THE FORMATION OF R. G. COLLINGWOOD'S EARLY CRITIQUE OF 'REALISM'

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ABSTRACT

In spite of the evident centrality of philosophical 'realism' in Collingwood's autobiographical account of his own intellectual development, his critique of 'realism' has hardly been investigated as a central theme in his philosophy. Collingwood's arguments against contemporary 'realism' and his stated move beyond 'idealism' have mostly been treated as a minor question subordinate to other questions. By contrast, I have tried in this thesis to reconstruct Collingwood's philosophy as a critical development of the realism/idealism dispute of his day, focusing on his less known early published and unpublished philosophical writings. This has enabled me to clarify his unique definition of 'realism' in terms of a dualistic framework, and understand his philosophy as an attempt to overcome such dualisms in the realms of philosophy. This approach ultimately highlighted the aim of Collingwood's reform of philosophy as the better understanding of the human mind and action.

By employing the 'historical' and 'internal' method of analysis, I firstly illustrated how the idea of 'dualism' became an issue in the realism/idealism dispute as it emerged in early twentieth-century British philosophy. This was followed by a biographical sketch in which I demonstrated that Collingwood's educational background was perfectly equipped to refute the 'realist' philosophy in the dispute. Historically contextualising thus, I chronologically restored the formation of his critique of 'realism' as his attempts to synthesise dualisms in logic (subject/predicate), ontology (abstract/concrete), epistemology (subject/object), and ethics (theory/action) during the period between *Religion and Philosophy* and *An Essay on Philosophical Method*. Finally, I argued that Collingwood's critique of 'realism' crystallised in his notion of duty, which embodied his characterisation of philosophy as both 'normative' and 'descriptive'.

Throughout, I presented a systematic and sustained picture of Collingwood's early philosophy, identifying and unfolding the fertile implications of his critique of 'realism' for his principal concern with the human mind and action.

ABBREVIATIONS

I will use following abbreviations when I cite Collingwood's writings. Full bibliographic information can be found in the References section at the end of the thesis.

(i) Collingwood's published works

RP	*Religion and Philosophy*
RusP	*Ruskin's Philosophy*
	(cited as published in Donagan (ed.), *Essays in Philosophy of Art*)
NIM	'Can the New Idealism Dispense with Mysticism?'
ST	'Sensation and Thought'
SM	*Speculum Mentis*
EPM	*An Essay on Philosophical Method*
AA	*An Autobiography*
NL	*The New Leviathan*
	(cited according to Collingwood's own paragraph numbering scheme)

(ii) Collingwood's manuscripts (cited according to page numbers in original manuscripts except MB)

TC	*Truth and Contradiction*, Chapter 2 (1917)
LG	*Libellus de Generatione* (1920)
NFL	'Notes on Formal Logic' (1920)
NHL	'Notes on Hegel's Logic' (1920)
SLB	'Sketch of a Logic of Becoming' (1920)
IHT	'An Illustration from Historical Thought' (c.1920-21)
1921	'Lectures on Moral Philosophy for M[ichaelmas] T[erm]'? (1921)
1923	'Action. A Course of lectures on Moral Philosophy' (1923)
1932	'Moral Philosophy Lectures' (1932)
1933	'Lectures on Moral Philosophy' (1933)
MB	'The Metaphysics of F. H. Bradley: An Essay on "Appearance and Reality"'
	(cited as published in EPM)

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INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of R. G. Collingwood has occupied a curious position in the history of British philosophy. In spite of his early death in 1943 and his non-mainstream style, his philosophy has attracted growing attention, and he is currently one of the most studied figures of the British Idealists. His philosophy has not only attained classic status in such areas as the philosophy of history and aesthetics, but is increasingly being studied for its contribution to political philosophy, anthropology, metaphysics, and philosophical method. However, one aspect of his thought has remained underexplored, namely his sustained engagement with what he calls 'realism'.[1] While the realism/idealism opposition is, needless to say, a traditional question throughout the history of Western philosophy, it is condensed by Michael Oakeshott, another of the most studied British Idealists, into its most fundamental divide: 'the "driving force" of Idealism is the belief that the known cannot be independent of the knower; and the resistance of Realism is the belief that what is known must be an antecedent reality'.[2] Collingwood recasts the whole of his intellectual life in terms of this struggle against 'realism' in his *Autobiography*,[3] unfolding this philosophical opposition into various realms of his thought. As an intellectual autobiography in which he put what he thinks 'worth telling about the story of [his thought]' (AA: vii), why did he compose it in this way? In order to clarify the position of his critique of 'realism' in his philosophy, in this thesis, I will undertake a systematic and sustained study of

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[1] Following his use of inverted commas for the term 'realism' in almost all cases in his *Autobiography* and some other works such as *An Essay on Metaphysics* in this time, I will express the target of Collingwood's criticism as 'realism' whereas I will not use it as a general term. What exactly he implies by 'realism' will be elucidated in the course of this thesis.

[2] Oakeshott, Michael, 'Beyond Realism and Idealism', review of W. M. Urban, *Beyond Realism and Idealism*, in *The Concept of a Philosophical Jurisprudence*, ed. Luke O'Sullivan (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2006), p.321.

[3] AA: Collingwood, R. G., *An Autobiography*, reprinted edition (1978) with S. Toulmin's introduction, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

Collingwood's attempts to refute and argue against the insidious implications of the main doctrines of 'realism'.

I. *An Autobiography*: A Controversial Book

Collingwood's extremely critical attitude towards 'realism' is noticeably dominant in his *Autobiography*. He refers to 'realists' or 'realism' in most chapters in it including chapter VI which is wholly devoted to its decay. Eight out of twelve chapters of the autobiography refer to 'realism' in one way or another. He means by the term 'realism' opponents of T. H. Green's school (AA: 18-9), and illustrates it with some examples: Thomas Case, John Cook Wilson, H. A. Prichard, H. W. B. Joseph, and E. F. Carritt. Second, he finds its parallel at Cambridge, especially in the work of G. E. Moore and, to a lesser extent, Bertrand Russell. Collingwood extends the range of realist philosophers to include Samuel Alexander and A. N. Whitehead. Although he includes contemporaries within the term 'realists' or 'realism', the degree to which he is critical of them varies. Of those contemporary philosophers, Collingwood seems to imply by 'realism' primarily those at Oxford such as Cook Wilson, Prichard, and Carritt, grouping their doctrines as Oxford 'realism'. Whereas Collingwood criticises them as 'minute philosophers' and assimilates those at Cambridge as their parallels in a less critical tone, he exempts Alexander and Whitehead from his criticism, regarding Alexander's position as non-'realistic' and Whitehead's as anti-'realistic' (AA: 46). Hence, it is doubtlessly evident that the matter of 'realism' is one of the most prominent topics in his *Autobiography*, and the term 'realism' is used to categorise many of the major philosophers of his time in Britain.

Collingwood expounds his critiques of 'realism' in a variety of domains in philosophy, as inspired by his engagement with historical and archaeological research. In the sphere of logic, he criticises what he calls 'realists'' 'propositional logic' in explaining his 'logic of question and answer'. It is in the theory of knowledge that he rebuts Cook Wilson's famous epistemological thesis 'knowing makes no difference to what is known' by a purported logical proof. Also, his criticism of the 'realists''

epistemology is not limited only to Cook Wilson's thesis. Since he understands knowing as the process of question and answer by the positive activities of the knower's mind, he criticises the 'realists'' epistemology for taking our knowing as simply passive 'intuiting' or 'apprehending' of reality (AA: 30). His attacks on 'realism' in logic and epistemology are based on his historical consciousness, and he comes to regard 'realism' 'as a philosophy which erred through neglecting history' (AA: 28). Such a historically-oriented critique of 'realism' is also directed at their scientific method of philosophy. He therefore urges:

> The mere fact that historical methodology had been so completely neglected, at any rate in England, encouraged me to hope that by concentrating my attention upon it I might hit upon truths in the theory of knowledge which were concealed from the 'realists' by their obviously conventional and second-hand ideas about the methods of natural science. (AA: 86)

His critique of 'realist' epistemology is also applied to another field of philosophy, namely moral philosophy. Since nothing is affected by being known according to the 'realist' epistemology, Collingwood infers, moral knowledge also cannot make any difference to the practice of moral action (AA: 48). This disconnecting of theory (moral knowledge) from practice leads to the denial of rational action and the normative theory of morals, and ultimately reduces rules of moral action into expediency and caprice (AA: 48). Collingwood therefore treats his criticism of 'realism' as a key to describe his unique philosophical doctrines in various domains of philosophy from logic to moral philosophy.

His attack on 'realism' however does not restrict itself to the realm of philosophy. He goes on to examine the consequence of this 'realist' epistemology and moral philosophy for our daily practice, and attributes the worse aspects of the current situation to the philosophy of 'realism'. This is typically found in the controversial last chapter, entitled 'Theory and Practice'. Sketching the ongoing political situation focusing on the emerging Fascist movements on the Continent in particular, he

criticises the British government's policy of appeasement. His criticism of current politics as such directs him to accuse the 'realists' of being 'the propagandists of a coming Fascism' (AA: 167) in the sense that they prepared the soil for such British governments' and people's passive attitudes towards the threat of Fascism. Collingwood's reduction of his criticism of 'realism' to the level of practical politics seemed to embarrass many of his contemporaries. Indeed, some immediate reviews of his *Autobiography* show this. Howard Hannay wrote that '[i]t is to be hoped that he will be able to expound at length his solution of the ethical and political problems which he has touched upon here in such a lively manner'[4] whereas another reviewer dismissed it as 'inexcusable extravagance'.[5] The notorious reputation of his *Autobiography* seems to persist, exemplified in a recent comment on it: 'Collingwood wrote his own autobiography, but it displayed rather like comedy or commonness in his vision, though one can well imagine a thin-lipped, acidic smile as he skewered another of the idiots and impostors by whom he felt himself constantly surrounded'.[6]

In short, Collingwood presents in his *Autobiography* the outline and development of his philosophy which is almost wholly couched in terms of his critique of 'realism' in various realms of philosophy. By relating his criticism of 'realism' to practical politics he caused some of his contemporaries' embarrassment, and the work is still regarded as problematic in the present.

II. Analytic Critics and Dialectic, Hegelian, or Kantian Collingwood

In spite of the unpopularity of the manner in which Collingwood criticised 'realism' in his *Autobiography*, it does not of course harm the centrality of his criticism of 'realism' as a philosophical claim. The secondary literature on Collingwood has tended to shy away from considering his criticism of 'realism' in its entirety.

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[4] Hannay, Howard, Review of Collingwood, *An Autobiography*, *Ethics*, vol.51, No.3, (1941), pp.369-70.

[5] S. P. L., Review of Collingwood, *An Autobiography*, *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol.36, No.26, (1939), pp.717-8.

[6] Blackburn, Simon, 'Being and Time' (Review of F. Inglis, *History Man: The Life of R. G. Collingwood*), *The New Republic*, 3 April (2010), http://www.tnr.com/article/books-and-arts/being-and-time. [Accessed on 6 April 2010]

Nevertheless, many of the monographs examining Collingwood's philosophy in general are compelled to say something about Collingwood's anti-realism.

The first monograph on Collingwood's philosophy, Alan Donagan's *The Later Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood* (1962), takes up his critique of 'realism', devoting a section to it in its last chapter. Donagan's view of Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' is entirely critical. Particularly commenting on the 'realists'' theory of knowledge, he remarks: '[Collingwood's] attempt to refute the realist theory of knowledge is the most curious and least happy of these *specimina philosophandi*. Realism appears to have haunted him as King Charles's head haunted the unfortunate Mr. Dick.'[7] He then attacks Collingwood chiefly on three points in relation to his criticism of 'realism'. First, he analytically criticises Collingwood's purported logical refutation of Cook Wilson's epistemological thesis in the *Autobiography*. He points out that Collingwood's purported refutation of Cook Wilson's thesis logically urges us to compare 'what is seen' with 'what is unseen', because he appears to assimilate knowing and seeing. Secondly, Donagan rejects Collingwood's critique of 'realists' for disconnecting moral knowledge from moral action, stating '[t]he two doctrines have no connexion whatever'.[8] And lastly, he suggests that Collingwood changed his mind in his criticism of 'realism' from *Speculum Mentis* (1924) to *The Principles of Art* (1938). Donagan argues that in *Speculum Mentis* Collingwood accused the realists of resting their epistemological claim, the knowledge makes no difference to its object, on an abstraction which entails the mistake of identifying concrete objects with concepts. Donagan claims that Collingwood argues that concepts are not identical with the concrete objects from what they are abstracted. Donagan contends, however, that in the *Principles of Art* Collingwood claims that concrete objects and concepts abstracted from them are distinct 'principles', and thus he is compelled to admit that realist propositions abstracted from objects are still true by its own principles independent of concrete objects. In this sense, Collingwood's critique of 'realism' is,

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[7] Donagan, *The Later Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, (1962), p.285.
[8] Ibid. p.289.

Donagan urges, weakened and invalidated by his own change. Although he naturalistically rejects the Cartesian mind-body dualism in the sense that he seems to expect that the mind-body relation can ultimately be explained in terms of science,[9] Donagan also objects to Collingwood's denial of the dualism, rejecting the purported epistemological interaction between the mind and its object. Hence, Donagan, *pace* Collingwood, agrees with the 'realists' and Cook Wilson's thesis.

Donagan's analytic charge against Collingwood provoked some defensive responses. Seven years after the appearance of Donagan's book, L. Mink published a monograph entitled *Mind, History, and Dialectic: The Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood* (1969). In the Preface, Mink distinguishes himself from Donagan in characterising his project as interpreting Collingwood as a dialectic philosopher.[10] Responding to Donagan's third point, his complaint of Collingwood's changing his mind, Mink cynically suggests that '[c]ertainly [Collingwood] left some lethal booby-traps for anyone who attempts to disentangle empiricist or "realist" from "idealist" strains in his thought',[11] and objects to interpreting him simply as either realist or idealist. Instead, he offers to understand Collingwood from a dialectical point of view that regards both realism and idealism as 'partial views which could be taken into and corrected in a more comprehensive theory'.[12] Mink suggests that this different viewpoint is the reason why Donagan was puzzled with Collingwood's ostensible change in relation to his critique of 'realism'. Reflecting that Collingwood *always* denied he was an idealist without giving us any evidence, Mink then concludes Collingwood was an 'empiricist' belonging to no particular school.[13] Although critically examining Donagan's first two points in detail, Mink rebuts Donagan's

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[9] In the following section, Donagan attempts to draw out some naturalistic implication in Collingwood's rejection of Cartesian dualism. For instance:
  '[Collingwood's] rejection of the assumption that man is partly body and partly mind (NL, 2. 41-2. 42) committed him to hold that human mental acts involve physical process: mind is not a ghostly inhabitant of a bodily house (NL, 2. 1-2. 13). [Ibid. pp.294]
[10] Mink, Louis O., *Mind, History, and Dialectic: The Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1969), p.ix. Mink's view on the 'realism' issue is in Chapter 4 Section 5, 'Beyond Realism and Idealism'.
[11] Ibid.p.112.
[12] Ibid.p.112.
[13] Ibid.p.111.

criticism of Collingwood by focusing on the third point and contending that Collingwood was a dialectic philosopher.

In 1970, shortly after Mink's book, another dialectical interpretation was offered by L. Rubinoff. In a section of his book, *Collingwood and the Reform of Metaphysics: A Study in the Philosophy of Mind*,[14] Rubinoff perceives the underlying principles of Donagan's criticism of Collingwood as Bertrand Russell's logical principles in *Principia Mathematica*, and understands the nature of debate between Collingwood and Donagan (Russell) thus:

> The issue between Collingwood and *Principia Mathematica* (as represented by Donagan) and again between Collingwood and Ryle, is itself worth a separate and lengthy study, for as Ryle himself points out, "It is a very important question about the nature of philosophical theories, whether philosophical arguments can establish the existence of anything". Of equal importance is the fact that the whole controversy reflects the central core of British philosophy during the first half of the twentieth-century.[15]

Contextualising the issue between Collingwood and Donagan in a larger philosophical debate as well as assimilating Donagan's position to Gilbert Ryle's, Rubinoff examines the argument between Collingwood and Donagan/Ryle in logic. He then points out an 'unquestioned assumption' underlying both Donagan's and Ryle's claims, namely, a 'failure to conform to the rules of propositional logic is identical with a failure to be logic at all'.[16] Rubinoff attempts to save Collingwood from this charge, insisting that they are asking different questions springing from their different views of the nature of reality. That is, the nature of reality is for Collingwood dialectical whereas it is composed of externally related facts for Russell. Hence, the

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[14] Rubinoff, Lionel, *Collingwood and the Reform of Metaphysics: A Study in the Philosophy of Mind*, (Tronto and Buffalo: University of Tronto Press, 1970). His argument on Collingwood's critique of 'realism' is mainly found in Chapter 7.3.c. 'Categorical Thinking and the Logic of Modern Realism'.
[15] Ibid.p.203.
[16] Ibid.p.204.

question for Collingwood is '[w]hat kind of logic can adequately regulate the various ways of enquiring into the nature of the dialectical processes of mind', while it is '[w]hat kind of logic can best describe the world of externally related facts' [17] for Russell (and Ryle and Donagan). Arguing thus they are, as it were, playing different games under the different questions in logic, Rubinoff concludes that the real question between Collingwood and the 'realists' is not really logical, but rather metaphysical:

> On this view, the question for the historian of philosophy is not whether Collingwood's logic
> can be made to conform to the logic of realism, or vice versa. The real question is, What is the
> nature of Reality? Thus the real issue between Collingwood and the school of Russell, Ryle,
> and Donagan is not so much logical as metaphysical... [18]

Following these dialectic defences of Collingwood against Donagan's analytic critique, interpretations appeared which emphasised the Hegelian elements in Collingwood. Seeking the origin of Collingwood's 'logic of question and answer', R. Peters raises Collingwood's logic to 'the tradition of dialectical form of Idealist logic which was founded by Hegel'.[19] On this understanding, he construes Collingwood's position between realism and idealism as the combination of 'logical realism' and 'epistemological idealism'.[20] Likewise, describing Collingwood's self-identification of his philosophy as 'objective idealism' in his lectures 'Central Problems of Metaphysics' (1935), G. Browning highlights Collingwood's debts to Hegel as 'his precursor in developing a systematic account of objective idealism that steers a course

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[17] Ibid.p.204.
[18] Ibid.p.204.
[19] Peters, Rik, 'Collingwood and Hegel's Dialectic', *Collingwood Studies*, II, (1995), p.108.
[20] Ibid.p.120.
'the whole scale of forms is constitutive of reality, in all forms essence and existence coincide. All philosophical propositions are categorical; in all of them subject of discourse has actual existence (EPM, 117ff). For example, the good for Collingwood is not a mere "ought" but an actually existing force which produces actual results in the moral actions of humanity. Collingwood's logical Realism is as outspoken as his epistemological Idealism.'
Similarly, M. Iiritano takes Collingwood's logic in strong relation to Hegel's logic although distinguishing Collingwood from Hegel in not having any third term such as *Aufhebung*. [Iiritano, Massimo, 'From the Principle of Non-Contradiction to Contradiction as a Principle: the Beginnings of Collingwood's revolution to Logic', *Collingwood Studies*, IX, (2002) p.53.]

between narrow forms of subjective idealism and materialism'.[21] Although the contexts and interests in which Peters and Browning refer to Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' differ, they agree in identifying Collingwood's effort to avoid one-sidedness to both subjective idealism and realism as in some sense Hegelian.

Defenders of Collingwood's critique of 'realism' are not only limited to dialectical or Hegelian interpreters. G. D'Oro's *Collingwood and the Metaphysics of Experience* (2002)[22] offers a Kantian reading of Collingwood. Attempting to clarify the reason and exact nature of Collingwood's 'anti-realism', in its third chapter 'Collingwood and the realism/anti-realism debate', D'Oro first limits the object of Collingwood's 'anti-realism' in her argument to that of Prichard's, and identifies the divide between Collingwood and Prichard as Prichard's commitment not only to ontological realism but also to epistemological realism. What Collingwood objects to is, according to her, the type of realist epistemology that fails to distinguish the ontological and epistemological status of objects because 'Collingwood, like Kant, thought that a realist epistemology would ultimately be unable to account for the possible co-existence of theoretical and practical reason, that it would ultimately be unable to explain how the world can be experienced from the radically different perspectives of the knower and the agent'.[23] In spite of Collingwood's criticism of epistemological realism, however, D'Oro objects to seeing him as its opposite, a form of epistemic idealist. For, he does not admit that 'categories and concepts through which reality is cognised are ideal, i.e. that they are not features of the objects as they are in themselves but only of how we experience them',[24] whereas epistemic idealism does.

D'Oro emphases this point to prevent Collingwood's critique of 'realism' from being misunderstood as an epistemological defeatism, using the term 'anti-

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[21] Browning, Gary, *Rethinking R.. G. Collingwood: Philosophy, Politics and the Unity of Theory and Practice*, (Basingstoke and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p.42.
[22] D'Oro, Giuseppina, *Collingwood and the Metaphysics of Experience*, (London: Routledge, 2002).
[23] Ibid. p.43.
[24] Ibid. p.46.

realism' instead of any kind of 'idealism' when she alludes to Collingwood's criticism of 'realism'. On the basis of her characterising the nature of Collingwood's 'anti-realism', she further argues the reason for Collingwood's 'anti-realism' in comparison with pragmatism. Despite pragmatists and Collingwood agreeing in their rejection of the correspondence theory of truth, for her, they sharply disagree on the seriousness with which they treat traditional questions in metaphysics. D'Oro insists that this contrast ultimately illuminates Collingwood's critique of 'realism' as a defence of 'a conception of philosophy as a normative or criteriological science'.[25] In this sense, she understands the nature of Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' as epistemological in conformity with Kant, and then draws out its characteristic as a defence of a 'normative or criteriological' conception of philosophy.

In addition to these overall comments, Donagan's attack on Collingwood prompted arguments about the details of his criticism of 'realism'. With respect to the first point, i.e. Collingwood's rebuttal of Cook Wilson's thesis, Donagan's criticism immediately provoked a response from J. F. Post,[26] and more recently from D. Jacquette, who examined Collingwood's claim in a purely analytic manner,[27] while M. Beaney touched upon it in examining Collingwood's general critique of analytic philosophy.[28] Regarding the interrelation between moral knowledge and action, some scholars have challenged Donagan's repudiation. For example, D'Oro's characterisation of Collingwood's conception of philosophy as normative or criteriological study can be seen as a defence of the interrelation between moral knowledge and action. J. Connelly tries to corroborate the interrelation by presenting an example. He argues that the moral knowledge Collingwood imparted in his lectures influenced one of his pupils, H. T. Hopkinson. Quoting from Hopkinson's

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[25] Ibid.p.52.
[26] Post, J. F., 'Does Knowing Make a Difference to What is Known?', *The Philosophical Quarterly*, vol.15, no.60, Jul, (1965), pp.220-8.; Donagan's response is Donagan, 'Does Knowing Make a Difference to What is Known?: A Rejoinder to Mr. Post', *The Philosophical Quarterly*, vol.16, no.65, Oct., (1965), pp.352-5.
[27] Jacquette, Dale, 'Collingwood against Metaphysical Realism', *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies*, vol.12, no.2, (2006), pp.103-14.
[28] Beaney, Michael, 'Collingwood's Critique of Analytic Philosophy', *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies*, vol.8, (2001), pp.99-122.

reminiscences of Collingwood's lectures, Connelly points out that Hopkinson's account of the lectures 'illustrates the way in which theory can affect the practice' of a man who was actively to work on practical issues.[29] Donagan's last point concerned the so-called 'radical conversion hypothesis',[30] originally raised by T. M. Knox, and which provoked many of Collingwood's commentators to examine the thesis. Hence, Donagan's detailed arguments over Collingwood's critique of 'realism' in the literature have been examined and challenged by scholars up to the present, involving one of the most controversial topics in Collingwoodian scholarship.

There is, however, no comprehensive investigation of Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' in spite of its centrality to his *Autobiography*. Also, commentators, who partially analyse it, such as Donagan, Mink, Rubinoff, and D'Oro, mostly focus on Collingwood's major published works, particularly in his later years, such as *An Essay on Philosophical Method* and *An Essay on Metaphysics*. In this respect, Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' has been discussed along the lines of Donagan's agenda, in the wider context of their arguments against Collingwood's philosophy in general.

III. Design of Thesis

In reviewing the secondary literature concerning Collingwood's critique of 'realism', we have seen that there is still no systematic reconstruction of his criticism, and that the majority of literature is relatively ignorant of his early works. In order to understand Collingwood's critique of 'realism' in its own right, these features in the literature seem to cast at least two doubts on our understandings of his critique of 'realism'.

First, if we take seriously Collingwood's own account of the development of his philosophy in his *Autobiography*, 'realism' appears to be a fundamental issue

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[29] Connelly, James, *Metaphysics, Method, and Politics: The Political Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2003), p.172.

[30] Whereas the change in Collingwood's philosophy was first pointed out by T. M. Knox's preface to Collingwood's *Idea of History*, 'the radical conversion hypothesis' was the denomination given by Rubinoff. [Rubinoff, 'Collingwood and the Radical Conversion Hypothesis', *Dialogue* 5/1, (1966), pp.71-83.]

which underpins his whole philosophical thinking. This is also corroborated by the fact that he systematically considers the realism/idealism problem in his lectures on metaphysics in 1935 as a central question.[31] In this sense, it should naturally be supposed that a comprehensive reconstruction of Collingwood's critique of 'realism' is a necessary task in order better to know under what kind of questions or aims he developed his philosophy.

Secondly, as the fact that his philosophical thinking after the mid-1930s is the target of the controversy over 'the radical conversion hypothesis' suggests, Collingwood's philosophical position including his attitude towards 'realism' gets complicated and puzzles scholars, involving the influence of some new philosophical movements such as A. J. Ayer's logical positivism.[32] By contrast, according to his own account in his *Autobiography*, Collingwood was at first seduced by 'realism' at Oxford, but shortly afterwards he began to have doubts about its central tenets, Cook Wilson's epistemological thesis in particular. While simply concentrating on the later period we are at risk of misunderstandings lacking a solid understanding of Collingwood's philosophical foundation. Thus, reconstructing Collingwood's intellectual journey from his early period allows us to understand in detail what and how he rejected his early 'realism' and laid the foundation for the whole of his subsequent philosophising.

I will primarily aim in this thesis to provide a comprehensive reconstruction of Collingwood's *early* critique of 'realism'. The scope of this thesis is, then, limited to the period from his maiden book in philosophy, *Religion and Philosophy* (1916), to the highly-praised work of his middle period, *An Essay on Philosophical Method* (1933). It is therefore not necessary to enter into the issue of the controversial radical conversion hypothesis. This early period contains not only some of Collingwood's key texts, i.e. *Religion and Philosophy*, *Speculum Mentis*, and *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, but also a variety of foundational working notes, drafts and

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[31] Collingwood, R. G., 'Central Problems in Metaphysics –Lectures written April 1935, for delivery T[rinity] T[erm] 1935', Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 20/1.
[32] Beaney, 'Collingwood's Critique of Analytic Philosophy', p.118.

manuscripts for his philosophy including *Truth and Contradiction* and *Libellus de Generatione*. These materials are invaluable sources in order to know how Collingwood laid the foundation of his philosophy in his early years.

In extensively examining these early texts in detail, this thesis aims to achieve the following. At the outset, I will try to illustrate the philosophical and biographical context in which Collingwood started his philosophical thinking. On the basis of the contextualisation, I will chronologically reconstruct Collingwood's critique of 'realism', in the context of contemporaneous British philosophy. And finally, in the light of, or in the process of, this reconstruction, I would like to reconsider the first two points on Donagan's agenda, i.e. the Cook Wilson thesis and the unity of knowledge and action (theory and practice). The last point is out of the scope of this thesis in an immediate sense, although it may, I suspect, be a help to lay some foundation for reconsidering his later philosophy and the controversies which surround it. Accordingly, I do not intend, unlike a number of previous interpretations, to label Collingwood solely as either realist or idealist. Rather, my purpose is to demonstrate how central the criticism of 'realism' was to his philosophy for the sake of a better understanding of his philosophical thinking.

My method in achieving these ends may be described as 'historical' and 'internal'. By the nature of this thesis as a philosophical chronological reconstruction of Collingwood's criticism of 'realism', it will necessarily be a historical investigation rather than theoretical. By taking this historical approach, I will account for the process and logic of Collingwood's thinking which we receive in an abridged form in his *Autobiography*. This approach enables us to consider the details of what exactly Collingwood took issue with in a variety of aspects of 'realism'. This is in contrast with that of Donagan whose critical agenda has generated the discussions, such as they are, of Collingwood's 'realism'. Whereas Donagan externally analyses and judges the superficial comments that surfaced in the pages of his *Autobiography*, my approach is intended fully and internally to extend what is implicit in them for a more

systematic and fairer discussion of Collingwood's claims. In this sense, my method can be regarded as internal as well as historical.

The body of this thesis is to comprise eight chapters. I will devote the first three chapters to contextualising Collingwood's critique of 'realism'. In Chapters 1 and 2, I will focus on the philosophical dispute between British Idealism and the emerging realism, mainly from the 1900s to the 1920s when Collingwood was finding his philosophical feet. Collingwood's arguments against 'realism' have tended to be seen as odd or pointless from the point of view of the tide of analytic philosophy. As the mainstream twentieth-century philosophy, realism became so dominant that it overwhelmed and obscured the original landscape of early twentieth-century British philosophy. Although Collingwood himself seems to be aware that he was already out of the mainstream trend by the 1930s,[33] the recent progress of historical reflection on the origin of analytic philosophy has made it possible to revisit the original philosophical context of the period. Referring to such fruits of the studies of the history of twentieth-century British philosophy, I would like to try to sketch the philosophical climate from an internal point of view. This will show that the realism/idealism dispute was a prominent controversy for students of philosophy at that time in Britain. On the basis of the philosophical context illustrated in the first two chapters, I will biographically sketch how Collingwood encountered the philosophical climate, shedding light on the intellectual circumstances in which he was brought up. This attempt will exhibit how perfectly Collingwood was in a position to respond to the dispute (Chapter 3).

The next four chapters will be devoted to the main task of this thesis, i.e. the reconstruction of Collingwood's critique of 'realism'. Chapter 4 will analyse *Religion and Philosophy* as his initial response to and starting point in arguing 'realism', while characterising the fundamental framework of his critique of 'realism' as the

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[33] In his letter to his student, T. M. Knox, Collingwood mentions in 1931 that his philosophical opinions 'are not fashionable'. [A letter to T. M. Knox, dated 14 June 1931, University of St. Andrews, T. M. Knox Manuscripts, MS 37524/411.]

opposition to its major dualisms in logic (subject/predicate), ontology (abstract/concrete), epistemology (mind/object), and ethics (theory/action).

Then, I will in Chapter 5 elucidate the connecting points between the cotemporary philosophical dispute and Collingwood's earliest philosophy particularly in logic and metaphysics in his manuscripts from 1917 to around 1921. In doing so, we shall see Collingwood's counter-arguments of 'realist' logic and metaphysics, and his overcoming the 'realist' dualisms in logic (subject/predicate) and ontology (abstract/concrete).

This is followed in Chapter 6 by an analysis of his development in epistemology since 1921, resulting in the philosophy of mind presented in *Speculum Mentis* in 1924. Collingwood's substantial arguments on epistemology to overcome the subject/object dualism will help us to understand the nature of Collingwood's rebuttal of Cook Wilson's thesis and the far deeper implications than is acknowledged in some influential understandings in the secondary literature.

It is in Chapter 7 that I will illustrate the development of Collingwood's epistemology to philosophical method and ultimately moral philosophy, examining *An Essay on Philosophical Method* and the series of his Moral Philosophy Lectures up until 1933. This attempt will give us a solid ground for Collingwood's solution for the ethical theory/action dualism against 'realism', on the basis of his synthesis of the epistemological subject/object dualism.

Finally, in Chapter 8, I will question *why* Collingwood had to criticise those 'realists' not only in logic, ontology, and epistemology but also in moral philosophy, by analysing Collingwood's rebuilding of the unity of theory and practice in close comparison with the contemporary 'realists'' ethical theories. This may also confirm what Collingwood ultimately intended in his criticism of 'realism'.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE REALISM/IDEALISM DISPUTE: PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT (I)

I. Introduction

Although 'realism' as a philosophical term bears a variety of uses and meanings in the history of Western philosophy, it primarily had a contemporary meaning when Collingwood used it as the target of his criticism. As a matter of fact, the context in which he addresses 'realism' was during the period when the dispute between realism and idealism was at its height in early twentieth-century British philosophy. Given that his teachers, such as Cook Wilson and E. F. Carritt, were realist philosophers, it is naturally assumed that his philosophical career began with the debate resounding in his head. As a first step in my investigation of his critique of 'realism', in this chapter, I will briefly trace the history of the dispute between realism and idealism as the background context of the formation of Collingwood's philosophical thinking.

II. The Realism/Idealism Dispute

The rise of realism at the outset of the twentieth-century was ignited as forms of attack against the British Idealist tradition inspired by such figures as T. H. Green and Edward Caird, and established by a number of heirs such as Bernard Bosanquet, F. H. Bradley, Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison, Henry Jones, J. M. E. McTaggart, and so forth. Of those British Idealists, the most influential and significant figure in the dispute is F. H. Bradley (1846-1924). He studied philosophy at University College, Oxford, reading classics as well as contemporary writers such as J. S. Mill, Hamilton and Mansel. His undergraduate period coincided with the period that was to be viewed as the rise of British Idealism. Having been preceded by pioneering importers

of Hegelian idealism from Germany such as J. F. Ferrier (1808-1864) and J. H. Stirling in the middle of the nineteenth-century,[1] it arose as a new intellectual current, mediated by the likes of Benjamin Jowett, aiming to refute the established British Empiricist tradition and Common Sense Realism. For example, Green, who was taught by Jowett with Caird at Oxford, had given an extensive criticism of Hume in his introduction to Hume's essays[2] and all of the British Idealists were heavily critical of utilitarianism in ethics. Bradley's *magnum opus*, *Appearance and Reality* (1893), was immediately and widely read by philosophers in Britain and came to be regarded as 'the supreme idealist manifesto'.[3] In fact, many historians of twentieth-century British philosophy agree on this point. For instance, G. J. Warnock admits, euphemistically, that Bradley was 'the foremost figure in British philosophy'[4] quoting from the preface of *Contemporary British Philosophy*.[5] More recently, Peter Hylton remarks that '[Bradley's] most ambitious book, *Appearance and Reality*, was published in 1893, and throughout the 1890s he was perhaps the most prominent philosopher in Britain.'[6]

As his version of idealism, often called 'Absolute Idealism', became the major philosophical trend of the last decade of the nineteenth-century in Britain, dissatisfactions with his idealism gradually began to appear. Although the objections against Bradley were also voiced from the idealist side by the 'Personal Idealists' such as A. Seth Pringle-Pattison, Bradley's Absolute Idealism stimulated more fundamental protests from realist philosophers such as Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore at Cambridge and J. Cook Wilson at Oxford. All those realist philosophies

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[1] Boucher, David, Introduction, in Boucher (ed.), *The Scottish Idealists: Selected Philosophical Writings*, (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2004), p.4.

[2] Green, T. H., 'Introduction to Hume's "Treatise of Human Nature"', in Nicholson, P. (ed.) *Collected Works of T. H. Green*, Volume 1 (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1997).

[3] Patrick, James, *Magdalen Metaphysicals: Idealism and Orthodoxy at Oxford, 1900-1945*, (Macon GA: Mercer University Press, 1985), p.36.

[4] Warnock, G. J., *English Philosophy since 1900*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.2.

[5] Muirhead, J. H. (ed.), *Contemporary British Philosophy*, (London: Allen and Unwin, Macmillan, 1924, 1925).

[6] Hylton, Peter, *Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.44.

were originally conceived by philosophers educated in a dense idealist atmosphere in the later decades of the nineteenth-century.

In Cambridge, young Russell was a student of G. F. Stout, James Ward, and especially McTaggart. Strongly influenced by those idealist teachers, he held an idealist and Hegelian view of philosophy from early 1894 to 1898.[7] Likewise, G. E. Moore, whose philosophical interest was inspired by his friend, Russell, was also a student of those idealist philosophers at Cambridge. Russell and Moore abandoned their idealist view around 1898,[8] and Moore publicly began to criticise idealism publishing 'The Nature of Judgment' in 1899.[9] Their claim against idealism became more apparent after the turn of the century, epitomised by Moore's famous essay 'The Refutation of Idealism' (1903), as well as Russell's *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903) and 'The Basis of Realism' (1911). This emergence of anti-idealism at Cambridge, initiated by Russell and Moore, and flourished and developed by the likes of Susan Stebbing (1885-1943), was to be the foundation of the analytic tradition of British philosophy.

On the other side, realism at Oxford was initiated by J. Cook Wilson. As Patrick observes: 'Cook Wilson's rebellion, a matter not of years but decades, was hardly complete before 1900; [...] But by 1900 certain specific themes of Wilson's thought had made him the bulwark of Oxford realism and the arch opponent of idealism.'[10] In spite of few published papers and books of his own due to his reluctance to publish, we can know his thought from the posthumous compilation of

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[7] He described his idealist period as follows:
'I was at this time a full-fledged Hegelian, and I aimed at constructing a complete dialectic of the science...I accepted the Hegelian view that one of the sciences is quite true, since all depend upon some abstraction, and every abstraction leads, sooner or later, to contradiction. Wherever Kant and Hegel were in conflict, I sided with Hegel.' [Russell, Bertrand, *My Philosophical Development*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1959), p.42.]
[8] Brown, S. (ed.), *Dictionary of Twentieth-century British philosophers*, (Bristol: Thoemmes, 2005). Russell's testimony is found in Russell, *My Philosophical Development*, p.54: 'It was towards the end of 1898 that Moore and I rebelled against both Kant and Hegel. Moore led the way, but I followed closely in his footsteps.'
[9] Moore, G. E., 'The Nature of Judgment', *Mind*, vol.8, no.30, (1899), pp.176-93.
[10] Patrick, *Magdalen Metaphysicals: Idealism and Orthodoxy at Oxford, 1900-1945*, p.8.

his papers, manuscripts and correspondence, titled *Statement and Inference* (1926).[11]

He did, nevertheless, have a significant influence through his lectures at Oxford. Furthermore, his students such as H. A. Prichard and E. F. Carritt magnified Cook Wilson's influence at Oxford through their lectures. Though this stream of Oxford realism has tended to be taken for granted in the history of twentieth-century British philosophy, it has been re-evaluated because of its considerable influence on the Oxford Philosophy of such thinkers as Gilbert Ryle, J. L. Austin and Isaiah Berlin,[12] and of recent revival of their ethical theories by moral particularists in modern ethics.

In opposition to these realist refutations of idealism, some defences of idealism appeared. H. H. Joachim (1868-1938), who was a self-confessed follower of Bradley and the editor of Bradley's *Collected Essays* (1935), published *The Nature of Truth* (1906) chiefly provoked by the huge impact of Moore's 'The Refutation of Idealism'. In the 1910s, the antagonism between realism and idealism became so visible that it stimulated a work entitled *A Defence of Idealism*[13] from a writer, May Sinclair, whereas Bernard Bosanquet, another heir of British Idealism, published a lecture *The Distinction between Mind and its Object* in 1913 responding to realism, followed by a more comprehensive and systematic defence *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy* (1921).

Concurrently, with those defensive reactions from the idealist camp to radical realist attacks on Bradley, Samuel Alexander (1859-1938) declared the doctrines of a sophisticated version of realism as a British Academy Lecture entitled 'The Basis of Realism'[14] in 1914. Unlike the anti-metaphysical nature of Cambridge and Oxford realism, he developed a metaphysical system based on his version of realism in *Space,*

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[11] Cook Wilson, J., *Statement and Inference: with other philosophical papers*, ed. by A. S. L. Farquharson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926).

[12] For example, see, Marion, M., 'Oxford realism: "Knowledge and Perception I' *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 8(2), (2000), pp.299-338; 'Oxford realism: "Knowledge and Perception II' *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 8(3), (2000), pp.485-519.

[13] Sinclair, May, *A Defence of Idealism*, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1917). Collingwood reviews this book in *Oxford Magazine*, 15 February, (1918), p.173. Compiled in Connelly, James, 'Collingwood and his Contemporaries: Responses to Critics 1918-1928', *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies*, vol.VII, (2000), pp.76-77.

[14] Alexander, Samuel, 'The Basis of Realism', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 1913-1914, (1914), pp.279-314.

Time, and Deity, which was first delivered as Gifford Lectures at Glasgow then published in 1920.[15] Similarly, A. N. Whitehead's famous book, *Process and Reality* (1929),[16] can be counted as another metaphysical work from realism, being aware of the contemporary arguments between realism and idealism.

Irrespective of who was the victor, it cannot be doubted that the realism/idealism dispute was a well-argued topic of philosophical dispute for contemporary philosophers from which some characteristic philosophical currents of the last century were generated, involving a number of major figures. This has been noticed by a variety of historians of British philosophy. For instance, Patrick points out that the disputes between realism and idealism in the 1920s and positivism and idealism in the 1930s were concerned with the fundamental question 'not of discrete conclusions but of the possibility of metaphysics'[17]; or, Candlish, particularising the debate between the representatives from both camps, namely Bradley and Russell, contends that 'the Russell/Bradley dispute as the philosophical and historical core of the wider historical shift in English-language philosophy away from, *inter alia*, monism and idealism and towards pluralism and realism.'[18] The period Collingwood began to read philosophy at Oxford was, thus, in such a heated atmosphere of the realism/idealism dispute.

In what follows in this chapter, I would like to clarify the points at issue in the dispute, which were to be confronted by young Collingwood, by giving a brief sketch of the philosophers' contentions involved in this dispute.

III. F. H. Bradley

It was Bradley's system of metaphysics and logic which set the background of the dispute and became the first target of the attack from the realists. His principal logical

[15] Alexander, Samuel, Space, *Time, and Deity*, (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1920).
[16] Whitehead, A. N, *Process and Reality*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1929).
[17] Patrick, *Magdalen Metaphysicals: Idealism and Orthodoxy at Oxford, 1900-1945*, p.165.
[18] Candlish, Stewart, *The Russell/Bradley Dispute and its Significance for Twentieth-century Philosophy*, (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p.4.

work is *The Principles of Logic* (1883),[19] and the metaphysical work is *Appearance and Reality*.[20] His aim in writing these books is, as an idealist philosopher, oriented to establish a system of metaphysics sprung from his complaint that 'I have not seen any serious attempt in English to deal systematically with first principles'.[21] This idealist enterprise of his philosophy can be explained as a reflection of the British Idealist current at Oxford represented by its initiator, T. H. Green.

Starting from a deliberate examination of British Empiricist tradition particularly that of Hume, Green offers a version of idealism characterised by his metaphysical notion of 'eternal consciousness' as immanent in the real world. For, Green contends, some 'mental work' is necessarily required to 'explain' the relatedness between facts in the real world. Given the sceptic consequence of Hume's empiricism, it seems to be impossible to recognise knowledge as related facts without some mental function. Expressing the mental function as 'consciousness', he thus maintains: 'a form of consciousness, which we cannot explain as of natural origin, is necessary to our conceiving an order of nature, and objective world of fact from which illusion may be distinguished.'[22] In addition, his notion of 'consciousness' as 'immanent' is intended to overcome Kant's dualism, rejecting purely intellectual 'things-in-themselves' as a cause of dualism. In this sense, Green is at pains to describe relations between facts in the world, deriving the mental notion of 'consciousness', primarily opposing Hume's sceptical empiricism and Kant's dualistic idealism.

> The true account of it is held to be that the concrete whole, which may be described indifferently as an eternal intelligence realised in the related facts of the world, or as a system of related facts rendered possible by such an intelligence, partly and gradually reproduces

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[19] Bradley, F. H., *The Principles of Logic*, in ed. by C. A. Keele and W. J. Mander, *Collected Works of F. H. Bradley*, vol.7-8, (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1999).

[20] Bradley, F. H., *Appearance and Reality*, in ed. by C. A. Keele and W. J. Mander, *Collected Works of F. H. Bradley*, vol.9, (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1999).

[21] Ibid. p.x.

[22] Green, T H., *Prolegomena to Ethics*, in Nicholson, P. (ed.), *Collected Works of T. H. Green*, Volume 4, (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1997), p.22.

itself in us, communicating piece-meal, but in inseparable correlation, understanding and the facts understood, experience and the experienced world.[23]

Nevertheless, as Hylton suggests, Green's mental notion of 'consciousness' appears to involve some tension which may dissolve his metaphysical system into dualism again due to the very mental notion of 'consciousness' as his solution of it. Green's language in describing the relation of the real world to 'consciousness' as the subject which describes it is not completely free from a dualistic presupposition between the world and the mind in spite of his intention to overcome it. The point that has to be refined is for Bradley this tension involved in Green's metaphysics and his conception of relation in particular.

Bradley's strategy to overcome problems found in Green is to stress 'Reality' as the source of concreteness or truth gained from the real world, giving it the highest status in his metaphysics. He calls pure Reality the 'Absolute', which is the supreme concept of his metaphysics. Emphasising that his Absolute or Reality is not divided but one (hence the term monism), he understands the Absolute as an undifferentiated whole: 'the Absolute is not many; there are no individual reals. The universe is one in this sense that its differences exist harmoniously with one whole, beyond which there is nothing. Hence the Absolute is, so far, an individual and a system.'[24] While he avoids dualism by the monistic notion of Reality, he introduces experience as the content of the Reality to avoid making his notion of Reality abstract: 'Absolute is one system, and that its contents are nothing but sentient experience. It will hence be a single and all-inclusive experience, which embraces every partial diversity in concord.'[25] Bradley's emphasis on the 'real' in his metaphysics is an essential difference from that of Green, i.e. 'eternal consciousness' as intellectual.[26]

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[23] Ibid. p.38.
[24] Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, p.127.
[25] Ibid. p.129.
[26] Hylton, *Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*, p.58.

His monistic conception of Reality or Absolute as the whole as such determines, in the sphere of logic, his notion of judgment as internal, and relation as unreal. In adopting the distinction between 'that', the concept, and 'what', the content of the concept, in the relation between the subject ('that') and the predicate ('what'), he contends that the nature of a judgment is to 'add an adjective to reality', and the adjective is not something in existence but an idea; because 'it is a quality made loose from its own existence, and is working free from its implication with that'.[27] In other words, the relation between the subject and the predicate is internal and unreal since what unites the two elements of relation is not something real but 'idea'. In this sense, judgment is made not externally referring to 'reality' outside of the mind, but internally in harmony with the Reality as a whole. This is, as we shall see later, the very point of which the realist rebellion was highly critical.

His conceptions of judgment and Reality or Absolute are applied to various aspects of his philosophical arguments. In the theory of truth, he is led to assert the doctrine of degrees of truth. The truthfulness of each judgment cannot be determined either completely true or false. For, the 'idea', which is the key in his internal judgment, is abstraction for Bradley. The more highly the idea of a judgment is abstracted from Reality, the less the judgment reflects the Reality; thus the truth of the judgment becomes lower. In this sense, the certainty of the judgment may vary depending on to what extent the idea which relates elements of judgment reflects the Reality. In other words, the truth of judgment rests on the extent to which the judgment is coherent with the Reality.[28] For Bradley, thus, the highest degree of the truth is called Absolute. Hence, Bradley tries to avoid the truth/false dualism in the aspect of theory of truth asserting the doctrine of degrees of truth.

With respect to the epistemic relation between the knowing subject and its object, he also attempts to avoid the dualism contending that the object is in the mind

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[27] Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, p.145.
[28] Candlish points out, in contrast with the conventional understandings of Bradley's theory of truth as the coherence theory, that Bradley never regards his theory of truth as coherence theory, but merely uses the notion of coherence as 'criteria' of the truth. [Candlish, *The Russell/Bradley Dispute and its Significance for Twentieth-century Philosophy*, p.82.]

'so far as that enters into relation with the self and appears as an object.'[29] Then he argues: '[i]f you take what in the widest sense is inside a man's mind, you will find there both subject and object and their relation. This will, at all events, be the case both in perception and thought, and again in desire and volition.'[30] According to Bradley, the epistemic relation of knowing the subject and its object is inclusive or internal in a man's mind, and this principle has a moral implication, as previously mentioned, in that it is applicable to the relation between desire and volition.

The significant features of Bradley's metaphysics are apparent even from this brief review of his metaphysical system. Firstly, it can be found in his avoidance of dualisms in many aspects of philosophical relations in refining what he takes to be a defect of Green's metaphysics. In the second, it is characterised as his insistence on Reality in order to escape from the Berkeleian solipsist trap of abstractness which was commonly regarded as a mistake in his time. The nature of Bradley's metaphysics as such is well summarised by Candlish:

> Bradley rejects on these grounds the view that reality can be understood as consisting of many objects existing independently both of each other (pluralism) and of experience of them (realism). Consistently, his own view combined monism (reality is one; there are no real separate things) with absolute idealism (reality consists solely of idea or experience). Such absolute or objective idealism stands in contrast to Berkeley's so-called subjectivism, for monism excludes Berkeley's separation of the mind from its ideas: in Bradley's view, the experience which is the fabric of the world is not owned.[31]

A problem of Bradley's system should be quite briefly noticed here in relation to his crucial critics. The core of the problem is in his notion of relation as unreal, the very point that he elaborated to reform Green's metaphysics. Since the 'idea' as what

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[29] Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, p.75.
[30] Ibid. p.76.
[31] Candlish, *The Russell/Bradley Dispute and its Significance for Twentieth-century Philosophy*, pp.21-2.

unifies the elements of the relation is not in existence, unreal, or 'thought', it necessarily turns out to be an abstraction from the Real. Despite his consistent pursuit of the monistic view of the whole, this point is to be criticised as the starting point of the breakdown of his metaphysics into dualism.

