . . . .[60]

Lord Nelson's being on the deck of the *Victory* is a situation which exhibits no enduring object. We can never know what he felt like on the morning before the battle. But for any mind that comes to a study of the battle of Trafalgar, Nelson's tactics and their rationale do sustain themselves. If those tactics and their rationale are marked with an enduring quality, will this signify the possibility of their recurrence? Is this how we must understand the enduring quality of past thought which gives to re-enactment its historical character? I think otherwise. Those tactics and their rationale could never recur again. They are just as limited in time as are the men and events of the battle. Those tactics and their rationale can endure only in a "secondary life." In his "secondary life" they are "incapsulated, not free" within the historian's "real life" context.[61]

All the same, Collingwood seems to qualify this view that "incapsulated" past thought is not free within

the historian's "real life" context, where he writes:

> If the Western European of today studies Hellenic civilization historically, he enters into possession of the mental wealth of that civilization and makes it an integral part of his own. As a matter of fact, Western civilization has formed itself by doing exactly this by reconstructing within its own mind the mind of the Hellenic world and developing the wealth of that mind in new directions.[63]

This quotation seems to say that past thought or experience <u>is free</u> in the mind of "the Western European of today" for he can develop past experience "in new directions." But is Collingwood still speaking about historical thinking when he sees a development of past experience; or is he speaking about some other way of thinking seen beyond the historical form?

NOTES

Part III--Chapter 1

[52]The Idea of History, pp. 196-200.

[53]Ibid., p. 289.

[54]Robin George Collingwood, An Autobiography (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 58.

[55]Ibid.

[56]The Idea of History, p. 290.

[57]Collingwood, An Autobiography, p. 113.

[58]Ibid., pp. 113-114.

[59]Ibid., pp. 114-115.

[60]The Idea of History, p. 297.

[61]Collingwood, An Autobiography, p. 113.

[62]The Idea of History, p. 163.

CHAPTER 2

PHILOSOPHY AS LOOKING FORWARD

Out last question seems to underlie Nathan Rotenstreich's reflections on Collingwood's treatment of history and philosophy. In his article, "Historicism and Philosophy," he asks: how does Collingwood differentiate history as a form from philosophy?[63] He tells us this question is of systematic import to Collingwood; whereas, such a question would not arise for Hegel since history for the latter was solely a "background" and not a form.

We argue that for Collingwood a self-conscious form of historical thinking cannot, in respect to the object of its thinking, be _essentially_ differentiated from self-knowledge. This lack of an _essential_ differentiation, in respect to their object, is not a problem of systematic import for Collingwood. His aim has been the integration of reality and thought. If certain forms lead up to self-knowledge, then any _essential_ differentiation between them and self-knowledge is false. Yet a nonessential distinction can be made. Indeed, Collingwood can be understood as making a nonessential distinction between history and philosophy.

To the question: what is self-knowledge? I think our study has given an answer. If past experience is

"incapsulated" and one can "revive" it, self-knowledge is the "incapsulated" experience "revived." The real question Collingwood poses is: how can history and philosophy differentiate themselves with respect to this essential element which both alike share? If past experience can be developed in various directions, this ought to suggest to us activities beyond the mere re-enactment of past experience. In order to answer this question, we now return to Collingwood's reflections on the romantic treatment of a disorder in the life of European culture.

When the forms of experience are found taken each for its own sake, that is, when each claims for itself that its form is all that matters, we are witnesses to a negative sort of unity. A form secretly strives for unity by excluding all the other forms but its own. This secret desire for unity is not at all the pure expression of the "separatist principle." A pure expression would exhibit no striving for unity at all. In short, no desire for unity or wholeness in the life of intellect would be manifested. Though the men of the Renaissance reverted to the "separatist principle" in reaction to Christianity, their concern for the independence of the inner activities of the mind was anything but that original concern of the men of antiquity. Why could they not develop the inner activities of the mind in a total neglect of the Christian "principle of unity"?