IV. The Emergence of Anti-Idealism in Cambridge

The rebellion against the idealism of Bradley in the 1890s, at Cambridge, emerged from figures such as G. E. Moore and Russell at the end of the decade. This current was started in criticising Bradley's notion of judgment, and then spread over the wider range of questions of philosophy such as the relation of the knowing subject and its object, the theory of truth, the pluralistic view of the world, moral theories, and so forth. As a matter of fact, their anti-idealism is commonly regarded as the emergence of the analytic tradition of twentieth-century British philosophy.[32] Since their anti-idealism, Russell's in particular, was to change drastically and its picture was going to be complex as the development of their analytic philosophy, I would specifically like to illustrate their earlier response to idealism in the 1900s in this section.

1. Judgment, Relation and the Logical Atomism

One of the earliest open attacks from the Cantabrigian anti-idealism was G. E. Moore's article published in *Mind* entitled 'The Nature of Judgment' (1899). As apparent from the title, its aim is to examine the notion of judgment particularly taking up that of Bradley in his *Principles of Logic* (*Logic*). Quoting Bradley's statement from *Logic* that 'truth and falsity depend on the relation of our ideas to reality',[33] Moore understands that what is crucial, for Bradley, in determining whether judgment is true or false is the relation between our ideas in our mind and reality. These ideas, according to Bradley, are 'mere ideas, signs of an existence, other than

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[32] According to Russell however, Russell and Moore, similarly in refuting idealism, differed in their focus of the criticism, that is, monism for Russell and idealism for Moore. [Russell, *My Philosophical Development*, p.54.]

[33] Bradley, *The Principles of Logic*, p.2.

themselves'.[34] In other words, our ideas about the existence of a thing are not the thing itself but the 'sign' of the existence of it. Based on the understanding of Bradley's notion of idea which relates elements of the judgment, Moore makes an opposite assertion that 'the idea used in judgment is not a part of the content of our ideas, nor produced by any action of our minds, and that hence truth and falsehood are not dependent on the relation of our ideas of reality',[35] because Bradley's 'idea', betraying his repeating insistence on the Reality, ultimately turns out to be the abstraction from that very reality. Furthermore, Moore finds a similarity in such an abstract tendency of Bradley's distinction of idea and reality in judgment with Kant's distinction of *a priori* and *a posteriori*, renaming Bradley's 'logical idea' 'concept', the equivalent of German word, *Begriff*, as a dichotomy with *Vorstellung*. Setting the range of his criticism to not only Bradley but also the idealist tradition since Kant as such, he points out the 'transcendentalism' common in idealism, which tends to be detached or abstracted from the reality. His rejection of Bradley's internal and unreal notion of relation in judgment aims, therefore, to destroy the dualism between the idea and reality, into which the idealist tradition, exemplified by Bradley and Kant, ultimately falls.

In Russell's case, while he implicitly suggested a similar notion of judgment in *The Principles of Mathematics*[36] in 1903, he explicitly formulates the counter-notion of judgment and relation as external or real against Bradley's in his essay, 'The Basis of Realism' (1911)[37] as a form of a summary of some preceding realists. As the fundamental doctrine of the new philosophical movement, what he calls 'realism', he

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[34] Ibid. p.5.

[35] Moore, 'The Nature of Judgment', p.177.

[36] Russell, *The Principles of Mathematics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903). Candlish perceives the notion of relation as real in judgment in this work, quoting Russell's statement such as 'the true logical verb in a proposition may be always regarded as asserting a relation' [Russell, *The Principles of Mathematics*, §53]; and the verb 'when used as a verb, embodies the unity of the proposition' [Russell, *The Principles of Mathematics*, §54]; and concludes that 'the idea that relations are real is central to Russell's conception of logic at this period' [Candlish, *The Russell/Bradley Dispute and its Significance for Twentieth-century Philosophy*, p.58].

[37] Russell, 'The Basis of Realism', *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, vol.8, no.6, Mar. 16. (1911), pp.158-161.

clearly declares that 'relations are "external"'.[38] He is doubtlessly aware that the new doctrine makes a sharp contrast with the antagonistic doctrine by idealism like Bradley as known by his emphasis that '[t]he importance of the question as to the value of relations lies in the fact that current arguments against realism and pluralism almost all depend upon the doctrine of internal relations.'[39] Thus, it can be proved that Russell, in sympathy with G. E. Moore, presented an anti-idealist position regarding the notion of judgment and relation at least by the beginning of the first decade of the twentieth-century.

Instead of the idealists' pseudo-monistic theories of metaphysics, what they offer as a solution is a pluralist theory of concepts and propositions. In 1899, Moore offers a theory of the logical world composed of 'propositions' and their elements, 'concepts', translating the former from 'judgment' and the latter from the likes of 'idea' or 'thought' in Bradley's terminology. A concept is the minimum unit of his logical world, and a proposition is a combination of some concepts, i.e. 'nothing other than a complex concept.'[40] Based on such a view of concepts and propositions, Moore, avoiding Bradley's fault of his metaphysics, that is, the abstraction from reality, conclusively manifests his view of the logical world:

> It seems necessary, then, to regard the world as formed of concepts. These are the only objects of knowledge. They cannot be regarded as fundamentally as abstractions either from things or from ideas; since both alike can, if anything is to be true of them, be composed of nothing but concepts. A thing becomes intelligible when it is analysed into its constituent concepts.[41]

A similar view is also offered by Russell in his 1911 essay. Since their world consists of the minimum unit what they call a 'concept', the world forms neither a monistic nor dualistic picture, but a pluralist one, which is often to be called 'logical

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[38] Ibid. p.158.
[39] Ibid. p.160.
[40] Moore, 'The Nature of Judgment', p.180.
[41] Ibid. p.182.

already be something. It is indifferent to their nature whether anybody thinks them or not. They are incapable of change; and the relation into which they enter with the knowing subject implies no action or reaction. It is a unique relation which can begin or cease with a change in the subject; but the concept is neither cause nor effect of such a change.[43]

While admitting that the concepts may be objects of the knowing subject, Moore disconnects the interaction between the knowing subject and its object by stressing the stable nature of concepts. This nature of 'concept' is to be more symbolically called 'monadic' by Russell,[44] and leads him to the unreserved denial of the interaction between the subject and its object:

What is plain is that all arguments based on the contention that knowing makes a difference to what is known, rest upon the internal view of relations, and therefore fail when this view is rejected.[45]

The denial of the idealist doctrine of the interaction between the subject and its object is, in addition, rejected again in Moore's famous essay 'The Refutation of Idealism' (1903) from a different approach. The question concerning the relation between the knowing subject and its object is, therefore, a well-argued topic against idealism by Moore and Russell, derived from their counter-argument of the idealist notion of judgment and relation, i.e. the very starting-point of their anti-idealism.

3. The Theory of Truth

In the theory of truth, the realist conception of judgment also implies a view which stands against the idealist theory of truth characterised by the doctrine of degrees of

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[43] Moore, 'The Nature of Judgment', p.179.

[44] Russell, 'The Basis of Realism', p.159.

[45] Ibid. p.160. This point is, based on the other Russell's work though, pointed out by Hylton that 'Russell's response to the view that truth may depend upon the mind is to follow Moore in insisting upon a very sharp distinction between knowledge, which is a mental state, and what is known, which is a proposition, and which is wholly independent of all mental states.' [Hylton, *Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*, p.159]

truth. For Moore, the concepts which form a judgment are not contingently but necessarily connected by their immediate properties inherent in the concepts themselves; for it is the only way that the stable and unchangeable concepts can be related, provided that the idealist arbitrary 'ideas' which take a role to connect them are denied. In this sense, 'a judgment is universally a necessary combination of concepts'.[46] That the relation of concepts is necessary means that the relation on which the truth and falsity of the judgment based is never determined by anything other than the properties of concepts themselves, 'not dependent upon any relation it may have to something else'.[47] In other words, the truth or falsity of judgment is not determined by, unlike in Bradley, any reference to Reality; thus, no degrees of certainty of the judgment are possible. The judgment is simply either true or false. Therefore, Bradley's doctrine of degrees of truth is rejected. Moore concludes:

> From our description of a judgment, there must, then, disappear all reference either to our mind or to the world. Neither of these can furnish 'ground' for anything, save in so far as they are complex judgments. The nature of the judgment is more ultimate than either, and less ultimate only than the nature of its constituents—the nature of the concept or logical idea.[48]

This denial of the degrees of truth is, also agreed by Russell, one of the doctrines of logical atomism. The claim, as the denial of interaction between the subject and its object, also derives from their criticism of judgment. A fundamental premise underlying their assertions is, according to Hylton, a distinction between the *act* of judgment and the *object* of judgment. In reducing the distinction into more general distinction between (mental) acts and their objects, he points out that 'Moore and Russell seem to insist upon this distinction quite generally—in knowledge, belief, thought, perception, and even imagination.'[49] In spite of their efforts to overcome the

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[46] Moore, 'The Nature of Judgment', p.192.
[47] Ibid. p.192.
[48] Ibid. p.193.
[49] Hylton, *Russell, Idealism, and the Emergence of Analytic Philosophy*, p.110.

collapse into dualism of Bradley's metaphysics, the distinction was later to be criticised by Collingwood as dualism.

4. Ethics

As we have seen above, Cambridge realists' initial refutation of idealism centred on the logical and metaphysical aspects. Their philosophical interest was mainly to develop a clearer philosophy by applying the mathematical and scientific method. Despite Russell and Moore writing essays in moral philosophy, it is often said that their interest in moral philosophy was relatively low. Nevertheless, what is noticed as significant in relation to both the history of ethical theory and Collingwood is Moore's *Principia Ethica.*

On the basis of the propositional logic he develops in logic, Moore articulates the subject-matter of ethics as follows:

> The peculiarity of Ethics is not that it investigates assertions about human conduct, but that it investigates assertions about that property of things which is denoted by the term 'good', and the converse property denoted by the term 'bad'.[50]

What for Moore is characteristic of ethics are ethical assertions, or propositions, concerned with 'things' that have the property of 'good' or 'bad' attributed to them, rather than a concern with human conduct. In this sense, his direct object of ethics is neither practice, conduct, nor action, but knowledge as 'good' as he expresses himself: 'The direct object of Ethics is knowledge and not practice'.[51]

What is 'good' then? He regards 'good' as a simple notion, which is indefinable and unanalysable any more. Just as a notion 'yellow' is, he analogises, a simple notion in the sense that we cannot explain by any manner of means 'to any one who does not already know it, what yellow is',[52] in the same way we cannot explain

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[50] Moore, G. E., *Principia Ethica*, (New York: Dover, 2004), p.36.
[51] Ibid. p.20.
[52] Ibid. p.7.

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'good' to anyone who has no idea about it. 'Good' is good simply, there is no other expression to explain it.

On the grounds of the nature of 'good' as he understands it, he criticises the existing moral theories. The property denoted by the term 'good' cannot be intrinsically defined as good in itself just as a thing denoted as 'yellow' can take on a different colour because of the reflection of the light. Thus, 'good' as a fundamental moral value cannot be fixed a particular property which composes a proposition. Nevertheless, there have been theories which try to define the 'good' in terms of some property. He regards such approaches to grasp the 'good' as error and calls it 'naturalistic fallacy':

> it is a fact, that Ethics aims at discovering what are those other properties belonging to all
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> things which are good. But far too many philosophers have thought that when named those
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> other properties they were actually defining good; that these properties, in fact, were simply
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> not 'other', but absolutely and entirely the same with goodness. This view I propose to call the
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> 'naturalistic fallacy.'[53]

As for the theories which fall into the fallacy, he categorises into two types such as what he calls 'Naturalistic Ethics' and 'Metaphysical Ethics'. In the first case, Naturalistic Ethics understands the good in the way that 'no intrinsic value is to be found except in the possession of some one *natural* property, other than pleasure'. [54] The contention that to be natural is good is for Moore exemplified by Rousseau's ethics and the type of ethical theory represented by J. S., Mill. Also, Moore picks up what he calls 'Evolutionistic Ethics' which applies the idea of 'Evolution' as good to ethics, originated by Herbert Spencer. In Evolutionistic Ethics, since it regards something 'to be more evolved' in the biological sense as good, the criterion of ethics is ultimately reduced into the mere law of nature. As is apparent in the consequence of

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[53] Ibid. p.10.
[54] Ibid. p.39.

the Evolutionistic Ethics, what Moore finds as a common tendency in Naturalistic Ethics is to reduce ethics into some scientific theory. He indicates:

> The method consists in substituting for 'good' some one property of a natural object or of a collection of natural objects; and in thus replacing Ethics by some one of the natural sciences. In general, the science thus substituted is one of the sciences specially concerned with man, owing to the general mistake (for such I hold it to be) of regarding the matter of Ethics as confined to human conducts.[55]

To regard a property as 'good' itself tends to mean to take some object in nature as a moral value such as 'nature' (naturalism), 'desire' or 'pleasure' (utilitarianism), and 'evolution' (evolutionistic ethics). Since such natural objects follow the law of nature, the agent who refers the natural object also comes to follow the law of nature. In this sense, the Naturalistic Ethics is reduced to a scientific theory. In addition, Moore suggests that the Naturalistic Ethics results in the study of human conduct as the object following the law of nature. In particular, he raises psychology as a typical example of such a tendency. His insistence to regard thought as the subject-matter of ethics seems to aim to be the antithesis of the tendency.

In the second case, he understands that the Metaphysical Ethics seeks 'good' not in nature but in some ideas, or 'supersensible-reality' in Moore's words, which exists in some way, raising some examples such as Kant's 'Kingdom of Ends'. This position certainly has a merit by which it can avoid the fallacy in the Naturalistic Ethics which seeks 'good' in nature. However, Moore, asking what the 'supersensible-reality' is, objects that 'good' has to be fixed to some object which exists in some sense in reality as long as the metaphysicians desperately insist that the 'supersensible-reality' does exist. In this sense, the Metaphysical Ethics also falls into the same naturalistic fallacy even though it ostensibly appears to evade it. Therefore,

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[55] Ibid. p.40.

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the Naturalistic Ethics and the Metaphysical Ethics equally fall into the naturalistic fallacy, which confuses the moral law with the law of nature.

How can 'good' be known to us if we cannot fix it to some property? Moore's answer is that it can be known simply 'self-evidently', or 'intuitively', asserting that all judgments on 'what is good' 'must rest in the end upon some proposition which must be simply accepted or rejected, which cannot be logically deduced from any other proposition. This result [...] may be otherwise expressed by saying that the fundamental principles of Ethics must be self-evident'.[56] In order to avoid confusions, Moore attempts to clarify what he means by 'self-evident' further. First, a 'self-evident' proposition is in any sense not inferred from some other proposition, but evident or true by itself alone; in the second, there is no reason to be 'self-evident'; and finally, the evidence to be self-evident lies not in itself but in our conviction of it. What can be self-evident has to be, thus, simple, unanalysable, and without any presupposition. Since Moore regards human action as a complex concept in the sense that when an action is taking place the result of the action is necessarily involved in it, i.e. the complex of the action and its results; it cannot be self-evident by itself. Hence, Moore seems to abandon human action as the direct subject-matter of ethics, describing how difficult and complicated it is to understand it.[57]

On the basis of propositional logic, Moore defines the subject-matter of ethics as the investigation into the proposition in which its property is denoted by the term 'good'. Since his ethics as such rests on propositions (thought), it excludes human action from the subject-matter of ethics. As a matter of fact, he confesses the difficulty of understanding human action. 'Good' is the fundamental value of Moore's ethics in the sense that it is indefinable and unanalysable. In spite of such a nature of 'good', a number of moral philosophers have tried to define it in reference to some natural object as a property of proposition. Rousseau's naturalism, Utilitarianism, and

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[56] Ibid. p.143.
[57] In fact, he claims the perplexity in accounting human action as follows:
'It is, indeed, obvious that our view can never reach far enough for us to be certain that any action will   produce possible effects. We must be content, if the greatest possible balance of good seems to be produced within a limited period.' [Ibid. p.23.]

Spencer's Evolutionalistic Ethics are criticised for exhibiting this fallacy. In addition, he finds the same fallacy even in the idealist moral theories such as Kant in the sense that they try to define 'good' in reference to some *existing* idea. In attacking the naturalistic fallacy, he seems to aim to refute his opponent, idealism, in the moral aspect as well as avoiding another fallacious approach from the Empiricist camp such as psychology. How can 'good' be known then? He seeks a solution to this question in intuition; 'good' is simply accepted as self-evident.

5. Summary

Dissatisfaction with British Idealism emerged in Cambridge. G. E. Moore and Bertrand Russell were two of the earliest antagonists. The focal point of their first attack is concerned with the relation between two concepts in a proposition (judgment) in logic. While Bradley thinks that the relation between concepts is 'unreal', Moore and Russell criticise Bradley's 'idea' as ultimately dualism or abstraction from the real world in spite of Bradley's attempts to overcome it. Instead, they offer a pluralistic view of the logical world composed of concepts and propositions, called 'logical atomism', aiming to avoid the abstraction from the reality.

Their notion of judgment leads to opposite conclusions in various topics of philosophy. In the epistemic relation between the knowing subject and its object, they insist that the truth or falsity of judgment cannot be changed depending upon our mind because concepts are related by the logical implications or properties of concepts themselves whereas Bradley admits the possibility of the change by our mind. In the theory of truth, similarly, they reject Bradley's degree of truth since the truth and falsity of a proposition is necessarily determined by the properties of the proposition without any reference to some abstract sources such as Reality. There can be no degree in the truth of the proposition. A proposition is simply either true or false, no middle.

By contrast with their logical and metaphysical arguments, their interest in moral philosophy is relatively less prominent. However, Moore's ethical theory such

as *Principia Ethica* is also developed on the basis of his logic. Setting the proposition (knowledge) as the subject-matter of his ethics, he excludes human action from the realm of ethics. In practice, what he regards as the object of his ethics is the propositions about 'things' which bear properties denoted by the term 'good'. He puts the 'good' on the foundation of moral value in the sense that the 'good' cannot be defined and analysed any more. Idealist moral theories represented by Kant are criticised as one of what he calls the 'naturalistic fallacies' since they try to define the 'good' as a 'super-sensible reality' in spite of the indefinable and unanalysable nature of the 'good'; and tend to confuse the moral law with the natural law in the end. What he was hostile in claiming the 'naturalistic fallacy' was thus the confusion of moral law with natural law, which had flourished in the nineteenth-century as forms of psychology and the Evolutionalistic Ethics originated from Spencer. Instead, he asserts that 'good' is simply 'self-evident', simply known by 'intuition'. Therefore, a focus of Moore's ethical theory centres, on the ground of his logical principle, on the theory of (moral) knowledge.

V. Oxford Realism

Whereas Cambridge developed an anti-idealist movement around the outset of the twentieth-century, a more radical realist current also appeared at Oxford. The pioneering figure was J. Cook Wilson, followed by H. A. Prichard, and the likes of H. W. B. Joseph, E. F. Carritt, W. D. Ross and so forth. They share a common starting-point with the Cambridge realists, but they contrast sharply in their theory of knowledge. In addition, they make clearer and more systematic assertions in moral theory than the Cambridge realists. In this section, thus, I will firstly survey their theory of knowledge, and then trace the outline of their moral theory chiefly focusing on Cook Wilson and Prichard.

1. J. Cook Wilson

The fundamental focus of Cook Wilson's criticism of idealism is, as with Moore and Russell, Bradley's notion of relation in judgment. We can find it becomes evident in

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1904 in the notes of one of his students of a Cook Wilson lecture criticising a chapter 'Relation and Quality' of Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*.[58] As we have seen above, Bradley's notion of judgment is external in the sense that the relation of two components of a judgment is given not internally sprung from the nature of components themselves, but externally supposing some 'idea' in our mind which relates the components. For Cook Wilson, Bradley's fallacy concerning the notion of relation is that 'a supposed infinite regress which results from relating the relation of two terms to the terms of the relation themselves.'[59] Suppose two terms A and B, 'concepts' in Moore's term, and a relation r which relates A and B. He maintains that Bradley mistakenly distinguishes the relation between A and r (r_1), and B and r (r_2), from the relation r itself. In other words, Bradley picks up the components of a judgment first, and then gives a relating 'idea', which stands against, or is faced with the components. Cook Wilson is critical of the opposing position between the relation and the related terms (concepts) in Bradley. For, Cook Wilson contends, r_1 and r_2 can be taken as the new or distinct relations from the original relation r, and consequently such a Bradleian notion of relation could invite the infinite split of the relation from the original r into the distinct rs in the process of judgment.

As a result of the criticism of Bradley's notion of judgment, composed of A, B and r, Cook Wilson eliminates the notion of relation itself maintaining that 'the ordinary statement of a relation does not contain the word relation r itself'. He instead states 'A is B's father.'[60] The relation of A to B can be expressed not by any relating 'idea' which stands against A and B, but by simply saying that 'A relates to B'. His avoidance of using the word, 'relation' as an element of a judgment, leads him to reject any abstract notion of medium such as 'idea', 'appearance' and so forth. Instead, he is led to a sort of realist position which is to be called 'direct realism'. In his letter

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[58] Cook Wilson, *Statement and Inference: with other philosophical papers*, ed. by A. S. L. Farquharson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), pp.692-695.
[59] Ibid. p.692.
[60] Ibid. p.693.

to Prichard dated 6 January 1904,[61] he reveals his own position which had perplexed him until he reached a conclusion in his lecture in the summer of 1903. His conclusion is expressed as follows:

> The judgment of knowledge is apprehension of reality or fact, it is not the fact, it is not the reality; but neither is it any image of the reality nor the apprehension of any such image. Nor is it mere apprehension as a subjective state—mere apprehension is impossible—it is (1) apprehension (2) of the reality.
>
> The ideal element we are looking for, and always (all of us) tend to misinterpret as an image of the reality, is the apprehending side as our act: the fact that we apprehend the reality.[62]

Cook Wilson denies, in describing the judgment of knowledge, the identification of knowledge with the reality, medium or, as it were, sense-datum theory of knowledge and subjectivism of knowledge which disconnects the correspondence of knowledge with the reality; and instead contends that knowledge is simply the understanding of the reality. Such a strict rejection of medium in the knowing process is, as Marion indicates, his main target which has to be attacked.[63]

His denial of the medium is, in the same letter to Prichard, also argued in another phase of the theory of knowledge, i.e. the relation between the knowing subject and its object. In this respect, he insists that there is nothing other than a knowing action by a subject in the process of knowing the object, while at the same time he dismisses the 'ideal element', that is, the medium in the knowing process between the subject and its object. Knowing an object is not to know some medium derived from the object itself, but simply and directly to know it as it is. This doctrine concerning 'knowing' by Cook Wilson presupposes, since the object is known by the

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[61] Ibid.pp.801-8.

[62] Ibid. p.808.

[63] Marion, 'Oxford Realism: "Knowledge and Perception" I', p. 302: 'The battlefield was, along with the doctrine of relations, primarily immediate experience, where at least some form of the Lockean account of sensation had to be vindicated against idealists.'

subject *as it is*, that the object suffers no change or influence in the process of being known by the subject. Therefore, 'knowing makes no difference to what is known.'

Furthermore, his 'direct realism' concludes that even the theory of knowledge is impossible. From his contention that knowing something is no more than simply and directly to know it as it is without being mediated by any ideal elements, Cook Wilson claims, giving an account of the nature of knowing is itself contradictory because knowing the process of knowing is also achieved not by describing it mediated by some terms but only by simply 'apprehending' it. Thus, '[w]e cannot construct knowing—the act of apprehending—out of any elements. [...] I felt the words [the theory of knowledge] themselves suggested a fallacy—an utterly fallacious inquiry'.[64] In this sense, his 'direct realism' reaches the denial of the theory of knowledge.

The spearhead of his criticism of the medium or ideal elements in the theory of knowledge is directed not only to idealism like that of Bradley but also to the empiricist tradition exemplified by Locke, because it admits some space for sorts of mental images or ideas to which the reality reflects, in other word, medium. Once the medium is granted, Cook Wilson fears, it is not very far to fall into idealism just as the historical fact that Locke's empiricism was shortly followed by Berkeley's subjective idealism proves.[65] This is the point at which Oxford realism contrasts clearly with Cambridge realism as pointed out by Marion:

> the main difference between Oxonian (Cook Wilson, Prichard) an Cantabrigian (Moore, Russell) realism lies in the fact that the latter, following the eighteenth-century empiricists, admits of epistemological 'intermediaries' in perception, while the former follows in essentials Reid's criticisms of any *tertium quid*.[66]

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[64] Cook Wilson, *Statement and Inference*, p.803.
[65] Ibid. pp.62-3.
[66] Marion, 'Oxford Realism: "Knowledge and Perception" I', p.303.

Cook Wilson begins, like Cambridge realists, his rebellion against idealism with the critique of Bradley's notion of judgment, claiming that Bradley's notion of judgment presupposes the 'idea' or medium in principle. For, such abstract notions in the knowing process cause an 'infinite regress' in explaining our knowing activity. As a result, he even suggests that the theory of knowledge is impossible or contradictory. Instead, he contends that knowing something is simply to know it directly as it is. Though he shares the same position regarding the epistemic relation of the subject and its object with Cambridge realists, his denial of medium is the point at which he is distinguished from them. Thus, Cook Wilson's doctrine concerning the theory of knowledge is a more radical form of realism which is sometimes called 'direct realism'.

2. H.A. Prichard

H. A. Prichard is, among Cook Wilson's students, a key figure who magnifies the influence of Cook Wilson's philosophy at Oxford. In his *Kant's Theory of Knowledge* (1909),[67] he expresses more explicitly Cook Wilson's doctrines in the theory of knowledge in a form of examining Kant's *The Critique of Pure Reason*. At the beginning of a chapter 'Knowledge and Reality', he extracts and develops two principles from Kant's theory of knowledge. Firstly, 'the very nature of knowledge presupposes the independent existence of the reality known, and to show that, in consequence, all idealism is of the variety known as subjective.'[68] In the second, which he uses to criticise Kant, he contends that 'the way in which Kant is misled [is] by failing to realize (1) the directness of the relation between the knower and the reality known, and (2) the impossibility of transferring what belongs to one side of the relation to the other.'[69]

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[67] Prichard, H. A., *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909).
[68] Ibid. p.115.
[69] Ibid. p.115.

From the first principle, Prichard articulates the doctrine concerning the relation between the knowing subject and its object. With all other contemporary realists, he strictly rejects the interaction between the subject and its object.

> Knowledge unconditionally presupposes that the reality known exists independently of the knowledge of it, and that we know it as it exists in this independence. It is simply impossible to think that any reality depends upon our knowledge of it, or upon any knowledge of it. If there is to be knowledge, there must first be something to be known. In other words, knowledge is essentially discovery, or the finding of what already is.[70]

He contends that knowledge must presuppose the ontological existence of the thing known, and then our knowing activity is just to know it as it already exists. In this process, no possibility that the knowing activity ontologically affects the reality as object is granted. Although the independent ontological status of the object appears to be doubtlessly obvious, Prichard claims, some idealists tend to insist upon the position that the reality is ontologically influenced by our knowing activity introducing some ideas of 'medium' or 'appearance' between the knowing subject and reality. He explains such ideas are a necessary consequence of the idealism which asserts the interaction between the subject and its object in raising the names of Berkeley and Kant in certain periods, as examples. Thus, he identifies the prime enemy of realism as the tradition of subjective idealism: 'the real contrary to realism is subjective idealism is confirmed by the history of theory of knowledge from Descartes onwards'.[71]

Since he regards 'appearance' and medium as the culprit of the idealist's fallacy, Prichard is, as in Cook Wilson, led to reject any medium between the knowing subject and its object and asserts a direct relation between them:

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[70] Ibid. p.118.
[71] Ibid. p.123.

it is thereby implied that the relation between the mind and reality in knowledge or in perception is essentially direct, i.e. that there is no *tertium quid* in the forms of an 'idea' or a 'representation' between us as perceiving or knowing and what we perceive or know.[72]

In line with this principle, his criticism of other theorists follows a similar track to Cook Wilson. He condemns Locke and Kant as wrong as long as they admit some medium between the mind and reality since such abstract ideas 'would leave the door open to subjective idealism'.[73] Marion does, thus, not only find this rejection of medium as the common point in Prichard and Cook Wilson, but also understands it as the fundamental aspect of Oxford realism.[74] Prichard's type of realism as direct realism as such is what is meant in his second principle concerning the theory of knowledge.

His direct realism forms a fundamental basis of his moral theory, by which he is nowadays remembered as a moral intuitionist. In his essay 'Does Moral Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?' (1912),[75] he answers the question in the affirmative, and identifies the 'mistake' to be found in the theory of knowledge. Just as he finds that any abstract ideas which mediate between the subject and its object are the origin of fallacy in the theory of knowledge, he rejects any moral ideas as the criteria to evaluate the rightness of action; for, he insists, we do not necessarily judge the rightness of our action in reference to such abstract ideas. Instead, he puts it that the sense of rightness is 'absolutely underivative or immediate'[76] in parallel to the direct and immediate nature of the apprehension of knowledge in his theory of knowledge. In other words, a moral action can be justified not by any 'theory' but by some 'moral apprehension' or 'intuition'.

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[72] Ibid. p.133.
[73] Marion, 'Oxford Realism: "Knowledge and Perception" I', p.328.
[74] Ibid. p.332.
[75] Complied in: Prichard, *Moral Writings*, ed. by J. MacAdam, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).
[76] Ibid. p.12.Moreover, he adds:
'This apprehension is immediate, in precisely the sense in which a mathematical apprehension is immediate. [...] Both apprehensions are immediate in the sense that in both insight into the nature of the subject directly leads us to recognise its possession of the predicate; and it is only stating the fact from the other side to say that in both cases the fact apprehended is self-evident.' (p.13)

Such a view of the intuitive nature of moral rightness invites an attitude to be criticised by Collingwood when it is faced with the real issues of the moral world. In his lecture for the British Academy entitled 'Duty and Ignorance of Fact' (1932), he is compelled to contend that 'to do some action' as 'to bring about some action' because he by definition rejects interaction between the mind and the reality, and denies any possibility that our will may change the reality. In other words, we cannot say 'to do some action' because the phrase necessarily implies that the 'will' of the agent makes her/him do the action, otherwise we have to admit that the will makes some difference to the agent's action. Thus, when we mention that we ought to do some action, strictly speaking, we cannot say any more than that we 'bring about' the action so that 'the bringing about' causes the action we ought to do. Therefore he concludes:

> As regards an obligation, the moral is obvious. It is simply that, contrary to the implication of ordinary language and of moral rules in particular, an obligation must be an obligation, not to do something, but to perform an activity of a totally different kind, that of setting or exerting ourselves to do something, i.e. to bring something about.[77]

Prichard never says we do moral action directly because it opposes his doctrine that the complete independence between the mind and reality, but merely says that the only thing we can do about moral issues is 'to set ourselves to bring it about'. Prichard's 'passive' conception of moral action restricts the range of an agent's responsibility for the action to mere 'setting to do', and the action itself is excluded from it. In consequence, his position results in an indifferent or irresponsible attitude towards the result of the action. He himself confesses this when he says that 'where we are setting ourselves to do something, we never *know* what we shall be doing, and at best can only find out afterwards what we have done.'[78]

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[77] Ibid. p.97.
[78] Ibid. p.97.

Prichard's view concerning the theory of knowledge is characterised by his strict rejection of any medium and his insistence on the directness or immediacy between the mind and the reality. In this respect, thus, he follows precisely the same position as Cook Wilson. As is suggested by the strong ontological nature of his view concerning the subject/object relation, his target of the direct realism is chiefly subjective idealism such as Berkeley together with the Cambridge realists. But what is sharply different from their theory is his denial of medium. In this sense, he can be called the advocate of Cook Wilson's realism. In moral theory, he develops and applies direct realism to moral philosophy. Based on his view of the theory of knowledge, he insists that moral values can be known, independently of any 'theory', immediately and directly by us. Although his moral position implies some 'passive' attitude towards actual moral issues, it is to be shared with other philosophers mainly at Oxford such as E. F. Carritt, which formed a group of moral philosophers sometimes called 'Oxford Intuitionism'.[79]

3. Oxford Intuitionism

The denomination 'Oxford Intuitionism' can be understood as the name for the moral philosophy of Oxford realists. For, they share a foundation in the theory of moral knowledge which is originated from Prichard's 'Does Moral Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?' (1912); i.e. the intuitionist position that a moral value is known not based on any medium such as knowledge but on 'immediate apprehension'. Though Prichard's position is distinguished from Moore's in the sense that Moore appears to admit medium between the knowing subject and its object at least at some points,[80] they share a similarity in maintaining that a moral value is known somehow intuitively. Prichard's intuitionism underlies other realists' moral theories at Oxford, E. F. Carritt, for example, stresses that duty as the object of his moral enquiry is self-

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[79] Marion, 'Oxford Realism: "Knowledge and Perception" I', p.311.
[80] Although Moore took a sense-datum theory, Baldwin argues, his position towards sense-data as medium kept shaken throughout his career. '5. Perception and Sense-data', in Baldwin, Tom, 'George Edward Moore', *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/moore/. [Accessed on 8 January 2010]

evident: 'The truth of some judgment and the existence of some duties are self-evident. And nothing is more certain that what is self-evident, for what does not need or gain by proof and is generally incapable of it.'[81] Likewise, W. D. Ross also insists the self-evident nature of moral recognition regarding 'right' as the fundamental moral value: '[rightness] is self-evident without any need of proof, or of evidence beyond itself. It is self-evident just as a mathematical axiom, or the validity of a form of inference, is evident.'[82] In this respect, thus, those three realists at Oxford agree.

On the basis of the intuitionism as such, a focus of their arguments is to be reduced to a question of what the self-evident moral value is. In 1928, Prichard rebuts Moore who thinks of 'rightness' as derived or inferred from the only fundamental moral value 'goodness', and regards both right and good are equally *sui generis*.[83]

In harmony with Prichard in 1928,[84] Carritt regards reducing 'right' (or duty) from good as fallacy raising some examples such as Prichard's 'Does Moral Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?' (1912), Rashdall's *The Theory of Good and Evil*, Russell's *Philosophical Essays*, and Moore's *Ethics*. Then, Carritt focuses on the enquiry into the nature of right (or duty). While denying a major difference between right and duty, he understands that rightness is called duty in the case that it takes a form of law stating that '[r]ights only seem absolute and duties only seem generically different from other right acts when they are stated generally in the form of laws.'[85] His conception of duty in such an objective sense is thus not something which

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[81] Carritt, E. F., *The Theory of Morals*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), p.28.

[82] Ross, W. D., *The Right and the Good*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p.29.

[83] Prichard, *Moral Writings*, p.47: 'I would suggest a prominent instance of the fallacy involved in the attempt which is often made nowadays (as e.g. I think it is by Professor Moore and Professor Laird) to maintain a view implies that we deduce the rightness of certain actions from our knowledge of what is good taken in conjunction with our knowledge of our powers of existing circumstances.' (In 'Duty and Interest', the inaugural lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 29 October 1928.)

This point is also to be noticed by a later historian of twentieth-century British philosophy: 'Moore had held that the rightness of an action consisted in its producing the greatest possible good. Prichard holds that rightness is *sui generis* exactly as goodness is and, like goodness on Moore's view, is simply evident to the discriminatingly intuitive eye.' (Warnock, G. J., *Contemporary Moral Philosophy*, p.11.)

[84] Although Prichard insisted the same point in 1928, the same year of the publication of Carritt's *The Theory of Morals*, Carritt criticises Prichard for the very raising of it in his article published in 1912.

[85] Carritt, *The Theory of Morals*, p.xi.

dominantly rules actions of individual agents. Rather, a moral rule expressed as duty does not exist before action and control it, but is formed and in consequence generalised from individual cases.[86] His conception of duty as such results in a negative attitude towards moral philosophy particularly concerning the interaction between moral theory and action. In confining the prime range of moral philosophy within the 'satisfaction of intellectual curiosity',[87] he concludes:

> I venture to think that moral philosophy should be in that sense formal: it should define morality, distinguishing it from right conduct and from other things with which it had been confused, it should not try to play the part of that consciousness or moral reason which acts primarily upon particular situations and whose immediate judgments neither need nor can be demonstrated.[88]

In Ross, 'rightness' is not merely irreducible from 'goodness' as in Prichard and Carritt, but self-evident in itself; so that right and good are equally self-evident. In analysing the notion of duty, although Ross, similar to Carritt, does not make any decisive distinction between right and duty, he distinguishes what is truly regarded as duty from what he calls '*prima facie* duty'; because even if there are certain kinds of duties which seemingly appear to be self-evident such as 'keeping a promise', they might not be right acts depending on the circumstance. Ross calls such ostensibly self-evident duty which might turn out to be the not right act depending on the situation '*prima facie* duty.' In addition, such *prima facie* duties can be more than one in a situation, those choices for right action in a situation may contradict one another. In that case, Ross asserts, we should find a choice which does not conflict with other

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[86] Ibid. p.116.
'I cannot persuade myself that I first morally apprehend the obligation of several rules, then intellectually apprehend one of alternative actions to be an instance of one and the other of another, and finally, by a second moral intuition, see which rule ought now to be followed. In rather think that I morally apprehend that I ought now to do this act and then intellectually generalize rules.'
[87] Ibid. p.71.
[88] Ibid. p.84.

'right' choices as an act to be taken. He distinguished such an act which does not conflict with any other 'right' acts and regards the true duty:

> When I am in a situation, as perhaps I always am, in which more than one of those *prima facie* duties is incumbent on me, what I have to do is to study the situation as fully as I can until I form the considered opinion (it is never more) that in the circumstances one of them is my duty *sans phrase* in the situation.[89]

This duty, furthermore, has to be something which directly carries out the duty itself.

Suppose a case when I have to return a book to my friend. In that case, he insists that what is essential in doing my duty is that the book returns to the friend's hands in reality even though it could be lost in the process of delivery by a postman after I packed and dispatched it by post. In this sense, he maintains '[t]hat which is right not because it is an act, one thing, which will produce another thing, an increase of the general welfare, but because it is itself the producing of an increase in the general welfare.'[90] This is the point which sharply opposes Carritt and Prichard who think our duty is simply 'setting myself to do'.

4. Summary

The realist reaction against British Idealism took a more radical form in Oxford than in Cambridge. Equally starting his criticism with Bradley's notion of judgment as potentially dualistic, Cook Wilson rejects any mental or abstract factor in the epistemic relation between the subject and its object, insisting that the mind immediately and simply 'apprehends' the reality as it is. In this sense, knowing makes no difference to what is known. Such intuitionist epistemological position leads him to the denial of any medium, which distinguishes him from early Cambridge realism. Cook Wilson's direct realism was succeeded by his followers at Oxford such as Prichard and Carritt, and developed in ethical theory. On the epistemological basis of

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[89] Ross, *The Right and the Good*, p.19.
[90] Ibid. p.47.

direct realism, Prichard contends that moral values are simply apprehended directly or 'self-evidently'. His application of their direct realism to the moral epistemology was generally shared by Carritt and Ross, and was to characterise their ethical theory as 'Oxford Intuitionism'. A question at issue among them is what is apprehended self-evidently as moral value. Commonly objecting to Moore's reduction of right to good, their arguments converge on the nature of right or duty (obligation). While Prichard and Carritt take obligation as objective indifferent to agent's action, Ross tries to ensure its realisation in the agent's action. This argument begs the question about the significance of moral philosophy itself, and then causes a contrast between Prichard/Carritt and Ross. The problem of duty or obligation as the central question in Oxford Intuitionism is also testified by a contemporary philosopher, Joseph: '[f]or a number of years past, many of us whose studies lie in philosophy at Oxford have been perplexed by the difficulties connected with obligation.'[91] The moral theory of Oxford realism is, therefore, emerged from the denial of the theory of knowledge, and then shifts to the argument over the content of the self-evident moral value.

VI. Conclusion

The fundamental problems and shared anathemas for both camps of the realism/idealism dispute can be summed up to two points: Berkeleian subjective idealism and the dualism between the mind and the reality. Not only pivotal in the dispute itself, these problems were already potentially rooted in an origin of British Idealism, Green's philosophy. Green attempted to overcome the Humean sceptical theory of knowledge, seeking to re-establish the relatedness between facts in the world. Green did so by introducing 'eternal consciousness' to explain the relation between facts. In spite of his intention to avoid any abstraction from the real world unlike Kant's things-in-themselves by insisting its 'immanent' nature in the world, Green's system nevertheless seems to Bradley to give rise to a tension between 'eternal consciousness' as the mental whole and the world. Bradley instead offered

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[91] Joseph, H. W. B., *Some Problems of Ethics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931), p.v.

the monistic notion of Reality within which mind and experience are included as a whole. This Reality was designed to avoid the dualism between the mental and the real as well as subjective idealism. In this sense, the problem with which Green and Bradley were commonly struggling was how the real world or experience can be placed in their metaphysical systems avoiding their anathemas, namely subjective idealism and dualism. Bradley's Reality makes the notion of relation internal because relation between facts in the world is not determined by reference to something outside Reality but internally determined in coherent within the Reality. This internal notion of relation is oriented to the unreal notion of judgment in logic. Based on the traditional notion of judgment as properly subject-predicate form, Bradley was urged to admit the relation between elements of judgment is determined in reference to 'idea' in harmony with Reality. Since this 'idea' is not anything existing in the real world but 'mental idea', this was to be seen as a chasm of his monistic metaphysics by realists.

In response to such British Idealists' difficult attempts between the two anathemas, Russell and Moore tried to challenge from the realist position. After overcoming subjective idealism by adopting the realist position altogether, they converted the monistic tendency of British Idealists into the pluralistic view of the world by the 'logical atomism'. This shift of course made them opposed to the Idealists in more particular points such as the notion of judgment, the epistemic relation between the knowing subject and its object, the theory of truth, and the moral theory.

Concurrently, British Idealism was opposed in Oxford by Cook Wilson, followed by the likes of Prichard, Carritt, and Joseph. The key to their rebellion was also the notion of judgment, which implied, for them, a backslide towards the dualism. Their evasion of subjective idealism was, however, not only shared with the Cambridge realists but also drove them towards the more radical 'direct realism' which denies any medium between the subject and its object in the theory of knowledge. This is the point by which they are distinguished from Cambridge realism.

Their 'direct realism' also resulted in the denial of the interrelation between the subject and its object ontologically and epistemologically, ultimately arriving at the dismissal of the theory of knowledge itself. Their rejection of the subject/object interaction was extended to moral epistemology, negating the interrelation between moral knowledge and human action. In this sense, Oxford realists insisted, with Moore, that moral value can not be known as knowledge but apprehended or intuited as the self-evident. Their discussions in ethics known as Oxford Intuitionism was mainly over the two questions; what is the content of the moral value as self-evident; and does this moral value really have nothing to do with human action.

In conclusion, the first decade of the twentieth-century was the period of the radical realist backlash against the dense idealist trend in the 1890s. The first wave from both Cambridge and Oxford quite critically challenged the British Idealist doctrines in many domains of philosophy from logic to ethics. Their aims of refuting British Idealism were varied, and they were gradually to leave from the dispute developing their own philosophy. For instance, Cambridge realism was to be the origin of analytic tradition as the mainstream twentieth-century philosophical current at least in Anglophone philosophy, whereas Oxford realism was to be the matrix of what is now known as Oxford Philosophy. Given those realists' arguments in seriously rebutting British Idealism, nevertheless, it is at least understood that the realism/idealism dispute was not an ignorable minor debate but an essential starting point for twentieth-century British philosophy.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SOPHISTICATION OF THE DISPUTE:
PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT (II)

I. Introduction

The radical rebellion against British Idealism by Oxbridge realist movements provoked some defensive arguments from the idealist camp, whereas some modifications of Oxbridge realism were offered from the realist standpoint. Following the beginnings of the dispute illustrated in the last chapter, in this chapter, I would like to shed light on the succeeding arguments up until 1930. Although these discussions are largely forgotten today because they are overwhelmed by the noticeable and productive development of analytic philosophy, these arguments show that the realism/idealism dispute occupied, to certain extent, the attention of philosophers throughout the period when Collingwood was developing the foundation of his philosophy.

II. The Defence of Idealism

Some defensive works appeared intermittently throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century in response to the criticisms arising from Oxford and Cambridge. I will pick up an earlier defender, H. H. Joachim, and the more comprehensive defence of Bernard Bosanquet.

1. H. H. Joachim

In 1906, Joachim, who regarded himself as a follower of Bradley, published *The Nature of Truth* aiming to refute the realist correspondence theory of truth with reference to his coherence theory. In this work, at the outset, he argues that the realist theory of truth is essentially that of correspondence. Referring to Russell's *Principles*

of Mathematics, he points out that the core of the correspondence theory is the 'one-one relation' between two parts of a whole. Although the correspondence theory tries to judge the truth or falsity of the relation of the two parts in asking whether they 'correspond' to each other, for Joachim, it is impossible because '[t]here is no "correspondence" between two "simple beings", nor between elements of wholes considered as "simple beings", i.e. without respect to the systematization of their wholes.'[1] For, even though the two beings in the world, say, A and B, are in a one-one relation, it does not necessarily follow that the relation bears the truth. Thus, we cannot say that the correspondence of A and B is the essential condition to be true. His refutation of the correspondence theory aims, in other words, to rebut the logic of 'proposition' advocated by early Russell. The point of his criticism is concerned with the conception of relation, asking whether the A and B are related necessarily by the nature of properties inherent in them or by some external idea provided by the knowing mind. This is the very point at which the realists began their refutation of idealism against Bradley, and Joachim again attempts to defend Bradley's position. In relation to this argument, he rejects the major realist doctrine, that is, the independence of the knowing subject and its object, maintaining that '[e]xperience [...] is a unity of two factors essentially inter-related and reciprocally involving each other for their being and their nature. Truth and falsity do not attach to one of those factors *in itself...*'[2] Therefore, Joachim's defence of idealism faithfully traces the main line of the realist critique of idealism mainly against Bradley, i.e. the conception of relation and the relation between the mind and reality, and then tries to refute the realist position along the line of Bradley.

In place of the realist correspondence theory, he offers the coherence theory of truth. As is apparent from his critique of propositional logic and his conception of relation as internal, he insists that some notion of 'whole' is required in order to sustain the truth of a judgment. Introducing such a 'whole' as the origin of truth, he

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[1] Joachim, *The Nature of Truth*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), p.10.
[2] Ibid. p.59.

defines the notion of truth as 'the systematic coherence which characterized a significant whole'.[3] A judgment concerning the relation of A and B can be determined only by reference to the 'whole' which includes A and B as parts systematically incorporated, but not by inherent properties which A and B have. In this way, Joachim tried to defend idealism in the field of the theory of truth.

Joachim's criticism of Russell's early conception of the logic of proposition has been recently re-evaluated in the context of the history of analytic philosophy. Nicholas Griffin's assessment of *The Nature of Truth*, for example, suggests that: 'it was the most sustained criticism that the fledgling analytic philosophy of Russell and Moore had received to that point, and it came from the still dominant neo-Hegelian tradition.'[4] Given also the fact that Russell himself considerably refers to Joachim's arguments quoting his own refutation of Joachim at length in *My Philosophical Development*,[5] therefore, it can be at least said that Joachim's defence of idealism was not merely an anachronistic defence of the philosophical status quo, but made a significant impact on the Cambridge realists.

2. Bernard Bosanquet

After the debate between Joachim and Russell, the realist movement in Cambridge started to reveal its characteristics as analytic philosophy, developing their original interest in logic and mathematics concurrent with the appearance of Wittgenstein on the scene. Following Joachim's objection to the Cambridge realists' theory of truth and their conception of a proposition, another major figure of British Idealism, Bosanquet, attempted to enter the dispute from a more inclusive point of view.

One of his early reactions to the dispute can be seen in his Adamson Lecture,

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[3] Ibid. p.79.
[4] Griffin, Nicholas, 'Some Remarks on Russell's Early Decompositional Style of Analysis', in Beaney, M. (ed.), *The Analytic Turn: Analysis in Early Analytic Philosophy and Phenomenology*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2007), p.79.
[5] For example, Russell, *My Philosophical Development*, Chapter 5.

The Distinction between Mind and Its Object[6] in 1913, which examines the influential realists' manifesto from American philosophers, *The New Realism: Co-operative Studies in Philosophy* (1912).[7] The topic of the lecture is, as obvious from the title, to examine the theories concerning the epistemic relation between mind and its object. In it he denies both extreme positions about the relation. He blames the radical form of realism which insists the complete independence of object from mind because it reduces 'the place of the mind in the actual world to its narrowest conceivable limit'[8] on the one hand, and on the other he rejects what he calls 'mentalism', which tends to deny the existence of the object, regarding it as 'a false form of idealism'. What is the right relation between mind and its object then? The right direction towards which the solution should head, he suggests, is some 'continuity' between them in contrast with both extreme positions which tend to be one-sided and reject the interrelation between them:

> Continuity of the real world with mind seems to me the inevitable goal and climax of twentieth-century physical realism [...]. If the object is to be real in its fullness, as it is the merit of that doctrine to affirm, it must be maintained in connection with its complete conditions. To try and hypostasise it apart from organisms with their minds is in my judgment an evasion of the task laid upon us by the arduousness of reality.[9]

He contends that for idealists there is a mutual relation between mind and object, and that this is also a necessary consequence of the realist position if it fully followed its position. The emerging realism since the turn of the century is, he contends, ultimately urged to conclude some 'continuity' of the mind and its object in order to avoid the mistakes of the extreme positions. In order to guarantee the full

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[6] Bosanquet, Bernard. *The Distinction between Mind and Its Object*, in Sweet W. (ed.), *The Collected Works of Bernard Bosanquet*, vol.8, (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1999). Originally published in 1913.
[7] Holt, E. and others, *The New Realism: Co-operative Studies in Philosophy*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912).
[8] Bosanquet, *The Distinction between Mind and Its Object*, p.25.
[9] Ibid. p. 49.

reality of the object, which that realism particularly stresses, we cannot ignore the 'organisms with their minds', an idealist notion of the whole. In this sense, Bosanquet as early as 1913 attempted to find some common point on which both camps have to agree, and then draw the realist camp on to the idealist side.

Bosanquet's interest in defending idealism continued up until he died. In *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy* (1921), [10] he finds that the fundamental points of philosophical questions of both camps centre on the matters such as the reality of time, progress, and ethics. Furthermore, he understands that the dispute between idealism and realism at bottom is concerned with the 'ethical and religious attitude to life'.[11] After examining the wide range of philosophical matters which underlie the dispute, he concludes that both positions are not complete. In line with the 1913 lecture however, he finds that they have a common basis in being oriented to 'some principle which unites the finite spirit with its world'.[12] Though he does not offer a clear solution to overcome the conflict between realism and idealism, in his view, it is overcome in the ethical and religious attitude to life, what is characteristic in him is that he seems to seek the key to solve the conflict in some 'moral point of view':

> We have seen how the very extremes of philosophy, in so far as it assumes the character of a philosophy of change, concentrate themselves round the moral point of view. The moral point of view is that in which man seeks his realisation in an endless process, and so perpetually feels the impulse to transcend his existing reality.[13]

Although few writers mention these books today, it is of interest that such a central figure of British Idealism responded directly to the new realist movement,

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[10] Bosanquet, Bernard. *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy*, in Sweet W. (ed.), *The Collected Works of Bernard Bosanquet*, vol.18, (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1999). Originally published in 1921.
[11] Ibid. p.203.
[12] Ibid. p.203.
[13] Ibid. p.214.

particularly focusing on the epistemological relation between the mind and its objects, defending the idealist position.

3. Summary

In the period when realist doctrines had a huge impact and were gaining sympathy among British philosophers, idealists were far from keeping their silence. Joachim tried to respond the first attack by realism, mainly examining Russell's *Principles of Mathematics* and G. E. Moore's 'The Refutation of Idealism' principally in the sphere of logic. His criticism of Russell's early logic of proposition gave rise to the debate between them, and left some impact on Cambridge realism, or early analytic philosophy. Bosanquet's early response appeared in 1913 in the form of the examination of *The New Realism*, followed by more comprehensive contemplations which, as well as taking account of more sophisticated versions of realism from Alexander, regarded the dispute between idealism and realism fundamentally concerning human attitudes towards moral and religious life. Bosanquet's defence of idealism was more epistemological than Joachim's. Their rebuttals of realism are, despite following different lines, fundamentally against the realist doctrine of the independent relation between mind and reality.[14] They try to rebuild the interrelation between the mind and reality which is destroyed by the realists. Although it is true that the standard history of twentieth-century British philosophy tends to be occupied by the revolutionary development of analytic philosophy germinated in Cambridge realism, it is at least evident from this short review that the idealist philosophers were far from convinced by the radical realist attacks both from Cambridge and Oxford during the 1900s, and constantly attempted to refute them at least throughout the 1910s.

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[14] However, it does not of course follow that Idealists are confusing them. For instance, Bosanquet, protesting against Moore's charge, admits that, say, a chair is a chair; and what an upholsterer says of it is a true description of it. But, there can be something missing in the chairmaker's description. 'It is ridiculous [from this] to say that it contradicts what the chairmaker says.' (Bosanquet, *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy*, p.5.)

III. The Realist Metaphysics

It was not only the idealist camp who responded to the initial collision between British Idealism and the realist movements at Cambridge and Oxford. There appeared more sophisticated works from the realist camp, keeping a certain distance from Cambridge and Oxford realism in the sense that they emphasised the construction of a metaphysical system on the realist foundations. Here, particularly in relation to Collingwood's argument, I will pick up on Alexander and Whitehead.

1. Samuel Alexander

In his British Academy Lecture entitled 'The Basis of Realism' delivered in 1914, partly being conscious of Bosanquet's attempt to solve the collapse of Bradley's monism into dualism in his *The Distinction of Mind and its Objects*, Alexander declares the principles of his version of realism.

In describing his own position, he understands the point of the realism/idealism dispute to be about the status of mind, and expresses his principle of realism as the 'democratic spirit' in the sense that he aims to seek an adequate and moderate status for mind between the arrogance of mind exemplified in the idealists' subjectivism and the contemporary realists' underestimation of mind. Furthermore, he attempts to clarify his position to assuage hasty hostility against him such as that of Bosanquet, finding the root of the hostility in the belief 'that in asserting the reality of the object, independent of mind though in relation to it, I am destroying the reality of mind, or at least am robbing it of that which gives it preciousness in knowledge and in life.'[15]

On the basis of his intention for a fairer treatment of mind, he makes a distinction between the subject-matter of science ('the empirical characters of various kinds of existences and their empirical laws') and that of metaphysics ('the fundamental or *a priori* characters of things',[16]) and then identifies the foregrounding

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[15] Alexander, 'The Basis of Realism', p.281.
[16] Ibid. p.283.

issue of the dispute (the relation between mind and its object) as a question of metaphysics. The relation between mind and its object so understood is thus explained by Alexander:

> Now the experience of this relation of knower to known declares that mind and its object are two separate existences connected together by the relation of togetherness or compresence, where the word compresence is not taken to imply co-existence in the same moment of time, but only the fact of belonging to one experienced world.[17]

This statement can be analysed into the following three points: (1) mind and its object are two separate existences; (2) both of them are connected by the relation of 'compresence'; and, (3) the term 'compresence' means that mind and its object do not co-exist in a moment of time somehow related but simply belong to one empirical world. By this basic view of the relation between mind and its object, Alexander implies not only the antithesis to idealism which tends to be inclined to insist the reign of mind over its object (1), but also to the negation of mind in contemporary realism at Cambridge and Oxford (2); and instead tries to reconcile the opposition by insisting on a common sense (3).

In refuting Berkeleian subjective idealism, he takes up and denies its belief that 'the mental fact is inseparable for the object' while affirming the opposite 'the object is inseparable for mental fact'. He finds the fallacy of this type of subjective idealism in missing the nature of mind, i.e. mind selects its objects by its own choice out of all existences in the world, then concludes that '[t]he mind apprehends only what it is interested in; that is, what affects it in any way. But selection, while it creates the limitation of the mind to what is selected, does not alter the object selected.'[18]

On the other hand, he is also critical of contemporary realism calling it 'naïve realism'. In responding to the naïve realists' rejection of the interaction between mind

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[17] Ibid. p.283.
[18] Ibid. p.302.

and its object, he tries to modify it in regarding mind as not independent from the body to which it belongs, despite being distinguished existences. Although he never mentions the Oxford realists in his lecture, his criticism of 'naïve realism' can also be applied to them in so far as the relation between mind and its object is concerned.

After examining the idea of mind in both extreme positions of the dispute, he points out the confusion of 'Mind' in the *a priori* or categorical sense with 'minds' in the empirical sense as a common error in both camps, and then he understands mind as empirical into which the *a priori* or categorical forms pervade in nature.

> It is not true that objects are mind. What is true is that into the constitution of mind enter the formal elements, and above all the fundamental ones of space and time, which enter also into physical and living things. The empirical mind is an outcome of and is built up upon the lower levels of empirical existence, in which also these elements are contained. The mind has a body of life; and life has a body of physical and chemical properties.[19]

In other words, the common error is to regard mind as 'Mind' which pervades the empirical existences as a property. Idealism affirms this view and finds some mental elements in empirical objects whereas realism rejects it and insists the complete separation between mind and its object. The reason why they go so extreme is that both of them presuppose this error. Instead, Alexander understands mind as empirical which exists in the empirical world and places it on 'time' and 'space' as the *a priori* or categorical conditions of mind. He thus seeks the essential cause of the opposition between realism and idealism in the conflict over the erroneous idea of mind. His own identification as a realist owes to the very empirical notion of mind.[20]

His *Space, Time, and Deity* (1920) was the work in which he attempted to build a metaphysical system on the ground of his realist conception of mind as empirical mind. In this work, he justifies treating mind in the empirical method, and

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[19] Ibid. p.309.
[20] Alexander, *Space, Time, and Deity*, p.8.

applies the same categories such as time and space with objects from his position that mind and its objects are equally members of an empirical world. What he implies by 'empirical method' here seems to be primarily 'scientific' since he deeply commits himself to the psychological study of mind, and regards philosophy and science essentially identical:

> Since, then, philosophy differs from the sciences nowise in its spirit but only in its boundaries, in dealing with certain comprehensive features of experience which lie outside the preview of the special sciences, its method will be like theirs empirical. It will proceed like them by reflective description and analysis of its special subject-matter. It will like them use hypothesis by which to bring its data into verifiable connection. Its certainty like theirs will extend no further than its efficiency in providing a reasoned exhibition of such system as can be discovered in these data. But the word empirical must not to be too closely pressed. It is intended to mean nothing more than the method used in the special sciences.[21]

In short, his point concerning the realism/idealism dispute is over the understanding of mind. By his fundamental view of mind that mind is an empirical existence compresent with things in the world, he distinguishes himself from both camps in the dispute. Since mind exists in time and space in the empirical world, he objects to idealism in maintaining that things to be mind's object also exist in space and time, and they are not in any sense mind-dependent. On the other hand, 'naïve realism' which thinks that mind and things are not only ontologically but also epistemologically separate from one another is, he contends, also fallacious because it cannot account for the illusion. Mind is at least not independent from the body, it is a physical thing. Thus, mind and things are in mutual interaction. Between those radical positions, he rejects both and derives a more modest realism from his view of mind. The reason why he still regards his view as realism rests, in spite of the ostensibly idealist contention of the interaction between mind and its object, on his empirical

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[21] Ibid. p.4.

conception of mind. This leads him to adopt an empirical or scientific approach to mind which depends upon psychology. Alexander, therefore, invests the realism/idealism dispute with what he calls the 'democratic spirit' which seeks an adequate status for mind; and consequently attempts to build a realist metaphysical system with his characteristic notion of mind as empirical.

2. A. N. Whitehead

A. N. Whitehead, Russell's co-author of *Principia Mathematica*, also develops a metaphysical system in his work *Process and Reality* (1929). He was a latecomer to the realism/idealism dispute and not deeply involved in it, in the sense that he was originally a mathematician and gradually shifted his interest to metaphysics during the 1910s and 1920s. The list of philosophical standpoints to which he is opposed given in the preface of *Process and Reality*, nevertheless, significantly reflects the key points of the dispute. The list is as follows:

(i) The distrust of speculative philosophy.

(ii) The trust in language as an adequate expression of propositions.

(iii) The mode of philosophical thought which implies, and is implied by, the faculty-psychology.

(iv) The subject-predicate form of expression.

(v) The sensationalist doctrine of perception.

(vi) The doctrine of vacuous actuality.

(vii) The Kantian doctrine of the objective world as a theoretical construct from purely subjective experience.

(viii) Arbitrary deductions in *ex absurdo* arguments.

(ix) Belief that logical inconsistencies can indicate anything else than some antecedent errors.[22]

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[22] Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, p.viii.

His critique of the idealist side of the dispute may be identified as (v), (vi), and (vii). The idealist doctrine (vii) that the existences (objects) in the objective world are composed of some subjective properties results, unified with the affirmation of sense-data (v), in the abstraction of the 'philosophical conceptions of a real world' from 'the world of daily experience'.[23] In other words, he tries to eliminate any subjective or mental elements regarding the world of daily experience in negating the Kantian idea of the world and sense-datum theory. For him such subjective or mental elements abstract from the real world are 'vacuous actuality' (vi), by which he means the 'devoid of subjective immediacy'. This 'vacuous actuality', Whitehead suggests 'haunts realistic philosophy',[24] and is one of the most essential targets for contemporary realists; and the line of Whitehead's criticism as the abstraction of mental (subjective) ideas from the world is, as we have seen above, that of the contemporary realists such as Russell and Moore particularly against Bradleys' idealism. In spite of his critical comments on idealism, Whitehead is free from the realist phobia about Bradleian Absolute Idealism which drives realists to radical realism. As a matter of fact, he finds an implicit refutation of 'vacuous actuality' in Bradley's *Essays on Truth and Reality*, and even regards his own cosmology, if successful, as 'a transformation of some main doctrines of Absolute Idealism onto a realistic basis.'[25]

While sharing the points of criticism of idealism with the contemporary realists, Whitehead's principal view of philosophy is remarkably different from theirs. Indeed, he develops the criticisms of Cambridge realists' mathematical reform of philosophy regarding it as 'the unfortunate notion' at the beginning of *Process and Reality*: '[p]hilosophy has been haunted by the unfortunate notion that its method is dogmatically to indicate premises which are severally clear, distinct, and certain; and to erect upon those premises a deductive system of thought.'[26] It seems to be

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[23] Ibid. p.218.
[24] Ibid. p.36.
[25] Ibid. p.vii.
[26] Ibid. p.10.

interesting here that he take up his *Principia Mathematica*, a joint work with Russell, as an example of such a view of philosophy, while trying to save himself from expected blame for committing the same view as Russell by explaining that the parts which contain such a view are written not by him but by Russell.[27] Granting that mathematical or scientific first principles are 'half-truth', he understands philosophy to be the consciousness to grasp human experience more generally, comprehensively, and systematically challenging such partial views of human experience. In identifying philosophy with the dialectical process of thinking in the sense that '[p]hilosophy is the self-correction by consciousness of its own initial express of subjectivity', he describes the function of philosophy as follows:

> The useful function of philosophy is to promote the most general systematization of civilized thought. There is a constant reaction between specialism and common sense, it is the part of the special sciences to modify common sense. Philosophy is the welding and common sense into a restraint upon specialists, and also into an enlargement of their imaginations.[28]

His view of philosophy as opposed to that of the Cambridge realists thus can be taken as his refutation of (i) the distrust of speculative philosophy.

His idea of philosophy and criticism of contemporary philosophy is, as is found in (iv), partly rooted in his denial of the traditional conception of a proposition as the subject-predicate proposition. He finds its origin in Aristotelian logic, and is hostile to it in claiming that '[t]he dominance of Aristotelian logic from the late classical period onwards has imposed on metaphysical thought the categories naturally derivative from its phraseology.'[29] In this sense, he is opposed to (iv), and even calls it 'evil'.

In criticising the traditional notion of a proposition as such, he traces the concept back to judgment which is the origin of the realism/idealism dispute. Whereas

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[27] Ibid. p.10f.
[28] Ibid. p.20.
[29] Ibid. p.41.

Russell and Moore insist that the truth or falsity of a judgment is determined by the inherent logical relation between properties of which the judgment is comprised irrespective of the judging subject, Whitehead takes an idealist position supporting Bradley that a judgment is determined by the subject, maintaining that: '[a] judgment is a feeling in the "process" of the judging subject, and it is correct or incorrect respecting that subject. It enters, as a value, into the satisfaction of that subject; and it can only be criticized by the judgments of actual entities in the future.'[30] Following such an idealist notion of judgment, he distinguishes the judgment from proposition and regards the latter as a component of the former, in contrast with early Russell and Moore who identify them. A proposition, Whitehead defines, 'emerges in the analysis of a judgment; it is the datum of the judgment in abstraction from the judging subject and from the subjective form.'[31] Succeeding the Russellian and Moorenian notion of proposition, in other words, he understands it as 'the potentiality of the objectification of certain presupposed actual entities.'[32] A judgment is a place in which the proposition as 'potentiality' is embodied in a specific and concrete form by a judging subject—for which the presupposition holds—that this potentiality is, or is not, realized for it.'[33] Rejecting the traditional notion of proposition as merely subject-predicate, thus, he attempts to refine the notion of proposition. Equally adopting Cambridge realists' proposition and idealists' judgment, Whitehead understands the relation between the both, i.e. proposition as 'potentiality' and judgment as its embodiment. This contrast between the realist notion of proposition and the idealist notion of judgement clarifies the abstract nature of proposition from the judging subject. This is therefore intended to be a criticism of (ii).[34]

Furthermore, his idealist notion of judgment results in a similar position in the focal point of the dispute, i.e. the relation between mind (subject) and its object. He

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[30] Ibid. p.270.
[31] Ibid. p.272.
[32] Ibid. p.278.
[33] Ibid. p.278.
[34] As mentioned in the last chapter, however, this criticism of the subject-predicate proposition cannot be applied to the later Cambridge realists, at least from the 1910s onwards. Russell extended the range of analysis to other types of proposition after the middle of the 1900s.

describes the relation as follows:

> All actual entities in the actual world, relatively to a given actual entity a 'subject', are
> necessarily 'felt' by that subject, though in general vaguely. An actual entity as felt is said to be
> 'objectified' for that subject. Only a selection of eternal objects are then said to have
> 'ingression' in that subject.[35]

In contrast with the contemporary realists who reject the interaction between mind
(subject) and its object, he maintains that they are related in the sense that an external
thing is 'objectified' by being selected out of other external things and 'felt' by a
subject. What is to occupy the subject are the things selected by the very subject, and
an 'object' as what is selected is influenced as long as the subject selects. He regards
his own account of the interaction between mind and its object as the 'inversion' of
Kant's account of it in *The Critique of Pure Reason*. Whereas in Kant 'the world
emerges from the subject' in the sense that Kant describes the process of the
interaction between them as starting from the subject's idea to its object as affected by
the idea, 'the subject emerges from the worlds' in Whitehead because he 'seeks to
describe how objective data pass into subjective satisfaction.'[36] Although Whitehead's
account can be seen as more objective in the sense that he is disposed to describe the
subject on the basis of the actual world, he is opposed to realists including those in
Oxford and agrees with idealists and Alexander in so far as granting the interaction
between mind and its object.[37]

Although it might not be fully relevant to count Whitehead in the participants
of the realism/idealism dispute, it is still apparent that his philosophy is deeply rooted
in the dispute. As can be known from the list of philosophical positions to which he
rejects, he is hostile to subjective idealism which is the common enemy of both sides

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[35] Ibid. p.56.
[36] Ibid. p.123.
[37] In spite of his agreement with Alexander as such, Whitehead seems to be different from
Alexander in rejecting the psychological attitude in philosophy. (iii)

of the dispute. He even denies any mental entities such as sense-data which Cambridge realism affirms. His disagreement with Cambridge realism becomes more explicit when he attacks their mathematical reform of philosophy and their early conception of proposition. His denial of the propositional logic ultimately results in his assertion as the mutual interaction between mind and its object. In this respect, his position sharply contrasts with both Oxbridge realism and subjective idealism, and comes close to the Alexander's position while he differs from Alexander in the view concerning the relation between philosophy and science.

3. Summary

Alexander and Whitehead are unique in their apparent attempts to develop a metaphysical system from the realist standpoint. In spite of their different approaches, they share the view that the mind and the world are both real and mutually interrelated. As long as they understand the mind as 'empirical' or what is derived from the world, they regard themselves as realists. Now, the focus of the discussion again comes to be the relation between the mind and the world in metaphysics and the subject and its object in epistemology. Although they seem to differ in whether or not to admit the scientific approaches to human mind such as psychology, they share their rejection of the radical realism of Cambridge and Oxford and subjective idealism, and comes close to the Alexander's position while he differs from Alexander in the view concerning the relation between philosophy and science.

IV. Conclusion

It may be said that the realism/idealism dispute in the first few decades of the twentieth-century in Britain was, in an aspect, a history of arguments over the relation between mind and reality sharing the common anathemas, i.e. subjective idealism and dualism in various spheres of philosophy. While British Idealism strove to situate experience in their idealist system, Oxford and Cambridge realism tried to detach reality from mind taking for granted the significance of mind. The defenders of idealism such as Joachim and Bosanquet attempted to reaffirm the mutual relation

between mind and reality; and Alexander and Whitehead aimed to achieve the same interaction on the realist basis. In this sense, Alexander's remark that the dispute between realism and idealism is over the status of mind was right. Under this major question as to the status of mind, participants in the dispute discussed and disagreed over the special points such as the notion of judgment as the breaking-point of the dispute, the epistemic relation between the knowing subject and its object, theory of truth, and moral theory. The focus of the debate, roughly speaking, gradually shifted from logic in the 1900s (the notion of judgment), epistemology in the 1910s (the subject and its object), to moral philosophy in the 1920s. This debate was to lose its liveliness and ultimately faded out towards the 1930s, shadowed by the development of analytic philosophy under some Continental sources such as Gottlob Frege and Ludwig Wittgenstein. In spite of the standard landscape of the early twentieth-century British philosophy in the present point of view, what also prominently comes to surface is the very dispute between realists and idealists involving most of major philosophers when we go into the philosophical literature of this period. Hence, it can be naturally supposed that this dispute is what was confronted by Collingwood as a philosophical question to be tackled when he started reading philosophy at Oxford.

How did Collingwood encounter the dispute then? This is the question of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

BETWEEN THE EXTREMES: BIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

I. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have given an overview of the dispute between realism and idealism in the early decades of the twentieth century in Britain, the period Collingwood was laying the foundation of his philosophical position. Many major philosophers were committed to the dispute having allegiances to British Idealism, Oxford realism, Cambridge realism and modified realists such as Alexander and Whitehead.

In illustrating the background behind Collingwood's critique of 'realism', the next question to arise is: 'how did he encounter and become involved with the contemporary dispute between realism and idealism?' In answer to this question I will attempt a biographical reconstruction of his early period of philosophical development, roughly up until the first half of the 1920s dividing it into four periods: his childhood until 1908; the Oxford years as a student and don from 1908 to 1916; what he calls 'a year of negative criticism' in London (1916); and thereafter.

Evidence of his younger period is very limited, though some primary evidence survives.[1] Partly due to this lack of evidence, his early years have scarcely been explored, with some exceptions such as W. M. Johnston's *The Formative Years of R. G. Collingwood*.[2] In spite of such limited materials to work with, however, we shall at

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[1] For example, 'Collingwood Diary' in possession of Mrs Teresa Smith.

[2] Johnston, W. M., *The Formative Years of R. G. Collingwood*, (Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967). Also, some testimonies and comments can be found in Smith, Teresa, 'R. G. Collingwood: "This Ring of Thought": Notes on Early Influence', *Collingwood Studies*, vol.1, (1994), pp.27-43.; Peters, Rik, 'Collingwood's Logic of Question and Answer, its relation to Absolute Presuppositions: another brief history', *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies*, vol.6, (1999), pp.1-28.

least discover that Collingwood's early years are characterised by two different intellectual sources, that is, the influences from his father, W. G. Collingwood, and John Ruskin; and the education at Oxford from his realist teachers such as Cook Wilson and E. F. Carritt.

II. Childhood: W. G. Collingwood and John Ruskin

Collingwood was born on 22 February, 1889, at Cartmell Fell, Lake District. He was the only son and third of the four children of William Gershom Collingwood (1854-1932) and mother, Edith Mary (1857-1928). William was a writer, painter, archaeologist, and dedicated secretary and biographer of John Ruskin. Edith also had aesthetic talent as a pianist and watercolourist. Before he went up to Oxford in 1908, R. G. Collingwood was privately educated by his father followed by a year in a preparatory school in Grange in 1902 and Rugby school from 1903 to 1908. Although materials concerning his childhood before Oxford are very limited, he describes in his *Autobiography* that the historical and archaeological groundings cultivated in his childhood underlie a significant background of his philosophy.

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Collingwood briefly illustrates the education he received in his childhood in his *Autobiography*. A remarkable element of his early education was, according to the book, his family circumstances, his father in particular. Despite the fact that his family house was located in the countryside, Collingwood's life was usually busy, full of intellectual and aesthetic activities surrounded by his parents, sisters and their artistic friends. In such circumstances, he had plenty of experiences which inspired insights into intellectual and aesthetic problems. For example, as he observed the process of their painting, he realised that 'no "work of art" is ever finished, so that in that sense of the phrase there is no such thing as a "work of art" at all' (AA: 2). Even though a painting has become distanced from the painter's hands and is exhibited in a gallery, it does not necessarily mean, unlike what critics tend to think, that the painting is finished or a completed work. Similarly, he raises another experience which forms a

part of his intellectual nature. When he went to his friend's house in his ninth year and found an old book about natural science which presents an old-fashioned theory of nature, comparing with modern theory, it alerted him to the fact that theories of nature are constantly revised and changed even though contemporary theories appear to insist that they possess the eternal truth (AA: 1-2). What he intends symbolically to show by digging up such initial memories in his childhood seems to be his profound awareness of the developing and changing nature behind the current form of knowledge, human works or human activities, although he, of course, adds that these experiences did not immediately alert him to such insights, but instead provided a foundation for his future intellectual development.

While teaching Greek and Latin languages for two or three hours every morning, William influenced his son to a great extent. William was the son of a landscape painter, named after his father, and studied at University College, Oxford tutored by a representative of British Idealism, Bernard Bosanquet. When he was studying at Oxford, William met with John Ruskin and was strongly influenced by him. After graduating from Oxford, he followed Ruskin as his secretary. While with Ruskin, William wrote some books on Ruskin's thought as well as his biography. After the death of Ruskin in 1900, he directed his energies till his death in 1932 to archaeology, which had been inspired by William Morris. Apart from R. G. Collingwood's interest in art, it is obvious that there are at least three elements which were shared by both father and son, namely British Idealism, Ruskin, and archaeology.

Although these three are mutually related, Johnston particularly stresses the influence of John Ruskin on Collingwood regarding William as the 'mediator' between Collingwood and Ruskin,[3] and then picks up some common factors among Ruskin, William, and Collingwood: (1) the enthusiasm for the many-sided life; (2) the notion that the arts can be understood and interpreted only by someone who is trained to practice them; (3) the importance of hobbies as a means of keeping the mind active;

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[3] Johnston, *The Formative Years of R. G. Collingwood*, p.28.

and (4) faith in the power of the written word.[4] The first element was inherited from his family life stimulating interests not only in philosophy but in art, history, and archaeology. The second feature is exemplified when he looks back at his experiences of observing his parents' works of art in childhood in *Autobiography* and also can be found in his later work, *Principles of Art*. The third element derived from the first two, and is manifest in his various hobbies such as sailing, singing, travelling, and book-binding. Lastly, his faith in the power of written word is obvious from the fact that he left a number of writings and books as a philosopher and archaeologist.

Johnston contends that it is Ruskin's influence and ideals, imparted through his father, that differentiated Collingwood from his philosophical contemporaries. No matter how much he was aware of Ruskin's influence by himself, it is at least corroborated by his earlier lecture in 1919 entitled 'Ruskin's Philosophy', which attempts to articulate Ruskin's ideas into philosophical outlook, while implicitly protesting against 'realist' doctrines in philosophy.

Not entirely detached from Ruskin's impact, Fred Inglis, the author of a recently published biography of Collingwood, remarks that the influence of British Idealists represented by T. H. Green was his father's heritage to his son:

> [British Idealists] taught, and [William] passed on to his son, not only that it is our ideas about the world that constitute our understanding of the relations between things rather than our empirical sense-experiences, but also Green's early and telling lesson of excellent civic-mindedness as well as of the English liberal principle that any extension of one person's freedom must be commensurate with the same freedom for others.[5]

Whether it is inherited from his father or not, Collingwood certainly positively evaluates the influence of British Idealism on public life. It was not for him simply an academic philosophical movement:

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[4] Ibid. pp.28-30.
[5] Inglis, Fred, *History Man: The Life of R. G. Collingwood*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p.9.

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The 'Greats' school was not meant as a training for professional scholars and philosophers; it was meant as a training for public life in the Church, at the Bar, in the Civil Service, and in Parliament. The school of Green set out into public life a stream of ex-pupils who carried with them the conviction that philosophy, and in particular the philosophy they had learnt at Oxford, was an important thing, and that their vocation was to put it into practice. (AA: 17)

Similarly, archaeology, another facet of William's career, can easily be found in Collingwood's lifelong commitment to it, and Collingwood later confesses that his engagement with archaeological research set the foundation of his lack of sympathy with his 'realist' teachers. In this sense, many of William's passions were inherited by Collingwood and contributed to the formation of his intellectual character.

In addition, another childhood experience, the reading of Kant's *Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals,* was to have a lasting influence on him. He recollects: 'I felt that the contents of this book, although I could not understand it, were somehow my business: a matter personal to myself, or rather to some future self of my own. [...] I felt as if a veil had been lifted and my destiny revealed' (AA: 4). The book mentioned is Kant's *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* translated by Abbott. Although he does not concretely give us how it made an impact on his thought at length, it is a fact that he was to be involved in philosophical thinking in his life.

By contrast with his years with his family before going up to school, his recollections are mainly negative concerning his period as a school pupil. He recalls that his years in Rugby school were mainly a waste (AA: 11), and complains that the 'faults of the English public-school system' led to a stultifying education in contrast to that given by his father which gave him 'an adult scholar's attitude'. He does not forget to add that he found at least one reliable schoolmaster and some friends. His time at Rugby resulted, he unhappily recalls, in conflicts with the restrictive curriculum, with school teachers, and the school culture which centred on sports. Therefore, leaving Rugby to go to Oxford was, he reports, 'like being let out of

prison' (AA: 12). Inglis's biography of Collingwood does, however, suggest that Collingwood was far less unhappy at Rugby than he portrays.[6]

Johnston, in seeking the basis of the unique *rapprochement* of history and philosophy in Collingwood, offers an interesting view of his educational background in contrast with most of other contemporaries:

> It seems probable therefore that Collingwood brought with him to Oxford a predisposition to study relations between history and philosophy. This bent can be explained best as a consequence of his early education. First, he was already twelve years old before he was subjected to the divisions of knowledge into classroom "subjects". Most men absorb these distinctions as early as the second or third grade, when English, mathematics, history are taught as utterly distinct subjects. Second, and perhaps more important, Collingwood had encountered at a very early age his father's interests in matters as disparate as art, history, archaeology, and geology. The seed of the question of how these fields relate to one another was planted early in Collingwood's mind, far earlier than in that of most children.[7]

As a matter of fact, all of these interests are concretely reflected in Collingwood's intellectual life. Collingwood's childhood was therefore filled with, as it were, an 'idealistic atmosphere' in the broader sense in which the humanistic, rather than the scientific, aspects of intellectual endeavour were enhanced.

III. The Exposure to Realist Doctrines: 1908-1916

After leaving Rugby, he went up to University College, Oxford, his father's college, in 1908. Feeling liberated from the intellectually restrictive and uncomfortable atmosphere at Rugby, Collingwood spent most of his undergraduate years immersed in study, so hard he suggests that it laid the foundation of his later insomnia and ill health. On graduating from University College with a First in Greats, he was appointed a fellow and tutor at Pembroke College, Oxford in 1912, and then worked

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[6] Ibid.pp.34-48.
[7] Johnston, *The Formative Years of R. G. Collingwood*, pp.35-6.

as a don until he left Oxford for London for wartime service at the Admiralty Intelligence Division. He continued to have students at Oxford whom he visited once a week, often visiting his friend and teacher E. F. Carritt, to whose son he was a godfather.

In this section, I will outline his first period at Oxford from 1908 to 1916 focusing on what he studied as a student and then how he developed what he learnt in the early years of his academic career.

1. As an undergraduate student: 1908-12

What did Collingwood actually study at Oxford? Like most of his contemporary philosophers at Oxford, he read Greats in the School of Literae Humaniores after reading for Classical Moderations. As he notes in his *Autobiography*, he was expected to read Homer, Vergil, Demosthenes, and Cicero as compulsory subjects in the curriculum of Classical Moderations. Also, there was some degree of choice in the subjects he studied. He chose Lucretius out of Tacitus, Livy, Plautus, Lucan, and Cicero; Theocretus out of Plato's *Republic*, Pindar, Thucydides, Aristphanes; Agamemnon out of Antigone, Hippolytus.[8] In addition to these compulsory duties, he spent most of his free time reading what he was interested in, shutting himself away from 'all the good easy social life'. Among what he read privately, at least since 1909, was the work of Croce.[9] After he obtained a First in the Classical Moderations, he started reading philosophy in Greats in 1910.

In his years in Greats, he had two tutors, one in ancient history, and one in philosophy, namely E. F. Carritt, who was to be his long-lasting friend and colleague. While he was required to submit a weekly essay for each tutor and attend some recommended lectures, he was almost completely free to arrange his own study in his own way. In ancient history, he fulfilled his intellectual desire in widely reading excavation reports at Greek and Roman sites and in spending one vacation surveying

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[8] University of Oxford, 'The Examination Statues', June 16, (1909), (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p.40.
[9] Peters, 'Collingwood's Logic of Question and Answer, its relation to Absolute Presuppositions: another brief history', p.6.

ancient Sicily. In philosophy, although it is difficult specifically to identify which lectures he attended, in reality due to the lack of evidence, we can at least suppose that he attended Cook Wilson's lectures as well as perhaps the rest of 'realist' philosophers mentioned in his *Autobiography,* such as H. A. Prichard and H. W. B. Joseph on Carritt's advice. He mentions his attendance at those lectures as evidence of his profound philosophical training in Oxford realism: '[m]y own tutor E. F. Carritt was another prominent member of the "realist" school, and sent me to lectures with Cook Wilson and the rest. I was thus thoroughly indoctrinated with its principles and methods' (AA: 22).

As a matter of fact, during the period Collingwood was reading philosophy in Greats, Cook Wilson was Wykeham Professor of Logic lecturing on logic three days a week.[10] In addition, Prichard was lecturing on the 'theory of knowledge' and Kant's 'metaphysics of morals', while Joseph was lecturing on Plato, and Carritt on 'Introduction to the philosophy of art' and 'Introduction to moral philosophy'. [11] Thus, it was undoubtedly the case that Collingwood was thoroughly exposed to 'realist' doctrines. On the other hand, as Collingwood testifies, '[t]here were still among the philosophers a few representatives of the original movement' (AA: 18), this is corroborated by the fact that some idealist figures were lecturing at the same time. For instance, J A. Smith was appointed as Waynflete Professor of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy and started lecturing from Michaelmas term of 1910, the same time Collingwood started reading philosophy. Smith broadly lectured on various topics such as logic, 'philosophy of religion', 'feeling', 'aesthetics of Benedetto Croce'; whereas other idealists, such as H. H. Joachim were also lecturing on Plato, Aristotle, and Descartes. However, the philosophical climate at Oxford then was already unsympathetic towards the idealist school in the sense that the school 'presented itself to most Oxford philosophers as something which had to be destroyed,

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[10] University of Oxford, 'Oxford University Gazette', 13 October, (1910); March 15; October 12, (1911), (Oxford: University of Oxford).
[11] 'Oxford University Gazette', 13 October, (1910); January 19; April 27, (1911), (Oxford: University of Oxford). There were also other realists, such as W. D. Ross lecturing at the same time.

and in destroying which [Oxford philosophers] would be discharging their first duty to their subject' (AA: 19).

That is the atmosphere Collingwood observed and sensed during his undergraduate days. In such a philosophical climate, in which realist philosophy was becoming increasingly dominant, he became familiar with 'realist' doctrines and regarded himself as a 'realist' despite feeling a little uncomfortable with their methods. He noticed, for example, while listening to Cook Wilson's lectures, he 'found that [Cook Wilson] constantly criticised Bradley for views which were not Bradley's' (AA: 22).

When Collingwood went to Oxford, the Greats curriculum was still running. Under the Greats, Collingwood extensively studied both in philosophy and ancient history. The curriculum seemed strikingly to fit with Collingwood's educational background cultivated by his family, father, and Ruskin since childhood. [12] In philosophy, what he encountered at Oxford was the opposite of what he had been exposed to as a young man, namely realist doctrines. Collingwood observed that they were 'obsessed' by the idealist doctrine in the sense that idealists were the object of attack and had to be discredited if one wished to be a sane philosopher. Although Collingwood positively read the 'realist' doctrines, a sense of incongruity came up in his mind in reading the 'realist' philosophy. After all however, it still remained a vague germ of doubt, not logically articulated at all.

2. The young don: 1912-1916

In June 1912, he was awarded a fellowship and tutorship in philosophy at Pembroke College after taking a First in Greats. Putting his reservations concerning 'realist' philosophy to one side, he took his first steps as an academic philosopher. When we

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[12] Johnston also insists on this point:
'he fitted superbly into a curriculum which, at least in principle, placed equal emphasis on Ancient history and Philosophy, both to be studied through Latin and Greek. Unlike most candidates, Collingwood worked equally hard on history and philosophy' (Johnston, *The Formative Years of R. G. Collingwood*, p.33.)

look at his diary,[13] there is evidence to show his involvement in the realist philosophical circle including that beyond Oxford. While he met with 'realists' such as Carritt (often), Ross (October 1912), Joseph (December 1913), and Whitehead (March 1914), he was also seeing J. A. Smith quite often. Presumably inspired by Smith, he extensively read Croce's work such as *Logica*, *Estetica*, and *Cultura* during this period. His interest in Croce inspired him to translate Croce's *Philosophy of Gianvattista Vico* in 1913, which stimulated a correspondence with Croce, which was to last at least until the end of the 1930s. We can see from the evidence that Collingwood was expanding his acquaintanceship outside Oxford especially with the Italian Idealist philosophers, while maintaining a close relationship with his 'realist' colleagues at Oxford.

In spite of his association with idealism and idealists, his questions concerning Oxford realism do not appear to surface in these early years. In his daily teaching and in giving his first lectures as a philosopher on Aristotle's *De Anima* in 1913, what he tried to do was to lay down 'sound scholarship' by emphasising 'first-hand study'. This policy of teaching seemed to be implicitly aimed at preventing students from being deceived by Cook Wilson's[14] misrepresentation of philosophers such as Bradley. In the process of teaching, he was committed to a 'frank attack' on 'realists' for their ignorance of history:

> If you had thought it possible to forewarn the 'realists' of this attack, I should have said, 'You must pay more attention to history. Your positive doctrines about knowledge are incompatible with what happens, according to my own experience, in historical research; and your critical methods are misused on doctrines which in historical fact were never held by those to whom you ascribe them.' (AA: 28)

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[13] 'Collingwood Diary', in the collection of Mrs Teresa Smith.
[14] Also he adds G. E. Moore's name to it in *Autobiography*.

What he was developing during this period he expressed in his first philosophical book, *Religion and Philosophy*, published in 1916, in order to tidy up and put behind him 'a number of thoughts arising out of his juvenile studies in theology'(AA: 43) before he went to London for the wartime service.

To sum up, having in his mind his dissatisfaction with 'realists' arising during his undergraduate years, Collingwood started his academic career as a fellow and tutor in philosophy at Pembroke College, socialising with his 'realist' colleagues such as Carritt. On the other hand, however, he seemed to seek sources of inspirations which could clarify his dissatisfaction with 'realism', stimulated by Smith and reading and translating the works of Croce. In the process of clarification of his dissatisfactions as such, he tried to express them by emphasising 'first-hand study' of philosophical works in his daily teaching in order to lay down 'sound scholarship' among his students. In this sense, he was to some extent already implicitly critical of 'realism'.

IV. 'A Year of Negative Criticism': 1916

Leaving *Religion and Philosophy* behind, Collingwood went away to London to work for the Admiralty Intelligence Division from 1916 to 1919. This work was voluntary and assumed that those undertaking it had independent incomes. Collingwood insisted that he would not be able to do the work unless he was paid at least expenses. Although he lived and worked in London, he was not completely isolated from Oxford because, as we can see in his *Diary*, he still took part in teaching at Oxford and accordingly went back to Oxford on a regular basis and frequently met Carritt and his family. He maintained his close contact with 'realists' at Oxford even while living in London. The account he gives in his *Autobiography* illustrates a significant change in his position towards 'realism'. Furthermore, his self-recognition of the change is not only found in his later recollections, but also in the immediate evidence written by him at the time. Noting comments he wrote in his working copy of *Religion and*

Philosophy around 1917, he repudiated the book as 'still realist', and designated the year of 1916 'a year of negative criticism'.[15]

The reason he gives for his change of mind is his 'meditation' on the Albert Memorial in Hyde Park, passing it every day while commuting to the office. According to Collingwood's own account, the monument gradually struck his mind by its 'ugliness' as he commuted, and he started to ask the question 'why Scott made such a thing?' From what he thought about the Albert Memorial, he developed a counter-argument to 'realism' which developed his dissatisfaction with 'realism' as a philosophy ignorant of history, as evidenced by Cook Wilson's lectures on logic.[16] In light of his archaeological research, he was already aware of what he calls the importance of the 'questioning activity' in knowledge. Applying this 'questioning' habit to the case of the reason why Scott made the monument, which appears to Collingwood unbelievably ugly, he pondered possible situations which might lie behind its present form. For instance, Scott might not have aimed to make a beautiful thing. If he did aim to make something beautiful, then he failed, but if not he may have succeeded in what he was trying to do. It suggests to Collingwood that he is required to do a sort of historical survey in order to know the answer to his question and evaluate the monument. It cannot simply be judged from its present appearance. This consideration helped Collingwood to clarify what had struck him in listening to Cook Wilson's criticism of Bradley. Understanding 'realists'' method of criticism as 'propositional logic', Collingwood makes the analogy with his Albert Memorial meditations. Taking the monument as a 'proposition' in logic, the proposition must have gone through some process before it is formed as a proposition, just as the Albert Memorial was made by Scott with his some intention. As the Albert Memorial cannot be evaluated without knowing the process of Scott's work, a proposition in logic

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[15] The copy is in the possession of Mrs Teresa Smith. I am indebted to Professor J. Connelly for alerting me to this.

[16] Peter Johnson recently provides a detailed reconstruction of Collingwood's Albert Memorial meditations in relation to his logic of question and answer. [Johnson, P. 'R. G. Collingwood and the Albert Memorial', *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies*, vol.15, no.1, (2009), pp.7-40.]

cannot be judged true or false without knowing what question it was meant to answer. Thus Collingwood explains:

> This enabled me to answer the question, left open [...] in 1914, whether the 'realists'' Critical methods were sound. The answer could only be that they were not. For the 'realists'' chief, and in the last resort, it seemed to me, only method was to analyse the position criticized into various propositions, and detect contradictions between these. Following as they did the rules of propositional logic, it never occurred to them that those contradictions might be the fruit of their own historical errors as to the questions which their victims had been trying to answer. There was also a chance that they might not be; but, after what I already knew about the 'realists'' attitude towards history, the odds seemed to me against it. In any case, so long as the possibility existed, the methods were vicious. (AA: 42)

It seems true, then, that some changes in Collingwood's attitude towards 'realism' occurred during his time in London. Thus, it is plausible that *Religion and Philosophy*, written before 1916 and published in 1916, had to be repudiated by him even shortly after publication: '[*Religion and Philosophy*] represents the high-water mark of my earliest line of thought—dogmatic belief in New Realism in spite of an insight into its difficulties which I think none of my teachers shared.'[17] Instead of adopting the 'realist' doctrines of his teachers, he developed a new framework of logic which he called 'the logic of question and answer', and wrote all those thoughts down at considerable length with a number of applications and illustrations in *Truth and Contradiction* in 1917, though it was turned down for publication by Macmillan who published his first book in spite of a positive reader's report from Henry Jones, Caird's successor at Glasgow University.[18]

Inspired by his meditations on the Albert Memorial, therefore, Collingwood clarified his vague scepticism of 'realism' which he had felt since his undergraduate

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[17] The notes on Collingwood's copy of *Religion and Philosophy*.
[18] Published in R. G. Collingwood, ed. Boucher, D., *Essays in Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 230-1.

days into a clear criticism. The core of his doubt is the limitations of the 'realists'' propositional logic. His alternative framework was the logic of question and answer.[19] Experiencing this 'year of negative criticism', it became possible for him to regard his teacher's 'realism' as 'dogmatic belief' and his own position as 'a new dialectical idealism'.

V. Acquaintances with Philosophical Figures: after 1917

After Collingwood returned to Oxford as an 'opponent of the "realists"' (AA: 44), he expanded his acquaintanceships with philosophers while working to clarify his own philosophical position. In addition to the existing relationship with his Oxford colleagues since his student years, he began in 1920 a correspondence with the Italian philosopher, Guido de Ruggiero, which was to last until Collingwood's later years; with Samuel Alexander since 1925 (although he knew him as a fellow worker at the Admirality); and with Prichard around 1933 while continuing to correspond with Croce. In this section, I will pick up his own statements on his position concerning the realism/idealism dispute from his works and his correspondence after his return from London. I will attempt to show the variety of tones and nuances which Collingwood revealed on the dispute at various times, and which have tended to puzzle interpreters.

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Shortly after the Albert Memorial meditations, Collingwood began to publish book reviews concerning the realism/idealism dispute mainly in *Oxford Magazine*.[20] One of the earliest reviews is that of May Sinclair's *A Defence of Idealism: Some Questions and Conclusions*.[21] Although Collingwood does not evaluate it as a first-class philosophical work which makes new contributions to philosophy, he sympathetically finds a positive aspect in it in being not 'one-sided':

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[19] 'For Collingwood the true unit of thought is not the proposition, but the whole question and answer complex.' (Johnson, 'R. G. Collingwood and the Albert Memorial', p.29.)
[20] Conveniently, Connelly compiles those reviews concerning the dispute in his 'Collingwood and His Contemporaries: responses to critics 1918-1928', *Collingwood Studies*, vol.7, 2000, pp.72-93.
[21] Collingwood, R. G., Review of May Sinclair, *A Defence of Idealism*, *Oxford Magazine*, 15 February (1918), p.173. (Compiled in Connelly, 'Collingwood and his Contemporaries: Responses to Critics 1918-1928', pp.76-77.)

With regard to Miss Sinclair's own philosophical temper, it might be said that a book which proclaims itself a defence of anything ending in –ism was lacking on just that point. [...] The spiritual monism which Miss Sinclair calls idealism is no one-sided doctrine. It is willing to accept all the assertions of pluralism, while protesting against its denials.[22]

As early as 1918, Collingwood clearly avoids some extreme or dogmatic version of idealism in sympathising with Sinclair, and even suggests that she is oriented somehow to reconcile the dichotomy between monism and pluralism. On the other hand, he is critical of a major figure in the idealist camp, pointing out, in his review of Bosanquet's *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy*, for instance, that Bosanquet wholly misunderstands Croce and Gentile.[23]

With respect to the realist camp, we can find at least one review, that is, Russell's *Mysticism and Logic* (1918). Although he is very critical of Russell's ethical theory regarding as 'the crudest type of evolutionary empiricist theories', he positively reviews Russell's logical and mathematical ideas: '[n]o one can make mathematical problems more attractive to the layman than Mr Russell; and such essays as that on the notion of cause ought to be read by every one who has any interest in philosophy.'[24] As is revealed in those book reviews concerning the dispute, he was regularly paying special attention to the dispute even after 1917, while attempting to polish his own position.

Another significant event during this period is his acquaintance with an Italian philosopher, Guido de Ruggiero. His correspondence with de Ruggiero started at least before the middle of 1920. Shortly after the beginning their correspondence, de

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[22] Collingwood, Review of May Sinclair, *A Defence of Idealism*, *Oxford Magazine*, 15 February (1918), p.173. (Compiled in Connelly, 'Collingwood and his Contemporaries: Responses to Critics 1918-1928', pp.76-77.)

[23] Collingwood, R. G., Review of Bosanquet, *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy*, *Oxford Magazine*, 2 March, (1922), p.271. Compiled in Connelly, 'Collingwood and his Contemporaries: Responses to Critics 1918-1928', pp.79-80.]

[24] Collingwood, R. G., Review of Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic*, *Oxford Magazine*, 15 February 1919, p.129. [Complied in Connelly, 'Collingwood and his Contemporaries: Responses to Critics 1918-1928', pp.77-8.]

Ruggiero seemed to visit Oxford hosted by Collingwood in September of the same year. In addition, while talking about the translation of de Ruggiero's book which was to be published in English as *Modern Philosophy* in 1921, translated by Collingwood and A. H. Hannay, he introduces a number of contemporary realist works in English to de Ruggiero in October 1920. In the letter, he gives a long list of what he regards 'New Realism': Holt's and other's *The New Realism*, Holt's *The Concept of Consciousness*; A. S. Pringle-Pattison's *Scottish Philosophy* and *Hegelianism and Personality*, regarding him as attempting the 'dissolution of Hegelianism'; Russell's *Problems of Philosophy* and *Our Knowledge of the External World*, explaining that Russell is 'nearer to Meinong than to the main line of New-Realism.' Also, he raises a number of major realists' works such as G. E. Moore's 'The Refutation of Idealism', *Principia Ethica* and *Ethics*; H. A. Prichard's *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*; C. C. J. Webb's *Problems in the Relations of God and Man* and *God and Personality*; Carritt's *Theory of Beauty*; Alexander's 'The Basis of Realism' and *Time, Space and Diety*; Joseph's *Introduction to Logic*; and so forth. He adds that Bosanquet's criticism of New Realism (*The Distinction Between Mind and its Objects*) is 'poor', Collingwood declares his determination to de Ruggiero to be 'the only English Neo-Hegelian'.[25]

A month later, he ambitiously reveals his plan to present a paper in November of 1920 on the 'collapse of modern Realism' openly rebelling against his Oxford colleagues for the first time:

I am to read a paper to the Oxford Philosophical Society at the end of November on the collapse of modern Realism, which is the first occasion on which I have put my views before the professors and tutors in philosophy here. I think, to judge by what I hear, that it comes at the right moment, when most people in Oxford who were realists are giving up their old position and the younger men have broken away from that school.[26]

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[25] 'Letters from R. G. Collingwood to Guido de Ruggiero', Dep.27, 2 October, 1920.
[26] Ibid. 4 November, 1920.