The Christian "principle of unity" had affirmed that "the only life worth living is the life of the whole man, every faculty of body and soul unified into a single organic system."[64] A second principle connected with this view of the "whole" man taught that "the individual man, just because of the absolute worth of every individual, is nothing without his fellow men. . . ."[65]

This "double principle" of Christianity was denied by the Renaissance. The Renaissance affirmed an opposite principle "an outer individualism coupled with an inner separation of the activities of the mind."[66] Though these rebels "reverted to the pagan ideal," their thinking that they lived by this ideal was an utter illusion. The "principle of unity" was still at heart their guide. Why was this so? Collingwood writes:

> For the Christian, as never for any pagan, religion becomes an influence dominating the whole of life; and this unity of life once achieved can never be forfeited again. No one who has outgrown the ancient paganism can be content with being everything by turns and nothing long; he must unify his life somehow, either positively, by bringing every activity into harmony, or negatively, by suppressing all but one.[67]

The Romantics failed to understand this "uneasy balance" surviving in the life of European culture. The so-called "pagan ideal" was eternally bad, and the religious form of unity was eternally good. This simplification led them to think that the religious form of unity which had

once prevailed could be brought back into the life of European culture. They were unaware of what historical reality had made of them. They could not bring the religious unity of the Middle Ages back again. If they had been thinking at all historically, they would never have attempted such a project. The re-enactment of past experience and our thinking it historically are not identical activities. All the same, they could have accomplished a unity of a different sort. They could have developed what historical reality had made of them.

The romantic error arises whenever re-enacted experience overflows our "secondary life" and secretly enters our "real life"; whereupon, past thought or experience is treated as if its orginal problems and concerns were still real. Those original problems and concerns of past experience no longer exist. Nevertheless, past experience can be sustained in our "secondary life"; there the original problems and concerns can be re-constructed on the basis of our re-enactment. Re-enactment is historical when it organizes past experience in a backward looking fashion.

Past experience brought into a "real life" context faces new problems and concerns. If our thought is to have any progressive effect on these new problems and concerns, we must put the past aside. We must organize

past experience in a forward fashion; but unlike the Romantics, we must know what we put aside. The Romantics failed to see the "uneasy balance" in the life of European culture because they put the past aside without having known it. This led them to think the old religious form of unity could be restored. The question of unity was not the old problem over again. It was a new problem requiring a new solution. We must understand how problems and solutions develop. Collingwood reminds us as follows:

> Every act whose history we may study, of whatever kind it is, has its place in a series of acts where one has created a situation with which the next has to deal. The accomplished act gives rise to a new problem; it is always this new problem, not the old problem over again, which the new act is obliged to solve.[68]

In Speculum Mentis, Collingwood develops past experience in the direction of a new solution. This new solution is not alien to a historical re-enactment of past experience; instead, it is integral to this type of activity. Putting the past aside as known, the philosophical form directs past experience into the future. In contrast, history re-constructs the old problems and solutions and is for this reason backward-looking in character. Nevertheless, looking forward and looking backward share what Collingwood has called the enduring quality of thought or experience. It is this "fact" which makes any essential contrast between philosophy and history an impossibility.

Yet the forms take different directions in our experience. This distinction will not imply that they must go about their tasks independently of each other. History will inform philosophy with knowledge, and philosophy will criticize and judge that knowledge in the light of new problems and concerns. Since both possess past experience as self-knowledge, they can take turns at looking backward and forward at the same time.

In summary, Collingwood's later writings on history do not contradict the relation of history and philosophy presented in Speculum Mentis. Our thesis has also argued that the absence of any strict differentiation between history and philosophy has no detrimental impact on his theory of forms. The real problem posed by Collingwood's notion of re-enactment is: how can history and philosophy differentiate themselves vis-à-vis that enduring quality of thought which re-enactment provides for them both? We argued re-enactment of past experience is not thinking historically. Thinking historically must give a direction to re-enacted thought or experience, namely, a backward-looking direction. We argued re-enactment of past experience is not thinking philosophically. Thinking philosophically must give a direction to re-enacted experience, namely, a forward-looking direction.

Lastly, we can question Collingwood's new "principle of unity" because he simply asserts without explaining why

accomplished thought or experience possesses a power to sustain itself into the future. Why is it that past experience compels the modern European to unify his life and experience? Though Collingwood argues that this is so, he still provides no reasoned explanation.

NOTES

Chapter 2

[63]Rotenstreich, Historicism and Philosophy, p. 405.

[64]Collingwood, Speculum Mentis, p. 56.

[65]Ibid.

[66]Ibid., p. 37.

[67]Ibid.

[68]The Idea of History, p. 324.

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