This presentation criticising 'realism' seems to be reported in his *Autobiography* (AA: 44). According to his account, the content of this paper attempted to attack Cook Wilson's epistemological thesis 'knowing makes no difference to what is known' from a logical approach. Collingwood tells of his intention to publish *Libellus de Generatione*, which was previously dedicated to de Ruggiero in 1920, provided that the presentation was successful. Nevertheless, it seems that his presentation did not go successfully, given the fact that the *Libellus* was not published.

Reflecting the unhappy result of giving his paper, he began to confess more intimate feelings to de Ruggiero. Four months after the presentation, he was driven to be against 'English idealists' and even sympathised with J. S. Mill:

'[t]o my mind, the break in English philosophy about 1870 is rather illusory: [...] I find myself now rather inclined to react against the English idealists because they imported so much of what was <u>bad</u> in Hegelism into England; and I find their present successors a real nuisance and my chief enemies. I am even becoming tolerant of Mill, in that he did <u>try</u> to get a concept of thought in fieri; but the result of the idealist tradition has been to solidify thought into a pure Platonic being.'[27]

Here, probably being conscious of widespread hostility to Hegel among 'realists' in Britain, he blames 'English idealists' since 1870 because of their distorted understandings of Hegel. Nevertheless, as he prepared the publication of *Speculum Mentis*, he once again revealed himself hostile to 'realism'. For example, in describing the content of *Speculum Mentis* to the publisher, he admits the book's critical nature towards 'realism': '[t]he main essay would be a hostile treatment of the "realism" which is now fashionable here and in America.'[28] Given his vacillating self-identifications in the context of contemporary philosophy under the two extreme

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[27] Ibid., 20 March, 1921. Underlines as original.
[28] Letter to Macmillan, dated 4 June, 1922, Macmillan Archives, add MSS 55273, British Library, London.

positions of realism and idealism, he seems to be frustrated and struggled with explaining his position in a clear way to his contemporaries. His intention to avoid being regarded as at either of the extremes can be seen, for instance, in the preface of *Speculum Mentis*[29] written in August of 1923: 'if the reader feels that my thesis reminds him of things that other people have said, I shall not be disappointed: on the contrary, what will really disappoint me is to be treated as the vendor of new-fangled paradoxes and given some silly name like that of "New Idealist"' (SM: 13).

In seeking and making more sophisticated his own philosophical position, Collingwood was oriented to sympathise with more moderate types of realism such as Alexander and Whitehead. In fact, he started reading Alexander's works at least in 1920 as is found in his *Diary*, which suggests that he intensively read Alexander from 13 to 17 of August, 1920. Furthermore, Collingwood began correspondence with Alexander from 1925 until Alexander's death in 1938. Moreover, in reviewing R. F. A. Hoernlé's *Matter, Life, Mind and God* (1923), Collingwood defends Whitehead from Hoernlé's understanding of him as a backslider towards idealism, insisting that 'Professor Hoernlé finds in Dr. Whitehead's attack on "matter" a spontaneous movement on the part of physical science towards the position of idealistic philosophy; [...] We should like to agree, but we cannot.'[30] In this sense, Collingwood was, in refining his philosophical position, seeking objects of sympathy outside Oxford, such as in the more moderate types of realism of Alexander and Whitehead. That Collingwood found difficulty in having sympathetic responses in Oxford is also evidenced in his letter to J. A. Smith, who introduced Italian idealism at Oxford: 'but if you and I are to be fellow—conspirators against the regime of the minute philosophers we ought, I suppose, to indulge in a certain amount of

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[29] **SM**: Collingwood, R. G., *Speculum Mentis: or the map of knowledge*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924).
[30] Collingwood, R. G., Review of R. F. A. Hoernlé, *Matter, Life, Mind and God*, *Oxford Magazine*, 7 June, (1923). [Complied in Connelly, 'Collingwood and his Contemporaries: Responses to Critics 1918-1928', pp.81-2.]

conspiratorial correspondence.'[31] In spite of such a sense of isolation from his 'realist' colleagues, it does not of course mean that he completely turned away from them as we can see from his frequent contacts and friendship with Carritt and his correspondence with Prichard around 1933.[32]

Since his turn to anti-realism in 1917, to sum up, he had publicly presented his position when the opportunity arose, such as reading a paper and publishing his first systematic anti-realist book, *Speculum Mentis*, while widely reading the contemporary works of realists and expanding his acquaintance with them. However, we find in his correspondence and reviews a sense of frustration that he is not rightly understood among his fellow philosophers, which is why he reveals his frustration to his Italian friend, de Ruggiero. This dissatisfaction with the lack of understanding from British philosophers is also repeated in his *Autobiography*:

> At that time, any one opposing the 'realists' was automatically classified as an "idealist", which meant a belated survivor of Green's school. There was no ready-made class into which you could put a philosopher who, after a thorough training in "realism", had revolted against it and arrived at conclusions of his own quite unlike anything the school of Green had taught (AA: 56).

In such a philosophical climate that the extreme attitude of either realism or idealism still remained and occupied philosophers' minds, Collingwood was struggling to refine his own position, referring to a number of contemporaries in increasing sympathy with Alexander and Whitehead in particular.[33]

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[31] Letter to J. A. Smith, 27 June, 1932, J. A. Smith Papers, MS JAS I 22, Magdalen College, Oxford.

[32] Collingwood R. G. and Prichard, H. A., Correspondence between R. G. Collingwood and H. A. Prichard, Bodleian Library, Oxford University, MS Eng. lett.. d116 (1925-44), fols.21-32.

[33] This is well summarised by Connelly:
'although Collingwood had repudiated realism by this date, at least in the sense that he no longer regarded himself as a disciple of Cook Wilson, he nonetheless took a considerable interest in the work of Alexander and Whitehead, and corresponded with Alexander from the mid-1920s until his death in 1938. In 1935 Alexander provided a testimonial for Collingwood's successful application

VI. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to reconstruct a biographical context lying behind the development of Collingwood's philosophy and his criticism of 'realism'. Educational backgrounds may be distinguished into two elements: his father's education and intellectual and the aesthetic atmosphere of his family life, including influences from Ruskin; and the 'realist' education at Oxford. As Johnston remarks, what Collingwood succeeded gaining from his family life was at least: (1) the sensibility to the concrete process of human knowledge, works, and activities; (2) the sense of integrity of human knowledge and activities as a whole; (3) the 'public-mindedness' inspired by British Idealists through his father; and (4) the awareness of the significance of history, attained by his practice of archaeological research with his father.

When Collingwood went up to Oxford, it still had the Greats curriculum in which students were required to study broadly not only one speciality. Probably feeling affinity with his background, Collingwood enjoyed and extensively studied both in philosophy and archaeology. However, what was fashionable in philosophy then was 'realism' as a reaction to British Idealism. Tutored by a member of the 'realist' school, E. F. Carritt, Collingwood was clearly exposed to 'realist' philosophy, although at the same time there were doubts germinating in his mind in the light of his archaeological experiences. The doubts stuck in his mind even after he started his academic career in 1912. While he expanded his acquaintance with philosophers outside Oxford, the young don started developing a 'frank attack' in his daily teaching by stressing the 'first-hand study' of philosophical books as an implicit critique of the 'realist' method. *Religion and Philosophy* is the result of his early exposure to realism, which he published before going to London for wartime service.

In London, his doubts took a clear shape prompted by his meditations on the Albert Memorial. The core was what he calls 'the logic of question and answer' in

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for the Waynflete chair of Metaphysical Philosophy.' (Connelly, 'Collingwood and his Contemporaries: Responses to Critics 1918-1928', p.75.)

contrast with the 'realist' logic as propositional logic. This made it possible to repudiate *Religion and Philosophy* as dogmatic realist belief, and identify his position as 'a new dialectical idealism' as early as 1918.

After his book *Truth and Contradiction* was rejected by Macmillan, he attempted to clarify his position partly by reviewing contemporary works concerning the realism/idealism dispute, in which he expresses his avoidance of both extreme positions. Also, he tried to convince his Oxford 'realist' colleagues by presenting a paper at the Oxford Philosophical Society reflecting his determination to be 'the only English Neo-Hegelian'. But this attempt appeared to result in failure. Although he kept clarifying and refining his position in spite of the failure of his first ambition, he seemed to be frustrated by the sectional trend which tended to label a philosopher as at either extreme of the dispute. Such frustration can be perceived in his vacillating self-identification during his period. Consequently, more moderate realists came to be appealing to him, especially after 1925, and he began correspondence with Alexander. However, his rejection of 'realism' was consistent throughout this period as can be seen in his letter to J. A. Smith in 1932. Reflecting the contemporary dispute between realism and idealism, therefore, Collingwood's early intellectual life was also the process of the dispute being worked out in his own mind, and which underlaid his 'idealistic' groundings from childhood and the 'realist' education in philosophy at Oxford.

What was exactly his position then when he was frustrated by the lack of understanding of it among philosophers around him? In order to clarify his position in the dispute, from the next chapter on, I will trace and analyse his conception of 'realism' as the counter-position of his position.

CHAPTER FOUR

'DOGMATIC REALISM': *RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY*

I. Introduction

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Collingwood's self-identification of his philosophical position varies between 'realism' and 'idealism' during his earlier period reflecting contemporary philosophical debates in Britain. How did Collingwood develop his philosophical position? His first systematic philosophical book, *Religion and Philosophy* (1916),[1] seems to be an appropriate starting point to tackle this question since it contains some of his original published responses to the dispute in his pre-London period. In this chapter, I will attempt to illuminate the themes of the book by exploring its contentions in terms of the dispute between idealism and realism.

Religion and Philosophy is Collingwood's first published philosophical book written from 1912 to 1914. It appeared in print in 1916, published by Macmillan for which he became a regular reader of manuscripts until he became closely involved with Oxford University Press. This book is, according to him, 'the result of an attempt to treat the Christian creed not as dogma but as a critical solution of a philosophical problem' (RP: xiii). In line with this principle, various problems in Christian religion and theology are transformed into philosophical questions and then discussed as such. Although his main interest, of course, centres on religious issues, this book is also interesting in terms of our main topic because he repudiated it as a 'dogmatic belief in New Realism' as early as two years after its publication: 'This book was written in and before 1914 (begun 1912) and represents the high-water mark of my earliest line

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[1] **RP**: Collingwood, R. G., *Religion and Philosophy*, (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1997). Originally published in 1916.

of thought—dogmatic belief in New Realism in spite of an insight into its difficulties which I think none of my teachers shared.'[2] This note seems to show that at least in 1918 Collingwood thought of this book in the context of the realism/idealism dispute in a sense, and that it assumes somehow an ambivalent attitude towards it. His interest in the dispute between idealism and realism, in spite of its less than prominent place, was captured by a reviewer, C. C. J. Webb, who was later to become his close friend.[3] Webb expresses agreement with Collingwood's position: '[w]ith what he says (on pp.99 foll.) of the questions which are at issue between these opposed types of doctrine I should find myself on the whole in agreement'.[4] Given his note and the contemporary comment, there is justification for seeing *Religion and Philosophy*, at least in part, as a contribution to the idealism/realism dispute.

Interpretations of the book vary according to the interests of the interpreter. On the one hand, there are some interpretations which take the book as realist, particularly focusing upon Collingwood's conception of history. For instance, while partly granting Collingwood's reservations about 'realism' as a 'casual attack' of 'realism', van der Dussen considers that Collingwood's notion of history 'can be characterized as realistic'. He quotes: 'History must be regarded not as a mechanical process, nor yet as a gradual accumulation of truths, but simply as objectivity; as the real fact of which are we conscious. History is that which actually exists; fact, as something independent of my own or your knowledge of it' (RP: 49).[5]

Similarly, referring to the same doctrine, Boucher also construes the notion of history as realist: '[Collingwood] appears to be subscribing implicitly to the realist concept of the correspondence theory of truth, which maintains that the object of knowledge exists independently of the mind that seeks to know it, and that the truth of

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[2] Notes on endpaper of Collingwood's working copy of Religion and Philosophy. The transcript of this note from Collingwood's original copy possessed by Mrs Teresa Smith was kindly offered by Professor James Connelly.

[3] Patrick, Magdalen *Metaphysicals: Idealism and Orthodoxy at Oxford 1901-1945*, p.44.

[4] Webb, C.C.J. 'Review of R. G. Collingwood *Religion and Philosophy*', *The Oxford Magazine*, 1 June, (1917), p.281.

[5] Van der Dussen, J., *History as a Science: the Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff publishers, 1981), pp.26-8. Original quotation includes an omission from 'not' to 'but'.

our statements depends upon the extent to which the statements correspond to the objects described'.[6] Such considerations have led some scholars to regard *Religion and Philosophy* as a realist work in a broader sense. For example, James Patrick understands Collingwood's standpoint during his early years including 1916 as epistemologically realist, stating that 'Collingwood remained vaguely committed to the realist epistemology until 1917'.[7]

On the other hand, there are scholars who find idealist elements in Collingwood's assertion of the identity of the mind and its objects, and dialectical arguments to be found in the book. Rubinoff interprets the relation between mind and object as follows: '[s]ince the *esse* of mind is not *cogitare* simply, but *de hac re cogitare* (RP: 100), mind is therefore identical with its thoughts and, to the extent to which these thoughts are therefore identical with their objects, the identity between mind and object is established'[8]. On the basis of the identity of them, Rubinoff finds the author's dialectical idea: '[g]iven a variety of assumptions about the nature of mind which, even in *Religion and Philosophy*, Collingwood appears to accept—that it is identical with its acts, that it makes itself through these acts; in effect, that it undergoes dialectical development—it follows that reality itself, and truth, must be subject to the same dialectic of self-making'[9]. The dialectical view of the book, in addition, was noticed by some contemporary reviewers: '[i]n developing his own views Mr. Collingwood's method may be best described as dialectical'[10]; '[t]he general lines on which Mr. Collingwood's thought runs will be found to be those of a unifying dialectic—alike in the treatment of mind and matter'.[11] The understandings of *Religion and Philosophy* therefore seem to be divided, capturing different aspects of it: the realist based upon its conception of history; and the idealist springing from

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[6] Boucher, David, *The Social and Political Thought of R. G. Collingwood*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.40.

[7] Patrick, *Magdalen Metaphysicals: Idealism and Orthodoxy at Oxford 1901-1945*, p.54.

[8] Rubinoff, *Collingwood and the Reform of Metaphysics: A Study in the Philosophy of Mind*, p.39.

[9] Ibid. pp.53-4.

[10] Gallway, G., Review of *Religion and Philosophy*, *Mind*, XXVIII, (1919), p.365.

[11] Anon., Review of Religion and Philosophy, *The Times Literary Supplement*, 18 January, (1917), p.36.

its argument about the relation of the mind and its object.

In short, the divided interpretations in the literature suggest that *Religion and Philosophy* is an ambivalent book in terms of the realism/idealism dispute. If we try to articulate the philosophical nature of the book without taking into account the roots of both interpretations, the ambivalence would remain puzzling.

In this chapter, hence, I aim to carry out an inclusive analysis of the philosophical framework of this book in the light of the realism/idealism dispute. And secondly, I will attempt to identify the direction of Collingwood's project as it is implied in the text. I will first examine his conception of history (Part I Chapter III), and then mainly focus on his metaphysical arguments of ontology (mainly Part II Chapter II) and epistemology (mainly Part II Chapter III), in order to clarify the philosophical foundation of the book. In so doing, this chapter shall be an illustration of Collingwood's philosophical position in his initial response to the realism/idealism dispute.

II. Ambivalent Conception of History

In arguing that the appropriate method for exploring religion and philosophy is history, in Part I Chapter III 'Religion and History', Collingwood, as noticed by a number of commentators, appears to make some realist assertions. Firstly, this can be observed in his rejection of psychology as the right method for the study of mind. He contends: '[a psychologist] is cutting himself off from any kind of real sympathy or participation in the very thing he is studying—this man's mental life and experiences' (RP: 41), if her/his job is merely to make a note of the man's superficial behaviours or statements while refusing 'to join in the question whether it is true' (RP; 41). As a source of this psychological attitude to human conduct or thought, Collingwood identifies the Bradleian notion of judgment[12] that takes judgment 'as a mental event or act which refers to a reality beyond the act' (RP: 40f). Such a notion of judgment results, he claims, in the psychological method which takes 'the mental activity as a self-

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[12] Collingwood suggests that the idea of judgment is adapted from Bradley's *Logic*. (RP: 40f).

contained fact; refuse, so far as that is possible, to treat of its metaphysical aspect, its relations with real things other than itself' (RP: 40). In other words, he understands that psychologists disconnect human judgment from reality. Collingwood thus criticises the Bradleian notion of judgment from the perspective of the realist correspondence theory of truth.[13]

However, his criticism of psychology is not so simple. While attacking the idealist notion of judgment implicit in psychology, he is also critical of Comtian positivism as the origin of psychology, which is generally regarded as a realist position. The ambivalent nature of Collingwood's critique of psychology may be understood as an attempt to avoid the danger of falling into subjectivism. He does this by criticising the Bradleian idealist notion of judgment on the one hand, while repudiating the psychologists' 'realist' attitude which simply takes psychological facts as indifferent to human conduct and thought, avoiding inquiry into their internal consciousness.

More significantly, it is in the notion of history that scholars discover the realist element in Collingwood's *Religion and Philosophy*. History is offered as a right method for studying the mind instead of psychology. In this respect, Collingwood identifies history with philosophy in the sense that both of them are 'the knowledge of one real world' (RP: 51). They are least cross-complementary because, while history cannot recognise its object without an intellectual function, philosophy or 'any theory must be a theory of facts, and if there were no facts there would be no occasion for theory' (RP: 47). Distinguishing the difference between history, as the knowledge of the particular, and philosophy, as the knowledge of the universal, he defines history thus:

> History *a parte objecti*—the reality which historical research seeks to know—is nothing else
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> than the totality of existence; and this is also the object of philosophy. History *a parte*
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> *subjecti*—the activity of the historian—is investigation of all that has happened and is

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[13] Cf. Boucher, *The Social and Political Thought of R. G. Collingwood*, p.40.

happening (RP: 51)

The former seems to imply the objects or facts of historical investigation, as it were, the objective aspect of history whereas the latter seems to mean history as a practice or discipline of historical investigation, namely the subjective aspect. When he refers to history, he appears to mean either or occasionally both of those meanings by the term 'history'. He makes no clear distinction between them and between historical facts (ontologically) and history perceived (epistemologically). Of those two aspects of history, in particular, the objective aspect tends to be emphasised as a source of objectivity in the study of mind: '[h]istory must be regarded not as a mechanical process, nor yet as a gradual accommodation of truths, but simply as *objectivity*; as the real fact of which we are conscious' (RP: 49, Italics as original); '[h]istory is that which actually exists; fact, as something independent of my own or your knowledge' (RP: 49). These remarks on history made by Collingwood appear to present his realist position, as suggested in the secondary literature, in the sense that they seem to regard history as having an independent existence from the mind, although no distinction between ontology and epistemology is made in the conception of history. Realist interpretations, therefore, rely on this emphasis on the objectivity of historical facts for their interpretation of his realist conception of history. However, Collingwood's notion of history has not only an objective but also a subjective element, on which the realist interpretations keep silent. In *Religion and Philosophy*, the subjective element of history remains underdeveloped as a firm theoretical form.

To sum up, Collingwood's notion of history and related ideas in *Religion and Philosophy* take on a realist character, as some scholars insist. In the conception of history, the objective aspect can be understood as realist. Moreover, this emphasis on 'objectivity' in the study of mind mediated by history is, as we shall see, a significant aim of his consistent rejection of subjective idealism or solipsism. In addition, his attack on psychology as the preliminary task before establishing history as the right method for the study of mind also betrays the realist standpoint from which he attacks

psychology, the correspondence theory of truth. Nevertheless, it is also true that each realist element is not without ambiguity. The realist attack of psychology is associated with a critique of realist Comtian positivism; and the notion of history contains a subjective element. In this respect, realist interpretations go too far, blurring the subjectivist implications in the notion of history and the anti-realist implications of his attack on Comtian positivism.

III. A Negative Framework of Metaphysics

Idealist interpretations of *Religion and Philosophy* chiefly rest on Collingwood's argument concerning the relation between mind and object. In this section, I will focus on his metaphysical arguments in Part II, especially Chapter II 'Matter' and Chapter III 'Personality' from the standpoints of ontology and epistemology concerning the relation between mind and object.

1. Ontology: Idealism and Materialism

At the outset of Chapter II, Collingwood distinguishes two meanings of 'idealism': first, 'idealism' as the opposite of 'materialism', 'concerned with the antithesis between mind and matter'; and second, 'Idealism' as of 'Realism', 'concerned the quite different antithesis of subject and object' (RP: 73f.). This seems to imply the division of metaphysical questions into ontological and epistemological. The chapter 'Matter', as is obvious from its title, deals with ontological questions.

First of all, he defines both poles of the ontological antithesis of mind and matter, with corresponding positions, idealism and materialism respectively. In his definition, materialism 'admit[s] the existence of thought, but will try to explain it as a kind of mechanism', while idealism 'admit[s] the existence of mechanism, but will try to describe it in such a way that its operation is seen to be a form of spiritual activity' (RP: 73). Then, he shows a commonly accepted view of the relation, what he calls 'plain man's dualism', which regards the world as composed of two different and clearly distinguishable things, mind and matter' (RP: 73).

In criticising the 'plain man's dualism', he finds the central problem of this

view in the interrelation between mind and matter. According to this ordinary view, he argues, mind is mind, including no element of matter, and so is matter. Since matter or mind can only affect same kinds of elements, i.e. matter can only influence another piece of matter, and mind can only influence mind, therefore the interaction between mind and matter becomes impossible. Thus, he sums up the view: 'mind cannot affect matter in any way in which matter can be affected, unless mind has properties characteristic of matter itself. That is, only matter can affect matter; mind can only affect matter if mind is itself material' (RP: 77). Furthermore, he claims that the view is not merely omitting the description of the interrelation of mind and matter, but theoretically making it totally impossible. Therefore, he concludes his critique of the 'plain man's dualism': 'Now in our original definitions of mind and matter, there was no such community, no part of contact. Each was defined as having unique properties of its own, quite different in kind from the properties of the other; and if this is really so, to compare and distinguish them becomes impossible.' (RP: 79)

Next, he turns his criticism to materialism. His point of criticising materialism is that materialism, which accounts for all events in the world and our minds become causes or mechanisms between matters. This can only present the view of the world as a finite connection of causes, 'a whole formed by the mere addition of parts' at best, being unable to grasp the world as a metaphysical whole. Accordingly, the dissolution of the comprehensive and infinite whole in materialism invites the self-contradiction in itself because such a view of the whole, he insists, discredits 'the intelligibility and reality of the parts' (RP: 88) as components of the world. Nevertheless, he also finds some positive aspects to it. First, he understands that materialism can guarantee the objectivity of reality gained by 'its insistence on fact, on reality as something beyond the power of the individual mind to create or alter'. Thus, '[m]atter is supremely objective' (RP: 92). Secondly, in discussing science as a discipline emerged from materialism, he suggests that another positive aspect of materialism is its possibility of recognising the uniqueness or individuality of things. On the basis of both sides of materialism, he regards that materialism is right in opposing solipsism and scepticism,

and wrong in cutting off the objective world completely from our own mind:

> Materialism, in short, is right as against those theories which make the world an illusion or a
> dream of my own individual mind; but while it is right to insist on objectivity, it goes too far
> in describing the objective world not only as something different from, and incapable of being
> created or destroyed by, my own mind, but as something different and aloof from mind in
> general. (RP: 93)

What position, then, would be adequate for the ontological aspect of the relation between mind and object? Although maintaining the importance of bringing the mind and the object into relation, Collingwood does not offer any clear conclusions. Highlighting the oneness of reality as 'mind is the one reality' (RP: 95), he just tentatively suggests his sympathy with idealism: 'The view for which we are contending would claim the title of idealism rather than materialism, but only because the current conception of mind seems a more adequate description of the world than the current conception of matter.' (RP: 94)

His negative attitude to the ontological aspect of the relation between mind and object can be seen as the rejection of the dualism between them (the plain man's dualism), scepticism, solipsism, and partly materialism. He is apparently discontented with the view of mind and matter as independent and unrelated existences, and seems to be willing to grant even mind's influence on matter. Therefore, it can be concluded that Collingwood was dissatisfied with the dualist, solipsist, and (with several reservations) materialist ontological theories, and it led him to be committed to what he calls 'idealism', whereas he still remains unable to make any positive assertions of it.

2. Epistemology: Idealism and Realism

Since Collingwood discusses the mind/object relation as a question of knowing in the chapter, 'Personality', this chapter can be read as dealing with the theory of

knowledge.

As in the chapter 'Matter', he firstly denies both extreme views on the epistemological relation of mind and object: 'knowing is a relation between two things, the subject and object, the knowing mind and the thing known. To forget the object makes communication impossible; but to forget the subject makes all knowledge impossible' (RP: 99).[14] Reflecting on his standpoint which stresses the significance of the objectivity of fact, manifest in the chapter on 'History' and 'Matter', he sets a minimum assumption for the theory of knowledge: 'a theory of knowledge must accept the fact of knowledge as a starting-point' (RP: 98). On this ground, he is oriented to bridge over the epistemological dichotomy between subject and object, paying due respect to his 'realist' teachers and idealist philosophers:

I believe that the argument I have tried to express contains little if anything which contradicts the principles of either Realism or Idealism in their more satisfactory forms. There is an idealism with which I feel little sympathy, and there is a so-called realism which seems to me only distinguishable from that idealism by its attempt to evade its own necessary conclusions. But I do not wish to appear as a combatant in the battle between what I believe to be the better forms of the theories. Indeed, if they are to be judged by such works as Joachim's *Nature of Truth* on the one hand and Prichard's *Kant's Theory of Knowledge* and Carritt's *Theory of Beauty* on the other, I hope I have said nothing with which both sides would not to some extent agree. (RP: 101f)

Here, it is obvious that Collingwood is clearly aware of the ongoing dispute between realism and idealism. Whereas he is still supportive of his realist colleagues such as Carritt and Prichard, he also shows his sympathy with the idealist camp. In addition, it is also worth noting that even at this stage in his career he seems to overlap realist and idealist doctrines in some respects, while nevertheless making a distinction between

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[14] These views are to be called 'subjectivism' and 'objectivism' respectively, in his *Libellus de Generatione*.

'better forms' within each theory. This overlap becomes clearer in his later works.

His positive doctrine on this issue can be summed up in two of his own propositions. In line with the unity of mind and object remarked upon in the previous chapter, he denies a sharp separation by maintaining '*esse* [of mind] is *cogitare*' (RP: 100). For him, 'even to say that the mind is one thing and the object is another may mislead' (RP: 100). Instead, he contends that all consciousness of the human mind is consciousness of some object as an individual and particular existence, and not something an abstract concept of the 'object'. Developing the first proposition '*esse* is *cogitare*', he thus presents the second doctrine: '[t]he *esse* of mind is not *cogitare* simply, but *de hac re cogitare*' (RP: 100). He consistently dismisses abstract concepts such as 'thought in general' as objects of our consciousness, and confines it to particular and concrete objects. This direction which tries to avoid abstractness and introduces concreteness is, as we saw, in harmony with the chapter on 'Matter'.

In the chapter on 'Personality', to sum up, he discusses the epistemological dispute between realism and idealism, concerning the relation between the knowing subject and its object. In principle, he rejects subjectivism or solipsism, which does not admit the external world outside the mind, and objectivism or materialism, which admits no mental existence or element in the knowing process. Collingwood asserts the inseparability of the subject and its object ('*esse* is *cogitare*') and the concreteness and particularity of what is known ('the *esse* of mind is *de hac re cogitare*'), in emphasising the unshakable objectivity of fact as object.[15] Given Collingwood's arguments on the epistemological dispute concerning the relation between the subject and its object, he aimed to resolve the opposition by, as it were, a 'synthesis' of realism and idealism, although his own position appears to remain unclear and underdeveloped. But it cannot be denied that his argument concerning the

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[15] Rubinoff also understands this point as follows: 'In any act of knowing there must always be a concrete identity between my mind and its object in the sense that my thoughts about the object are not something "like" the object but "is" the objects I know it. Since the *esse* of mind is not *cogitare* simply, but *de hac re cogitare* (RP: 100), mind is therefore identical with its thoughts and, to the extent to which these thoughts are therefore identical with their objects, the identity between mind and object is established.' (Rubinoff, *Collingwood and the Reform of Metaphysics: A Study in the Philosophy of Mind*, p.39.)

epistemological identity of mind and object assumes, however dense its eclectic character, an obviously idealist element in the sense that it admits mind's influence on its object in the knowing process. In this sense, the idealist interpretations of *Religion and Philosophy* in the secondary literature do have a degree of substance to them.

3. Idealist Conclusions

On the basis of the argument of the identity of the mind and its object, he maintains that different minds achieve a sort of unity or identity through the medium of an object of which both minds are equally conscious (RP: 104). For, if a mind is identical with its object of which the mind is conscious, another mind that is conscious of the same object is also identical with the object and shares the same recognition. Insofar as the two minds are conscious of the same object, Collingwood thus maintains that they are identical. His argument concerning the relation between the mind and its object and between particular minds is developed into the view of the world, or the metaphysical whole. From the axiom '*esse* is *cogitare*', each person's mind in the world, i.e. 'personality', exists in relation to its object. This relation derives its personality's relation to the other personality. In this way, each personality is a part of all other elements which consist of the whole world, associated by its epistemological relation with its objects and other personalities. Hence, he insists: 'All personalities are components of a whole, the universe; and therefore, by the above argument, they are all necessarily identified with each other and the whole, that is, with the universe considered as homogeneous with them, an absolute mind, God' (RP: 114). What is important in Collingwood's conception of the whole or universe is its strong rejection of the abstractness of the idea, as conditioned by his axiom 'the *esse* of mind is *de hac re cogitare*'. In fact, presumably bearing Bradley's notion of the 'Absolute' in mind, he rejects any understanding of his idea of the whole and the unity of minds and their objects in any abstract sense, claiming that '[t]o call this formless and empty abstraction "the Absolute" is merely to abuse language' (RP: 115). He still, nevertheless, uses the term 'Absolute', but consistently maintains that his whole does

not ignore the detail of the world and its elements, namely concreteness: 'A real philosophy builds its Absolute (for every philosophy has an Absolute) out of the differences of the world as it finds them, dealing individually with all contradictions and preserving every detail that can lend character to the whole' (RP: 115). As Rubinoff rightly points out,[16] Collingwood seems to intimate a germ of his later idea of the 'concrete universal', which he articulated in *Speculum Mentis*.

In addition, there is another element of idealism to be detected in *Religion and Philosophy*, the idea of the inseparability of theory and action. In Part I, Chapter II entitled 'Religion and Morality', he presupposes the 'positive nature of thinking and knowing' as a basic idea of his philosophy:

> Knowing is an activity just as walking is, and, like walking, requires to be set in motion by the operation of the will. To think requires effort; [...] it is the outcome of a choice which deliberately determines to think and selects a subject of thought. There can be no activity of thought apart from activity of the will. (RP: 31)

Collingwood here seems to oppose realist passive doctrines of the theory of knowledge which tend to insist that our knowledge is given immediately just as the external world is present in front of us. Instead, he contends that our knowledge is a result of our positive activity of knowing, such as the act of choosing an object from among many. Also, the choosing action of our mind is a consequence of, or influenced by, what we already know. Thus, he asserts that '[o]ur actions depend on our knowledge' (RP: 31) and *vice versa*. In this sense, he attacks the detachment of theory from action:

> [A]ll consciousness is volitional, and that two statements is not merely verbal. The former

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[16] 'Collingwood combines the epistemological doctrine that all knowledge is mediation with the metaphysical doctrine of the concrete universal. The latter is particularly evident in Collingwood's claim that the object of any particular mind is only one moment of a totality which includes the contributions of other minds. Indeed, the object's very existence as an object for me depends upon the existence of all the other moments.' (Ibid. p.41)

way of putting it suggests that there is such a thing as a mind, regarded as a thing in itself; and that this thing has two ways of behaving, which go on at once, as a machine might have both a circular and a reciprocating motion. This idea of the mind as a thing distinguishable from its own activities does not seem to be really tenable; the mind *is* what it *does*; it is not a thing that thinks, but a consciousness; not a thing that wills, but an activity. (RP: 34)

These assertions, implicitly present the idea of a 'concrete universal' and the identity of theory and action. They already reveal in 1916 a consistency with his later claims in *Speculum Mentis* and *An Autobiography*. What is clear in those assertions is, at least, his intention to overcome some of the major dualism in realist thinking: the epistemological dualism between mind and object; the dualism between the abstract and the concrete; and the moral dualism between theory and action.

4. Summary

Collingwood's metaphysical arguments and his positions regarding the dispute between realism and idealism may be better understood, not so much by his positive statement, but by his negative claims. Firstly, he strongly rejects the solipsist or subjectivist views of the relation between mind and object ontologically and epistemologically. In the second, another polemic view, materialism or objectivism is also criticised. While he without reservation rejects it in the epistemological phase, he finds its merit in the ontological sense, i.e. the objectivity of things in the world. This seems to be the aspect which is captured by those who interpret *Religion and Philosophy* as a realist text. Nevertheless, it does not follow that he is satisfied with an eclectic standpoint, namely, the empiricist dualism of mind and object. Ontologically this is called the 'plain man's dualism'. In contrast with those negative assertions, his positive ideas are less clear apart from the doctrine of the unity and interaction of mind and object, crystallised into the axiom '*esse* is *cogitare*'. This underlies Collingwood's fundamental philosophical orientation in *Religion and Philosophy*, as well as being the foundation of the idealist interpretation of the work. Idealist and

realist interpretations in the secondary literature, therefore, seem to be compatible with each other, grounded on Collingwood's different arguments.

IV. Conclusion

When Collingwood wrote *Religion and Philosophy*, as we have seen in Chapters 1 and 2, the realism/idealism dispute was one of the most controversial issues in British philosophy. Demonstrating that he was vividly conscious of the dispute, *Religion and Philosophy* in many ways embodies the controversy. It is corroborated by the fact that he addresses some of the crucial questions in the dispute, such as the notion of judgment, and his diffident references to both his 'realist' colleagues and idealists (in effect, he never directly criticises philosophers of either camp). The latter, in particular, perhaps shows that he was still equivocating and undecided between the two camps. Despite the ambiguity of the surface of the work, however, he developed his position in negative doctrines. When he attacked solipsism and subjectivism, he seemed to oppose a type of idealism which is represented by Berkeley, and with which both camps in the dispute disagreed. When he criticised objectivism and materialism, he seemed to be conscious of the naïve realism of Oxford and Cambridge. In repudiating abstractness, he appeared to have Bradley's Absolute Idealism in his mind. Instead, he tried to establish his own philosophy which overcame or, as it were, synthesised all those positions, while at the same time adopting many of their virtues. This seems to be the reason why many contemporary reviewers take it as dialectic work. But his project eventually remained underdeveloped and vague as it was expressed in *Religion and Philosophy*. His dissatisfaction with it two years later as 'dogmatic belief' is testimony to its underdeveloped character.

With respect to the term 'realism', his definition of 'realism' in *Religion and Philosophy* appears at the outset of the chapter on 'Matter'. He placed 'realism' as the epistemological antithesis of the subject and its object, contrasting the ontological antithesis between mind and matter, and then distinguishing the dichotomy between

'realism' and 'idealism' from that of 'materialism' and 'idealism'. It can be said that, therefore, he meant by 'realism' the epistemological doctrine which denies the interrelation between the knower and what is known. Nevertheless, it is curious that he also appeared to regard 'realism' and 'idealism' as in some way compatible saying that 'realism' is 'only distinguishable from that idealism by its attempt to evade its own necessary conclusions' (RP: 101f.). The similarity mentioned here seems to be developed in his later works into a unique meaning of 'realism'.

The question still remains why did Collingwood repudiate the book only two years after its publication? As Connelly and D'Oro suggest, Collingwood, it seems, experienced some 'new turn' (EPM: xxiii)[17] during the two years after finishing it. This is also supported by his explanation of the meditations concerning the Albert Memorial in his *Autobiography*. What changed in his philosophical position as a result of his meditations is the topic of the next chapter.

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[17] **EPM**: Collingwood, R. G. *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, (Oxford: Oxford University, Press, 2005). New edition with an introduction by James Connelly and Giuseppina D'Oro. Originally published in 1933.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FOUNDATION OF COLLINGWOOD'S CRITIQUE OF 'REALISM'

I. Introduction

As we have seen in Chapter 3, Collingwood suggests in his *Autobiography* a 'turn' in his attitude towards 'realism' during the Great War, brought about by his meditations on the 'ugliness' of the Albert Memorial. As a matter of fact, he repudiates *Religion and Philosophy* as 'dogmatic realism' as early as a few years after its publication. In what does the change or turn consist after *Religion and Philosophy*? This question will be answered with reference to the manuscript material Collingwood wrote between 1917 and 1921 and which addressed some of the issues in the contemporary realism/idealism dispute.

The earliest work in this period is *Truth and Contradiction*[1] written in 1917, during his spare time while working at the Admiralty Intelligence Division in London. According to his *Autobiography*, he wrote it with the intention of publication, and in fact offered it to Macmillan Press. However, it was not published because of a strange reason, he was told by the publisher, 'that the times were hopelessly bad for a book of that kind' (AA: 42), despite a strong positive reader's report, with some reservations, from Henry Jones, one of the leading idealist philosophers of the time.[2] Collingwood kept the manuscript in his own hands until he finished the draft of *An Autobiography* and destroyed it himself later (AA: 99). In spite of his account, chapter two of the draft survives. Starting from the examination of the notion of judgment as the

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[1] **TC**: Collingwood, R. G., *Truth and Contradiction* Chapter 2, (1917), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 16/1.
[2] 'Henry Jones' report on R. G. Collingwood, *Truth and Contradiction*' , dated 4 March 1918, reprinted from Macmillan Archives, in Collingwood, *Essays in Political Philosophy*, pp.230-1.

fundamental contradiction in the dispute, he critically discusses the formal nature of the traditional logic and its ultimate collapse into dualism. Whereas finding this dualism in both camps, he seems to identify the nature of 'realism' as this dualism.

When the war was over, he went back to Oxford as 'an opponent of the "realists"' (AA: 44). While writing other things such as an address on 'The Spiritual Basis of Reconstruction',[3] and 'Lectures on the Ontological Proof of the existence of God'[4], Collingwood wrote 'Ruskin's Philosophy'[5] for the Ruskin Centenary Conference at Coniston in 1919. The next year, he wrote and dedicated a little hand-made book *Libellus de Generatione*,[6] dated 20-23 July 1920, to Guido de Ruggiero. Collingwood explains that this was written 'only to help the process of crystallization in my own thoughts'. He continued: 'Nobody has seen it except my friend Guido de Ruggiero' (AA: 99).[7] Nevertheless, he suggests, as we saw in the Chapter 3, his intention was to publish it. In a letter to de Ruggiero dated 4 November 1920, he made its publication conditional on the success of a paper he was planning to give in which he was going to criticise the realists publicly for the first time. Given the fact that the *Libellus* was not published after all, we have to assume that he did not think the paper went well. According to his *Autobiography*, a question asked in this little essay was 'whether history could be a school of moral and political wisdom?' (AA: 99) It shows that as early as 1920 he had a clear intention to think about history in relation to moral and political questions.

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[3] Collingwood, R. G., 'The Spiritual Basis of Reconstruction', (1919), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 24/3. [Compiled in Collingwood & Boucher (ed.), *Essays in Political Philosophy*, pp.201-6.]

[4] Collingwood, R. G. 'Lectures on the Ontological Proof of the existence of God', (1919), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 2.

[5] **RusP**: Collingwood, R. G., *Ruskin's Philosophy*, in Collingwood & Donagan, Alan (ed.), *Essays in the Philosophy of Art*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), pp.5-41. Originally published by Titus Wilson & Son, 1922. Hereafter, I shall use the Donagan's edition as the source of the reference.

[6] **LG**: Collingwood, R. G., *Libellus de Generatione*, (1920), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 28.

[7] In fact, we can find its evidence in his letter to de Ruggiero dated 30th July 1920: '[...] I have lately been turning over in my mind into the form of a little philosophical essay; it is very rough and incomplete, a mere sketch written in a few days, but I should be very much honoured if you would accept it from me in gratitude for all that your work has done for me. I have no intention of publishing it, so I can only give it to you in this form.' (Letters from Collingwood to Guido de Ruggiero, 30 July 1920)

In the same year, Collingwood wrote several studies on logic corroborating and examining in detail the idea of the world of being and of becoming developed in *Libellus*. Firstly, 'Notes on Formal Logic'[8] argues and criticises formal logic as the logic of the world of being. In the beginning of this note, he refers to the plans for a larger work. While this note is to be 'a chapter of the complete work', he mentions, 'there ought to be notes on the Logic of Becoming as well' (NFL: 1). It is fair to assume that the latter was 'Sketch of a Logic of Becoming'[9] dated 14 September 1920, which develops the dialectical relation between logical terms such as concept, judgment, and inference. On the same day, he also wrote 'Notes on Hegel's Logic',[10] which examines certain parts of Hegel's *Logic* paragraph by paragraph. Although it is not clear what the plan, 'the complete work' is, it might be supposed that it includes 'Draft of opening chapters of a "Prolegomena to Logic" (or the like)'.[11] For, given its well-organised table of contents and Collingwood's writing style, he appears to have written it for publication.

From the titles of manuscripts in this period, it can be supposed that Collingwood's philosophical thinking centred mainly on logic and metaphysics. Thus, I will focus on those logical and metaphysical manuscripts of this period in order to identify how he 'turned' from his pre-London thought represented by *Religion and Philosophy*. The first section will analyse his logical arguments in relation to the focal points of the ongoing realism/idealism dispute, and the second section will be devoted to surveying the metaphysical framework informing *Ruskin's Philosophy* and the *Libellus*.

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[8] **NFL**: Collingwood, R. G., 'Notes on Formal Logic', (1920), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 16/4.

[9] **SLB**: Collingwood, R. G., 'Sketch of a Logic of Becoming', Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 16/3.

[10] **NHL**: Collingwood, R. G., 'Notes on Hegel's Logic', (1920), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 16/2.

[11] Collingwood, R. G., '"Prolegomena to Logic" (or the like)', (c.1920-21), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 16/5.

II. Logic: The Origin of the Turn

Collingwood's surviving manuscripts from this period are preoccupied with logic. In them, inspired by the Albert Memorial, he tried to reform the traditional logical framework. Reflecting the breaking-point of the realism/idealism dispute, his argument started with the notion of judgment as early as in *Truth and Contradiction* in 1917, and then followed a similar track with the dispute, that is, from the notion of judgment to the subject/object dualism in the series of writings after *Truth and Contradiction*.

1. 'The Logic of Being': Judgment and Dualism

The surviving chapter of *Truth and Contradiction* aptly demonstrates the conjunction of Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' with the contemporary realism/idealism dispute. Starting from the three traditional laws of logic, that is, (1) the law of identity [A is A], (2) the law of contradiction [A cannot also be B] [*sic*], and (3) the law of the excluded middle [*x* is either A or not A], he firstly contends that everything exists by distinguishing itself not only from other things but from itself. In other words, the individuality or concrete existence of a thing is found not only by distinguishing itself from other kinds of things, but also in distinguishing itself from the same kind of things. Thus, the law (1) can be justified as true only when two contradictory conditions, 'A is A' and 'A is B', are compatible. This condition contradicts law (2), thus law (1) and (2) contradict each other. As long as (1) and (2) appear to be contradictory, it cannot be said that either (1) or (2) is absolutely true. Therefore, it is not always possible to judge something as purely true or false. This conclusion denies law (3).

What Collingwood attempts in this refutation of the three traditional laws of logic on which, he believes, both camps in the dispute rest, is to develop an adequate conception of judgment which can avoid the defects of both the realist and idealist notions of judgment. He opposes the realist correspondence theory of truth which regards truth and falsity as belonging to a single judgment, and which takes the

judgment to be either true or false. Since he denies law (3), the excluded middle, this dualistic distinction of judgment is rejected. Instead, he insists the degree of truth (TC: 11) which avoids the dichotomous truth/falsity distinction of judgment. What then is the source of the truth of judgment? His answer to this question is a sort of coherence theory which presupposes 'systems of thought': 'Truth and falsehood are attributes not of single isolated judgments but of systems of thought, systems in which every judgment is coloured by all the others' (TC: 10). In this sense, he rejects the correspondence theory of truth and what he calls propositional logic, while supporting a kind of coherence theory of truth and degrees of truth which are generally embraced by idealists.

Nevertheless, it does not follow that he completely accepts the idealist position. Collingwood is critical of the contemporary idealist coherence theory, exemplified by Joachim, because it is abstracted from real experience and the world in presupposing 'abstract experience' or an ideal world as the source of truth. This abstraction from reality is a result of the idealist notion of judgment as external, exemplified by Bradley. In other words, as long as we seek the source of truth outside the components of judgment, it is inevitable that judgment is abstracted from reality. Thus, judgment has to be internal: 'The truth of a judgment is not a separate attribute of the judgment: it is that which the judgment asserts: the content, the meaning of the judgment itself. And the only sense in which one judgment could be called truer than another would be that it simply asserted more' (TC: 11). In supporting a kind of coherence theory against the realists, Collingwood also opposes along with the realists the idealist coherence theory and their notion of external judgment because it is an abstraction from the reality, i.e. the dualism of idea and reality.

Collingwood's avoidance of this dualism can also be detected in other manuscripts. In 'Notes on Formal Logic', he identifies the logic of being, that is, the defective logic, with 'formal logic', by which he means 'a science of the *what* without the *that*, a science of the *possible* or of the methods considered in abstraction from their content' (NFL: 1). He then looks back to the medieval debate between

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nominalism and realism, identifying it as ultimately falling into a dualism as a result of being equally grounded in formal logic which divorces itself from reality. He seeks the fundamental cause of abstraction from the reality in the nature of formal logic, which 'interprets the verb *to think* as meaning to *classify*, and the definition of logic as the thinking about "thinking about thought"' (NFL: 14), that is, the classification of classifications. Judgment in formal logic as such thus has to be an act of classification. This notion of judgment in formal logic again implies a dualism between the judging subject and the object judged.

Based on the complexity of the idealist and realist notions of judgment, Collingwood seems to arrive at his own conception of judgment which is characterised by its 'active' nature, although it is difficult to see in what his own notion of judgment consists from the surviving chapter of *Truth and Contradiction*:

> The truth of a judgment is shown, not by its power of resisting contradiction and of preserving itself unchanged in the face of opposition, but precisely by the ease with which it accepts contradiction and undergoes modification in order to include points of view which once it had excluded. Not self-preservation but self-criticism is the mark of a truth; and the enjoyment of truth is not an achievement but an activity. (TC: 12)

In short, based upon his awareness of the point at which realism and idealism fundamentally contradict each other, Collingwood begins his criticism of 'realism' at the notion of judgment, trying to correct the defects of both positions. On the one hand, he criticises the realists' formal logic, denying the law of the excluded middle and the correspondence theory of truth. On the other hand, he also criticises idealism for its conception of judgment as external because it necessarily presupposes some abstract or ideal world as the reference point of the truth of judgment, resulting in a dualism or abstraction. Furthermore, he also points out the immediate outcome of the existing notion of judgment as dualism, and understands it as common to both camps in the realism/idealism dispute. Avoiding the shared anathema, namely dualism, in the

dispute, Collingwood regards the idealist notion of external judgment as problematic following contemporary realists, whereas rejecting the realist correspondence theory of truth in terms of a sort of idealist coherence theory.

2. 'The Logic of Becoming': Dialectic

What is Collingwood's own conception of judgment and his solution to the dualism? His answer during this period can be found largely in a 'Sketch of a Logic of Becoming' (1920) in which he develops his reform of the notion of judgment.

In contrast with the existing notion of judgment which takes the components of the subject and the predicate as the synthesis of *what* and *that*, Collingwood understands the subject and the predicate of judgment to be 'the names of two phases of reality' (SLB: 1), and the copula which connects them as the dialectical relation between them. This is intended to be a criticism of and to replace the Bradleian distinction between *that* and *what* (parallel to the subject and the predicate), which falls into the dualism between the idea and the reality: 'This apart from the more obvious fact that the attempt to distinguish the that and the what as subject and predicate leads to the dualism of idea and reality which wrecks Bradley's whole philosophy' (SLB: 1; underlined in the original). Simultaneously, it also targets Cambridge realists in that their formal logic is based on the same dualistic distinction between the subject and the predicate.

This change in the notion of judgment, firstly, enables Collingwood to overcome the difficulty of the judgment in the logic of being, which he showed in *Truth and Contradiction*, i.e. the contradiction between the law of identity and the law of contradiction. In Collingwood's conception of judgment, the subject is taken as 'the idea of an object from which our enquiries about it began' or 'what we begin by knowing of the object', and the predicate is 'what we end by knowing about the same thing' (SLB: 3). In other words, the subject is our initial knowledge and the predicate is embodied knowledge, a reconsideration of the same object in our understanding process of the reality. In this sense, '[t]he judgment, then, is the identity of concrete

differences, i.e. of concrete determinations of reality' (SLB: 3). He identifies this 'dynamic or process character of the judgment' with Cook Wilson's idea, and even evaluates it as 'dialectic'. Thus, the contradiction between the two laws of logic in the existing notion of judgment is overcome and he concludes: '[judgment] always represents a real "advance of knowledge" from subject to predicate' (SLB: 4).

Secondly, Collingwood's conception of judgment as such implies the collapse of the framework of traditional logic. Whereas the judgment as the 'advance of knowledge' is already an inference, he says, a concept as a component of a judgment is at the same time judgment and inference since each concept is a different phase of reality in our process of understanding the reality: 'a concept is always part of others and a whole of parts—there is no Whole in a world of Becoming. And in being a whole of parts the dynamic concept is at the same time judgment and inference' (SLB: 2). Thus, the traditional distinction between concept, judgment, and inference turns out to be overlapping and obscured by his reform of notion of judgment. At the same time, his notion of the concept as 'a part of others and a whole of parts' appears to be intended to satisfy his condition of the theory of truth as 'coherence without abstract whole', as is suggested in *Truth and Contradiction*.

Finally, this notion of judgment in which dialectical processes take place distinguishes itself from that of the Cambridge realists, such as Russell, despite Collingwood and Cambridge realists agreeing in their view that judgment is internal. Their judgment is not 'act' itself unlike in Collingwood but one on 'fact' and thus 'static' in nature in the sense that they think that judgment occurs by logically necessary implications of properties of concepts which comprise the judgment within the fixed frame of logical atomism.[12] Therefore, Cambridge realism is accused by Collingwood of being 'reactionary'. He remarks upon 'the utter futility of modern

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[12] C. R. Morris remarks that this contrast between 'active' and 'static' in judgment is the break which differentiates the idealist logic since Kant from the traditional logic. [Morris, C. R., *Idealistic Logic: A Study of its Aim, Method and Achievement*, (London: Macmillan, 1933). P.122.] If so, Collingwood's 'active' notion of judgment makes a truer contrast with the 'realist' logic which depends on the traditional logic.

realism' because of its ignorance of 'the dialectical nature of philosophical thinking' (NHL: 2).

In short, Collingwood starts his reform of the logic of being, that is, the 'realist' logic, by tracing it back to the notion of judgment, which is the very origin of the realism/idealism dispute. While the traditional logic on which 'realism' is based thinks of the subject and the predicate in judgment in a dichotomised relation between the judging subject and the object judged, Collingwood takes them to be two phases of reality, and the judgment is the process of more the embodied understanding of the same reality, reasoning from the subject to the predicate. He calls this process of embodiment, copula, 'dialectic'. Such a notion of judgment contains inference in itself, and the derived notion of concept as a phase of reality also implies judgment and inference in itself. His conception of judgment thus results in the collapse of the traditional framework of logic, replaced with his dialectical conception of judgment.

3. Summary

Collingwood's logical manuscripts are chiefly his efforts to articulate an adequate conception of judgment, which he takes to be at the heart of the difference between realism and idealism. We see his criticism of the existing conception of judgment and some conditions for a more adequate notion in the surviving chapter of *Truth and Contradiction*. His own conception of judgment which was expounded in the lost chapters can be pieced together from his scattered subsequent manuscripts written around 1920. There, he expounds his alternative to the traditional notion of judgment conditioned in *Truth and Contradiction*. In thinking of the subject/predicate as a series of processes, he dissolves the dualism which haunts both camps in the dispute. His condition for the theory of truth as coherence, without any abstract whole, is reflected in the notion of the concept. His ostensible agreement with Cambridge realism in judgment as internal, is undermined in his insistence on the 'dialectic'. In formulating his own conception of judgment he attempts to avoid the defects in the traditional

'realist' notion of judgment, and instead establish an adequate logical framework for understanding reality not as abstract but as concrete.

III. Metaphysics: The Framework for his New Philosophy

Whereas Collingwood began his effort to elaborate his own position in order to evade the errors of realism and idealism in logic, he also exhibited a more comprehensive view of philosophy on his return from London. In this section, I will look at his wider view of philosophy, focusing on *Ruskin's Philosophy* (1919) and *Libellus de Generatione* (1920).

1. *Ruskin's Philosophy* (1919)

In *Ruskin's Philosophy*, Collingwood presents a rough sketch of his own philosophical framework and its relation to the practical life, through an interesting analysis of Ruskin's thought. Granting that Ruskin was by no means a proper philosopher, he tries to elucidate neither Ruskin's attitude towards philosophy nor his acquaintance to and reading of philosophy but instead 'his philosophy' as something that underlies his writings on art, politics, and so forth in the light of the philosophical context of Ruskin's time. As an intellectual landscape of the middle nineteenth-century when Ruskin was active, Collingwood points out that there was a methodological conflict between 'the Logical' and 'the Historical', or 'logicism' and 'historicism', in his words.

The fundamental nature of 'logicism' is described as 'the pursuit of general laws' or the 'discovery of general laws'. The 'logicist' method rests upon assumptions that 'every individual fact is an instance of some eternal and unchanging principle, some law to which time makes no difference', and that 'the general law is more important, more valuable to know, more real, than the particular fact which is a mere instance of it' (RusP: 12). Under this intellectual attitude of 'logicism', what scientists seek is to describe facts in terms of how each fact exemplifies a general law while statesmen in the same spirit aim to make the government follow 'the eternal principles of justice and the natural rights of man' as much as possible. This attitude was,

indicates Collingwood, already well-known in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the so-called 'age of rationalism'. The consequence of this attitude in our practical life, he suggests, is threefold: 'a kind of contempt for facts' because facts are mere instances of general laws; 'a habitual intolerance' particularly in politics due to its pursuit of some abstract ideal rather than individuals' happiness; and 'a tendency towards monotony and rigidity in all kinds of mental work' such as in art (RusP: 13). Thus, the 'logicists', according to Collingwood, tend to attach too much importance to general laws abstracted from individual facts and take for granted those facts as the mere data of the law, giving rise to a sort of dogmatism in politics and formalism in art.

'Historicism' is a totally opposite intellectual attitude to 'logicism'. It seeks not general laws but individual facts, and it explains the facts not by general laws but in relation to other facts in context. Its basic inclination can be described as 'tolerance' in every aspect of life. This 'historicist' attitude appeared in the early nineteenth-century, as forms of the reviving interest in the Middle Ages, increasing freedom in art-forms, and scepticism concerning the permanence of political structures. Collingwood seems to take an interest in the Middle Ages of the time as a reactionary inclination against the rational attitude of eighteenth-century, while finding a typical exemplification in art in Robert Browning's historical study of the life of Sordello. The rise of 'historicism' in the early nineteenth-century is, he adds, regarded as a characteristic feature in the age of revolution in which political structures drastically changed. In this sense, 'historicism' is the very opposite attitude to 'logicism' in every respect.

Amid those contemporary trends, Ruskin was, Collingwood contends, a whole-hearted historicist. Collingwood bases his conclusion on identifying four characteristics of Ruskin's 'historicism': first, 'the belief in the unity or solidarity of the human spirit' in the sense that he never argues issues in art separated from other domains of human activity such as religion, politics, morality, and so forth; in the second, his emphasis on the historical causes by which he takes in history as a

'drama', 'the unfolding of a plot in which each situation leads necessarily to the next' (RusP: 19); third, his extreme tolerance of the imaginative sympathy with the past in which he does not immediately accuse anything of being wrong due to its ostensible features; and finally, his position towards the logical question of contradiction in which he takes, say, two contradictory claims not as conflicting with each other, but as two sides of a truth. Those characteristics of Ruskin's thought are, according to Collingwood, sharply in contrast with and opposite to what the logically-minded person thinks.

The position of Ruskin's thought as such is more clearly identified in Collingwood's further comparisons with contemporary philosophy and thought. According to Collingwood, the fundamental ground prevailing in English intellectual trend since the early nineteenth-century was what he calls 'Kantianism'. Kant himself appears to think the theoretical faculty of mind to be unable to reach an ultimate truth and expect practical or moral faculty to be only guide for the supreme issues of philosophy and religion. Collingwood indicates that this Kantian idea ultimately came to dominate the entire thought of Victorian age in a distorted manner. Collingwood thus detects:

> [Victorian English people] held, you could never settle questions of ultimate, absolute truth, and it was no good trying: but moral questions you could and must settle. So it became the fashion to despair of solving of difficult intellectual problems, while moral problems of at least equal difficulty were held to be soluble without hesitation, by the employment of the faculty called conscience, which you had only to obey and all would be well. (RusP: 26-7)

Regarding this trend in Victorian era as 'disastrous' combination of intellectual scepticism and moral dogmatism, Collingwood takes it to be the cause of vicious features of typical Victorians: 'it inculcated moral narrowness combined with intellectual apathy, and made the Victorian Englishmen appear in the eyes of the world a prig and a Philistine, religious in it, proud of his ignorance, confident in his

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monopoly of a sense of justice and "fair play"' (RusP: 27). In contrast with 'Kantianism' as such, Ruskin was in the opposite position because he objected to understanding the human mind as a complex of divided faculties. Thus, Collingwood admires Ruskin for being free from such maladies of Victorian thought. With respect to British Idealists who are primarily known as the advocates of Hegelianism, Collingwood thinks that Ruskin was not interested in them since they understood Hegel wrongly under the influence of eighteenth-century abstract, formalistic, and ahistorical logicism. Instead, Collingwood regards Ruskin as a truer heir to Hegel than the British Idealists because Ruskin had been working with the historically-minded and dialectic spirit of Hegel far earlier than the British Idealists, although Ruskin was not properly familiar with Hegel's philosophy. Collingwood thus sums up 'Ruskin's philosophy': 'its historical and dialectical, as opposed to a mathematical and logical, character; its scorn of scholastic distinctions; its breadth and imaginativeness; above all, its intensely synthetic nature—its refusal to separate any one aspect of life from any other, and its resolute envisagement of the spirit as a single and individual whole' (RusP: 41). Those characteristics of Ruskin's thought are, as we have seen in the Chapter 3, shared by Collingwood and inherited from his father.

In summary, Collingwood's distinction between 'the Logical' and 'the Historical' in the history of nineteenth-century philosophy corresponds with another distinction between the mathematical and the dialectical. He identifies Ruskin as the historicist with whom he is apparently in sympathy. What distinguishes Ruskin from his contemporaries is mostly shared by Collingwood. On the other hand, 'logicism' seems to come close to 'realism' as his analysis goes because its formalistic, abstract, and mathematical nature seems to allude to what he was to characterise as the logic of being in his logical manuscripts. In addition, Collingwood also seems to include British Idealists in 'logicism' insofar as he blames them for being seduced by 'Kantianism' and ignorant of true virtues of Hegelianism as historical and dialectical. On the basis of such a methodological distinction between them, Collingwood already here expounds the effects of both camps of the dispute not only in the realm of

philosophy but in a wide range of human mind, activity, and society. In this sense, Collingwood, although not very clearly, lays down what he agrees and disagrees with in a way of the distinction between historicism (the Historical) and logicism (the Logical) in Ruskin's time. In sympathy with Ruskin, Collingwood sides with 'historicism' while 'logicism' sharing a variety of similarity with 'realism'. The key words common in Ruskin and Collingwood are history and dialectic.

2. *Libellus de Generatione* (1920)

The position Collingwood supports in *Ruskin's Philosophy* is more clearly worked out in philosophical terms in *Libellus de Generatione*. He calls his position 'Absolute Empiricism', as the sub-title implies, and sketches roughly what he means by it while referring to other philosophical positions. Insisting that his 'Absolute Empiricism' is a true understanding of Hume, Collingwood agrees with what he takes to be Hume's theory, the absolute denial of substance and the resolution of all reality into the activity of experience, while opposing the subjective idealism of Berkeley. In accordance with the contemporary hostility towards the dualism between the mind and its object, Collingwood maintains that reality is 'becoming', that is, 'the reality of mind is the process of its experience' (LG: 1). He finds the true heir to Hume not among the British Empiricists, such as Mill, but instead in Kant and the German idealist tradition. He carefully alerts us to his avoidance of their British offspring who are the Absolute Idealists, such as Bradley, claiming that it implies the subjectivism that Hume rejects. Finally, Collingwood confesses his abandonment of contemporary realism despite being immersed in its doctrines and profoundly familiar with them. Rejecting Berkleian subjective idealism, Bradleian Absolute Idealism, and contemporary realism, he attempts to develop a metaphysical framework to understand the relation between reality and mind without setting them up as a dualism. He then posits a metaphysical distinction between the world of being and the world of becoming, in parallel to the distinction between logic of being and of becoming in logic.

The World of Being

What he finds unsatisfactory in contemporary metaphysics is described in detail in his characterisation of the world of being. Defining it as 'the world as conceived by a philosophy whose fundamental category or instrument of thought is the theory of being'. (LG: 4) He breaks down the world of being into three components: (1) 'metaphysics as theory of Being', (2) 'logic as formal logic', and (3) the 'epistemology as the dualism of knower (subject) and known (object)'. In the *Libellus* he principally focuses on the third component, having dealt with the second in his other logical manuscripts where he entered the contemporary controversy over the dualism resulting from the 'realist' conception of judgment.

Aiming to avoid the dualism between the realism and idealism, Collingwood illustrates and examines the realists' two possible solutions to the dualism between the knower (subject) and known (object), in the understanding of mind, namely objectivism and subjectivism. 'Objectivism' regards human consciousness as an 'epiphenomenon', and leading to materialism in the ontological phase. It does not grant existence to the subject, asserting the 'sole reality of the object'. There exists no subject in the objectivists' world. This, for Collingwood, is a serious short-coming because the realist cannot account for the subject. The denial of the idealist theory of knowledge by the Oxford realists, such as Cook Wilson and Prichard, is an example of objectivism. Looking at this view morally, free will is completely denied since objective and rigid moral laws rule all agents' actions. This moral objectivism results in either 'authoritarianism' ('some person or institution being in possession of the facts') or 'scepticism', where nobody possesses the facts more than anyone else (LG: 28).

On the other hand, 'subjectivism', or as he prefers to name it, 'voluntarism', regards reality 'represented as mind expressing itself in terms of Will' (LG: 11). On this position, the dualism is between thought and will and leads to two outcomes: 'solipsism', claiming that 'every person's world is the whole world, outside of which there is nothing'; and 'monochronism', in which 'everything is contemporary and

compresent in my single monochronous state. Change is inconceivable' (LG: 14). The world for a knowing subject as such is mere idea, nothing other than what it thinks, so the pictures captured by the subject are just like frames of their ideas in each moment which have no relation to one another. In consequence, 'subjectivism' results in a paralysed 'perfect world' in which everything is just what we think. Despite this subjectivist position being generally understood as 'idealism' or 'subjective idealism', Collingwood maintains that it is 'one of the inevitable and universal forms of realism' (LG: 13) as long as it presupposes the subject/object dualism.

The two possible solutions, excluding one another, in the world of being attempt equally to be 'perfect rigid monism, a philosophy of One Substance' (LG: 17). However, Collingwood criticises both objectivism and subjectivism for falling into contradiction because they pretend to be monistic while presupposing the epistemic distinction between the subject and its object. Despite the fact that each cannot be sustained without the other, each exclusively insists itself as the monistic whole. But as long as they presuppose the subject/object dualism, neither of them cannot solely be a whole. The occasion on which this contradiction becomes most manifest is when we ask the question 'how we can grasp the mind'. This difficulty of 'realism' is called by Collingwood 'coincidentia oppositorum' adapted from Nicholaus Cusanus. This metaphysical contradiction coincides with the contradiction between the law of identity and of contradiction in his analysis of traditional logic. Just as the logic of being was unfeasibly urged to make the two contradictory laws compatible, the world of being involves the irreconcilable contradiction in itself. In the Libellus, Collingwood takes up the epistemological dualism of the subject and its object as the fundamental presupposition of 'realism' or the world of being, and claims that 'realism' leads itself into dissolution, coincidentia oppositorum, because it cannot soundly understand 'mind' due to its dualist presupposition. In developing this criticism, Collingwood unfolds the idea of the metaphysics of the world of being, that is, the world of monism or One Substance, the world that absorbs hopeless and irresolvable contradictions. In this respect, Hegel is blamed for his dualism between

thought and sense (NHL: §3), and so is Bradley for that between 'idea and reality' (SLB: 2).

The World of Becoming

Collingwood's positive solution to the problems encountered in the world of being is to develop his idea of the 'world of becoming'.[13] We have seen in the previous section that this world is developed in terms of logic in such manuscripts as 'Notes on Hegel's Logic' and 'Sketch of a Logic of Becoming', pointing out that Collingwood regards Hegel's idea of 'dialectic' as the key to the new logic.[14]

Concluding that *coincidentia oppositorum* as the principle of the world of being cannot understand changing reality, such as our mind, he offers us a new principle, what he calls the 'synthesis of opposites' (LG: 49-50). In order to transcend the uneasy identification of identity and difference, the categories of the world of being, they are restated as 'positivity' (affirmation) and 'negativity' (negation), respectively. 'Identity means that the past phase of the process is preserved in the present phase, that the boy lives in the man, the father in the son, the savage in the citizen. The present affirms the past. Difference means that the past moment is transcended, is superseded, is no longer in existence; the present negates the past' (LG: 50). In this sense, he resolves the contradiction between identity and difference into the changing phases of reality. The essential change here is to introduce the axis of time. By regarding that conflicting dichotomies correspond to *coincidentia oppositorum* as different moments in a whole of experience, he attempts to resolve *coincidentia oppositorum*. This is precisely the same strategy that Collingwood adopts for the logic of becoming in reforming the notion of judgment.

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[13] According to Peters, this conception of 'Becoming' has its origin in Hegel and Italian Idealists: 'Collingwood tries to ground a logic of becoming on a new synthesis of the immediate and the mediate, of intuition and thought following the example of the Italians. Moreover, he tries to give his logic an ontological basis just as Hegel did in the Science of Logic. Time and again Collingwood reminds himself that the concepts of his logic are constitutive of reality. The most dominant figure in these manuscripts is, not surprisingly, Hegel, the first master of the logic of becoming.' (Peters, 'Collingwood on Hegel's Dialectic', p.115)

[14] See Browning, *Rethinking R. G. Collingwood: Philosophy, Politics and the Unity of Theory and Practice*, p.37; Iiritano, 'From the Principle of Non-Contradiction to Contradiction as a Principle: the beginning of Collingwood's Revolution in Logic', p.53.

This principle is applied to various domains of philosophy. In the theory of truth, developing the conclusion of his refutation of the realist laws of logic, he articulates the relation between truth and falsity: '[i]n the world of becoming, there is no such thing as error, there is only the moment of falsity correspondent to the moment of truth in this or that concrete phase of thought' (LG: 68). This theory of degrees of truth is also found in *Religion and Philosophy*. In epistemology, the dichotomy between the knowing subject and its object is restated as the 'subjectivity' and 'objectivity' of a concrete reality of experience, in which they are both just moments, or 'two opposing and contradictory aspects, not two pre-existent or separate things' (LG: 72). Therefore, '[s]ubjectivity is the element of selfness in experience; objectivity that of other than selfness. Both moments can be traced in every act and every experience.' (LG: 73) Collingwood maintains that this is the true meaning of Kant's *a priori* synthesis. In morality, Collingwood applies the idea of 'moments of reality' to the 'good' and 'bad'.

'The synthesis of opposites' is Collingwood's principle of the world of becoming and is oriented to the idea of the 'Oneness of Reality' which is identified with experience: 'Reality is Experience neither more nor less; in so far as there is a distinction, it is a distinction between the moment of subjectivity and objectivity, not between two things one of which is called thought while the other is called the world' (LG: 76). Each philosophical dichotomy is not the opposition between ontologically diverse existences, but the conflict in a *moment* of the whole of reality as experience. Since the principle of the world of becoming introduces the idea of time to understand changing reality, he therefore suggests the necessity of historical investigation in philosophical study in order to analyse the *moments* at various times (LG: 70-1). Consequently, he even identifies by synthesis history with philosophy:[15]

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[15] Although Collingwood develops and uses the term 'becoming' to a large extent as we have seen in the *Libellus*, we hardly find it in *Speculum Mentis*. A reason for it can be found in his letter to de Ruggiero dated 29 May, 1921. He says:
'I find the concept of becoming is more and more closely identified in my mind with that of self-consciousness. In my last year's essay I did not demonstrate that nothing except a self-consciousness can become; but that demonstration would now take a central position if I rewrote

For the world of becoming on the other hand, history is philosophy and philosophy is history; not as an undifferentiated identity, not, that is, because one cannot see the difference between them but because they are opposite moments which never exist apart, of which all real thinking is the concrete synthesis. (LG: 79)

In short, in the *Libellus* Collingwood exposes 'realist' metaphysics of the world of being as defective, while sketching his alternative framework for metaphysics as the world of becoming. The world of being is analysed into the theory of being (metaphysics), formal logic (logic), and the subject/object dualism (epistemology). Chiefly focusing on the last point, he classifies the world of being into two types, i.e. objectivism and subjectivism. By objectivism he means mainly Oxford realists whereas subjectivism in general is associated with the subjective idealism of Berkeley. Both objectivism and subjectivism, however, cannot actually evade the dualism and eventually fall into the contradiction of *coincidentia oppositorum*. For Collingwood, neither can explain the other side of subject or object because they ignore the other. Bradley is also said to subscribe to the same consequent dualism. In this sense, they are still presupposing and haunted by the subject/object dualism and *conincidentia oppositorum*, remaining unable to understand the whole reality of the human mind and experience. Collingwood calls this dualistic world of being 'realism'. The world of becoming is his solution to overcome the dualism in the world of being. Instead of *coincidentia oppositorum*, he offers the 'synthesis of opposites' in harmony with his strategy of the logic of becoming. In it the subject and its object are regarded as two phases or moments of a whole reality of experience. As the method of investigating such moments in the process of reality, history has a significant role and is even identified with philosophy. On this principle, he insists upon the true Oneness of Reality and works out its implications for the domains of

the essay.' After dedicating the little essay to de Ruggiero, he develops his idea of becoming into the notion of 'self-consciousness', and uses it in *Speculum Mentis*, in which the term 'self-consciousness' is more apparent than 'becoming'.

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philosophy. In the *Libellus*, therefore, Collingwood categorises both sides of the dispute into the world of being as erroneous under the name of 'realism', and then offers an alternative metaphysical framework as the world of becoming characterised by its emphasis on history.

3. Summary

In both *Ruskin's Philosophy* and *Libellus de Generatione*, Collingwood tries to elaborate his own metaphysical framework. He distinguishes what he agrees with as 'the historical' in *Ruskin's Philosophy* and 'the world of becoming' in the *Libellus* from which he opposes, 'the logical' and 'the world of being', respectively. He seems to imply by 'the logical' Cambridge realism and its formal logic whereas by the world of being he clearly refers to the Oxford realism. What is unique in Collingwood is that he is also critical of Bradley especially in the point of the epistemic dualism, including Bradley in what he calls 'realists'. In the *Libellus*, he identifies the fundamental defect of 'realism' as *coincidentia oppositorum*, developing from the logical arguments worked out in his earlier manuscripts.

On the other hand, the historical or 'dialectical' is what he supports in *Ruskin's philosophy*. In the *Libellus*, he offers his solution, 'synthesis of opposites', for *coincidentia oppositorum*. Being parallel to his reform of the notion of judgment in the logical manuscripts, his strategy to overcome the defect is to take the conflicting subject and its object as moments in the process of one reality. In order to achieve a way of thinking about contradictions as phases in a process, what is required is a historical consciousness. Thus, the key to his metaphysics is, as implied in *Ruskin's Philosophy* and the *Libellus*, history and dialectic. Hence, from this fundamental idea, he points out the implications in domains of philosophy. Collingwood's elaboration for his own metaphysical framework is therefore roughly and generally illustrated in *Ruskin's Philosophy* as the historical and in the *Libellus* more philosophically as the world of becoming, having a common emphasis on history and dialectic.

IV. Conclusion

Whatever the change he experienced in London, he begins his philosophical speculations anew by developing the logical and metaphysical foundation of his philosophy. As a number of his drafts and manuscripts from 1917 to around 1921 show, he extensively examines existing theories in logic. Aptly perceiving the kernel and origin of the contemporary dispute, his argument cut into the notion of judgment. *Truth and Contradiction* demonstrates his critical position towards both the realists and idealists. Opposing the realists, his critique chiefly centres on their formal logic and its elements, such as the correspondence theory of truth and the truth/falsity dichotomy. On the other, he attacks the idealist conception of judgment as external and the abstract notion of a coherent whole as the source of reference of its truth. Despite both realists' and idealists' intention to evade dualism, Collingwood detects, those features of both camps paradoxically give rise to dualism. Hence, Collingwood understands the dualism to be the fundamental nature of 'realism', and includes most of his contemporaries such as the Cambridge and Oxford realists as well as the British Idealists in the 'realist' camp.[16]

Accordingly, Collingwood's task in establishing his own position is to overcome the 'realist' dualism. In logic, he attempts to tackle the subject/predicate dualism in understanding them as the two moments of a reality; in other words, the identification process of a reality from the general or abstract to the concrete. In this sense, the abstract/concrete distinction is no longer dichotomous. He calls this process dialectic.

In metaphysics, he pays special attention to the 'realist' epistemological dualism between the subject and its object, and points out its negative outcomes in many aspects of philosophy and even in practical life. In *Ruskin's Philosophy*, he

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[16] That both camps of the dispute are not actually opposite positions is to be more clearly stated by Collingwood in his essay 'Metaphysics of F. H. Bradley' in 1933 (**MB**: published in *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, pp.229-52). Expressing the shared anathemas of both camps as 'phenomenalism' and 'subjectivism', he maintains: 'the modern realists, instead of opponents, are in reality followers of Bradley; and that his *Appearance and Reality*, instead of the last word of a decaying Idealism, is the manifesto of a new Realism' (MB: 246).

generally characterises its nature as the inclination to discover general laws, pointing out its practical manifestations. In *Libellus*, he analyses the philosophical basis of such attitudes under the name of the world of being. His strategy to solve the dualism is to understand the knowing subject and its object as two moments of one reality of experience within which both are embraced. He highlights the role of historical consciousness in order to achieve the 'dialectical' way of thinking so that we can rightly grasp the changing process of reality. One of its practical consequences is exemplified in Collingwood's appraisal of Ruskin as a historicist.

Hence, Collingwood develops his logical and metaphysical contentions characterised by 'dialectic' and 'history' out of the criticism of the dualism which springs from the notion of judgment. This is what makes it possible for him to characterise his *Religion and Philosophy* as 'dogmatic realism' and claim that he is developing 'a new dialectical idealism'[17] in 1917.

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[17] Collingwood's notes found in page proofs of *Religion and Philosophy* bound together with proofs of 'The Devil'.

CHAPTER SIX

INTUITION, PERCEPTION, AND RATIONAL THINKING

I. Introduction

As we have seen in the last chapter, Collingwood, who came back to Oxford as an opponent of 'realism', restarted the construction of his philosophy by elaborating the notion of judgment in logic, an initial issue of the dispute between realism and idealism. In analysing the 'realist' notion of judgment, he found its fundamental defect in the traditional dichotomy in logic between the subject and the predicate, and attempted to overcome it. This point was applied to the metaphysical framework in such works as the *Libellus* and *Ruskin's Philosophy*. Particularly focusing on the epistemic dichotomy between the knowing subject and its object, he analyses and expounds the maladies of the dualism in various domains of philosophy and even in practical matters. Regarding the metaphysical framework as 'the world of being', Collingwood tried to overcome the dualism and develop a new framework under the title of 'the world of becoming'. However, his new metaphysical framework remained under developed and obscure.

The following period up until the publication of *Speculum Mentis* was, in a sense, the period for further development and clarification of his metaphysical framework. Before or after the *Libellus*, he returned to the epistemological question inspired by the case of historical understanding in 'An Illustration from Historical Thought' (c.1920-21). [1] The epistemological question kept occupying his philosophical thinking throughout this period as exemplified in such articles as 'Can

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[1] **IHT**: Collingwood, R. G., 'An Illustration from Historical Thought' (c.1920-21), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep.Collingwood, 16.

the New Idealism Dispense with Mysticism?' (1923)[2] and 'Sensation and Thought' (1923)[3] whereas he also discussed the relation between fields of knowledge in the process of writing *Speculum Mentis* subtitled 'the map of knowledge'. For instance, he explored the relation between history and philosophy in 'Croce's Philosophy of History' (1921)[4] and history and science in 'Are History and Science Different Kinds of Knowledge?' (1922).[5] In this chapter, therefore, I will trace Collingwood's further attempts to address the epistemological questions following his thinking in the *Libellus*. I then look at the crystallisation of Collingwood's effort to analyse the knowing process of the human mind in relation to the forms of knowledge from art to philosophy in *Speculum Mentis*.

II. Reconsideration of the Epistemological Question

1. The Question Reconsidered

As we have seen in Chapter 3, Collingwood supposedly gave a paper at the Oxford Philosophical Society in November 1920 if he was faithful to the plan he revealed to de Ruggiero.[6] Whatever the result of the paper, it is evident that the *Libellus*, which he expected to publish depending on the response to the paper, was not after all published. Simultaneously, he left a note entitled 'An Illustration from Historical Thought' (c.1920-21). In it Collingwood brings the epistemological question up again using the case of understanding historical facts. When we try to understand an historical event in the past, he reflects, our understandings of it may vary one from another depending on our point of view. For example, Grote and Mommsen, in discussing an event in ancient history, may hold different views of the same event due

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[2] **NIM**: Collingwood, R. G., 'Can the New Idealism Dispense with Mysticism?', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volume III, (1923), pp.161-75.

[3] **ST**: Collingwood, R. G., 'Sensation and Thought', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, vol.XXIV, 1923, pp.55-76.

[4] Collingwood, R. G., 'Croce's Philosophy of History', in Debbins, William, (ed.), *Essays in the Philosophy of History*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965). pp.3-22. Originally published in *The Hibbert Journal* (1921).

[5] 'Are History and Science Different Kinds of Knowledge?', in Debbins (ed.) *Essays in the Philosophy of History*, pp. 23-33. Originally published in *Mind* (1922).

[6] As has been quoted in Chapter 3, Collingwood told the plan to de Ruggiero in a letter dated 4 November 1920.

to their different political standpoint. 'Grote would lament over incidents over which Mommsen would exalt.' (IHT: 1) In accounting for this phenomenon, he positively refers to Samuel Alexander's position that the value of the epistemic object does not reside in itself but in the relation between the subject and its object. This position describes that Grote and Mommsen equally faced an identical reality as their object, and reached different characterisations of the event through the evaluating process. Not entirely satisfied with Alexander's account, Collingwood goes further by maintaining that what the two take as the historical facts were not identical because each depended on the knowing subject of their own. With respect to this question, he raises and examines two possible defective answers, the objectivist and the sceptic, in parallel to the circuit of *coincidentia oppositorum*, which he articulated in the *Libellus* as the breakdown of 'realism'.

The objectivist may describe it thus: it is merely the result of the different choices from a whole reality; subjects pick up different facts from the reality and produce different knowledge. Reality is, according to this position, 'a kind of stuff out of which the practical or willing mind sculpts its objects' (IHT: 2). Taking Alexander's and Kant's position, Collingwood thinks it untenable because even a historical picture formed from selected identical facts may differ among the interpreters of it. He thus insists that '[i]f a theory were a mere selection of points to make a pattern, there would be no such thing as knowledge' (IHT: 2). On the other hand, others may explain the different characterisations by arguing that no one can approach the object without some subjectivity, including sympathies, ideals, expectations, and so forth. This is directed to scepticism which claims that '[a]ll thinking is falsified by the element of practicability or subjectivity' (IHT: 2). Collingwood denies it because this position dictates that the historical facts as they are can never be attained. Since the two answers cannot reach the right solution, they eventually fall into *coincidentia oppositorum*.

What distinguishes this note from his preceding manuscripts is that Collingwood does not seem completely satisfied with his own solution to *coincidentia*

oppositorum. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Collingwood resolves in the *Libellus* the contradictory identification of identity and difference by regarding identity and difference as positivity and negativity, the two phases or moments of reality. But he reveals his dissatisfaction with it in 'An Illustration from Historical Thought': '[t]his is like our view that objectivity and subjectivity are the same as the moments of difference and identity: but the moments are existentialist. Objectivity becomes the object, subjectivity the subject. But this is impossible' (IHT: 2). Although he does not offer any alternative here, he starts to doubt the possibility of his own solution.

Arguing the case for historical understanding, Collingwood demonstrates the ambiguity of his solution of the *coincidentia oppositorum*, suspecting that it might not eventually reach true knowledge. In this sense, what now becomes at issue is, again, the status of knowledge or the knowing process of the human mind in which knowledge is formed.

2. Intuition and Rational Thinking

Collingwood's reconsideration of the status of knowledge and the knowing process of the human mind takes a certain shape in 1923. In July of this year, he gave a paper 'Can the New Idealism Dispense with Mysticism?' at a symposium of the Aristotelian Society with the same theme in response to Evelyn Underhill.[7]

At the outset, Collingwood purges his terminology of vestiges of 'realism'. In correcting Underhill's understanding of the Italian idealists, such as Gentile, he makes a distinction between change and history. Whereas change is a realist concept, history is idealist since '[t]hat which changes is a mere object, which need not know that it is changing, and indeed which no one need know to be changing' (NIM: 165).[8]

The main point of Collingwood's argument is the content of what Underhill calls 'mysticism'. Analysing her conception of mysticism, he assimilates it to

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[7] Underhill, E., 'Can the New Idealism Dispense with Mysticism?', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volume III, (1923), pp.148-60.

[8] In contrast, Underhill does not make a clear distinction between change and history. See, Underhill, 'Can the New Idealism Dispense with Mysticism?', p.148.

Gentile's notion of 'philosophy' in the sense that: 'there is one single and whole spiritual life, which is the true life of man and is actually achieved by human beings in this world', and that 'in this life we at once lose ourselves in the contemplation of an absolute object and in that self-surrender find ourselves' (NIM: 164). In other words, Collingwood understands Underhill's 'mysticism' or Gentile's 'philosophy' as a sort of insight into a whole. Collingwood finds such a sense of whole and its relation to human life in art and religion in particular.

How then is this 'mysticism' attained? Underhill only suggests that such a sense of whole can be attained only by 'a kind of intellectual intuition' while philosophy, by its discursive nature, cannot reach the sense of whole as the ultimate truth. She eventually gives no clear description of what 'a kind of intellectual intuition' is. Collingwood goes on with his analysis asking what 'intuition' means in Underhill's sense. Presenting some candidates for her meaning of 'intuition' such as instinctive or the infra-rational intuition of Bergson, supra-rational intuition, or intuitive νοῦς of Aristotle, he seems puzzled and unable to grasp it, critically concluding that it cannot be expressed other than by saying that 'whatever it is, it is intuitive; and that means it cannot explain or indeed express itself; and so it is perhaps useless for us to demand a description of it' (NIM: 171). Since her 'intuition' cannot be described, he claims, it is empty. It is a 'non-existent way of apprehending the non-existent' (NIM: 171).

However, he denies reverting to what is generally regarded as the opposite position, i.e., 'idealism', which rejects 'intuition' altogether and admits only 'hard thinking' or the critical development of rational theory as a way to reach the ultimate truth. Committing himself to neither intuitionism in Underhill's sense nor 'idealism' in the anti-intuitionist sense, he agrees with Underhill in this respect, that mysticism or intuition 'is a thing which an idealistic philosophy cannot dispense with, in the sense that it cannot frame a view of human life without including it' (NIM: 173). If this is so, how is a philosophical position possible which neither excludes the discursive or rational thinking of idealism nor entirely depends on 'intuition'?

Collingwood's position is to accept intuition as an initial and implicit grasp of ultimate truth as true knowledge, and then gradually to make it explicit in the process of the knowing mind.

> The necessity of mystical experience lies in the principle that we discover new truths neither by the inference of the logic-books nor by the intuition of Aristotle, but by an act of mind which reaches out beyond the given, grasps the new thought as it were in the dark, and only after that consolidates its new conquest by building up to it a bridge of reasoned proof. But the building of this bridge, which is the task of reflection, is only the bringing into visibility on the sensitive plate of what has already been recorded upon it, the rendering explicit of a mediation or proof which was already there implicitly. (NIM: 174).

In summary, Collingwood understands Underhill's sympathy with 'mysticism' or 'intuition' in the contemporary philosophical opposition between the 'rationalist' or discursive thinking of idealism and instinctive or indescribable mysticism of intuitionism. After analysing her conception of 'intuition' or 'mysticism', he accepts neither rationalist idealism nor rising intuitionism, but places 'intuition' within the process of human knowing as an indispensable element of human knowledge. Intuitive or mystical experience cannot be final in itself. In order to be knowledge, it thus always needs to go through the explication and test of rational reflection. Nevertheless, Collingwood's illustration of the process of the human mind still remains rough. This he was more technically to expound in 'Sensation and Thought'.

3. Perception

In granting both intuitive experience and rational thinking as necessary elements for the formation of knowledge, Collingwood moves on more closely to analyse the process of the knowing mind in 'Sensation and Thought'.

The theme of the paper is the relation between the knowing subject and its object. More directly, he aims to criticise the idea of sense-data. By the idea of sense-

data, he means such concepts as sensa, apparition, and appearance, and implicitly includes those who admit medium between the knowing subject and its object such as Cambridge 'realists' and Bradley as his target.

Collingwood points out in the sense-datum theory of the realists a feature of empiricism, i.e. the tendency to divide elements of knowledge into the sensuous and the intellectual. He then complains: '[t]he resulting compromise must always be a thing of shreds and patches in which two dominant motives—sensationalism and intellectualism—play see-saw without getting any nearer a solution [sic] of their problems' (ST: 56). Accordingly, he rejects both the sensuous (sense-data) and the intellectual. Sense-data as pure sensation is, he urges, impossible because in the process of knowing 'we have allowed memory and imagination, comparison and differentiation, to creep in unobserved' (ST: 60). Thus, we cannot observe anything by sense-data without such positive functions of the human mind. On the other hand, the intellectual as pure thought is also impossible because, if it were, it would be pure hypothesis without any concrete and factual contents. Hence, '[i]n pure thought we should never be aware of any object simply and directly presented to us as an object: we should never be able to say of anything "this is so" [...] All our statements would be hypothetical' (ST: 62). In this sense, sensationalism and intellectualism, which lean towards either sensation or thought, are equally impossible. Hence, sensationalism, intellectualism, and empiricism as the compromise between the two, are all mistaken in presupposing the separation between sensation and thought.

Instead, Collingwood, naming this erroneous presupposition 'the empiricist fallacy', understands that the two propositions, say, 'a stick in water looks bent' and 'the stick is straight' are neither sensation nor thought but two interpretations of a reality. Then, he calls the interpretation as such 'perception'. Being applied to the case of the stick in water, the ostensible illusion at issue is, he contends, not that the one is sensa and the other thought, but instead it is caused by 'two implicit principles of interpretations (perceptions) which are respectively true and false' (ST: 70). The reason why we think the stick in water is bent while it is actually straight is not

because we receive sense-datum of the bent stick having the ideal of a straight stick, but because we interpret the outside world as perception based on wrong principles implicit in ourselves. Once we become aware of right principles, we thus no longer think the stick in water is bent.

From the analysis of the famous case of illusion in epistemology, Collingwood reaches a position on the process of the knowing mind which neither rejects 'intuition' altogether nor completely depends on rational thinking. That is, we *immediately* apprehend the object not as a sense-datum but as perception which already contains the subject's thinking process such as supplements from memory, imagination, comparison, and so forth. Firstly, this position, in rejecting the sense-datum theory, agrees with Oxford realism which emphasises direct intuition while disagreeing with Cambridge realism which admits sense-data. Second, Collingwood's position is distinguished from realism both at Oxford and Cambridge in his definition of perception containing interpretations by the knowing mind. Finally, he of course disagrees with subjective idealism in denying intellectualism. As such Collingwood's understanding of the knowing process, characterised by the notion of 'perception', is an attempt to elaborate a sophisticated picture of the knowing process granting both the intuitive sources of knowledge and the rational aspect of it. Based on these preliminary considerations on the knowing process of the human mind, he develops the full exposition of the process from intuition to knowledge in *Speculum Mentis*.

4. Summary

Collingwood's philosophical thinking after the *Libellus* is a reconsideration of the epistemic process of the human mind and the formation of true knowledge. In this period, he more clearly formulates his position on the epistemic process of the human mind.

The first fruits of his reconsideration appear in 1923. In 'Can the New Idealism Dispense with Mysticism?', he critically exhibits the various implications of 'mysticism' or 'intuition' embraced by modern philosophers. Granting neither pure

intuitionism nor rationalism, he accepts intuition as an indispensable element of human knowledge, and locates it in the process of the knowing mind along with rational thinking. Intuitive or mystical experience is the initial form of human experience although it cannot be complete in itself. In order to be knowledge, it thus always needs to go through the explication and test of rational reflection. In this sense, human experience is, Collingwood maintains, received in an intuitive form at the beginning and then gradually rationalised and thought out by reason into forms of knowledge in the process of the knowing mind.

In 'Sensation and Thought', he focuses on the knowing subject's epistemic contact with its object, discussing the classical question in epistemology, namely the illusion. Criticising the traditional dualism between sensation and thought as the 'empiricist fallacy', he rejects the sense-datum theory as empty because there is no such thing as pure sensation. Instead of sense-data as the initial form of experience to be received by the knowing subject, he introduces the notion of perception composed of sensation and thought. Thus, we know the external world not as sense-data mediated but as perception directly. This position is opposed to the Cambridge realists in denying that sense-data is a medium between the subject and its object, whereas modifying the intuitive nature of his Oxford colleagues' direct realism, he embodies the content of intuition in perception. Hence, Collingwood's notion of intuition can be distinguished from contemporary intuitionist theories insofar as it is not something indescribable and irrational, but accounted for by rational thinking in the process of knowledge formation in the human mind. Therefore, Collingwood believes the knowing process of the human mind to be thus: we first of all directly apprehend the external world neither as sense-data nor as any indescribable intuition, but in the form of perception in which the knowing subject's thought is implicit, and then gradually thinking perception through into the forms of knowledge.

III. *Speculum Mentis*: the Map of Knowledge

Based on his analysis of the epistemic process of the human mind in the series of writings after the *Libellus*, Collingwood crystallises his ideas into a system of the development of the human mind in *Speculum Mentis,* mapping domains of knowledge, i.e. art, religion, science, history, and philosophy in an overlapping hierarchy of forms. In this section, I would like to outline the system of the work as the developing process of knowledge in the human mind from intuition to rational thinking. This is simultaneously aimed at being a reconstruction of the epistemological foundation of Collingwood's critique of 'realism'.

1. Art

In *Speculum Mentis*, Collingwood clearly distinguishes the areas of knowledge, or forms of experience, into art, religion, science, history, and philosophy, and identifies this map of knowledge with the knowing process of the human mind. He sees the map from art to philosophy as a hierarchical order, according to the degree of the rational manifestation of experience implicitly included in the intuitive grasp of reality at the initial stage. [9] Since the human mind intuitively and immediately attains the experience in its barest form as is shown in 'Sensation and Thought', art is where this initial process occurs: '[a]rt is the foundation, the soil, the womb and night of the spirit; all experience issues forth from it and rests upon it' (SM: 59). In art, human experience is attained as 'pure imagination' because, Collingwood contends, what an artist does is neither 'think' nor 'conceive' but simply 'imagine' whether the experience is fictitious or real. In other words, aesthetic experience is gained intuitively, without containing or being processed by any rational thinking: '[t]his purely intuitive knowledge grasps or presages its object solely as beauty; and thus beauty is the birthplace of truth' (SM: 90). He calls the aesthetic experience

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[9] It is pointed out by Boucher that this distinction of five forms of knowledge is common with that of Gentile's. [Boucher, *The Social and Political Thought of R. G. Collingwood*, p.16.]

'knowledge' manifest in the form of beauty, and regards art as the 'cutting-edge' of the mind in the sense that the mind initially gains all experience as its aesthetic form.

By calling the aesthetic experience 'knowledge', Collingwood is not unaware of its self-contradictory nature. For, to be knowledge is to be thought formalised, or concepts. Concepts are, by definition, not intuited but only conceived. From this contradictory characterisation of art, however, he confirms his contention in 'Sensation and Thought' that intuition and thought are inseparable:

> Intuition and thought are inseparable, being only the immediacy (actuality, positiveness) and mediation (reflection upon itself) of all experience. Now experience as such is not partly intuitive and partly conceptual, it is all intuitive and all conceptual. [...] [T]hus its conceptuality is precisely what appears to it as pure intuition. Hence the paradox that the content of the work of art is its own form in an intuitive guise.' (SM: 95)

This contradiction in art is not reconciled in the phase of aesthetic experience.

2. Religion

In art, the reality or truth of experience is only revealed 'in the equivocal form of beauty, submerged, so to speak, in the flood of aesthetic emotion' (SM: 110). But the aesthetic truth, against Collingwood's account of it as knowledge, cannot be knowledge in the strict sense because it needs to be logically formulated. Religion, the second phase of human knowledge, is the place where the truth is asserted explicitly.

> The actual object of imagination, which in art obscurely means a truth that cannot be clearly stated, in religion is that truth itself; the secret of the universe is revealed, no longer merely shadowed forth in parables but made manifest in visible form; and this revelation makes explicit for the first time the distinction between reality and unreality, truth and falsehood. (SM: 112)

Collingwood observes that the truth is explicitly asserted in religion as its religious dogma, and bears the logical structure. Its insistence on the truth necessarily coincides with the denial of untruth or the unreal as exemplified in its repudiation of pagans, and arrives at the dualistic distinction between reality and unreality, truth and falsity. Although religion for the first time asserts truth, the religious attitude towards truth is the origin of paradox in dogmatically refusing to discuss because the rational truth, he holds, has to be something justifiable in itself under criticism and in discussion. Collingwood points out that this paradox in the religious attitude towards truth is caused by its unawareness of the linguistic distinction between symbol and meaning. Since faith, the specific form of the religious reason, still owes to its intuitive or imaginative form, Collingwood groups religion with art as long as it rests on its intuitive origin in asserting its truth. Accordingly, the religious truth is urged to be clouded by its intuitive nature and unawareness of the distinction between symbol and meaning. Religious truth therefore struggles with the paradox between its intuitive origin and its superficially logical form.

3. Science

Truth is for the first time asserted in religion. But it remains something intuitively known, erred by the religious mind's mythologising reality since it still takes language literally instead of metaphorically, being unaware of the distinction between symbol and meaning. The beginning of science is thus to be aware of this distinction.

> When he realizes that words are mere symbols and distinguishes what they are from what they mean, then by facing and accepting the metaphysical character of all language he has overcome it and is henceforth using language 'literally'. This revolution in the use of language is the birth of science. (SM: 157)

Being aware of this distinction is to be aware of the medium inseparable from science, namely language or 'the veil of imagery' in his own words between the subject and its

object. But this distinction gives rise to a dilemma; language by nature obscures the reality as its object while language as medium between reality and knowledge is indispensable for the scientific mind.

In order to reconcile it, Collingwood firstly suggests that the veil turns out to be transparent by being aware of it. A thinker who recognises it can see through the veil of language to the object which the language symbolises. Nevertheless, 'the transparency of the symbol does not mean its abolition' (SM: 158). A scientific mind with a good deal of awareness of the veil of language can find out the object as reality from the symbol of it by language, neither abandoning the veil nor being deceived by it. The mind cannot think without language as symbol whereas to lose its intuitiveness or immediacy with reality is to lose the mind's own cutting-edge.[10] Hence, he deliberately distinguishes the problem of language as veil from the opacity of language and states: '[t]he life of thought is that consciousness which has freed itself not from language but from the opacity of language. The thinker has mastered words and bent them to his purpose; he has pierced through language to that which it means, the concept or object of thought' (SM: 159). By recognising the distinction between symbol and meaning and coming to be able adequately to deal with language, experience attains the logical form in the scientific mind.

Although the mind in science liberates oneself from its previous intuitive nature by the linguistic distinction between symbol and meaning, this distinction eventually gives rise to another dilemma. A scientific mind attempts to observe and describe reality as detailed as possible by using its new tool, language. Since symbolising reality in terms of language is inevitably abstraction from the reality described, the more the reality is described, the more knowledge is abstracted from the reality. Collingwood regards the nature of the scientific mind as a vestige of its previous form, namely the religious mind, and finds the shadow of religion in the

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[10] The term 'transparency' is also used in Moore's famous essay 'Refutation of Idealism'. Collingwood in fact pays significant attention to it and understands it as a sort of direct realism. (e.g. see, *An Autobiography*, p.25.) Whereas Moore introduced the sense-datum theory thereafter, Collingwood attempted to save the subject's directness with its object by 'perception' without falling into the sense-datum hypothesis.

scientific mind's inclination towards 'the absolute distinction between the universal and the particulars, the world of thought and the world of sense' (SM: 161). Thus, 'the constant description of the soul's grasp of the universals as "intuition", "gazing", and so forth, betrays the imaginative character of the entire conception' (SM: 162). In other words, the scientific mind is necessarily urged to struggle with the gap between its pursuit in describing the universal and the idea of universal conceptualised *a priori* due to the very distinction of symbol and meaning. He takes it that this dualistic abstraction is the nature of science, categorising it into two: '*a priori* science', 'the affirmation of the abstract or classificatory concept as real' (SM: 163) such as mathematics; and secondly 'empirical science', which focuses on facts that spring from reality. Although the latter tries to understand reality by closely focusing on empirical facts, Collingwood claims that its way of treating facts is not concrete but 'de-individualized' and 'de-factualized' in the sense that each fact in empirical science is ultimately classified into categories which are framed *a priori*. Collingwood therefore concludes that scientific mind is unable to achieve the truth of reality to the fullest extent by its nature.

4. History

Abstraction and dualism which are the difficulties of the scientific mind are partly manifest in its treatment of 'fact'. The abstract treatment of empirical facts in science is overcome in the next form of knowledge, history.

What takes an important role in grasping the concrete reality of objects is perception as defined by him in 'Sensation and Thought'. Perception by definition contains both 'sensation' and 'thought' in itself. Whereas rejecting the sense-datum theory which affirms some pure sensation, this definition characterises perception as both immediate and mediate. In other words, perception in Collingwood's sense can keep in touch with intuition as the cutting-edge of human knowledge whereas granting the mind's positive function at the earliest moment of the knowing process.

In this sense, he understands perception as a kind of reconstruction from what are intuitively apprehended and arranged by the mind:

> To perceive is to see what we do not see, to grasp the object as a whole in a synthesis of front and back, top and bottom, past, present, and future; all this is implied in my perception of the ink-pot I see before me. Thus in perception we have that very identical process of reconstruction from data which is the essence of history. (SM: 212)

Since perception so understood is the essence of historical fact, he identifies perception with history (facts historically understood).

Given his conception of historical fact as identified with perception as such, it seems to be too superficial a view to regard his notion of 'fact' in *Speculum Mentis* as simply realist as van der Dussen does.[11] By his notion of perception or 'fact' historically understood, Collingwood is opposing Cambridge realists in rejecting their notion of 'fact' as sense-datum or pure sensation whereas leaving a space to agree with Oxford realists insofar as granting its immediate or intuitive nature. Nevertheless, he is different from both types of realists in the sense that his notion of 'fact' is not merely intuitively perceived but already contains thought, rational thinking of mind, from the beginning of the mind's knowing process. Hence, his notion of history in *Speculum Mentis* is, unlike van der Dussen's realist interpretation, articulated critically in examining contemporary realist theories.

Now, it is possible for the historical mind to grasp the whole picture of reality as a whole overcoming all defects in the previous forms of knowledge, that is, art, religion, and science.

> There is thus no feature of experience, no attitude of mind towards its object, which is alien to history. Art rests on the ignorance of reality: religion, on the ignoring of thought: science, on

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[11] Van der Dussen, *History as a Science: the Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, p.55.

the ignoring of fact; but with the recognition of fact everything is recognized that is in any sense real. The fact, as historically determined, is the absolute object. (SM: 218)

The historical mind which can grasp the whole picture of reality then comes to understand itself as a part of the whole reality. Since the knowing mind or subject is interwoven in the whole fabric of reality, changes in the subject caused by knowing something are also the changes in the world as its object. Therefore, the subject and its object are interrelated, and '[b]eing known, whether truly known or erroneously known, must make a difference to the object' (SM: 244).

However, Collingwood is aware that this interrelation between the subject and its object gives rise to a sort of the historicist difficulty. That is, the changeability of the historical objects by the subject makes historical knowledge detached from 'what really happened', and arrives at scepticism. This contradictory consequence in history is to be resolved in the philosophical form of experience.

5. Philosophy

At the outset, Collingwood declares the identity of the subject and its object is 'the differentia of philosophy' (SM: 249). The point of the subject/object identity is to take true knowledge as the knowing mind itself. This is, he insists, never an abstract solipsism unlike subjective idealism. Since knowledge in philosophy has processed each stage from art as the receptor of the intuitive source of knowledge to history as the concrete embodiment of the experience, it fully contains all spheres of the reality in itself and only explicit in philosophy: '[p]hilosophy is only important and worth cultivating if this identity is an all-pervading principle, present in every phase of experience but only becoming explicit in philosophy' (SM: 249).

On the other hand, Collingwood does not deny the subject/object dualism in the forms of knowledge from art to history. Although the dualistic distinction causes inconsistencies and contradictions in each form of knowledge, he contends, it is the very fuel of the development of knowledge towards philosophy. Thus, 'philosophies'

of, or reflections on, forms of knowledge apart from that of philosophy presuppose the subject/object distinction, which is the very essential definition of 'realism' in his sense.

The historicist problem in the historical mind is overcome in philosophy which takes its object as the knowing mind itself and consequently realises the true identity of the subject and its object. Philosophies on the forms of knowledge which cannot reach the identity are now called by Collingwood 'realism'. Given his critical position towards 'realism' which attacks forms of knowledge that presuppose the subject-object dualism and the book's dialectic structure, it can be said that *Speculum Mentis*, as Boucher remarks,[12] is an idealist work in a sense. However, it also has to be noted that there remain various ambiguities with respect to Collingwood's notion of philosophy and its relation to history. [13]

6. Forms of Action

Co-relative with these forms of experience, Collingwood introduces forms of action which are the manifestations of the human mind into action. Each form has a co-relative form of action. He allocates what he categorises forms of action to each of the forms of experience from art to philosophy: play as the form of action for art, convention for religion, utility for science, duty for history, and absolute ethics for philosophy.

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[12] In characterising the philosophical nature of *Speculum Mentis*, Boucher refutes van der Dussen's interpretation: 'Van der Dussen, in my view, is mistaken in his belief that Collingwood, at the time of writing *Speculum Mentis*, cannot be classified as belonging to 'any specific movement, either Idealism or Realism' on the grounds that elements of both are to be found in Collingwood's work. Collingwood's principles of philosophical criticism throughout *Speculum Mentis* are thoroughly idealist, and he uses them consistently to expose the fallacies in the claims of realism.' [Boucher, *The Social and Political Thought of R. G. Collingwood*, p.43.]
This point is also indicated by Donagan in rather a critical tone: 'Although he unsparingly criticized his German, British, and even his Italian idealist predecessors, far from objecting to their idealism, or proposing a new philosophy that should be neither idealist nor realist, he called instead for an idealism purged of every vestige of realism (SM: 288).' [Donagan, 'Collingwood and Philosophical Method', in Krausz, Michael, (ed.), *Critical Essays on the Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p.8]
[13] For instance, the relation between history and philosophy remained puzzling for Collingwood. As is suggested by Boucher, for instance, the unification of the mind and its object is to happen not in philosophy but in history in later works: 'In *Speculum Mentis* it was philosophy which unified the mind and its object, but later, for Collingwood, this unification takes place in history.' [Boucher, *The Social and Political Thought of R. G. Collingwood*, p.53.]

Just as art is described as the most rudimentary form of thought, Collingwood finds the most rudimentary form of action in what he takes to be 'play'. In parallel to the immediate and implicitly intuitive nature of art, play is not chosen by reason because it is right, useful, correct, or conventional, but simply by caprice. In play, I have no reason for what I do, therefore play is motiveless. In this respect, Collingwood identifies play with art, and characterises it as 'the attitude which looks at the world as an infinite and indeterminate field for activity, a perpetual adventure' (SM: 107).

The form of action in religion is convention. Since I in religion dogmatically accept religious doctrines in principle, religious action takes the form of obeying what the doctrines command me. At the same time, the action itself and what the action means are not separated because the religious mind does not recognise the distinction between symbol and its meaning. In other words, doing a conventional act is itself a religious practice. As the term 'convention' itself shows, therefore, conventional action is the form of religious action 'in which the agent does a given thing not because he chooses it, but because his society chooses it' (SM: 135).

As the human mind becomes aware of itself in science, 'ethics' arise in the scientific mind because the scientific mind's self-consciousness makes it possible to be conscious or reflective of its action. Due to the dualistic and abstract nature of the scientific mind, it is directed to the separation of knowledge from conduct, and comes to regard its action as not good in itself but as a means to an end. This results in the mind's utilitarian attitude towards ethical issues in its scientific phase. Thus, Collingwood regards utilitarianism as 'the most abstract and dialectically primitive of all possible kinds of ethical theory' (SM: 172).

With respect to the historical phase of human action, Collingwood's epistemological synthesis of the subject and its object is applied to morality. The historical mind that carefully recognises the concreteness of fact is, he maintains, oriented to the discovery of individuality. Taking individuality as freedom from any abstract laws and formalisations, he contends that the notion of obligation or duty

becomes manifest in history because the existence of a world of concrete fact 'constitutes the obligation to perform the relevant action, and thus the "station" of the agent as a member of the world of fact dictates his "duties" as a contributor to that world' (SM: 223). In the historical mind, therefore, knowledge as history and action as duty are interrelated as both sides of the agent in the world as a whole. What is the content of duty then? This is the very point in which duty as historical ethics is faced with a serious problem. Collingwood offers two contradictory possible answers that may be given to the question: the subjective and the objective. While the subjective position takes the human will as 'its own world and its own law' (SM: 233) and realises the autonomous decision-making within the mind at the cost of negating the outside world, the objective view highlights the law derived from concrete reality in the world by which the action is determined, sacrificing the autonomy of the will. What underlies this difficulty of historical ethics is, as it were, the conflict between duty derived from the concrete reality of the society and the freedom of individual choice. Collingwood finds law as its typical example, and characterises it as an 'unstable attitude' between duty and freedom, and society and individuals.

Where this conflict in historical ethics as duty is resolved is what Collingwood calls 'absolute ethics' in philosophy. Distinguishing his position from what 'realists' critically understand as 'idealistic ethics' which tend to obscure the distinction between right and wrong or good and evil, he again emphasises the importance of the concrete attitude 'which determines what precisely a man has done and judges it as in certain ways right and in certain ways wrong' (SM: 304) without being deluded by any abstract determinism. On the basis of such a fully concrete attitude, Collingwood maintains that 'the agent', in absolute ethics, 'identifies himself with the entire world of fact, and in coming to understand this world prepares himself for the action appropriate to the unique situation' (SM: 305). Since the agent's will and entire world of fact are identical, to follow the sense of obligation or responsibility arising from the world of fact is simultaneously to realise the agent's will itself. In this sense, the conflict between society and individuals or duty and freedom is overcome in absolute

ethics in philosophy. He therefore concludes: 'To recognize the fact—to obey the law in the spirit of intelligent and cheerful co-operation—is to transcend it, and to have reached, if only implicitly, the position of absolute ethics' (SM: 305).

In *Speculum Mentis*, to summarise, Collingwood already develops his ethical theory as forms of action in parallel to the forms of knowledge from art to philosophy. As relatively capricious forms of action, he analyses play and convention. Play as the most capricious action with no end and motive corresponds to art as the most intuitive 'knowledge' while convention as simple acceptance and practice of religious dogma coincides with religion. Once the human mind attains reflective thinking in science, ethics also arises as a rational form of action. Because science is still based on the abstract subject/object dualism, however, scientific ethics also divides its ethical thinking into means and end. This is why Collingwood describes scientific ethics as utility. In history, ethics presents itself as duty in concretely taking account of the entire facts of the situation in which the agent is involved. Despite the fact that duty insists that it is freedom, it remains incomplete due to the tension between freedom and duty. In order to overcome the tension and realise the 'perfect freedom', absolute ethics is the co-relative form of action for philosophy, and is the most rational form of action. As the knowing subject and its object fuse together in philosophy, the philosophical mind comes to identify itself with the world, and consequently builds a strong correlation with practice. To follow the sense of obligation arising from my concrete and rational understanding of the world is thus to realise myself in the world. In this sense, *Speculum Mentis* demonstrates that Collingwood already developed his ethical theory in quite a systematic manner on the ground of epistemology manifest in forms of action from play to absolute ethics, and insists upon the unity of theory and practice in human action.

7. Summary

Speculum Mentis is, in a sense, an attempt to illustrate the process of the knowing mind in various forms of human knowledge from art to philosophy, and of human

action from play to absolute ethics, focusing on how the mind achieves knowledge in each form.

In art, the mind positively receives experience intuitively in his sense but does not yet rationalise it. Thus, the aesthetic experience does not assert itself as truth. Nevertheless, Collingwood does not disregard such aesthetic 'knowledge' repudiating it as irrational mysticism, but takes it as the cutting-edge of human knowledge which implicitly contains truth within it. In the sphere of action, play is equivalent to art in its intuitive and motiveless nature. The implicitly rational nature of the aesthetic experience seems to be corroborated by his conception of 'intuition' in his 'Can the New Idealism Dispense with Mysticism?' and 'perception' in 'Sensation and Thought'.

Religion is the place where the truth implicit in art becomes explicit for the first time. The religious mind insists on its knowledge as truth. However, since the religious mind tends to reject discussion about it, religious truth bears a dogmatic character, because it is unaware of the distinction between symbol and meaning in language. This dogmatic character of the mind appears in action as conformity to practices commanded by convention in religious doctrines. Such dogmatism makes religious knowledge ultimately unable to free itself from the vestiges of its intuitive origin.

Becoming aware of the linguistic distinction, knowledge can escape from its intuitive status in the scientific phase of the mind. In other words, the scientific mind becomes aware of language as the veil of imagery between the knowing subject and its object, which disguises the mind in art and religion. The scientific minds' self-consciousness gives rise to utilitarian ethics as the form of scientific action. But, because the scientific mind still drags religious shadows as its apologist, scientific knowledge is abstracted from the reality.

The abstractness in science is overcome in history in its concrete treatment of fact. Knowledge is known as perception as both immediate and mediate by the historical mind. By perception which contains intuition and thought, the knowing

mind can firstly grasp the concrete reality avoiding the abstraction. The concrete mind in history presents duty in action as having a sense of obligation arising from each concrete situation. The notion of perception results in the identification of the object of the knowing mind with the mind itself. Since this identification is not yet complete, it consequently gives rise to a historicist difficulty in the understanding of historical facts, and the conflict between duty and freedom in action. This consequently collapses history.

The subject/object identification which contradicts the phase of historical knowledge is overcome in philosophy. Also, processing all phases of knowledge from art to history, the philosophical mind attains the all-inclusive knowledge of reality to the fullest extent. This is where the contradiction of duty and freedom in history is reconciled and reaches absolute ethics as 'perfect freedom'. Since only philosophy can accommodate the subject/object identification, Collingwood distinguishes philosophy from other forms of experience, and regards the philosophy of the rest of the forms as 'realism' insofar as they presuppose or are unable to solve the subject/object dualism.

The development of the human mind illustrated in *Speculum Mentis* traces, therefore, the process of the knowing mind from art as the most intuitive form of knowledge to philosophy as the most rational. The fuel of this development towards philosophy which causes contradictions in the forms of knowledge is the subject/object distinction. The critique of epistemological dualism ultimately culminates in his insistence on the unity of theory and practice. This dualism is now clearly seen as the essence of 'realism' in Collingwood's sense. Criticising this 'realism', he seems to hold a sort of dialectic idealism with an obscurity as he admits himself later in his *Autobiography* (AA: 56-7). It is true that Collingwood rejects that *Speculum Mentis* should in any way be considered 'New-Idealist', and protests against his theory being called the 'usual idealism' by some critics. Nevertheless, Collingwood is not rejecting idealism as such. He wants to avoid being confused with what the contemporary 'realists' understand as 'idealism' from their reactionary point

of view; that is, the view that tends hastily to accuse any form of 'mental idea' of abstraction.[14]

IV. Conclusion

Collingwood's main question during the period between the *Lillebus* and *Speculum Mentis* is epistemological, concerned with the medium between the knowing subject and its object. This is in contrast with the heavily logical and ontological character of his thought in the previous period between *Truth and Contradiction* and the *Libellus*. Given what has been discussed in this chapter, it can be said that he understands that the epistemic process of the mind has three essential elements, i.e. intuition, perception, and rational thinking.

As we have seen in Chapters 1 and 2, the rising realist movement was in a sense a radical reaction against what the realists believed to be 'idealism'. In attacking any idealist notion of 'mental idea' in epistemology, Oxford realists asserted a 'direct realism' that excluded any 'medium' while Cambridge realists take the 'mental idea' not as something abstract but as 'pure sensation' or 'sense-data' derived from experience. Collingwood's position is thus: (1) the rejection of the sense-datum theory which grants pure sensation as a medium; (2) the immediacy or the intuitive nature of the relation between the subject and its object; (3) the intuition above does not mean irrational but implicitly rational. He is clearly opposed to Cambridge realists by (1). By (2), he agrees with his Oxford colleagues' direct realism and rejects the positions of the British Idealists and Cambridge realists insofar as he rejects any medium between the subject and its object.[15] Finally, he is not content with the irrational notion of Oxford realists' 'intuition' and grants its possibility to be rationalised in the knowing process. The forms of experience intuitively attained in Collingwood's sense

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[14] In fact, Collingwood anticipates a criticism by 'unintelligent critics' who misunderstand his insistence upon the interrelation between subject and object: 'We do not assert that the trees and hills and people of our world are "unreal", or "mere ideas in my mind", still less that matters is nothing but a swarm of mind-particles. The very essence of trees and hills and peoples is that they should be not myself but my objects in perception: they are not subjective but objective, not states of myself but facts that I know.' (SM, 311)

[15] He also assimilates earlier Moore's 'transparency' in 'The Refutation of Idealism' with direct realism.

are art and religion. Art is the mind's 'cutting-edge' with the external world, and aesthetic experience is what is intuitively apprehended by the mind as it is. Accordingly, it is not yet logically arranged and unable to be asserted as truth by the mind. In religion, the experience gained in art is asserted as truth for the first time. But the religious mind only dogmatically asserts its experience as truth rejecting rational discussion of its beliefs.

How is such intuitive experience recognised by the mind? What is at issue here is the nature of the medium between the mind and its object.[16] The defect of the existing theories is, for Collingwood, the account of false appearance such as illusion since Cambridge realists were finding their sense-datum theory unmanageable and Oxford realists were merely insisting on 'immediacy'. Collingwood's theory of perception is an attempt to offer a more adequate solution to the problems. In elaborating his notion of perception, he firstly admits neither pure sensation nor pure thought alienated from the mind. This is a denial of the 'sense-data' of the Cambridge realists and the 'idea' of the British Idealists. Second, he sympathises with the Oxford realists' negation of any medium between the mind and its object. From this position perception should be something that occurs in the mind through the mind's process of knowing its object. When the perception is formed in the mind, it not only originates from the intuitive apprehension of the reality but also has been already 'interpreted' by the mind itself. In this sense, perception contains sensation and thought in itself. The cause of illusion is, in Collingwood's account, the mind's wrong principle by which it interprets the intuitive experience. If this wrong principle is corrected, the mind is no longer deceived by illusion.

By his notion of perception, it becomes clear that the mind refers to some principle of rational thought when the mind apprehends its object. It is in the scientific

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[16] As Marion suggests, the problem of medium was actually the focus of discussion at Oxford at that time whereas Moore, as is indicated by Baldwin, also struggled with this question throughout his life. 'Moore wrote more extensively about perception than about any other topic. In these writings he moves between the three alternatives set out here without coming to any firm conclusion.' [Baldwin, 'George Edward Moore', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/moore/.]

forms of knowledge and thereafter that the rational thinking takes a significant role in the knowing process. Collingwood distinguishes such rational knowledge as that of science, history and philosophy from that of intuition in art and religion. Science which has scientific theory as its principle is the first logical form of knowledge. But it cannot truly reach reality due to its inadequate treatment of fact, and ultimately gives rise to the abstraction of its theory from the fact as reality. In the next form of knowledge, history, fact can be treated in a thoroughly concrete way without losing its logical form. Also, history is identified with perception as comprised sensation and thought. This epistemological notion of history, however, is not reality itself. Thus, the dualistic gap between the mind and what is known remains, resulting in the historicist dilemma, i.e. scepticism that history cannot capture what actually happened as it was. Collingwood tries to solve this dilemma in philosophy by regarding the mind's object as the mind itself having included all forms of experience from art to history. All preceding forms of knowledge unable to overcome the subject/object dualism are criticised by Collingwood as 'realism'.[17] Hence, Collingwood between the *Libellus* and *Speculum Mentis* tackles the problem of epistemology examining contemporary theories and systematising their results as 'the map of knowledge' in *Speculum Mentis*. Also, it is during this period that his definition and criticism of 'realism' becomes primarily epistemological by focusing upon the dualism between the mind and its object. What he offers as an alternative is a sort of dialectic idealism.

Given Collingwood's epistemological argument in this period, the first point of Donagan's agenda, i.e. Collingwood's logical rebuttal of the Cook Wilson thesis, may be reconsidered. Since Donagan's critical analysis of his argument, Collingwood's argument against the Cook Wilson thesis has been referred to negatively in the secondary literature. For the latest example, Jacquette remarks that 'Collingwood's argument, despite its elegance and intuitive appeal, does not reveal any hidden inconsistencies or logical incoherence in Cook-Wilsonian [...]

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[17] The relation between history and philosophy is not fully clear in *Speculum Mentis*, and is to be changed in his later works. It is well-known that this point and Collingwood historicism have been one of the most controversial topics among Collingwood scholars.

metaphysical realism.'[18] Nevertheless, it has also been noticed, as Jacquette aptly suggests,[19] that there is some deeper question which is beyond the range of logic behind Collingwood's critique of the Cook Wilson thesis. Indeed, Collingwood's counter-arguments against 'realism' found in his published and unpublished writings in this period are mostly occupied not by logical arguments but by the epistemological, whereas, as Donagan himself notices,[20] he already articulates the Cook Wilson thesis as the object of his criticism at least in *Speculum Mentis* (SM: 283). This epistemological nature of Collingwood's refutation of 'realism' is apparent from his persistent arguments against 'realism' during this period; and Donagan is ignorant of this feature when he logically and analytically criticises Collingwood's refutation of the Cook Wilson thesis. In this respect, D'Oro's defence of Collingwood is right in contending that 'Collingwood's argument is clearly of an epistemological rather than ontological nature',[21] objecting to the realists' belief that 'we can know things as they are in themselves'.[22] Irrespective of the tenability of Collingwood's argument in his *Autobiography*, it is thus too hasty a judgment if we reject, as Donagan does, Collingwood's criticism of the Cook Wilson thesis only by the purported logical refutation in his *Autobiography*. At the same time, however, Collingwood's argument targets a broader range of contemporaries than D'Oro indicates including Cambridge realists and British Idealists, and ultimately crystallises into a comprehensive picture of his philosophy of mind developing not only the theory of knowledge but also the theory of perception.

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[18] Jacquette, 'Collingwood against Metaphysical Realism', p.104.

[19] Ibid. p.114. 'The dispute between metaphysical realism and idealism regrettably cannot be resolved by appeal to logic alone. The failure of Collingwood's efforts to disclose a hidden logical inconsistency in Cook Wilson's epistemic interpretation of metaphysical realism reinforces the assumption that the resolution of this perennial quarrel in speculative metaphysics must continue along other lines, and that the defense of realism versus idealism or idealism versus realism, if there is to be progress in understanding the deeper philosophical issues, is not simply a matter of deductive logic.'

[20] Donagan, *The Later Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, p.285.

[21] D'Oro, *Collingwood and the Metaphysics of Experience*, p.43.

[22] Ibid. p.41. 'Prichard, in other words, appears to commit himself not only to realism in the theory of perception but also to realism in the theory of knowledge. It is the claim according to which we can know things as they are in themselves, that constitutes the bone of contention between Prichard and Collingwood. It is this claim that Collingwood describes as the realist theory that knowledge makes no difference to what is known.'

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE APPROACH TO MORAL PHILOSOPHY

I. Introduction

In the foregoing chapters, we have seen that the philosophical framework of Collingwood's critique of 'realism' is fundamentally consistent throughout the period from *Religion and Philosophy* to *Speculum Mentis* in spite of some evidence of a shift of attitude. The philosophical framework of his critique of 'realism' is essentially consistent in the following three respects: (i) the rejection of subjective idealism; (ii) the denial of the rising contemporary realism of Cambridge and Oxford; and (iii) his orientation towards synthesising both. We saw that this framework is tacitly suggested in *Religion and Philosophy* and privately revealed to de Ruggiero in *Libellus de Generatione*, then officially published in a systematic form in *Speculum Mentis*. During this period, the focus of his criticism starts with logic, and then shifts to metaphysics followed by epistemology.

A remarkable characteristic of the period following *Speculum Mentis*, as far as we can see from the surviving published and unpublished writings, is the number concerning moral and political philosophy. For example, 'Notes Towards a Theory of Politics as a Philosophical Science' (c.1925-7)[1], 'Outlines of a Concept of State' (c.1928)[2], 'The Breakdown of Liberalism' (c.1928)[3], and 'Political Action' (1928-9)[4].

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[1] Collingwood, R. G., 'Notes Towards a Theory of Politics as a Philosophical Science' (c.1925-7), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collinwood, 24/6.

[2] Collingwood, R. G., 'Outlines of a Concept of State' (c.1928), Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collinwood, 24/9.

[3] Collingwood, R. G., 'The Breakdown of Liberalism' (c.1928), Bodleian Libray, Oxford University, Dep. Collinwood, 4/8.

[4] Collingwood, R. G., 'Political Action', *Proceedings of Aristotelian Society*, 29, (1928-9), reprinted in Boucher (ed.), *Essays in Political Philosophy*, p.92-109.

Among them, the series of drafts for his Moral Philosophy Lectures[5] are particularly

significant in knowing the systematic structure and the process of development of his

moral and political philosophy.

His increasing interest in moral and political philosophy is accompanied by a

decrease in the numbers of logical and metaphysical writings which had occupied

such a large proportion of his time in the previous period.[6] However, it is also a fact

that he published a polished book entitled *An Essay on Philosophical Method* in 1933.

Collingwood gave his own evaluation of the book in submitting it to the publisher: 'it

is in fact my first, genuine, technical, philosophical work. [...] here the philosophy

itself beginning to take shape, and the style aims at elegance and economy'[7]. It has

won positive appraisals in the secondary literature as one of the best of Collingwood's

books.[8] Nevertheless, contemporaneous responses were divided. For instance, a

reviewer commented that, '[t]he style is lucid and agreeable, and the conclusions to

which the finely systematized argument leads are important and not without

considerable originality'.[9] On the other hand, A. J. Ayer did not even consider it

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[5] **1921**: Collingwood, R. G., 'Lectures on Moral Philosophy for M[ichaelmas] T[erm], Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 4.
1923: Collingwood, R. G., 'Action. A Course of lectures on Moral Philosophy', Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collingwood, 3/1.
1932: Collingwood, R. G., 'Moral Philosophy Lectures' 1932, Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collinwood, 7.
1933: Collingwood, R. G., 'Lectures on Moral Philosophy' 1933, Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Dep. Collinwood, 8.

[6] In fact, his manuscripts concerning these topics from *Speculum Mentis* to the year of publication of *An Essay on Philosophical Method* found in Collingwood Papers are only two items such as 'The Metaphysics of F. H. Bradley: An Essay on *Appearance and Reality*', (1933), published in new version of *An Essay on Philosophical Method*; and 'Notes towards a Metaphysics' (1933).

[7] Collingwood, R. G., Letter to Clarendon Press, dated 9 March 1933, Clarendon Press Archives, PB/ED/001547. Complied and partly introduced in Johnson, Peter, *The Correspondence of R. G. Collingwood: An Illustrated Guide*, (Swansea: R. G. Collingwood Society, 1998), p.16.

[8] D'Oro, for instance, starts her book by admiring this work as triggering her interest in Collingwood:
'I was so struck by the elegance of the prose and the insights into the nature of the method and task of philosophy contained within it, that I could not understand how such a book could possibly have escaped my attention until then.' (D'Oro, *Collingwood and the Metaphysics of Experience*, p.1).

[9] Hartshorne, C., Review of R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, *International Journal of Ethics*, vol.44, Apr., (1934), p.357. Also, we can find positive reviews in: Anon., Review of R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 March, (1934), p.136; T. G., Review of R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, *Nature*, CXXXIV, 27 Oct., 1934, p.648.

philosophy. He suggested that 'An Essay on Philosophical Method is a contribution to belles-letres rather than philosophy. The style is uniformly elegant, the matter mostly obscure'.[10]

It is not immediately apparent from the book that it was originally conceived as the methodological introduction to his moral philosophy lectures. However, even in the book itself he uses moral philosophy to illustrate some of his arguments. The reflections on philosophical method began life as the preamble to his lectures. D'Oro indicates: '[t]he introduction finally took on a life of its own and was, in a revised form, published as EPM. The introductions to the lectures on Moral Philosophy, therefore, are early drafts of the Essay'.[11] In this sense, it is naturally supposed that one of his representative philosophical works, An Essay on Philosophical Method, is profoundly related to the development of his moral philosophy. In this chapter, my investigation into Collingwood's critique of 'realism' will focus in particular on the bridge he built from logic and metaphysics to moral philosophy, in An Essay on Philosophical Method and the Moral Philosophy Lectures. In so doing, I will analyse the specific targets of his criticism of 'realism' formulated in his philosophical method and moral philosophy. In addition, I will explain how Collingwood was impelled by his understanding of the human mind and action to move from epistemology to moral philosophy.

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[10] Ayer, A. J., *Philosophy in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Weidenfeld, 1982), p.193. Also, a number of negative reviews can be found: Ronayne, C. F., Review of R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, *American Review*, March, (1935), pp.627-33; Cross, F. L., Review of R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, *The Church Quarterly*, vol.118, (1934), pp.303-5; G. B., Review of R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, *The Tablet*, 23 Dec., (1933), p.842; Schiller, F. C. S., Review of R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, *Mind*, XLIII, (1934), pp.117-20; Ryan, John, K., Review of R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, *The New Scholasticism*, vol.3, (1934), pp.172-4.
[11] D'Oro, *Collingwood and the Metaphysics of Experience*, p.8. Connelly agrees with her in this point: 'The methodological introduction to these lectures, which has been growing, cuckoo like, since 1923, was cut out in 1933 "as overlapping the course" and took a life of its own.' (Connelly, *Metaphysics, Method, and Politics: The Political Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, pp.38-9).

II. A Method for Understanding the Human Mind and Action: *An Essay on Philosophical Method*

By the time he wrote *Speculum Mentis*, Collingwood had formulated the essential criterion of his conception of 'realism' as the doctrine of the epistemological dualism represented by the Cook Wilson thesis 'knowing makes no difference to what is known.' His critical position against 'realism' was already having a bearing on his moral philosophy at this time. The 1921 version of his Moral Philosophy Lectures, which illustrates the history of moral philosophy based on the theory of knowledge, Collingwood categorises moral theories into subjectivism, objectivism, and the synthetic position in terms of the epistemic subject/object relation. What was consistent in these attempts is Collingwood's fundamental question what is the adequate framework for understanding the human mind and action? *An Essay on Philosophical Method* may also be placed in the line of answers to this fundamental question. In this section, first of all, I would like to illustrate the methodological foundation for the enquiry into the human mind and action crystallised in *An Essay on Philosophical Method*.

1. The Logical Analysis of Method

In seeking an adequate method for understanding the human mind and action, Collingwood distinguishes two types of tradition in philosophical method in the Introduction of *An Essay on Philosophical Method*: the Cartesian tradition as the naturalistic or scientific method and the Kantian tradition as the historical and humanistic method. Whereas Descartes tried equally to apply a method to all three main branches of science, mathematics, natural science, and metaphysics, Kant introduced the distinction of methodology in accordance with disciplines. Collingwood is concerned that modern philosophy in inheriting these two opposing traditions is in 'a time of crisis and chaos':

The present is a time of crisis and chaos in philosophy. The exceptional difficulty which modern philosophers find in accepting each other's conclusions, and even in understanding each other's arguments, is a necessary consequence of their failure to agree upon principles of method, or even to find out exactly how they differ; this only is clear, that the old methods are no longer followed, and every one is free to invent a new one of his own. (EPM: 6)

In order to cast a light on the 'modern chaos' in philosophy, he examines the philosophical method comparing the Cartesian tradition as the 'non-philosophical' method with the Kantian 'philosophical' method. His strategy is to examine the nature of logical reasoning in both methods based on the traditional framework of logic since Aristotle. As a matter of fact, the main body of chapters of *An Essay on Philosophical Method* appear to be, though not so obviously, devoted to the three forms of logical thinking: concept, judgment, and inference. Chapters II, III, and IV are analyses of the concept; V and VI cover judgment; and VII and VIII are concerned with inference. By comparing the philosophical method with the non-philosophical (scientific) method in each form of logical thinking, he intends to demonstrate that such a traditional framework cannot necessarily be applied to philosophical method: '[e]ven words like concept, judgment, inference, though at first sight unambiguously philosophical, betray subtle distinctions of meaning according as they are applied to philosophical or non-philosophical thought.' (EPM: 35)

2. Concept

At the first level of logical thinking, he compares philosophical concepts with the non-philosophical by observing the process of classification and division of concepts in philosophy and science. In science (irrespective of exact or empirical science), every object can be classified into a particular genus which is defined by a theory. For example, species of creatures are divided into animals and vegetables, and the animals are divided into vertebrates and invertebrates, and vertebrates again into mammals,

birds, reptiles, and fish and so forth. Every species can be classified into a particular genus in the system. Although there may be some tricky cases, all species of creatures belong to only one of those genera and cannot belong to plural genera. This fact suggests that the scientific concepts are mutually exclusive by definition. By contrast, it is not the case in philosophical concepts. This has been, Collingwood insists, long well-known since Aristotle remarked in *Nicomachean Ethics* that the concept of the goodness is predicable under all his categories. That is to say, philosophical concepts overlap and are not exclusive. Collingwood calls this the 'overlap of classes', and takes it as the separating-point between philosophical concepts and scientific concepts, contending that 'an overlap of classes is characteristic of the philosophical concept, and may serve to distinguish it from those of exact and empirical science' (EPM: 45).

As an appropriate framework for philosophical concepts, Collingwood offers what he calls the 'scale of forms'. Since the philosophical concepts are different from one another, not only in kind but also in degree, they should be placed in a successive order on a scale so that the border of concepts can be distinguished not by one simple borderline but by gradual variation from one to another. In his own words: '[i]n such a system of specifications the two sets of differences are so connected that whenever the variable, increasing or decreasing, reaches certain critical points on the scale, one specific form disappears and is replaced by another' (EPM: 57). He quotes from Plato examples of the combination of the difference of kind and degree such as nescience, opinion, knowledge; conjecture, understanding, reason and so forth. Such a series of concepts regarding the human mind are certainly different and distinguishable from one another and can be organised in a consecutive order, but the difference of concepts is not exclusive, unlike in the case of scientific concepts. For, the border between concepts is not as clear as in the case of the specification of the system of creatures by species and genus. In this sense, he maintains that 'the scale of forms' is the most adequate system to specify philosophical concepts. In addition, he even ultimately applies the idea of a scale of forms not only to the philosophical concept

but also to the non-philosophical concept taking the case of scale of H_2O as an example, i.e. ice, water, and steam.

Understanding the characteristics of the philosophical concept as such, he highlights them by contrasting the philosophical concept with those in exact sciences, such as mathematics. As is evident from the case of defining a geometrical figure, the definition is absolute and rigid in the sense that a figure either applies precisely to the definition given or not; no ambivalent case is possible; the particular case never changes the definition itself, even if it does not apply well to the definition. By contrast, the philosophical concept, he perceives, is 'indefinable' (EPM: 93). In the philosophical concept, the definition given is not necessarily final and perfect; it must be revised repeatedly in describing the cases which do not fit well with the existing definition, so that the definition can reach a higher degree of adequacy.[12] He thus explains the process of defining the philosophical concept:

> To define a philosophical concept, therefore, it is necessary first to think of that concept as specifying itself in a form so rudimentary that anything less would fail to embody the concept at all. This will be the minimum specification of the concept, the lower end of the scale; and the first phase of the definition will consist in stating this. Later phases will modify this minimum definition by adding new determinations, each implied in what went before, but each introducing into it qualitative changes as well as additions and complications. Finally, a phase will be reached in which the definition contains, explicitly stated, all that can be found in the concept; the definition is now adequate to the thing defined and the process is as complete as we can make it (EPM: 100-1).

From the conclusion that the defining philosophical concept is a process of modification of the initial definition by examining new cases, Collingwood draws out

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[12] Collingwood points out that the definitions of philosophical concepts in a sense resembles with that of empirical science like zoology because the classification system in such a science can also be modified in accordance with the discovery of new species which do not fit the existent definition, though he also puts the difference between them.

an implication concerning the relation between thought and action. That is, thinking is itself to act in our mind, and likewise action is itself fundamentally the consequence of thinking. This point can be ultimately reduced to the epistemic relation of the subject and its object, the basis of his critique of 'realism'. The philosophical definition is the product of the interrelation between the knowledge already worked out by the subject and the subject's action to know the object. Knowledge is constantly changed or modified by the knowing mind. We can know this from the observation of philosophical concepts in comparison with non-philosophical concepts. This point is well described by Connelly:

> Both our knowing and the concept known constitute a scale of forms; both the scale of forms of the concept as we know it, and our knowing of the concept (that is, our philosophical knowledge of the concept in relation to our experience) expresses itself as a scale of forms of the concept. The scale of forms of the concept and the scale of forms of our knowledge of the concept are in the end the same because the knowledge we come to possess is knowledge of ourselves, of our own experience; but now it is knowledge ordered according to its logical priority and progressive adequacy rather than according to psychological contingency.[13]

To sum up, in analysing the concept as the first form of traditional logical forms, Collingwood compares the philosophical concept with the non-philosophical. The non-philosophical concept can be mechanically classified according to the rigid, exclusive, and absolute definition. We can clearly determine whether a concept fits with the definition of genus or not. By contrast, we cannot classify the philosophical concept in such an 'all or nothing' way unlike the case of the non-philosophical concept. The philosophical concept cannot easily be applied to a single definition, but overlaps into definitions of adjacent genera. In this sense, the philosophical concept is

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[13] Connelly, *Metaphysics, Method, and Politics: The Political Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, p.80.

indefinable, and the definition of such a concept is not exclusive but overlapping. In order to capture what he means by a philosophical concept, he offers the idea of a 'scale of forms'. By placing the philosophical concept on a scale of forms, it becomes possible to understand its overlapping meanings by gradual degrees, and constantly to polish and modify it to a better definition of the concept. In such a process of defining the philosophical concept, we can see the mutual interaction between the knowing subject and its object, or thought and action.

3. Judgment

With respect to judgment, Collingwood again attempts to compare the philosophical judgment with the non-philosophical in the logical structure. He examines the difference between both in the elements of judgment, i.e. quality, quantity, relation, apart from modality.

In quality, he asserts, all judgments are at once affirmative and negative because to affirm a judgment is to deny other judgments which contradict the judgment affirmed. The difference between the philosophical judgment and the non-philosophical is thus: since the non-philosophical judgment consists of non-philosophical and mutually exclusive concepts, to affirm a judgment is to deny 'indiscriminately all the judgments incompatible with it' (EPM: 107). On the other hand, a philosophical judgment composed of philosophical concepts, when it is affirmed, provokes other incompatible judgments and urges us to modify them so as to be compatible with the judgment affirmed just like in the case of philosophical concepts.

By relation as an element of judgment, he means the relation between judgment and the object to be judged. What is the difference between the philosophical judgment and the non-philosophical (scientific) in relation to their objects? He characterises the non-philosophical judgment as 'hypothetical' and the philosophical as 'categorical'. In mathematics (as one of the exact sciences), our reasoning starts from suppositions and reaches conclusions. He calls this process of

thinking hypothetical and regards this as the typical character of mathematical (exact-scientific) thinking. In empirical science, similarly, when we classify an individual event or genus, we first of all determine theoretically the typical case in *a priori*, and then classify individual objects into it. Hence, judgment in both exact and empirical science is hypothetical. Judgment in science is not based on any concrete and individual object, and does not necessarily correspond to it because the scientific judgment essentially flows, not from any observation or perception of concrete objects, but from suppositions. In the case of philosophical judgment, he contends that it has to be categorical judgment, by which he means, in essence, judgment about what actually exists. In supporting this contention, he briefly reflects on the history of the Ontological Proof referring to Plato, Boethius, Anselm, and modern philosophers such as Descartes. These philosophers, Collingwood understands, agree in viewing philosophy as a form of thought in which essence and existence are conceived as inseparable, and concludes that 'unlike mathematics and empirical science, philosophy stands committed to maintaining that its subject-matter is no mere hypothesis, but something actually existing.' (EPM: 127) While he does not deny that the philosophical judgment sometimes can be hypothetical, the essential characteristic of the philosophical judgment is about what actually exists, namely categorical. Therefore, he rejects with implicit hostility the contemporary current of the scientific reform of philosophy:

> [I]t is impossible to engage, however slightly, in the study of logic, for example, or ethics, without committing oneself to the view that one is studying a subject-matter that actually exists, and therefore aiming at a knowledge only expressible in categorical propositions. No proposed method of reforming these sciences, whether by changing their method or by redefining their subject-matter, will rid of them of this characteristic. (EPM: 128)

From the conclusion that the philosophical judgment is in essence categorical and judgment about what actually exists, he proceeds to apply it to his moral

philosophy in giving an account of moral judgment. The particular subject-matter of moral judgment as categorical is, thus, 'giving an account of how people think they ought to behave' (EPM: 132). In simpler words, the object of the moral judgment is human action. In consequence, his characterisation of the subject-matter of moral judgment as human action reaches the same point as the conclusion in the discussion of the concept, i.e. thought and action existing in mutual interaction. He asserts: 'no theory of moral ideals is conceivable which does not admit that to some extent moral ideas affect action' (EPM: 132). Moral judgment concerning a subject's action as actually exists is not only the product of the subject's thinking but also what dictates to its moral action. In this sense, his conclusion in the phase of judgment is in harmony with that of the concept. He then applies it to moral philosophy:

> [Moral philosophy] describes, not action as opposed to ideas about action, but the moral consciousness; and this it is forced to describe as already being in some sense what it ought to be. This in turn will affect the account which it gives of action; for no theory of moral ideals is conceivable which does not admit that to some extent moral ideas affect action. (EPM: 132)

The task of moral philosophy is to describe the agent's action as moral consciousness. By the unity of thought and action and his definition of philosophy as categorical, it is inevitable to describe the moral consciousness as 'already being in some sense what it ought to be', i.e. normative existence. Therefore, describing action as the moral consciousness is not only to describe the action itself but also to give some explanation of norms to which the action refers. This leads to his conception of moral philosophy as 'both normative and descriptive' (EPM: 132).

In contrasting the difference between the philosophical and the non-philosophical in judgment, he characterises the non-philosophical judgment as essentially hypothetical and the philosophical as categorical. In the former, judgment is carried out on the basis of non-philosophical concepts which are classified by *a*

priori definitions, and necessarily turns out to be a hypothetical judgment which presupposes not the concrete and real objects but the *a priori* definitions. The latter, on the other hand, is done by being based on some concrete objects in existence. This distinction between categorical and hypothetical corresponds with the distinction between philosophy and science.[14] What the philosophical judgment as categorical thinking presumes as its subject-matter is primarily human action. As in the case of the concept, he emphasises the unity or mutual interaction of thought and action, and the 'realist' dichotomy of them is denied. This leads his characterisation of moral philosophy as 'both normative and descriptive'.

4. Inference

Prior to examining inference, Collingwood undertakes a preliminarily examination of sceptical positions concerning the possibility of inference in philosophy, i.e. what he calls 'critical philosophy' and 'analytic philosophy'. The latter in particular is the movement of Cambridge realism[15] but he does not specify who falls into the former category. In spite of avoiding particular names, it is supposed, according to Beaney, that he means by 'critical philosophy' Oxford realism.[16] Collingwood then points out the contradiction implied in 'analytic philosophy' that, despite the point it makes about having 'done away with the old idea of constructive philosophy' (EPM: 146), it does in reality involve some constructive philosophical doctrines insofar as they rest on principles. It is, he urges, also the case in critical philosophy. In other words,

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[14] Rubinoff, *Collingwood and the Reform of Metaphysics: A Study in the Philosophy of Mind*, p.184.

[15] This is obvious from the fact that he refers to G. E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, and Susan Stebbing. Beaney particularly specifies Collingwood's target as G. E. Moore:

What Collingwood primarily objects to about "analytic" philosophy is what we may call "conservatism". [...] The idea that philosophy should involve no more than the analysis of "common sense" was the main target of Collingwood's criticism. Here it is clear that it was G. E. Moore's views to which he objected' (Beaney, 'Collingwood's Critique of Analytic Philosophy', pp.106-7)

[16] Beaney identifies the 'realists' of Oxford as 'critical philosophy', and explains the reason why Collingwood does not specify their names: 'That members of the Cambridge School should be named, but no members of the Oxford School, is hardly surprising given Collingwood's position at the time. Not least, Collingwood was hoping for a chair at Oxford (he had unsuccessfully applied for one in 1928), to provide him with more time for writing, and it clearly would have been imprudent to make public criticisms of his Oxford colleagues.' (Beaney, 'Collingwood's Critique of Analytic Philosophy', p.119.)

although both sceptical views of inference deny the possibility of inference and try to evade the systematic and constructive thinking towards a philosophical system, they still cannot be free from implying some system as far as they try to offer some new 'method' in philosophy. The analytic philosophy of the Cambridge realists, for instance, attempts to reform method in philosophy by applying the mathematical method, while rejecting the construction of a metaphysical system. Nevertheless critical and analytic philosophy Collingwood maintains, are self-contradictory because '[t]hey both fail to recognize that methods imply principles, and systematic methods, systematic principles; and that their professed scepticism is merely a veiled claim to exempt these principles from criticism or even from explicit statement, while assuming their truth and sufficiency' (EPM: 147).

Subsequent to this refutation of these sceptical positions, Collingwood seeks an adequate way of reasoning in philosophy. In analysing the reasoning into three elements, namely data, principle, and conclusion, he contrasts philosophical reasoning with reasoning in exact and empirical science. In exact science, he demonstrates two characteristics of reasoning: (1) the principles in it originate from both the science itself and logic; (2) reasoning in exact science always deductively follows from principles to conclusions and not *vice versa*. Although Collingwood admits that there are some similarities between philosophical reasoning and in exact-science in (2), he also clearly distinguishes them in following two points. First, while exact-science has two origins, i.e. the science itself and logic, philosophy only has logic as the origin of its principles since logic is itself a branch of philosophy. It follows that exact-science may neglect its assumptions in logic while philosophy cannot (EPM: 155) because it is possible for exact-science solely to rest upon presuppositions derived from itself. Secondly, principles or axioms in philosophy have to be more than mere assumptions, but categorically asserted since, by the nature of philosophical judgment as categorical, the philosophical inference based on categorical judgment cannot be separated from what actually exists. Such differences between philosophy and exact-science in inference imply that in exact-science a conclusion is totally different from

its data before processing the inference on the one hand, and on the other the conclusion is fundamentally the same with data in philosophy, though the conclusion in philosophy has to be tested categorically. Hence, Collingwood remarks concerning the nature of philosophical inference that: 'philosophy does not, like exact or empirical science, bring us to know things of which we were simply ignorant, but brings us to know in a different way things which we already knew in some way.' (EPM: 161)

Even philosophy uses experience as the test of philosophical inference however, it does not follow that philosophy can be identified with empirical science. In comparing philosophy with empirical science, he finds four differences. (i) In philosophy, the initial knowledge forms the basis of the reasoned final knowledge and consists of the system itself. In empirical science, initial knowledge is a starting-point of systematic theory and does not comprise the system itself. Although individual creatures contribute to form a definition of species which is to be a part of a whole classification system of, say, animals, that particular creature becomes replaceable with other individual creatures of the same species. (ii) While the data of empirical science is merely the individual fact, data in philosophy simultaneously have to be both conclusion or universal proposition, and individual fact. (iii) Whereas data is known by perception in empirical science, data in philosophy is known by thinking as distinct from perceiving. (iv) The conclusion reasoned is different and completely new from the initial data and remains a hypothesis in empirical science, but in philosophy the conclusion is the very initial data itself developed in a more rational form, or the fact well understood. Thus, he concludes:

> In the case of empirical science this is something new, something different from the data and added to them; in the case of philosophy it is the data themselves, developed into a new and more rational form. In empirical science, the outcome of an inductive process is an hypothesis standing, somewhat nebulously, outside the facts on which it depends, like the shadow of a mountain cast on a cloud; in philosophy, the theory that emerges from

consideration of the facts is no mere hypothesis, it is the facts themselves more thoroughly

understood.' (EPM: 170)

By comparing philosophy with exact and empirical science, Collingwood finds that the fundamental difference between philosophy and science in their inference lies in the relation between data and conclusion. Whereas scientific reasoning results in entirely new conclusions from data, philosophical reasoning is a better and more rational understanding of the same object which is tested by experience. In this sense, he insists that there is a continuity between theory (the conclusion of philosophical inference) and experience (that of data), and 'the theory is nothing but the experience itself, with its universality further insisted upon, its latent connexions and contradictions brought into the light of consciousness. Experience is already developing into theory, and theory is still experience' (EPM: 170-1). Furthermore, he applies a scale of forms to the relation between theory and experience, and concludes that philosophical inference is the repeated process of understanding the barest experience into moral, rational and theoretical forms of experience. The more we think of experience philosophically, the more rational and theoretical form the experience takes. Accordingly, he expresses the last form of the process:

The stage last reached, regarded as a theory, is now a theory criticized and refuted; what

stands firm is not its truth as theory, but the fact that it has actually been reached, the fact

that we have experienced it; and in criticizing and demolishing it as a theory we are

confirming and explaining it as an experience. (EPM: 173)

He understands that this is the very nature of philosophical inference.

With respect to the last form of logical thinking, in short, he begins with an examination of sceptical positions on inference. Whereas assimilating both critical philosophy and analytic philosophy in evading the construction of a philosophical system, Collingwood points out their contradiction that they eventually presuppose

some system in so far as they attempt to offer some method based on some principle. Collingwood's criticism of both scepticisms is thus understood as a defence of philosophy as a systematic and constructive study against contemporary anti-metaphysical trends. Commentators agree in this respect. Whereas Beaney contends that: '[a]lthough the more stridently positivist forms of analytic philosophy had yet to take hold in Britain, Collingwood recognized its anti-metaphysical implications',[17] D'Oro draws out the implication of Collingwood's criticism:

> It is important to recognize the intellectual climate during the 1930s since it is difficult to glean, from a reading of EPM alone, that it was written at a time when the philosophical world was in turmoil, when a new form of empiricism was delivering the final blows to rationalist metaphysics, as it had survived in the work of the British Idealists. [...] [I]n spite of appearances, however, EPM contains a thoroughgoing, if covert critique of the neo-empiricist revival.[18]

In order adequately to characterise philosophical inference, he compares the philosophical inference with that of science. The inference in science changes data into a different form. Philosophical inference is re-understanding the data given by thinking in a more rational form, so that the data and conclusion are not essentially different. Here, the 'realist' dualism of experience (data) and theory (conclusion) is denied, and the mutual interaction between them is again maintained. Such a thinking process, incorporating the unity of experience and theory, Collingwood asserts, is the very nature of philosophical logic.

5. Summary

In seeking an adequate method for understanding the human mind and action as the main subject-matter of philosophy, he works out the logical foundation of the method in *An Essay on Philosophical Method*. In this work, he contrasts the philosophical and

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[17] Ibid. p.100.
[18] D'Oro, *Collingwood and the Metaphysics of Experience*, p.55.

the non-philosophical in each form of logical thinking because what is problematic to him in contemporary philosophy is the confusion of the philosophical method with that of the non-philosophical. In distinguishing the philosophical from the non-philosophical, he consistently criticises the attempt to introduce the non-philosophical method into philosophy. By the non-philosophical method he means primarily the scientific or mathematical method of the Cambridge realists. Nevertheless, it would be unfair if I failed to state that Collingwood's criticism of the non-philosophical method implies a criticism of Oxford realism. For, Collingwood rather euphemistically suggests that his criticism of the non-philosophical method should show both the Cambridge and Oxford realists' methods ultimately fall into error (EPM: 150). Collingwood's methodological criticism of Oxford realism in *An Essay on Philosophical Method* is thus recognised by Beaney: '[i]n his *Autobiography*, with fascism spreading and war looming, it was the moral implications of such a philosophy that Collingwood was primarily concerned to criticise; in the earlier *Essay*, it was its methodological contradictions that he sought to expose.'[19] In line with the development of his criticism of 'realism' as we have seen in Chapter 5 (logic and metaphysics) and Chapter 6 (epistemology), it is in a sense philosophical method that Collingwood crystallised into his critique of 'realism' during this period. Just as Collingwood's criticism covers a wide range of contemporary philosophy in other domains of philosophy, the scope of Collingwood's criticism in method is broader than the surface of *An Essay on Philosophical Method* implies.

In spite of Beaney's right interpretation that Collingwood equally aims to criticise Cambridge realism explicitly and Oxford realism implicitly however, it is still a fact that Collingwood's methodological critique of 'realism' is made mostly in referring to Cambridge realists' theory. We can therefore perceive most prominently the crystallisation of his refutation of the Cantabrigian movement to reform the scientific and mathematical method in philosophy in this work. Notwithstanding, the conclusion that philosophical thinking is the repeated process of understanding what

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[19] Beaney, 'Collingwood's Critique of Analytic Philosophy', p.100.

is already known in a more rational form, as sharply distinct from that of science, is also intended to overcome the dualism between theory and experience, the parallel subject/object dualism represented by the Cook Wilson thesis. In fact, he finishes his arguments in many chapters of *An Essay on Philosophical Method* by applying his conclusion to moral philosophy, insisting on the unity of theory and experience. This unity consequently characterises Collingwood's conception of moral philosophy as both 'normative' and 'descriptive'. This intimates another question: 'what is the object of his philosophical method elaborated in the course of confronting Cambridge realism?', or in other words, what precisely does he mean by 'philosophy' in *An Essay on Philosophical Method*?

III. The Analysis of Action

It can be naturally supposed that the answer to the question raised in the last section 'what Collingwood exactly means by philosophy?' strongly assumes a moral implication especially given the facts that his philosophical method was developed in a series of Moral Philosophy Lectures, and that he completes many chapters of *An Essay on Philosophical Method* with the application of his conclusion to moral philosophy. In this section, I will clarify what his philosophical method sets as its object, and illustrate his analysis of the object by examining the series of Moral Philosophy Lectures.

1. Action as the Subject-Matter of Philosophy

The series of Collingwood's Moral Philosophy Lectures, in which he developed his own philosophical method, is in its object quite consistent from the first lectures to the year of the publication of *An Essay on Philosophical Method*. As early as the 1921 Lectures, he describes its object thus: '[t]he business of moral philosophy is simply to study conduct (that is, the deliberate action of rational beings) as it really is, irrespective of any preliminary hypothesis' (1921: 1). Taking human action or conduct as the object of his moral philosophy, he understands the moral questions 'are all restatements of one single question, namely the question of the name of choice (in

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the proper sense of the word) of action' (1921: 2) because the seemingly different questions in the history of moral philosophy are in reality appearing 'in a different way according to the historical phase of development reached by thought' (1921: 3). On this basis, he reviews and sorts moral theories into three positions in accordance with the difference between epistemological positions for knowing the criteria for action: (1) Ancient and Medieval philosophy present an objectivist or realist theory of knowledge; (2) the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a philosophy of subjectivism, such as that of Hobbes; (3), and, the Kantian synthetic philosophical position of the eighteenth century.

In the 1932 Lectures, we can also see that he sets action as the object of his moral philosophy: 'we want a general theory of action in its whole extent, which shall also contain a specific theory of consciousness and of moral action' (1932: 1); or more directly, 'Our subject is action' (1932: 10).

From his first lectures in 1921 to the 1932 Lectures, hence, he sets the subject-matter of his moral philosophy as human action. Given the fact that the Lectures provide the foundation of *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, it can rightly be supposed that the object of his philosophical method is principally human action.

2. The Analysis of Forms of Action

In the series of Moral Philosophy Lectures, Collingwood, in seeking a method for philosophy, consolidates his criticism of Cambridge realism as a fallacious approach to human action, consequently crystallising it into *An Essay on Philosophical Method*. Nevertheless, as we have seen in analysing the book, his critique of 'realism' is not merely confined to its scientific approach to philosophy, but extends to the moral dualism of theory and action, or, thought and experience. While his account of moral philosophy in terms of the subject/object epistemic relation in parallel to theory and action can be found in the 1921 Lectures, the 1923 Lectures are significant in the sense that it develops the analysis of action by applying the scale of forms using the same epistemological framework to the 1921 Lectures.

Based on the parallel connection of the epistemic and practical relation between the agent and its object, he offers in the 1923 Lectures an axis in common with the two relations, namely passivity and positivity.

> Thought cannot exist as the wholly passive or effortless contemplation of a given reality: in order to know, we must work by knowing, we must use our will to overcome the force of our own ignorance and prejudice, to attend to the facts and to cross question nature. Action is thus a necessary means to thought. And conversely, thought is a necessary means to action: for unless we know the situation in which we stand, we cannot act, because we do not know what to do. [...] Thought and action are thus mutually mean to each other, and the absence or defect of either would involve a corresponding absence or defect of the other. (1923: 33)

In placing the mutually indispensable relation, he thus puts together the ideas that one cannot know anything without some positive action to know it, and that action is also the result of positive thinking. Without acting positively, we cannot do or know anything. There are, however, different degrees of positivity and passivity in relation to our actions and thoughts. In the 1923 Lectures, he classifies human action according to the balance between positivity and passivity in human action for the first time, though it is not yet clearly articulated.

Human action, according to him, can be distinguished into two classes: (unconscious) action and (self-) conscious action. He subdivides the former into such classes as mechanical action, reflex action, and instinct. What is common in those actions is the lack of the process of choice as a result of thinking or reflection. In such types of unconscious action, the body acts merely in response to external factors without reflective thinking. In this sense, those actions are quite passive actions in nature, and regarded as lower classes of action by Collingwood. By contrast, he defines the other action, conscious action, as 'action on the part of a self which recognises itself as self' (1923: 67), and contends that 'reason, as the consciousness of

what is not present to us, is identical with will, in the sense that an action conditioned by reason is a voluntary or chosen action. What makes it a chosen action is the consciousness, not of what we are doing, but of what we are not doing' (1923: 70). Conscious action, unlike the unconscious, is done as a result of reasoning or thinking. In other words, it is to choose an action to be taken from some alternatives. Such actions are in essence positive. In this sense, conscious action is placed higher than unconscious action. Then, Collingwood subdivides conscious action into six classes according to the degree of positivity: what he calls; caprice, play, convention, utility, conscience, and absolute action. This analysis of conscious action in 1923 is, as we have seen in the previous chapter, to be developed as forms of action corresponding to forms of knowledge in *Speculum Mentis* in a slightly different way. In the series of the Moral Philosophy Lectures, moreover, he consistently stresses the significance of conscious action in moral action:

> Moral activity, then, is the self-creation of a conscious being, shaping itself according to ideal standards which it conceives as the fruit of a moral struggle. [...] Only a conscious being can create itself, and to be conscious is to have ideal standards: ideal standards again can only take shape in the course of the process of thinking, that is in the course of a struggle which when it is conceived with specifically moral ends is called a moral struggle. (1921: 60)

In the 1923 Lectures, he develops his critique of 'realism' in accounting for conscious action. Since 'realism' posits a dualism between consciousness and its object, the mutual interaction between them is impossible and consequently the action chosen by conscious reasoning also turns out to be impossible. Similarly, in the 1933 Lectures, he makes a more direct criticism, specifying the origin of the dualism in 'realism':

There was in those days a thing called Realism in Oxford, whose main article of faith was that 'knowing makes no difference to its object'. [...] where knowledge takes the form of self-knowledge it is flagrantly and indubitably false. For this reason the 'results' did not, and still do not (for many of them are still with us), talk about self-knowledge at all when they could help it. Sometimes they denied that there was such a thing. And I remember an American realist[20] who was logical enough to declare a kind of philosophical jihad or holy war on the thing his philosophy could not cope with, and assert that the 'task of realism was to liberate the world from the plague of self-consciousness'—whether it is a plague, I suggest, depends upon how much of it you have. (1933: 33a-b; mentioned as supplement in 1939)

The criticism of 'realism' in his Moral Philosophy Lectures, from the position which regards conscious action as rational and the most important, rejects the epistemological dualism of 'realism' through and through since it hinders conscious choice or action, alluding to Oxford realism represented by the Cook Wilson thesis as the main source of the defect. Again, his critique of 'realism' in the series of Lectures ultimately arrives at the unity of theory and action.

What seems important to remark is that Collingwood, by his insistence on the unity of theory and action, never intends to mean something like the view that human action conforms to or obeys theory. He grants not only conscious action, in which human knowledge affects one's action, but also unconscious action, which occurs without thinking. More significantly, Collingwood repeatedly highlights the 'choice' of agents. He rightly admits the possibility that knowledge may not affect choices in some cases, he emphasises the unignorable role of conscious action in moral philosophy which tends to be dismissed by the contemporary 'realists'. In this respect, Donagan's second charge against Collingwood seems to be pointless. Denying the interrelation between moral knowledge and human action, Donagan tries to refute Collingwood's position by using an example:

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[20] Collingwood only refers to 'an American realist' anonymously.

The two doctrines have no connexion whatever. Supposing it to be a fact that killing an enemy in war is morally permissible, realist epistemology holds that it remains a fact whether it is known or not; but it does not follow from this that a man's actions in war will be the same whether he knows that fact or not.[21]

A soldier's knowing that the 'realist' epistemology takes a moral thesis 'killing an enemy in war is morally permissible' as a fact, Donagan's claims, does not result in a soldier's certain action in the battlefield. Collingwood does not deny the possibility that Donagan submits, instead insisting that it may affect the soldier's action. That is, Collingwood never denies that the soldier can ignore what she/he knows in acting in war whether it is from the soldier's conscious choice or a more instinctive response to the danger. This is clearly stated by Collingwood himself in the 1921 Lectures:

Knowledge is said to be <u>guide</u> to action: it enables us to act, and is therefore practically useful and indeed indispensable since without it we should act at random in the dark; but it doesn't <u>make</u> us act, [...] our will should be able to disregard the information given for its guidance by our intellect.' (1921: underlines as original)

In this sense, Collingwood thinks of human action as a more complex event than Donagan appears to impute to him. Hence, it becomes evident that Donagan's second point against Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' is a hasty accusation, disregarding Collingwood's precise position found in his Moral Philosophy Lectures.[22]

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[21] Donagan, *The Later Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, p.289.

[22] This implies that Donagan did not read the Lectures when he was writing his 1962 book. Nevertheless, it has been said among scholars that Donagan did read them before he wrote his book. Indeed, there is evidence that Donagan had an interest in the Lectures when he was writing the book, and that the Lectures were removed from the possession of Kate Edwards for a certain period between the late 1950s to the early 1960s. However, there is no definite evidence that Donagan did read them as far as I have been able to establish. Rather, his preface for the reprinted edition of his book strongly suggest that he did not read them when he wrote the original edition:

'[...] Those who wrote on Collingwood before 1978 therefore had reason to expect that one day at least some of their interpretations and conjectures would be directly confirmed or disconfirmed.

In the Moral Philosophy Lectures, in short, he analyses action as the object of his philosophical method. In analysing action, he makes a distinction between unconscious action as lower and conscious action as higher in degree on the scale of action, then regards the latter as the true object of moral philosophy. For, conscious action is the only action which is done by philosophical thinking while unconscious action tends to happen from mere natural laws or thoughtless responses to stimuli. The theory which makes conscious action fundamentally impossible is the epistemological dualism advocated by Oxford realism. Here he affirms the unity of theory and action by criticising Oxford realism, and in particular the proposition that knowing makes no difference to what is known.

3. Summary

The prime object of his philosophical method as the scale of forms is human action, in the light of the process that the idea of the scale of forms has been developed as a method to analyse action in the Lectures; and the fact that he often mentions it himself. What is made clear in his analysis of action is that the object of (moral) philosophy is precisely speaking the conscious action taken by our own positive choice. The condition which makes conscious action possible is the unity of theory and action. Therefore, the series of Moral Philosophy Lectures strongly implies the criticism of the epistemological dualism of the subject and its object which was posited by Oxford realists. Collingwood's intention to overcome the moral dualism between theory and action, with the parallel dualism of the subject and its object, is often noticed in the secondary literature:

Up to a point, their expectation seems to have been borne out. For example, the preservation of the manuscripts of the set of lectures Collingwood delivered on ethics in 1921, 1923 (with additions for 1926), 1928, 1932, 1933, and 1940 should make possible a definite history of how he arrived at the philosophy of mind in Part 1 of *The New Leviathan*. That should decide the questions that Mink and I dispute—perhaps by showing us both to be mistaken.' [Donagan, Alan, *The Later Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1985), p.x.] (This I am indebted to Professor Rex Martin for his pointer.)

The moral world is a world not of objects but of thoughts, and therefore our knowledge of that world is also knowledge of ourselves: in giving an account of our thoughts and principles moral theory is providing the means of gaining self-knowledge. False understanding of our own principles, opinions, capabilities and inclinations distorts our practice: the only remedy for such distortion is a revision of our 'opinions as to what our opinions really are.' Such a revision is the result of theoretical reflection, and therefore in tracing the consequences of this reflection on individual and collective conduct we can trace the indirect (that is, non-prescriptive) though nonetheless, real effect of theory on practice.[23]

Despite the different approaches of Oxford realism and Cambridge realism they both deny the unity of theory and action. In criticising their different approaches, Collingwood concludes that there is a unity of theory and action, a position that he consistently holds both in the *Essay on Philosophical Method* and the Moral Philosophy Lectures. Also, his analysis of conscious action as such in the Lectures therefore seems to demonstrate the 'descriptive' aspect of philosophy he maintained in the *Essay on Philosophical Method*, although it still remains in a rough and undeveloped form.

IV. The Development of Moral Philosophy

The question that arises is on what kind of criterion conscious action, as the true object of philosophy, is based. For, conscious action, by Collingwood's definition, is performed in accordance with the results of our own thinking, and a judgment we make on our own action necessarily has to be grounded on some criteria or, as it were, norms. An enquiry into his thinking on this point will lead us to the kernel of his moral philosophy.

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[23] Connelly, *Metaphysics, Method, and Politics: The Political Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, p.175.

1. Goodness as the Fundamental Moral Virtue

In order to make a choice concerning our own action based on some criteria or norms, what we need to do first is to know the criteria. The foundation of his moral epistemology, in the form of a sketch of the history of moral theory in terms of the theory of knowledge, took a shape in the 1921 Moral Philosophy Lectures. Although his theory of moral criteria was repeatedly refined throughout the series of Moral Philosophy Lectures and also appeared in *Speculum Mentis* as forms of action, I will illustrate it by chiefly focusing on the 1932 and 1933 Lectures in which it reached a certain definite clarity.

In seeking moral criteria for human action, he particularly examines the 'realists'' ethical theories. In the 1932 and 1933 Lectures, he points out a trend in them that reduces the subject-matter of moral theory into a single moral value. For example, Prichard and Carritt reduce it into 'duty'; whereas Moore and Joseph into 'goodness' and Hastings Rashdall into 'rightness'. Disagreeing with such a trend, he positively evaluates Ross's strategy of arguing for the plurality of moral values, despite opposing their intuitionist view of moral epistemology common in those 'realists', including Ross. While he denies their intuitionism (Oxford Intuitionism), he tries to develop Ross's approach to moral values as the criteria of human action.

On the basis of such contemporary moral theories, he posits 'goodness' as the fundamental criterion for human action. A conscious action done by the agent's voluntary and rational choice is fundamentally determined by goodness. In other words, the good is the object of the agent's choice as he states that 'the good may be identified as the object of choice' (1933: 38). The goodness is brought not by a thing but by the action itself: 'Goodness is revealed rather than created by the act of choice; [...] what we choose is always an act, not thing; [...] The inference is that activities are good in themselves, and reveal their goodness as far as we make them the objects of choice' (1933: 39). For him, the criterion of human action is thus goodness, and the goodness is in and always with action, manifesting itself as good in so far as it is chosen.

From where does the goodness come? Unlike Oxford Intuitionists, he offers a whole which is composed of individual conscious actions. '[W]e have also become aware of this present action as forming one part of a whole that goes beyond it, to which by this act we are committing ourselves; and indeed we have become aware that it is only for the sake of this larger whole that we are doing the present action.' (1933: 73). A conscious action is, since it is rational, never aimless or single blind action but always done for a certain purpose or goal as a series of actions to realise it. For instance, to buy poison is itself simply to buy chemicals, but it might be the first step towards murder if we see the action in terms of its purpose. In this sense, he regards the sum of actions and their purpose as a whole, and thinks that each conscious action is a part of such a whole. Accordingly, the intuitionalist position which insists that moral criteria are simply gained by intuition is rejected:

> [F]undamentally only action is good, and that all choice is choice of good; and that goodness belongs to whole actions whose parts are good only in virtue of the goodness of the whole. It follows that a rational will, which sees its immediate act—its act here and now—as part of a whole which goes beyond it, it choosing this immediate act not as good in itself but as good in its relation to that whole.' (1933: 73)

Nevertheless, Collingwood elsewhere does not necessarily reject intuition as a source of moral criteria. For example, he remarks in the 1932 Lectures: 'our thought not a bare intuition, but intuition and conception at once, rule and its application' (1932: 77). Also, his basic theory of knowledge is, as developed in Chapter 6, something which admits both intuition and reason as a whole. Although this question is an important aspect of his moral philosophy, I go on to sketch his normative theory for now, leaving this question for the next chapter.

2. Utility

In developing the theory of moral norms, Collingwood distinguishes goodness as the fundamental object of human action into three forms: utility, right, and duty according to the degree of self-consciousness in action. Those forms of goodness of course form a scale of goodness.

In classifying conscious actions into three forms of goodness, he focuses on the relation between an immediate action and its purpose as the good, asking to what extent the action and the goodness overlap. From this point of view, there is a kind of action in which what we are immediately doing is not actually good in itself. The immediate action can be regarded as good in so far as it is an action for an end which the agent wishes to realise. Collingwood calls the good in this form 'utility'. Utility is considered to be the end or purpose of actions in which the pursuit of the end turns out to be good; and what we are doing for it is in principle not considered as good in itself. In this sense, action and goodness tend to be regarded as completely separate from one another. This view of goodness involves, by his definition, that action itself bears the value of good, 'thinking of goodness as belonging not to the action as a whole but to a part of it, though not the part which we are immediately doing' (1933: 74); and the so-called end is 'a myth'. He therefore characterises utility as the first and the most elementary form of goodness criticising utilitarianism as a typical case of it:

> Utility would be a more elementary or simple or primitive form of goodness, more easily grasped by thought, and hence there would be a natural tendency to fall into the error of thinking as utilitarians do think, that utility is the only genuine or fundamental form of goodness and that other forms, such as rightness, are only the same thing over again or else somehow definable in terms of it.' (1932: 58)

This kind of relation, he argues, between action and the end, can be found typically in the economic aspect of human activity. In this sense, economics is understood to be the study of this aspect of human action, namely utility.

3. Right

In the phase of utility as the first form of goodness, goodness belongs not to an action but to the whole of which the action is a part. It follows, in the next stage, that goodness 'is diffused throughout the whole, not concentrated in any one of its parts' (1933: 74). In this case, the action and the end are equally good because both of them constitute a whole throughout which goodness pervades. When goodness is considered thus, i.e. each part is good in relation to the whole, the whole turns out to be the basis and source of goodness, and logically prior to each part. It implies that goodness is considered as something abstracted from actions as parts of the whole, an idea or universal. In this sense, goodness in this stage 'belongs properly and primarily not to any particular act but to an abstract idea which determines or dictates each particular act' (1933: 74). Collingwood calls goodness thus considered 'rightness': 'What is good in itself is the abstract rule; rightness is the kind of goodness which this rule confers upon the immediate act. The will in choosing to obey the law and to do this act is choosing to do what is right' (1933: 75). In the stage of 'rightness' as the second form of goodness, actions conform to what are 'right', namely rules. Hence, the criteria for human action in the phase of rightness are the abstract rules or laws which represent rightness.

However, the intuitionist theory of Oxford realists contradicts such universal criteria for human action, regarding action as bare particulars. If there appears such a universal criterion found in the individual action as rule-following, the intuitionist view would take it as a mere arbitrary product of the human mind. Collingwood objects to such intuitionist view of the universal rules as erroneous. Taking up the case of applying laws as an example, he maintains that a law, as a universal rule, is something not actually ready-made and mechanically applied to every single case but constantly modified or adjusted to each particular case in the process of application of the law. The rules as the manifestation of rightness are not necessarily 'hard-and-fast, ready-made, unalterable rules' as intuitionists assume. Carritt is opposed to such an erroneous view of universal rules, and instead premises rules on a particular sense of

right gained by intuition in a way that 'I morally apprehend that I ought now to do this act, and then intellectually generalise rules.'[24] Collingwood understands such an intuitionist theory as the combination of empiricism ('theory of knowledge as a mysterious intuition of bare particulars') with nominalism ('theory of universals as arbitrary creatures of the mind'), and regards it as scepticism or, in practice, irrationalism (1933: 93). As long as intuitionists hold this view, Collingwood urges, they cannot recognise the universal rules in an adequate way. It is clear that his criticism of the intuitionism of contemporary realists again centres on epistemology. 'As a theory of ethics', he concludes, 'it represents an attempt to confine the operation of the will to bare caprice, and to arrest the development of choice into rational choice' (1933: 93). In harmony with Collingwood's example of law for rightness, politics is designated the proper study of rightness or rules, just as economics was for the study of utility.[25]

4. Duty

Collingwood distinguishes 'duty' from right, and offers it as the third form of goodness. At this point, he is sharply different from Oxford realists such as Prichard and Carritt who agree in identifying duty with right.[26]

In order to support his distinction between right and duty, he mainly identifies four main characteristics of duty in contrasting duty with right in the 1933 Lectures,

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[24] Carritt, *Theory of Morals*, p.116.

[25] Mink points out that economics for the study of utility and politics for rightness are not precisely ethics in Collingwood. 'Strictly speaking, the principle of utility and the principles of right were not for Collingwood moral principles at all. Utilitarianism is the conceptual theory of economic activity, regularianism the conceptual theory of political activity. Both are useful and necessary; the former is the rationale of choice in the satisfaction of wants, the latter the rationale of choice in the ordering of social life under institutions of law. Either can be (as both have been) transformed into ethical theory; and even as such neither the ethics of utility nor the ethics of right is wrong in what it affirms. Like any member of a scale of forms, each is in principle wrong only in its own self-limitation and in denying what can be affirmed only at a higher level.' (Mink, *Mind, History, and Dialectic: The Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, pp.90-1)

[26] Concerning the identification of duty with right by Oxford realists, Collingwood treats Ross in a slightly different way. While he regards that Ross identifies duty with right in general, he additionally notes that Ross seems to make a sort of distinction between them referring to the Provost's book just published, *The Right and the Good*. This point will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

though he makes more distinctions in other places.[27] Firstly, he asserts that while right action can be right without respect to any motive, duty can be dutiful action only when it is carried out from good motive. For instance, 'to support my parents is right, whereas to support them gratefully and affectionately is morally good or [...] a duty' (1932: 94).

Secondly, while there can be plural possibilities as a right action in a given occasion, there is only one action which can be called duty on a particular occasion, because '[t]he claims of right are satisfied by any act falling under a rule whose authority I recognise [...] but there is only one concrete individual act, on any given occasion, that can satisfy the claim of duty' (1933: 107). In the case of replying to several letters awaiting a response when I have got an hour, for instance, it can be right to reply to any of the senders such as the inspector of taxes, someone who asks my opinion on his/her new book, and so on; but I can say that no particular letters must be replied to in this particular hour. In this sense, right actions can be more than one on an occasion, but it is not the case with duty.

Thirdly, whereas duty specifies the holder of it, a right action does not. For example, suppose the case of two persons who perform the same action, say, paying a debt to a creditor. If the debtor pays the debt to the creditor, we can say that the debtor does one's duty because the debt belongs exactly to the debtor who borrowed the money. On the other hand, if somebody except the debtor pays the debt to the creditor, the action cannot be called doing duty but merely doing right. In this respect, 'duty is a concrete it involves the whole of my character; circumstances and history, which no one else can entirely share' (1933: 108).

Finally, although right has its opposite word, wrong, duty does not. Suppose the case that I share my lunch with a hungry man who will die if I do not share. On this occasion, to share my lunch is my duty. In describing this duty, is it possible to express it in a negative form? Say, 'sharing my lunch is *not* committing a murder'.

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[27] Generally speaking, his argument on this point is not consistent and stable throughout in the series of Moral Philosophy Lectures during this period. Here, I would like to roughly illustrate only substantial reasons.

This statement only abstractly speaks of the action based on the conception of murder, and is not actually describing what sharing my lunch means on this occasion. For, in order to avoid committing a murder on this occasion, I have not only intentionally to kill the hungry man but do something to save him from the hunger in effect. In this sense, while 'right' has its opposite not only in a linguistic sense but also in a practical sense as wrong action opposed to a right action, duty does not have an opposite linguistically and practically.

What is common in those four aspects of the difference between duty and right is that duty is essentially concrete whereas right is abstract. Duty limits itself to only one action in a situation, specifying the holder of it who must carry out, and even the motive from which it is made. Hence, he tries to save duty from the confusion with right, defining the conception of duty and equivalent notions such as 'ought' and 'obligation' as follows:

> We sometimes speak of our duty when we mean no more than the actions dictated by the ordinary rules of life; we say that we ought to do something when we only mean that it would pay us to do it. But in all these cases we can distinguish between the regarded or impoverished use and the true or correct use of the word. The word duty properly refers to a kind of value, what we sometimes call moral goodness, that is neither utility nor rightness; the word ought properly refers to the claim that this kind of value has upon us; and the word obligation properly refers to the fact that there are certain things we must do, if we are to be true to our own nature as free and responsible agents. (1932: 82)

Although his argument concerning the distinction between right and duty during this period is not completely consistent yet, his effort to distinguish them itself is quite consistent. What is then the reason why he tries to distinguish them? As can be seen from the passages just quoted, he thinks that the confused use of duty is the degradation or impoverishment of duty. It is because, he insists, duty is 'a thing which does not often come directly into our experience (1932: 82) whereas other criteria of

human action such as what we want to do (utility) and what we think right (right) are quite a commonplace in our everyday life. Duty can be manifest only in the time of 'rare moral crises' in which those common criteria cannot satisfy us and we are forced to seek something what 'we <u>must</u> do on pain of a kind of moral death or dissolution' (1932: 82; the underline as original). Although it may naturally be asked here that what the moral crises mean, Collingwood does not make it clear at this point.

With a sense of dissatisfaction with the general indifference towards duty, he turns to examine an argument that the 'realists' were addressing regarding the range of duty on action. The question of the argument is, 'to what extent should we have responsibility for doing a dutiful action?' On the one hand, Ross insists that doing my duty is to carry it out, or bring into existence my duty. For instance, suppose I return a book borrowed from a friend by posting it. In this case, to return the book is my duty. In Ross's sense, to return the book means that the owner of the book actually receives the book. Thus, if the book is lost after I posted it to the owner, I need to buy another copy and then send it again; for to do my duty is to realise it in reality. On the other hand, Collingwood understands Prichard to argue in 'Duty and Ignorance of Fact', that to do my duty is to 'set myself to do' it, or 'the initiation in myself of a certain state of will' (1932: 94). In the case of returning a book, my duty is simply to 'try' to return the book even if the book eventually does not reach the owner. Carritt, according to Collingwood, agrees with Prichard on this point.

Despite Collingwood's basic agreement with Prichard's position, he points out two problems from both practical and philosophical points of view. From the practical point of view, if to do my duty is simply to 'set myself to do', it might be justified merely to 'think' or 'wish' to do it without taking any actual action. In the earlier case, it might follow that I can say I did my duty if I just thought or wished to post the book in spite of sending nothing in reality. From the philosophical perspective, my will to do my duty is regarded as abstract from the action, 'divorced from any actual and effective exercise of will itself' (1933: 118). Since by his

definition duty has to be concrete and always specify its agent, action, and occasion, this tendency of duty in Prichard's sense is unacceptable.

Taking account of such dangers which may result from Prichard's and Carritt's position, yet basically agreeing with their position that the responsibility for the result of the action cannot be included into the range of duty, Collingwood tries further to clarify the range of responsibility included in duty. He suggests: 'Doing our duty is certainly to bring into existence a certain state of will in ourselves; but if this is genuinely a state of will it is known by its fruits, that is, by getting something done. This something done is in itself something right'. (1933: 120) Prichard's assertion 'setting myself to do' is right insofar as it means to manifest a state of will in my mind; but Collingwood goes further than Prichard, in maintaining that the result of the will has to be known by its 'fruits', flow from the will, i.e. actual action in the world. Doing one's duty in Collingwood's sense is therefore to bring a certain state of will into existence in reality, 'get something done'; or in more casual words, 'try as hard as I can'. However, he, unlike Ross, does not require that the result of the action always has to be successful.

In short, Collingwood's notion of duty distinguished from right is quite a concrete notion specifying the dutiful action to be taken. He chiefly distinguishes duty from right in four points: (1) motive to do the dutiful action, (2) only one dutiful action in a particular situation, (3) the agent who does the dutiful action, and (4) the actual appearance in the reality (the denial of duty in a negative form). Unlike in the case of rightness, duty rigidly and accurately specifies its content such as the agent, the action to be taken, motive, and its actual carrying out into reality. Collingwood's conception of duty as such locates himself in a moderate position between Prichard/Carritt and Ross in the ongoing debate over the range of positions in moral responsibility at Oxford.

5. Summary

As the criteria or norms on which conscious action is based, Collingwood regards goodness as the fundamental criterion of conscious action, reviewing the moral theories of contemporary 'realism'. Nevertheless, goodness is not something known by intuition in the 'realists'' sense, but a notion by which is embodied the universal whole as a complex of a series of actions and its end. He analyses goodness into three forms namely utility, right and duty. These forms do not exist separated one from another, but co-exist in every conscious action. They form a scale in accordance with the degree of self-consciousness in action. In utility, the action does not bear goodness itself because the end is abstracted from action as utility to be aimed at by the action. When goodness is regarded as an abstract rule which has to be obeyed by conscious action, goodness reveals itself as rightness. Intuitionism is criticised here because, according to intuitionism, one cannot think such an abstract criterion of conscious action that has not originated from experience. Duty can be distinguished from right in its concretely specifying the agent, the action to be taken, the agent's motive, and the actual manifestation into action. Although his arguments concerning the criteria of conscious action are not yet necessarily well-organised during this period, the attempt to distinguish duty from right is quite consistent. In the process of his attempt to develop the system of moral criteria on which conscious action is based, what is consequently criticised, but not without some agreement, by Collingwood is chiefly Oxford realists such as Prichard, Carritt, and Ross. This system of moral norms seems to constitute another aspect of philosophy as 'normative'. In this respect, D'Oro's interpretation of Collingwood's project as a defence of a conception of philosophy as a 'normative or criteriological science' is right. 'Collingwood attempts to rearticulate the project of metaphysics within the framework of an inquiry into the heuristic principles that govern different areas of experiences, and thus explicitly defends a conception of philosophy as a normative or criteriological science.'[28]

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[28] D'Oro, *Collingwood and the Metaphysics of Experience*, p.51.

Why did Collingwood make such a distinction between right and duty? What we know from the Moral Philosophy Lectures and *An Essay on Philosophical Method* is his concern that the notion of duty is scarcely required and only becomes manifest to us at the time of 'rare moral crises' (1932: 82).

V. Conclusion

In the period from *Speculum Mentis* to *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, Collingwood prominently makes attempts to develop the logical and epistemological position elaborated in the foregoing period to moral philosophy. Indeed, we can see that a number of drafts and manuscripts concerning moral and political philosophy flew from his hands during this period. In this chapter, we firstly illustrated his methodological argument in the *Essay on Philosophical Method* on the basis of his logical and metaphysical arguments, and then focused on the Moral Philosophy Lectures from which the method was derived.

In the *Essay on Philosophical Method*, Collingwood makes more of the distinction between philosophical method and the non-philosophical (scientific), keeping in his mind chiefly the trend of scientific and mathematical reform of philosophical method by Cambridge realism. He compares both approaches in the traditional framework of logic. In this comparison, he tries to overcome the epistemological dualism between the knowing subject and its object which pervades the scientific and mathematical approaches to philosophy, and establish the true method for philosophy. The idea of a 'scale of forms' is the very core framework designed for his own philosophical method. The primary subject-matter of his philosophical method is human action as is obvious from the fact that the scale of forms, by which he aims to analyse human action, has been developed in the series of Moral Philosophy Lectures. Hence, *An Essay on Philosophical Method* is consistent in its aim, the better understanding of the human mind and action, with his works since publishing *Religion and Philosophy*.

The analysis of human action that his philosophical method supposes as its object is developed and revised in the series of Moral Philosophy Lectures. He distinguishes conscious action from other human actions, and regards it as the true subject-matter of his (morally-oriented) philosophy. In applying the scale of forms to the analysis of human action he aims to describe the process of mutual interaction between theory (knowledge) and action. Thus, his analysis of human action is oriented to grasp the relation between theory and action, as the 'descriptive' aspect of philosophy.

This conclusion leads him to investigate the criteria or norms which influence conscious action. He puts goodness as the fundamental moral value to be sought by conscious action, and analyses it into three forms, utility, right, and duty. These three forms of goodness are also organised on a scale according to the degree of the interaction between consciousness and action. While utility and rightness is placed on the lower levels in accordance with the criteria relating to self-consciousness, duty is placed on the highest level in the sense that only duty can truly make the interaction between consciousness and action possible. As we have seen, this theory of moral criteria for human action is also developed mainly through criticising Oxford realism. This can be taken as the 'normative' aspect of philosophy.

In conclusion, during the period from *Speculum Mentis* to *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, Collingwood concurrently developed his philosophical method and moral philosophy, constantly criticising 'realist' philosophy. His philosophical method is demonstrated mainly by objecting to the Cambridge realists' methodology as inspired by scientific and mathematical method, whereas Collingwood's moral philosophy is developed extensively referring to Oxford realism. Although his method and moral philosophy are developed referring to different types of 'realism', the core of his criticism is common to both, i.e. the dualism between subject/object and theory/practice. His moral philosophy is composed of two parts, the analysis of action and the theory of the morally good. These two embody his conception of philosophy as both descriptive and normative, respectively. Now, our reconstruction of

Collingwood's critique of 'realism' ultimately arrives at moral philosophy, going through various fields of philosophy since *Religion and Philosophy*. From the process of his philosophical thinking, we can perceive that his criticism of 'realism' strongly assumes a moral nature.[29]

In the final chapter, I will more closely examine his critique of 'realism' in his moral philosophy at the time of the Lectures, aiming to tackle some questions left out in this chapter such as his position on intuitionism and rationalism, what he concretely means by 'moral crises', and so forth.

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[29] In this sense, Mink is right in pointing out that Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' took a clear form in the period from *Speculum Mentis* to *An Essay on Philosophical Method*; though he is not fully aware that Collingwood's moral criticism of 'realism' rose to the surface then as well.
'[I]n the years between *Speculum Mentis* and *Essay on Philosophical Method* his debate with his "realist" colleagues gave him more and more arguments against the doctrine that knowing can be a simple and immediate intuiting of an independent "reality" [...]. He may well have recognized that the logic of the realist doctrine of perception is the same as the logic of the Platonic doctrine of "philosophical" knowledge. His objections to realism became increasingly clearer and more urgent.' (Mink, *Mind, History, and Dialectic: The Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, p.77)

CHAPTER EIGHT

'REALISM', DUTY, AND FREEDOM

I. Introduction

Departing from the discussion in logic since the end of the First World War, Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' has, through epistemology, arrived at moral philosophy and his unique conception of duty by around 1933. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Collingwood's philosophy is primarily developed in order better to understand human mind and action; and moral philosophy as the principal domain of philosophy is characterised by him as both normative and descriptive. The method of his philosophy, the 'scale of forms', has to be not scientific but historical, because each individual's concrete action cannot be perceived by the abstract and formal framework of science. In this sense, Cambridge realists are criticised for their application of mathematical methods to philosophy. Applying the scale of forms in the series of Moral Philosophy Lectures, he develops his moral philosophy in two respects: the analysis of human action as the descriptive aspect and three forms of goodness as the normative. Through working out the foundation of his moral philosophy, he attempts to re-establish a comprehensive landscape of the mutual interaction between theory (the theory of moral norms) and human action in the moral world. Although his speculations are not thoroughly clear and stable, he already crystallises his unique notion of duty distinguished from right as the supreme norm of his moral philosophy by 1933. As will be clear from the brief illustration of duty in the last chapter, his notion of duty is elaborated extensively in referring to his colleagues, the Oxford realists.

Accordingly, I would like to focus on his notion of duty and analyse it in the context of the Oxford realists' debate in ethics. In so doing, this shall be the conclusive investigation into the last task of this thesis, that is, the moral and political implications of Collingwood's critique of 'realism'.

II. Oxford Realists' Debate over Obligation

As I briefly indicated in Chapter 1, the main point of the controversy among Oxford realists (intuitionists) was over the nature of obligation. As a matter of fact, the question of obligation was so prominent, or significant, that J. H. Muirhead, one of the idealists, contributed a small book to the discussion.[1] In it Muirhead offers a good summary of the discussion. Before starting the detailed analysis of Collingwood's conception of duty, it would be helpful for our purpose, to look a little closer at the contours of the debate.

Reflecting on his predecessors in the debate, such as T. H. Green and B. Bosanquet, Muirhead identifies the main question of ethics throughout the first few decades of the twentieth-century in Britain as 'what makes a thing good'— that is, the criteria or principles of goodness.[2] In determining the definition or principles of the good, as the discussion deepened, what became central to the whole discussion was the idea of 'obligation'. This shift of emphasis, Muirhead indicates, implies the emerging recognition among philosophers that some capitalised and abstract ideas such as Good or God are no longer appealing as moral principles of goodness. Instead, philosophers were required to think that goodness should be judged in each particular situation: '[a]ctions are judged right or wrong, good or bad, simply in view of the situation, as it is presented to the agent or as he has made it by his own previous actions, and the engagements into which he may have entered.'[3] More or less in conformity with recognition of the situatedness of principles of goodness,

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[1] Muirhead, J. H., *Rule and End in Morals*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932).

[2] '[T]he main question again came to be, as it was to Plato and Aristotle, that of the principle of Good—the definition of that which is inherently lovable and makes life worth loving, as the criterion of the goodness or lovableness of everything else, including conduct and character.' [Ibid. pp.7-8.]

[3] Ibid. p.8.

philosophers such as G. E. Moore and the Oxford realists were oriented to seek the origin of moral consciousness not in the conclusions of speculative reasoning but in intuitive apprehension.

Recognising that the principles or criteria of the good cannot be sought in some general idea, Moore thinks that good is a simple, unanalysable, and indefinable concept intuitively known. Furthermore, he considers 'right', 'ought', or 'obligation' as a 'cause of a good result' and subordinates it to his utilitarian notion of good by identifying right with 'useful'.[4] In this sense, the status of obligation or right is in Moore's ethics reduced to mere utility.

Whereas Moore tries to explain 'right' or 'obligation' in relation to good, Prichard insists that all attempts to explain 'right' are mistaken, and that right or obligation is also indefinable. In parallel with the case of the theory of knowledge, the rightness of our moral judgment is asserted by intuitively stating 'this is right'. Prichard's modification of Moore's 'right', which was subordinated to the utilitarian notion of good, into an equally intuitive notion, suggests Muirhead, is intended in order to criticise two existing theories of right or obligation: the utilitarian theory and Kantian deontology. With respect to the former, he insists that obligation belongs not to 'thing' but to 'action'. The term 'ought' thus only refers to actions alone. We can never say 'it ought to be' but instead 'I ought to do it'. He is also critical of the utilitarian view of obligation explained in terms of good. Against the Kantian deontology, even though Kant thinks of obligation differently from the utilitarian theory that 'right is good', he is eventually himself compelled to reduce right into good. What is common in both positions is that they think right can be described by reasoning, that is, by a theory of knowledge. In 'Duty and Interest' (1928), therefore, Prichard states:

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[4] 'To ask what kind of actions we ought to perform, or what kind of conduct is right, is to ask what kind of effects such action and conduct will produce. [...] Every judgment in practical Ethics may be reduced to the form: This is a cause of a good thing.' [Moore, G. E., *Principia Ethica*, p.147.]

> We are therefore forced to allow that in order to maintain that for an action to be right, it must
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> be advantageous, we have to maintain that advantageousness is what renders an action right.
>
> But this is obviously something which no one is going to maintain, if he considers it seriously.
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> For he will be involved in maintaining not only that it is a duty to do whatever is for our
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> advantage, but that this is our only duty. And the fatal objection to maintaining this is simply
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> that no one actually thinks it.[5]

He then criticises seeking the ground of rightness in the theory of knowledge for ultimately having to be deduced to the agent's advantage. It makes it impossible to think of duty or just action without conceiving of duty in terms of the agent's advantage. For these reasons, Prichard understands the notion of obligation as intuitive as well as good.

Carritt goes further to a more extreme sceptical position. He shares Prichard's intuitionist position concerning right or obligation. Since right or obligatory action is apprehended without any logical reasoning, '[y]ou cannot prove to a man that he has duties, or should do his duty, or that justice is a duty'; and consequently, '[a]ll you can do is to get him to imagine the situation again and repeat the act of moral thinking with greater attention.'[6]

Ross's *The Right and the Good*, published in 1930, is therefore a contribution to the debate. In sympathy with Prichard and Carritt, Ross considers the epistemological status of obligation as intuitive, and attempts to resolve its problems: (1) the objectivity of the obligation, and (2) the conflict between the obligations. As we saw in Chapter 1, he makes the distinction between duty proper and *prima facie* duty. The conflicting obligations in a situation are, in Ross's terms, *prima facie* duties; and an obligation which meets all those conflicting *prima facie* duties is called duty proper. We can arrive at such a duty by reflective thinking, taking account of

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[5] Prichard, *Moral Writings*, p.29.
[6] Carritt, *The Theory of Morals*, p.2.

factors in the situation. The more developed our mature thinking, the more general or objective the obligatory action arrived at.

This is his solution to the first difficulty. In introducing the distinction between *prima facie* duty and duty proper Ross tries to tackle at least two problems with the intuitive notion of duty. That is, by determining duty proper it attains objectivity by the reflective thinking process, while at the same time reconciling the conflict between *prima facie* duties. Finally, as is evident from what has been discussed above, Ross thinks duty or obligation is a property of not a thing but action. In this he agrees with Prichard.

To sum up, starting from the British Idealists' enquiries into the principle of Good, what came to be shared among the philosophers around the turn of the century is the recognition that some general and universal principle for morals was no longer possible. Moore, contending that good is self-evident, tried to explain right or obligation in terms of good and eventually identifies it with utility. Partly provoked by Moore's utilitarian notion of right, the principle or the justification of good, moved on to a convergence on the issue of obligation. Criticising Moore's reduction of right to utility, Prichard also took right to be self-evident, and pointed out that the utilitarian notion of right is the consequence of its epistemological grounding. Carritt radicalised Prichard's intuitive notion of obligation, concluding that obligation does not necessarily need to manifest into actual action.

Ross took a different path from Carritt. Granting the intuitionist notion of obligation, he attempted to solve two problems in the intuitionist position, i.e. the objectivity of obligation and the conflict of obligations in a situation. In this sense, Oxford realists were striving to develop a sound understanding of 'obligation' which was compatible with their intuitionist epistemology, avoiding some general moral principle, and reconciling conflict of obligations.

III. Collingwood's Elaboration of Duty

When those 'realists' were seeking a sound understanding of 'obligation', Collingwood was needless to say at Oxford and got involved in the debate. Moreover, he was not merely an observer, but an active participant in the discussion who was fully familiar with the 'realists'' philosophy as we saw in Chapter 3. As I briefly demonstrated in Chapter 7, Collingwood's conception of duty was elaborated with reference to the Oxford realists' discussions of obligation. Although remaining unclear around 1933, the conditions of Collingwood's theory of duty are: (1) in a particular situation, there must be *one* particular action to be done; (2) duty belongs not to action but to an agent; (3) the denial of a negative form of duty; and (4) a right action can be right without reference to any motive, duty is dutiful action only when it is carried out from a good motive. In this section, I would like further to analyse his notion of duty in the context of 'realist' theories, in order to clarify Collingwood's departure from them.

The first characteristic of Collingwood's duty is in sympathy with what Ross calls the 'minor difference' between 'right' and 'something that ought to be done' or 'what is my duty'. In *The Right and the Good*, Ross explains:

> It may sometimes happen that there is a set of two or more acts one or other of which ought to be done by me rather than any act not belonging to this set. In such a case any act of this set is right, but none is my duty; my duty is to do 'one or other' of them. Thus 'right' has a somewhat wider possible application than 'something that ought to be done' or any of its equivalents.[7]

Ross remarks that in a particular situation there is only one action which ought to be done, while right normally had plural possibilities. Whereas Ross takes this difference as 'minor', Collingwood develops this distinction as one of the central doctrines in his

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[7] Ross, *The Right and the Good*, pp.3-4.

moral theory.[8] Since there is only one dutiful action in a situation, in contrast with right, the first characteristic of his notion of duty limits the action to be taken as duty in a particular situation and offers no alternative option. Thus, Collingwood's first condition of duty is to specify one dutiful action to be taken from plural possible right actions in a situation, turning Ross's rather indifferent treatment of the distinction into a key doctrine.

The second characteristic of Collingwood's duty, that is, belonging to agent while right belongs to action, is partially implied in Ross's 'minor' distinction between right and duty. We saw above Ross distinguishes duty from right insofar as *my* duty is *to do* 'one or other' of the right actions in a certain situation in which I get involved. In other words, what should be called 'duty' is 'my doing' a right action itself rather than some objective knowledge of what is right action in a certain situation. In this sense, Ross seems to think that duty is something closer to the agent than right. In relation to Prichard, this point comes up in the 1933 series of correspondence he had with Collingwood. In response to Prichard's remark that '[t]his act is or "would be" right stated as meant to convey that you or I ought to do the action',[9] Collingwood seems to think that there is a glimmer of implicit agreement between them regarding the possibility of distinguishing 'right' from 'duty': 'according to you [Prichard], "this act is right" does not necessarily mean that you or I ought to do the action. That is what I think myself, and I think that the emphasis on it

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[8] Boucher points out this point: 'Collingwood was particularly impressed by Ross's recognition that right and duty are not synonymous terms, but disappointed that Ross did not make more out of it. After acknowledging that "right" has a somewhat wider possible application than "something that ought to be done", Ross goes on to ignore the distinction for matters of convenience.' [Collingwood, Boucher (ed.), *Essays in Political Philosophy*, p.47.]

As a matter of fact, there is evidence which corroborates this 'something ought to be done' was at issue at Oxford involving Collingwood. Collingwood, in his letter to Prichard dated 2nd February 1933, assimilates 'right' in his sense with Prichard's conception of 'claim' for 'something ought to be done'. In response to him, however, Prichard rejected Collingwood's assimilation, in a letter dated 23rd March 1933: 'I am definitely not with you on your suggestion [...] that "right" is a proper substitute for claims'. (Correspondence between Collingwood and Prichard, fol.34, 36.) Ross also argues this 'something' and distinguishes his '*prima facie* duty' from Prichard's 'claim' in his book [Ross, *The Right and the Good*, p.20]. Hence, this 'something ought to be done' was a centre of ethical discussion at Oxford deriving a number of notions surrounding it such as Prichard's 'claim', Ross's '*prima facie* duty', and Collingwood's 'right'. Nevertheless, they objected to their own notions being assimilated with that of other's.

[9] Correspondence between Collingwood and Prichard, fol.21. The underline as original.

might serve to clear up several difficulties.'[10] By characterising duty as distinguished from 'right' as a property of action, Collingwood tries to eliminate the distance between obligation and the agent, and regards it as directly and necessarily belonging to the agent her/himself.

With respect to the third, Collingwood insists that duty cannot be stated in a negative form 'not to do it is my duty'. It always has to be stated in a positive way: 'to do it is my duty', whereas it is possible to talk about right in a negative way; 'not to do it is right'. This is intended as an objection to what he calls in Prichard's coinage, 'disobligation'. This characterisation of duty seems to imply that duty always requires the holder of it to take a certain action, making it impossible for her/him to do nothing when aware of one's 'duty'.

Finally, duty has to be done with a good motive. In making this point, Collingwood distinguishes himself from the 'realists'' position on motive because they allow natural or physical factors, such as 'feeling' or 'desire', to slip into the conception of motive. Although Prichard is aware of the difference between desire and a sense of obligation, he eventually includes both meanings within the term 'motive' as 'co-ordinate forms or species of motive', and simply defines a motive as 'what moves us to act.' [11] This conception of motive, contaminated by such naturalistic elements such as desire, according to Collingwood, leads Ross to separate duty from the 'morally good' in regarding a 'morally good' action may be done only for a 'morally good' motive. '[T]he only acts that are morally good are those that proceed from a good motive; [...] If, then, we can show that action from a good motive is never morally obligatory, we shall have established that what is morally good is never right, and a fortiori that "right" does not mean the same as "morally

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[10] Ibid. fol.33. Although Prichard finally rejects Collingwood's distinction between right and duty as far as the correspondence is concerned, it is interesting that Dancy suggests that Prichard, who generally holds duty or obligation is a property of action, comes to regard it as a property of the agent by 1932, despite the fact that he does not maintain this position afterwards. [Dancy, 'Harold Arthur Prichard', 6.3.]

[11] Prichard, *Moral Writings*, p.15: 'we mean by a motive what moves us to act; a sense of obligation does sometimes move us to act; and in our ordinary consciousness we should not hesitate to allow that the action we were considering might have had as its motive a sense of obligation. Desire and the sense of obligation are co-ordinate forms or species of motive.'

good".[12] In doing so, Ross is urged to separate the 'morally good' motive from the idea of duty and consequently downgrades it to a lower virtue (1932: 96). By contrast, Collingwood strongly rejects the idea of calling any physical factors a motive, and redefines it thus: 'the only thing that can properly be called a motive, therefore, is the state of will from which a certain action flows' (1932: 95). By 'the state of will' he excludes any capricious or naturalistic factors from the motive, and returns it to within our power or our own control. By attaching a condition that a certain action has to flow from the motive, he rejects Prichard's attitude which is satisfied only with 'setting oneself to do' something. Collingwood attributes the motive in his rational sense to the notion of duty. This makes it possible for him to fuse the detached 'duty' with the 'morally good' in Ross's sense. 'Without blurring the distinction between the right and the good', hence, '[Ross] would be able to hold what is surely the obvious truth, that it is our duty not only to do right but to be good' (1932: 96). Making a morally good motive a characteristic of his notion of duty, Collingwood's duty therefore particularises the agent's motive, or will.

In short, Collingwood's unique conception of duty is developed through close and extensive discussions with the Oxford 'realists'. He shares the common understanding of the contemporary situation of ethical theory; i.e. that general and abstract principle of morals are not possible, therefore ethical judgments have to be made in each particular situation without reference to any abstract principles. Also, the focus of his thinking is, together with the 'realists', the notion of obligation or duty. His duty has, roughly speaking, four characteristics. Firstly, by urging that there must be only one dutiful action in a certain situation, he restricts duty to one action from other right actions that may be performed in the situation. Duty gives me no alternatives. Although Ross seems to make a similar but marginal distinction between right and duty, it is Collingwood who highlights this distinction and develops it into a significant thesis. Secondly, he contends that duty in a situation is a property of the agent and not of action. Thus, my duty in a particular situation cannot be done by

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[12] Ross, *The Right and the Good*, p. 4.

anyone else. In the third characteristic, his duty rejects even the option not to do it, because duty cannot be expressed in a negative form while right can. Once I recognise my duty in a situation, it must be carried out. It is thus impossible, unlike Prichard's and Carritt's view, to merely set myself to do something which I regard as my duty without performing the action. Finally, his duty even penetrates into the agent's motive in doing it. My duty must be done from a good motive. By eliminating any capricious factors from the notion of motive, he returns the motive to within the power of my rational will, and tries to save duty from a diminished status. Collingwood's notion of duty is therefore very concrete and particularised to the agent, conditioning occasion, action, manifestations into action, agent, and the agent's motive. All elements which comprise my duty in a sense urge me to its realisation.[13]

From this analysis of Collingwood's notion of duty, there are two questions which may be raised. (1) Can his conception of duty, which is situated in a particular case, bear some objectivity or universality? Or, is this a merely subjective criterion of ethical judgments for particular cases? (2) If one's duty is so particularised and specified closely to its agent, how may the freedom of an agent's will be guaranteed? By responding to the two questions, I would like to attempt to make a further clarification of Collingwood's notion of duty.

IV. Intuitionist or Rationalist?: the Universality of Duty

If Collingwood's duty is so particularised as suggested above, is his notion of duty determined only case by case without any reference to universal principles? In other words, is his notion of duty merely a subjective or even solipsist moral criterion, specifically applicable to a situation known or intuited by the agent? This question is

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[13] Connelly aptly characterises Collingwood's ethics of duty as such as an 'agent-centred ethics'. [Connelly, 'Collingwood's Moral Philosophy: Character, Duty, and Historical Consciousness', in Sweet W. (ed.), *The Moral, Social, and Political Philosophy of the British Idealists*, (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2009), p.233.]

what gave rise to the Oxford realists' intuitionism, and highlighted by some commentators on Collingwood.[14]

This is a point at which Collingwood is sharply distinguished from his colleagues. In his Moral Philosophy Lectures of 1933, he criticises Carritt's extreme form of Oxford Intuitionism. Taking up Carritt's *The Theory of Morals*, he maintains that Carritt assumes moral rules 'must somehow exist, ready-made, codified or promulgated as it were, before the case arises' (1933: 92), and are applied to the new situation which we face. Aware of the intuitionists' common avoidance of general principles in ethics which generate a sense of obligation in the agent, Collingwood comments on Carritt:

> The intuitionist theory of ethics denies that there is any such element of universality; it thinks of actions as bare particulars, and thinks that any universal element (i.e. any element of rule or regularity) found in them is imported into them ab extra by the work of the mind; as Mr. Carritt says, "I morally apprehend that I ought now to do this act and then intellectually generalize rules." (1933: 93, underlines as original)

In so understanding Carritt, Collingwood regards the Oxford 'realist' theory of knowledge as a theory contends that we apprehend moral rules by pure 'intuition' without any rational thinking, and then arbitrarily formulate abstract or so-called general rules 'by the work of the mind'. He takes it as the combination of 'a mysterious intuition of bare particulars' with 'arbitrary creatures of the mind', and condemns it as 'a completely sceptical theory of knowledge' (1933: 93). What results from this theory is, according to Collingwood, 'to confine the operation of the will to bare caprice, and to arrest the development of choice into rational choice' (1933: 93).

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[14] For instance, Milne criticises the lack of general principles in Collingwood's ethics: 'Why does there have to be any morality at all? Collingwood ignores this question. But it must be answered if the claim that Duty is a form of practical reason is to be justified.' [Milne, A. J. M., 'Collingwood's Ethics and Political Theory', in Krauz (ed.), *Critical Essays on the Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, p.306.]

In this sense, Collingwood finds the intuitionist theory capricious or objectively unintelligible as an epistemic process relating to ethical principles. Collingwood, as we saw in Chapter 6, made this criticism of the intuitionism in 1923.

Collingwood's solution to the problem is consistent with what he believed in 1923. While granting the intuitive nature of ethical principles, he contends that they are not grasped merely by pure intuition, but always also with our perception. He demonstrated this in 'Sensation and Thought'. In discussing the case of conflicting moral rules intuitively known, Collingwood applies this doctrine to ethical cases in the 1932 Lectures: 'our thought is not a bare intuition, but intuition and conception at once, rule and its application' (1932: 77). In this sense, Collingwood's notion of moral intuition, unlike in his colleagues' views, is designed to contain certain rational elements at the beginning of the knowing process of moral principles, despite his colleagues such as Prichard and Carritt treating them as completely intuitive from start to end. This is why he repudiates Carritt's intuitionism as 'mysterious' and eventually exhibiting 'irrationalism' (1933: 93). Hence, my apprehension of a moral rule in a particular situation is, holds Collingwood, not my intuiting of it as mere datum of a more general rule, but an outcome of my perception.

By contrast with the intuitionists' abstract induction from intuitive data of a moral principle in a particular situation to a more general rule in accordance with its applicability to various cases, Collingwood's universality of moral principles is drawn from our ability for moral reasoning itself. That is, the universality of a moral rule depends on 'our being able to distinguish relevant from irrelevant features of the one instance that we are considering' (1933: 94). He finds the origin of universality of moral rules in the agent's ability to judge that one particular action is the only one dutiful action in that situation because, he believes, being able to make a relevant judgment shows the existence of some 'a priori universality' (1933: 94) of the rule judged. This universality is for him something 'we know in advance of their actually occurring that it would apply to all other cases of the kind if any others arose' (1933: 94) in the exactly identical situation. In this respect, Collingwood parts company from

Ross. Although Collingwood and Ross agree that some reflective reasoning is necessary in order to figure out something truly obligatory, Collingwood emphasises the reasoning itself, whereas Ross derives universality from its applicability to many cases. As far as his Lectures up until 1933 are concerned, therefore, Collingwood presumably seeks the origin of moral standards not in any external criterion but the internal ability of reason.[15] In this sense, Collingwood's notion of duty is not subjective, irrational, nor capricious, but rational.[16] This is sustained by his refinement of the 'realists'' notion of 'intuition'.[17]

Taking up the two doctrines of Collingwood's theory of duty, i.e. duty is concrete and duty is rationally discovered by logical thinking, Donagan claims that the two positions are contradictory because all concepts and logical thinking are abstractions. Based on this interpretation of Collingwood, Donagan seems to construe Collingwood's notions of 'intuition' and 'reason' as implicitly dichotomous, and then concludes that the cause of this contradiction is 'a relic of philosophical idealism':

> Now, on one side, ideals and principles are abstract, and thinking employs abstractions; and on the other, intuition is not abstract. Intuition, therefore, is not thinking; and a man who is

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[15] Although Collingwood's statement is not thoroughly clear and expounded at all, Milne's criticism is a bit misleading because Collingwood at least does not ignore the question and tries to offer a solution in insisting on reason. While Milne seems to expect the origin of principles to be external ideas, Collingwood considers it to be internal. The non-subjectivity of Collingwood's duty is also to be corroborated by his defence of the 'common good' of 'Green's school' against 'realism' in *An Autobiography*.'[Realists] destroyed by denying the conception of a "common good", the fundamental idea of all social life, and insisting that all "goods" were private.' (AA: 49)

[16] In comparison with Hobbes' theory of ethics as subjectivist or utilitarian, Boucher characterises Collingwood's ethics as belonging to 'the immanent or rational will tradition'. 'On the general philosophical level, then, Hobbes and Collingwood represent different traditions in ethical thought. Hobbes's *Leviathan* falls firmly into what Collingwood calls the subjectivist, or utilitarian, tradition, while Collingwood's *Leviathan* is representative of the immanent, or rational will, tradition.' [Boucher, *The Social and Political Thought of R. G. Collingwood*, p.109.]

[17] Disagreeing with an intuitionist interpretation of Collingwood, Connelly, though from a rather different approach, deliberately exhibits Collingwood's ambiguous position towards Oxford realists' intuitionism, and finally assimilates it with a rationalist kind of moral particularism with reservations in the context of modern ethics. [Connelly, 'Collingwood's Moral Philosophy: Character, Duty, and Historical Consciousness', pp.246-8.]

guided solely by it is not a thinker. While the particular heresy Collingwood had in mind was the subordination of reason to passion, his anathema also falls on its subjection to intuition.[18]

Given his notion of intuition and perception, Collingwood does not take intuition and reason as dichotomous. It has to be admitted, of course, that Donagan here targets Collingwood's later writings, such as *An Autobiography* and *The New Leviathan* based upon his acceptance of the 'radical conversion hypothesis' interpretation of Collingwood's philosophy. As far as works up until 1933 are concerned however, Collingwood appears to find no difficulty in responding to Donagan's charge.

Furthermore, as long as the universality of moral rules is considered in his sense, all action must obey the universal rules as such. 'All action is action according to rules, because every agent has some specific nature, and the universal characteristics of that nature express themselves in its activity as universal laws governing its actions' (1932: 80). Collingwood then emphasises that this obedience to the rules is *necessity* arising from duty.[19]

Collingwood's notion of duty is not a subjective moral criterion. Rather, subjectivism is a point of his critique of Oxford realists such as Prichard and Carritt. Applying his criticism of their idea of 'intuition' since 1923 to the sphere of moral epistemology, he attacks them because their notion of 'intuition' is mystical or irrational allowing them to slip capricious factors into our moral judgment, and consequently makes moral rules unintelligible to other persons and ultimately subjective. By contrast, Collingwood, rejecting any 'pure intuition', thinks that apprehending a moral rule more or less already contains my thinking. This epistemological foundation of his notion of duty saves obligation from the fatal consequence of the Oxford realists' intuitionist position, i.e. the irrational and capricious nature of moral principles. Instead, he seeks the universality or objectivity

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[18] Donagan, *The Later Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood*, p.243.
[19] He does not forget to add, of course, that this necessity means not natural law in any sense but that of moral law: '[T]he law of action expressing that nature is not a law simply stating what happens, like the law of gravitation: it is a law stating what ought to happen. Obedience to it is not a necessity in the ordinary sense, but an obligation.' (1932: 81)

of our moral judgment in the very reasoning of the judgment in a particular situation. The fact that we are rationally able to make an adequate judgment in a case taking account of all factors of the situation itself demonstrates some existence of universality or objectivity. This makes duty free from any abstract and generalist position of moral principles. Collingwood's notion of duty thus does not require of me any slavish obedience to moral rules as abstract and general. Nevertheless, it does not mean that duty in his sense makes no impact on the agent's action. As long as duty is considered in his sense, that is, duty not imposed by anybody else but apprehended by myself in taking account of everything concerned as fully as possible with the occasion, I must obey the duty as a necessity. Therefore, Collingwood's notion of duty has a normative function which governs human action, concretely and rationally considered, free from caprice.

V. Duty and Freedom

Another question arises from Collingwood's particularised notion of duty. How does the freedom of will become possible if duty specifies its contents in detail, that is, the situation; action to be taken; the agent to whom it belongs; the agent's motive; and the necessary translation of it into action. This question is the one with which Collingwood significantly concerns himself after articulating his notion of duty in both the 1932 and 1933 Moral Philosophy Lectures. This becomes evident when we look at, as Boucher indicates, the process by which Collingwood elaborated the distinction between duty and right from *Speculum Mentis* to the Lectures of 1933.

As we saw in Chapter 6, in *Speculum Mentis* Collingwood makes a distinction not between duty and right, but between duty and what he calls 'absolute ethics'. Duty in *Speculum Mentis* is associated with history as the form of action corresponding to history as the second highest form of knowledge prior to philosophy. Although finding freedom in the historical mind in comparison with the scientific mind, he also characterises law as the typical feature of the historical mind. Consequently, he is compelled to admit the unstable nature of historical ethics due to the 'regularian'

feature of law towards agents. Thus he declares 'absolute ethics' in philosophy as 'perfect freedom' in order to resolve the conflict between the freedom of the historical mind and the regularian nature of law in history. However, his characterisation of absolute ethics as the form of philosophical action remains ambiguous.

Conflating history and philosophy in methodology in contrast with the scientific method in *An Essay on Philosophical Method*, 'absolute ethics' is no longer present in the Lectures of 1932 and 1933, replaced by the emerging distinction between duty and right. In the 1933 Lectures, Collingwood isolates law from duty and attributes it to right. By this reformation, his conception of duty is now liberated from any factor which could cloud the freedom of the agent's dutiful action, and establishes itself, in the words of *Speculum Mentis,* as 'perfect freedom'. Hence, it can be said that Collingwood's distinction between duty and right is in a sense intended to purify or get rid of the regularian nature of law from the notion of duty. Pointing out that this change is already present in 1929, Boucher thus remarks that 'duty, in the latter work, transcends the inadequacies of duty in *Speculum Mentis*, which were a consequence of the identification of duty with regularian action'. [20] Given the process of the development of his notion of duty, Collingwood is consistent in his attempt to save duty from its degraded regularian status in the contemporary ethics of his day, and ultimately regards duty as freedom. In other words, the freedom in duty for Collingwood is to be able to think out what I ought to do in a situation by considering everything concretely and rationally to the fullest extent, and at the same time to perform the action myself.

In addition to such fully particularised duty, Collingwood's notion of duty further expands the range of the agent's consideration of what ought to be covered: '[I]t is my duty', Collingwood contends, 'not only to do this act but to make myself into the right kind of person to do it' (1933: 114). While including the agent's attitudes preceding the carrying out of one's duty, Collingwood also confirms that dutiful action is not only thought out taking in to consideration everything of

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[20] Boucher, *The Social and Political Thought of R. G. Collingwood*, p.95.

relevance to the situation, but also, as I suggested in the previous chapter, must be carried out: 'it is my duty to determine myself as a will, i.e. to act in such a way that in acting I take entire responsibility not only for acting thus and not otherwise, but for acting at all' (1933: 116). This is another point in which Collingwood is radically different from Prichard and Carritt. Whereas Prichard's and Carritt's conception of obligation can be satisfied with merely 'setting oneself to do', even taking no actual action in reality, Collingwood's duty must result in action. In eliminating 'every trace of passivity' (1933: 116), he now declares: '[t]he feature or elements in virtue of which it is a duty therefore include the entire character and disposition of the agent' (1933: 114). Collingwood's notion of duty is therefore elaborated by his consistent pursuit of concrete rationality to the fullest extent, and he calls it 'absolute freedom'. Prichard's and Carritt's notion of obligation cannot meet Collingwood's notion of duty partly due to the very passivity of their theories. This 'passivity', for Collingwood, fatally ruins 'freedom' in his sense. It may be said that the 'realists'' lack of, or passivity towards action is caused by their lack of rationality at the foundation of their moral judgment, that is, the irrational notion of 'intuition'. For, capricious factors in their notion of 'intuition' make the grounds of their moral judgment uncertain, and weaken the rational necessity to bring it into existence. Accordingly, Collingwood's duty as the fully rational form on the scale of good—from rationality down to caprice—arrives at his rational idea of 'freedom'. If this freedom appears to be the restriction of freedom, as Collingwood is to maintain in 1940, it is caused by the confusion of caprice with freedom:

> The consciousness of this complete obligation—complete in the sense that it covers every detail of what is to be done and leaves no option anywhere—is a universal feature of duty. It may appear to involve the complete negation of freedom, but that is only because freedom is falsely identical with caprice. A man who knows that he has got to do exactly what he does, and that he has no option left anywhere, is in this state of complete obligation only because he

is resolved to do his duty. That resolution is the act of his own will; and hence the apparent absence of freedom is not a genuine absence of freedom.[21]

Given the fact that Collingwood states this in referring to the intuitionist's and utilitarian's theory, this criticism is clearly directed to his 'realist' colleagues.

This criticism also illuminates both sides of Collingwood's idea of freedom: the pursuit of autonomy of will and freedom from caprice.[22] Duty is now regarded as 'perfect freedom' and the culmination of practical reason, and stands as the counterpart of history as the culmination of theoretical reason.[23] In 1937, Collingwood was to reveal an idea to T. M Knox that conceptualised freedom as the rational notion of duty identical with knowledge: 'I'm thinking, I suppose, of the kind of position taken up by that great man Lachelier in his contention that knowledge is the same as freedom.'[24]

Although this aspect of his philosophy did not become clear until 1933, this combination of duty as the most rational form of practical reason and history as the highest form of theoretical reason seems to embody his characterisation of moral philosophy as both 'normative' and 'descriptive' as it is articulated in *An Essay on Philosophical Method* (EPM: 132).

Collingwood's notion of duty is by no means ignorant of the question of freedom. Rather, this question is a driving force when he distinguishes duty from right. This is evident from process of refinement I have detected from *Speculum Mentis* to

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[21] Collingwood, Boucher (ed.), *Essays in Political Philosophy*, pp.151-2.

[22] This is to be more clearly stated by him in NL: Collingwood, R. G., *The New Leviathan: or Man, Society, Civilisation and Barbarism*, revised edition with the introduction by David Boucher, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992):
'The freedom of the will is, positively, *freedom to choose*; freedom to exercise a will; and, negatively, freedom *from desire*; not the condition of having no desires, but the condition of not being at their mercy.' (NL: 13.25.).

[23] 'Duty, conceived as a unique individual doing a unique act in a unique situation, and doing that act because it was the only one which a unique agent the person could do, gave rise to history as the theoretical counterpart of duty.' [Boucher, *The Social and Political Thought of R. G. Collingwood*, p.94.]

[24] Letter to T. M. Knox from R. G. Collingwood. Knox manuscripts, University of St. Andrews, MS 37524/421. Dated 2 Nov. 1937. Compiled Collingwood, Boucher (ed.), *Essays in Political Philosophy*, pp.232-3.

the 1933 Lectures. In its development up to 1933, Collingwood's conception of duty becomes fully concrete and rational, centred on the agent, taking account of the action to be taken; situation; motive, and so on, being free from any utilitarian or regularian factors. For him, this concrete rationality of duty is freedom and the culmination of practical reason. The recognition of this duty is sustained by the historical method as the culmination of theoretical reason. In this sense, he identifies knowledge gained by the historical method with freedom. These embody the two aspects of his moral philosophy, namely the theory of duty as normative and historical method as descriptive. Oxford realists, especially Prichard and Carritt, are criticised by Collingwood for the incompleteness of concrete rationality in their notion of obligation.

Why then was Collingwood inclined to formulate such a theory of duty? Although this is a topic which might need a whole thesis in itself, I will endeavour to give a brief answer based on his own testimony up until 1933.

VI. 'Moral Crises': the Necessity of the Unity of Theory and Practice

Collingwood gives the reason why he believes his version of duty is the moral standard for his contemporary world in both the 1932 and 1933 Lectures. Fundamentally, what lies at the heart of his working-out of the theory is a sense of 'moral crises'.

Seeing 'moral crises' as an analogy of the ongoing financial crisis of 1929, Collingwood believes that they have in common the collapse of self-evident rules of life. Whereas the collapse discredits notes as a form of reliable currency in the financial crisis, 'all the rules of ordinary life become a bankrupt currency' (1932: 78) in our moral life. Although nobody doubts the value of notes and the moral rules in ordinary times, they become no longer self-evident once a serious crisis hits our ordinary life, and exposed as not self-evident facts at all, but mere presuppositions relying on something else. For those who have experienced such a sense of collapse, the previously self-evident moral rules turn out to appear 'only contingent expressions

of a single ultimate rule' (1932: 78), lacking the appeal they once had. Recognising that the students who are listening to his Lectures are in such moral circumstances, Collingwood tells them in the 1933 Lectures:

> Your parents were brought up in a framework of political and social ideas and institutions within which they could live their own lives in certainty as to what was required of them and in confidence that if they respected the ideas the institutions would protect them, give them security of life, and what is more important, peace of mind. This framework has collapsed. The systems of social, economic, and political order which at the beginning of the century seemed fully capable of protecting the person, property, and thoughts of the individual man or woman have been subjected to strains which leave them damaged. (1933: 127-8)

In such an uncertain situation, no utilitarian value is of interest any more, nor does the regularian rule guide us by commanding action adequate to the crisis. What the generation in the crisis of moral uncertainty is inclined to seek is thus not any abstract moral principles but certain and concrete facts. 'In these crises,' Collingwood observes, 'what is commonly a matter of theory and argument becomes a fact, an object of experience' (1932: 78). Being underpinned by the concrete facts known by the historical consciousness, what we seek as the moral standard in the age of crisis is the very sense of duty Collingwood articulated. For, it is during such a time when the dutiful action for me becomes necessarily obvious if we appropriately explore the situation with the historical consciousness. While adding that he does not deny this duty may be known in ordinary times, Collingwood believes: 'it will be generally agreed by anyone who call [sic] recollect such experiences, that on such occasions we do not envisage alternative possible actions and ask which we shall do' (1933: 112). Instead, what turns out to be crucial at such a time is that the realisation of what obviously I ought to do in the existing situation. Unless I bring my will into existence, my will would not be entirely free because in that case there must be something that obstructs the realisation of my will in my mind. Therefore, 'in that activity, it is

affirming, what apart from the affirmation would not exist, its character of being a will. Every manifestation of itself as a will in some particular mode is a creation of itself not only as determining itself to that mode, but as determining itself to be a will in general' (1933: 115). The realisation or manifestation of my will at the most rational and concrete extent is for Collingwood freedom. In the 'moral crises', the critical situation not only necessarily limits my choices to act, but also urges me to act if I want to ensure my freedom. Otherwise, my freedom must be ruined or at least clouded if I do nothing. Positive action is needed. In this respect, it is corrupt and disturbing the freedom of my will to leave, like the 'realist' theory, a space for doing nothing while knowing what ought to be done. Accordingly, their denial of and their logical passivity towards the interrelation between theory and action has to be criticised.

Now, this is the point at which a political implication of Collingwood's criticism of 'realism' becomes apparent. It is for the sake of freedom that any theory which disregards the doctrine of interaction between theory and practice is fatally flawed, especially during the time he lived. As he puts it in his Preface dedicated to the translation of de Ruggiero's *The History of European Liberalism* in 1927,[25] his notion of freedom significantly is a political sense. Repeating his sense of crisis in advocating that 'from various sides, in various countries, the political systems that take their stand upon freedom are being attacked by powerful and dangerous enemies',[26] he highlights his notion of freedom and liberalism as Continental, distinguishing it from its British sense. Whereas both senses of freedom start with the recognition that men and women are free, Collingwood's emphasis on the Continental sense of liberalism is in conformity with de Ruggiero's understanding of it: '[t]his freedom is not possessed at birth; it is acquired by degrees as a man enters into the self-conscious possession of his personality through a life of discipline and moral

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[25] Compiled in Collingwood, Boucher (ed.), *Essays in Political Philosophy*, pp.175-6.
[26] Ibid. p.176.

progress.'[27] Because it is in time of crisis that freedom is threatened when the fact that 'freedom is not possessed at birth' becomes the most discernible. He therefore elaborates his sense of duty in order to ensure the continuance of freedom as he understands it.[28]

Collingwood's notion of duty is, to summarise, a result of his pursuit of freedom in time of crisis. By the nature of crisis, our freedom is constantly threatened and demands positive action from us to protect it. Although he does not limit applicable situations for his notion of duty to times of crisis, he elaborates it with a clear recognition that the time in which he lives is a period of crisis. In translating de Ruggiero's understandings of freedom and liberalism, Collingwood introduces the Continental conception of freedom of which it is imperative we are aware especially in times of crisis. What the Continental notion of freedom crucially demands of us is the very positive action, or carrying out of actions, to protect it. Since Collingwood's 'realist' colleagues' ethical theory appears to him to discourage, or at least did not encourage positive action to protect freedom, his critique of them in the political sphere centres on their denial of the interaction between theory and practice.

VII. Conclusion

Collingwood's notion of duty is formed through extensive critical engagement with the Oxford realists. They share some common ground. Firstly, it is no longer possible to seek moral normativity in some capitalised and abstract ideas. On this widely shared recognition around the turn of the century, Moore offered an intuitive and utilitarian good, and then attempted to explain right in terms of good unanalysable and a simple moral norm. Prichard pointed out that not only Moore's right but also Kant's

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[27] Ibid. p.175.

[28] Even so, how is this duty in the time of crisis *necessarily* carried out? Or, even if some obligatory action is to be taken in a situation so specified in detail by my own concrete and rational thinking, why does it follow that I *necessarily* carry it out? As some commentators such as Helgeby ['Action, Duty, and Self-Knowledge in R. G. Collingwood's Philosophy of History', *Collingwood Studies*, vol.1, (1994), p.104] and Rolliston ['Collingwood and the Relation between Theory, Practice and Values in Historical Thinking', *Journal of the Philosophy of History*, 3, (2009), p.150] indicate, it is hard to find any account of this point in Collingwood's works until 1933.

right reduce 'rightness' into some natural property, and are unable to escape utilitarian vestiges. He then criticised the fallacy of both utilitarian theory and Kantian deontology which underlies their attempt to describe 'right' in terms of some inferential knowledge, and contends that right is equally as intuitive and simple as the notion of good. In line with Prichard's criticism of contemporary ethics, what became at issue among philosophers in Oxford was the nature of 'right', i.e. the question of what obligation is. Agreeing with the position of the epistemological status of obligation as intuitive, Carritt radicalised Prichard's denial of the theory of knowledge as the foundation of moral philosophy and denied the influence of knowledge on moral action, while Ross tried to solve two difficulties which arose from the intuitionist position: the objectivity of duty and the conflict of obligations in a particular situation. Therefore, the common task of philosophers in Oxford when Collingwood was elaborating his moral theory was to develop a sound understanding of 'obligation' which was compatible with the following points: (1) the avoidance of general moral principles; (2) the intuitionist epistemology; (3) the objectivity of obligation; (4) the conflict between obligations.

As a student and afterwards a colleague of them, Collingwood was, of course, aware of this task and tried to tackle it. With respect to the avoidance of general moral principles, he shared this aim with 'realists' and took the same strategy as them in understanding moral judgments in the context of each individual situation in which the agent is involved (1). On this basis, he refined the 'realists'' irrational nature of 'intuition' into a rational conception of 'intuition' underpinned by his notion of 'perception', and then placed 'duty' as the most rational form of action on the scale of human action. Duty sustained by his conception of 'intuition' seeks its universality in the very reasoning ability that we have to make adequate moral judgments in individual situations. This is intended to be a solution to (2) and (3). Regarding the final question (4), he distinguishes 'duty' as truly obligatory from 'right' and contrasts duty as never conflicting in a situation, while right action may do. In this sense, Collingwood's notion of duty is quite a rational one which relies on reason as the

origin of universality. On these epistemological foundations, he developed an 'agent-centred' notion of duty to the fullest extent, concretely specifying the contents in detail such as the agent who is to do it; the action to be taken; the necessary manifestation of action into existence; and the agent's motive. Therefore, I must discharge my duty once I figure it out.

Such a concrete and rational duty gives rise to a question, namely the possibility of freedom. This was indeed not only Collingwood's great concern but also a reason why he distinguished duty from right. Although he regarded law as a typical example of duty in *Speculum Mentis*, by 1933 he detached it from duty and attributed it to what he calls 'right' since law bears a regularian character which may force certain actions against the agent's will. Collingwood's duty became free from any slavish obedience to moral rule. In this sense, his notion of duty is the junction at which theoretical reason as the deliberate analysis of a situation by the historical method joins with practical reason as rational moral thinking entirely free from any irrational caprice. This is why Collingwood's notion of moral philosophy is both 'normative' and 'descriptive'.

The context of Collingwood's unique understanding of duty, as many other European intellectuals also believed, was the recognition of crisis in the contemporary world. Particularly, he took it as 'moral crises', in which existing moral values were at stake. What are required at such a time were, for Collingwood, not ready-made abstract moral principles but concrete facts, namely history; the rational thinking to figure out adequate action which makes it possible for me retrieve freedom during the restrictive circumstances of crisis; and to bring the action into existence to fulfil my duty. Collingwood crystallised his notion of duty as containing all elements demanded in the moral crises. At such a time, the passive implication of the 'realists'' moral theory towards the interaction between theory and practice might appear to Collingwood to be none other than the obstruction of freedom. Therefore, the three rules of life he imparted to his students at the close of the 1933 Lectures are not a dry, commonplace preaching of a teacher to his students, but an embodiment of his notion

of duty, or a lively practical motto, by a philosopher who shared the sense of moral crisis with younger generation:

Know yourself, respect yourself, and orientate yourself.[29]

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[29] Extracted from (1933, 129).

CONCLUSION

Criticism of 'realism' was a central concern in the development of Collingwood's early philosophy. His thought was elaborated throughout various realms of philosophy including epistemology, logic, ontology and moral philosophy, in response to contemporary disputes between British Idealism, Oxford realism, and to a lesser extent Cambridge realism. The centrality of his critique of 'realism' in his philosophy as developed in this thesis is consistent with the emphasis Collingwood gives it in *An Autobiography*. The fundamental question at the centre of his critique of 'realism' was understanding the relationship between the human mind and action.

In order better to understand the human mind and action, he began his philosophical thinking in the context of the ongoing dispute between British Idealists and 'realist' philosophers. It was in *Religion and Philosophy* that we have seen the starting-point of his attempt in the form of a negative framework. What Collingwood rejects as his foundational position can be summed up in three points: (i) subjective idealism; (ii) 'objectivism' or 'materialism' (against Oxbridge realism); (iii) abstractness or dualism (against both Empiricism and British Idealism). As Chapters 1 and 2 illustrated, (i) was the common anathema to both sides of the dispute. While British Idealism attempted to establish a monistic metaphysical system avoiding (iii), it was because of the very (iii) that Oxbridge realism attacked them. The central issue of the realism/idealism dispute was therefore (iii), i.e. dualism. Aptly understanding the core of the dispute, Collingwood fundamentally objected to the dualism and regarded it as the prime element of his special conception of 'realism'. Accordingly, Collingwood's critique of 'realism' was directed not only at the realist side of the dispute, but at both sides in part. This is the reason Collingwood found common positions in both camps, namely their denial of subjectivism and phenomenalism, and

regarded Bradley's metaphysics as the manifesto of a new realism.[1] In this sense, Collingwood was by no means a sectional participant to the dispute simply siding with either camp, but aiming to bring a constructive development to the dispute. Throughout, this was a sustained principle in the development of his philosophy.

Although his critical position against 'realists' remained more or less implicit in *Religion and Philosophy*, it was in his undergraduate years, if his *Autobiography* is to be trusted, that he germinated doubts about their positions. His disagreement with them was underpinned by his intellectual background cultivated by his father and Ruskin, who instilled a profound insight into the nature of human activities in him. Collingwood was inspired in his humanistic interests since his early childhood through them. This remarkably distinguished him from many contemporary philosophers, and set him in an appropriate position to reform scientific or ahistorical 'realist' philosophy. On this basis, Collingwood developed a philosophy of his own by constantly criticising 'realism'.

What exactly was Collingwood's development from the realism/idealism dispute? Properly resisting what he defines as 'realism', his development from the dispute is characterised as overcoming 'realist' dualisms in realms of philosophy such as subject/predicate (logic), abstract/concrete (ontology), subject/object (epistemology), and theory/action (ethics).

Collingwood's first attack of 'realism' was logical and ontological in nature. After 'a year of negative criticism', Collingwood traced the process of the dispute back to its origin, namely the notion of judgment and the subject/predicate dualism in the traditional logic. The notion of judgment had been in fact a main battlefield at an early stage of the dispute. Bradley's 'Reality', the target of Oxbridge realists'

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[1] This point was more essentially repeated in *The Idea of History*, declaring the main doctrine of 'realism' in his sense: 'Realism in both cases [Cambridge and Oxford] meant the doctrine that what mind knows is something other than itself, and that mind in itself, the activity of knowing, is immediate experience and therefore unknowable. [...] Everything that we know is thus placed outside the mind, and constitutes a body of things whose proper collective name is nature; history, which is the mind's knowledge of itself, is ruled out as impossible.' [Collingwood, R. G., *The Idea of History*, revised edition, ed. by J. van der Dussen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.142.]

criticism, was itself designed to reform Green's idealist whole, 'eternal consciousness', to prevent it from falling into dualism. Since this 'Reality' was the source of truth in Bradley's logic, the truth of judgment was dependent on its coherence with other elements in Reality or on what Joachim called 'significant wholes'. This resulted in his doctrine of the degrees of truth, and was to inspire Joachim's formulation of the coherence theory of truth. The Bradleian notion of Reality characterised the notion of judgment as 'internal' in the sense that truth of judgment does not rest on something outside of it while the relation between the subject and predicate in judgment as 'unreal' because the two are related by the 'idea' which does not exist in the real world. This 'unreal' relation between subject and predicate, for Oxbridge realists, gave rise to abstraction from the very Reality and ultimately relapsed into abstract/concrete dualism. Instead, Cambridge realists offered the notion of judgment as 'external' and the relation as 'real' in the sense that the truth of judgment rests on the real world outside the judgment itself. This disposed them to the correspondence theory and the rejection of the idealist notion of monism in favour of their pluralism, namely 'logical atomism'. In other words, a focus of the debate at this stage was how some general concept (idea) can logically be identified with a certain concrete thing in making a judgment. This was in a sense concerned with the ontological dichotomy between abstract and concrete.

Collingwood's development from this debate was to overcome the abstract/concrete and subject/predicate dualisms. Although he was in sympathy with the Oxbridge realists' critique of Bradley's notion of judgment as potentially dualistic, he equally rejected the realists' correspondence theory and their truth/falsity dichotomy because they were dualistic. For him, both British Idealism and Oxbridge realism resulted in dualism, resting upon the traditional notion of judgment. This dualistic *impasse* made it unable rightly to understand the logic of the human mind and action. It is, he maintained, impossible to employ such a rigid framework for the dynamically changing human mind and action. His solution to transcend this difficulty of 'realism' was to take the subject and the predicate in a judgment (or

proposition) to be two phases in a reality; that is, the embodiment process in human mind from an abstract grasp to the more concrete understanding of the same reality. Thus, the abstract/concrete and subject/predicate dualism were overcome. Since this notion of judgment includes inference in itself, the traditional framework of logic upon which 'realist' logic rest was, for him, broken down. Hence, Collingwood in logic and ontology did not lean simply on either side of the dispute, but attempted to improve the logical framework for the activities of human mind and action, critically and affirmatively adopting from both camps. This process in his conception of judgment was what made it possible to regard *Religion and Philosophy* as 'dogmatic realism' as early as 1918, and he called it 'dialectic' in 1920.

Although it was already in his sights since writing *Religion and Philosophy*, Collingwood's critique of 'realism' developed as an epistemological doctrine during the period between *Libellus de Generatione* and *Speculum Mentis*. The main target of his criticism in epistemology was the subject/object dualism. This was in fact a main battlefield of the realism/idealism dispute. To admit some 'mental idea' in the epistemic process is in a sense a generic doctrine for idealism. Despite his pursuit of Reality, for instance, Bradley eventually granted that 'appearance' is not reality itself but 'idea'. Cambridge and Oxford realism objected to such 'mental idea' in the idealist epistemology in different ways: sense-datum theory for Cambridge realists and direct realism for Oxford realists. By rejecting any 'mental idea' in the epistemic process, both Cambridge and Oxford realism arrived at the view, as Cook Wilson famously articulated, that knowing makes no difference to what is known. Although reaching the same conclusion, they were distinguished by their position towards the medium. Cambridge realists unconfidently offered sense-data as the medium purely derived from experience, whereas Oxford realists denied any such medium altogether.

Collingwood's strategy to overcome the epistemological subject/object dualism was, parallel with the logical dualism, to take the two opposites of the dualism as phases of an epistemic process: from intuition, perception, to thought (or rational thinking) in his characteristic sense. Precisely identifying the divide between

the 'realism' of Oxford and Cambridge as the medium through which knowledge is attained, he rejected the Cambridge realists' answer of sense-data, while accepting the Oxford realists' immediate or intuitive 'apprehension'. But, he went further to criticise their notion of intuition as irrational, and modified it by introducing his conception of 'perception' as both sensation and thought. Knowledge is intuitively attained by the mind as perception in the first instance, and then gradually rationalised by the mind's reflective thinking in the process of understanding. The more clearly the mind understands its object, the fuller it rationally and intelligibly grasps the object developing what were implicit in the initial perception into explicit knowledge or thought. Thus, knowing makes a difference to what is known, and the subject/object dualism was denied. In this sense, Collingwood developed his epistemology on the basis of his critical examinations of the dispute, carefully avoiding defects and adopting benefits from both camps. *Speculum Mentis* was a crystallisation of his epistemology as such in the form of explicating the epistemic process of human mind and its manifestation into action, in criticising the epistemological dualism as 'realism'.

On the basis of such logical, ontological and epistemological foundation throughout the 1920s, Collingwood crystallised his method for philosophy in his *Essay on Philosophical Method*. In spite of its less prominent surface, this essay was significantly sustained by what he had developed in the 1920s in criticising 'realism'. As he outlined his philosophical analysis of it in *Speculum Mentis*, what he presupposed to be the object of the philosophical method was consistently the human mind and action.

Particularly referring to the Cantabrigian reform of philosophy by the mathematical method, 'non-philosophical method' in his words, Collingwood compared it with what he took to be the philosophical method, by examining both methods in the traditional framework of logic, namely concept, judgment, and inference. In each form of logical reasoning, Collingwood identified a variety of dualistic deadlocks in the non-philosophical method in approaching the human mind

and action. As he closely elaborated the defects of logical and epistemological dualism in the previous period, the dualism which permeates through the non-philosophical method was unable to meet the changing nature and the complex mutual influence of the human mind and action. By this comparison, Collingwood demonstrated that it is impossible rightly to treat the human mind and action by the scientific or mathematical method. A tenable logical framework of the adequate method was, for Collingwood, what he called 'the scale of forms'. This was designed to make it possible to grasp the human mind in the relation between mind and its object, and human action in the relation between the mind's knowledge and action. By the development of his philosophical method as such, not only the human mind but also human action entirely fell into the scope of Collingwood's philosophising. The 'realist' dualism between human knowledge and action, or theory and practice, came to be the main issue at this time. Collingwood's method and objectives of philosophy, consequently, oriented him to characterise the nature of philosophy as both 'normative' and 'descriptive'.

These twofold characteristics of Collingwood's conception of philosophy were embodied in his notion of duty as the pivotal point of his moral philosophy. The series of Moral Philosophy Lectures roughly consist of the analysis of forms of action and the normative theory of morals to which the forms of action refer. He distinguished forms of action into unconscious and conscious action, highlighting the latter as the true subject-matter of his moral philosophy. His normative theory is thus what the forms of conscious action refer to. Admitting the mutual relationship between conscious action and norms, he of course presupposed the mutual link between theory and practice.

In Collingwood's normative theory of morals, all forms of conscious action are equally aimed at 'goodness', although he subdivided this goodness into three forms, i.e. utility, right, and duty, according to the degree of self-consciousness. The highest form of moral norm is 'duty', distinguished from 'right'. Whereas the notion of duty or 'obligation' was a central issue in ethics among Oxford realists, it was in

the distinction between 'right' and 'duty' that Collingwood significantly improved the contemporary discussion from his colleagues' arguments, in explicating an adequate idea of obligation. He tried to elaborate a notion of duty which is compatible with the following tasks at issue at Oxford concerning the conception of obligation: (1) not to make it capitalised abstract norms such as Good or God; (2) to grant intuition as the origin of moral knowledge; (3) to ensure the objectivity of obligation; and (4) to reconcile the conflict between obligations. Since his notion of duty is understood in the context in which the agent is involved, it is not some abstract or transcendent notion which forces upon us some moral criteria. The strategy thinking of moral criteria in context was shared with Oxford realists, and aimed to overcome (1). His epistemology gave, as we have seen in Chapter 6, grounds for (2) and (3). Whereas granting intuition as the origin of moral knowledge (2), Collingwood rationalised his Oxford colleagues' notion of 'intuition', designating 'intuition' the intelligible and rational origin of knowledge (3). Finally, the conflict between obligations was evaded by distinguishing right from duty. He developed such 'agent-centred' notion of duty to the fullest extent, concretely specifying its contents in detail such as agent, action, necessary manifestation of action into existence, and the agent's motive. Collingwood's conception of duty on the one hand therefore demonstrated the normative aspect of philosophy.

On the other, his notion of duty also exhibited the descriptive aspect of philosophy. His strategy to understand duty in context and concretely specified contents of duty demand us to investigate and describe the circumstance surrounding us in figuring out our duty. Collingwood identified this investigation as history. This further led him to identify philosophy with history by 1933, and his emphasis on history in understanding duty now includes the descriptive aspect of philosophy.

Nevertheless, his notion of duty as such was by no means regularian in nature because it restricts the agent's freedom. Rather, by proposing such an 'agent-centred' duty, the result of the agent's own reasoning and will, duty turned out to be a necessary condition to ensure the agent's freedom in the situation with which he or

she was faced. Thus, Collingwood's conception of duty was a crystallisation of his notion of philosophy as both normative (the rational moral thinking entirely free from any irrational caprice and regularian elements) and descriptive (the deliberate analysis of the situation by the historical method). His conception of philosophy as such was sustained by his ultimate goal in philosophy, the better understanding of the human mind and action.

If my argument is sustainable on the basis of the concrete and historical evidence of Collingwood's thinking, Donagan's criticism of Collingwood's position was to a large extent irrelevant, omitting many of background implications of what Collingwood wrote in his *Autobiography*. Collingwood's critique of Cook Wilson's thesis was not only a logical argument, which Donagan took it to be, but rather an epistemological argument as D'Oro asserted. Collingwood's contention of the unity of theory and practice was not a merely 'groundless fear' as Donagan contended, but a central and consistent doctrine of his early philosophy, sustained by ample arguments from logic to moral philosophy. In this sense, Collingwood's critique of 'realism' in his early period was in harmony with his self-reconstruction of his position in the *Autobiography*. Although to be fair to Donagan most of unpublished materials which are open to scholars now were not available to him, Donagan's charges against Collingwood's critique of 'realism' tended to expose by themselves the defects of 'realism' in being less aware of historical context. His doubts were answered not by the analytic method he employed but by the historical method Collingwood advocated.

On the other hand, defenders of Collingwood's position have in part highlighted his critique of 'realism'. Mink misunderstood Collingwood's persistent rejection of the idealist label, but his interpretation of Collingwood as 'a dialectic philosopher' was right when he maintained that Collingwood took both realism and idealism as 'partial views' from a more comprehensive point of view, a dialectical view on Mink's account. This became evident from my contention that Collingwood elaborated his position not by simply leaning towards either side of the dispute, but by

critically examining them both. This was a line also followed by such interpreters as Peters and Browning, but with more emphasis on Hegelian dialectic.

In line with these dialectical interpretations, Rubinoff rightly explained the aim of Collingwood's critique of 'realism' as 'the dialectic process of mind' when he contrasted it with that of his Russellian realist critics including Donagan as 'the world of externally related facts'. However, we may go further in contending that Collingwood's aim in criticising 'realism' was not simply to achieve a better understanding of the human mind but the mind in relation to action.

Collingwood's insistence on the mutual relation between the human mind and action was more clearly captured by D'Oro in Kantian terms. She recounted his critique of epistemological 'realism' in suggesting that Collingwood intended to ensure the co-existence of theoretical and practical reason. Her conclusion was that Collingwood's critique of 'realism' as a defence of philosophy as a normative or criteriological study was also correct as confirmed in his critique in moral philosophy. Nevertheless, it seems to be fair to add that Collingwood's conception of philosophy was also 'descriptive' as well as normative, as exhibited in his historical analysis of action.

Our reconstruction of Collingwood's early criticism of 'realism' combined these scattered fruits of Collingwoodian scholarship together, and attempted to produce a systematic and sustained picture of the development of his early philosophy.

In relation to his later criticism of 'realism' however, it has to be admitted that there are some questions unresolved in this thesis. Firstly, Collingwood's notorious attack against 'realism' in practical politics in his *Autobiography* remains puzzling. As we have seen throughout the thesis, by 1933 he substantially elaborated moral philosophy on solid philosophical grounds. We have seen that his notion of duty was designed to urge moral agents to action. But there is still a certain logical gap between his notion of duty, his position towards practical politics, and his attack against his colleagues. While our reconstruction corroborated and strengthened Connelly's claim that it is an inadequate approach 'to draw general conclusions about Collingwood's

philosophical work and development from their perception of his personal politics',[2] it was still unclear what drove him to denounce 'realists' as 'the propagandists of a coming Fascism'.

Secondly, Donagan's last point, Collingwood's abandonment of the 'abstraction principle' in his later period, was yet unexamined. Since Donagan developed this contention by examining Collingwood's critique of 'realism' between his early and later period, this would be a core question concerning his position towards 'realism' in his later life. Hence, it may well be worthwhile in considering his controversial 'conversion' to examine Collingwood's response to later opponents such as G. Ryle and A. J. Ayer after his *Essay on Philosophical Method* in the light of the philosophical foundation reconstructed in this thesis.

All these unsolved problems considered, Collingwood's early critique of 'realism' was nevertheless mostly consistent with his *Autobiography*, deriving many of his principal philosophical doctrines from his engagement with the problems they posed. Under his prime concern in philosophy as the study of human mind and action, he systematically expanded his philosophical thinking, ceaselessly criticising 'realism' in a variety of philosophical realms. The philosophical framework of 'realism' was for him irrelevant to understanding the human mind and action. While this insight was probably in part a heritage of his early exposure to historical and aesthetic works, which remarkably distinguished him from many other contemporary philosophers, it was radical 'realist' philosophy that provided with him with the target which facilitated his breakthrough. Accordingly, his criticism of 'realism' as a philosophical doctrine was not King Charles's head which haunted Dickens' Mr. Dick, but a fertile soil and driving force for developing Collingwood's philosophy.

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[2] Connelly, *Metaphysics, Method, and Politics*, p.204.

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