

Chapter 1 : Leo Strauss: On Collingwood's Philosophy of History [] - PDF Free Download

Collingwood's philosophy of history shares with Gadamer the view that meaning (in Collingwood's case the meaning of an action rather than a text) is not to be identified with inner psychological processes. An action's meaning is to be found in a publicly re-enactable syllogism.

Feb 12, Varad rated it it was amazing A book anyone who is - or pretends to be - a historian must read. That is not to say it will be easy for many historians to read, or that they will agree with its conclusions. History, that is, for and by its own sake. The influence of idealism is apparent Collingwood was one of the British idealists , and the philosophy itself is too rich and complicated for exegesis here. Two main ideas underpin the edifice. The first is the notion that the past has no independent existence, having ceased to be the moment it passed into whatever temporal oblivion things that have occurred pass into. It need not be pointed out that the philosophy of time is itself hugely controversial, but Collingwood only introduces that to the extent it impinges on his enterprise, and no more. The past can only be known in the present, because all that is known of it is what of it that has persisted into the present. We can know of it only what is left. It is how the historian goes about doing all this that is surely the most controversial aspect of his philosophy of history. And what the historian reconstructs is not events or actions, for those are lost, but the thought that went into those events or actions. For Collingwood, "All history is the history of thought" A stunning claim, and a controversial one. It raises all sorts of issues, such as what constitutes a thought, what an event is, whether humans in the present can re-think the thoughts of humans in earlier centuries if their thought processes are incommensurate which introduces the vexed question of the unity and uniformity of human nature , and so forth. But from his premises his conclusions are entailed logically. For they all flow from the basic premise upon which the entire structure is erected: It is created by humans thinking, by our mental processes. History and philosophy are in this respect, for him, identical. This is implied throughout the main text, but is most forcefully established in the essays and lecture notes which were added to the edition. Here Collingwood makes clear, in powerfully protreptic fashion, his conviction that history without philosophy is a nullity. From this arise profound metaphysical, epistemological, and moral consequences. Metaphysical, for history is an attempt to unite in the concrete reality of the present the wholly ideal existences of the past and the future. It is wholly ideal" The present itself is is only a momentary phenomenon, the point at which the two unrealities meet. Epistemological consequences stem from the metaphysical, for the unreality of the past constrains our ability to know it. What we are really trying to know, of course, is the present. The past is "necessary" while the future is "possible. It is probably the most controversial proposition in all history the discipline, not the subject , whether we study the past for its own sake or our own, but Collingwood eminently, sensibly, chooses the only way he must: All history leads up to the present; we seek to comprehend it by "reconstructing its determining conditions" And comprehend it we must, for it is innate in our humanity. It is part of what makes it human. That is why history is, and must be, philosophical: We apprehend the world through thought, and no thought is more crucial than that by which we reconstruct the making of the world we inhabit, that is, the present. Every past that was once a present was itself reconstructed in that way. So it is that Collingwood can declare that all history is the re-enactment of past thought. Philosophy and history are both concerned with thought. For their problem is the same. Indeed, history is the "immediate and direct source of all philosophical problems. Without history, philosophy lacks sustenance and withers. Nurture a historical consciousness, though, and you have all, save its own methodology, "that philosophy needs. All philosophy is the philosophy of history. Not only does Collingwood vindicate history as a way of understanding the world, he vindicates humans as beings compelled to understand the world through history. History is philosophy because it must be; we make it so. History exists because humanity does; it emerges from our perspective on the world. I think, therefore I am. And because I am, I think historically. Everyman is his own historian. And every historian, according to Collingwood, is his own philosopher. For not only is every historian his own philosopher, he must be, if he is ever to be worthy of the name. Originally written 1 August , edited 28 June

Chapter 2 : R. G. Collingwood - Wikipedia

*Philosophy of history. Collingwood is widely noted for *The Idea of History* (), which was collated from various sources soon after his death by a student, T. M. Knox.*

It emerged as a sequel to the rise of "scientific history" which took place in the latter part of the nineteenth century. And if the older or traditional branches of philosophy cannot make intelligible the "new historical technique" or solve the problems "created by the existence of organized and systematized historical research"; if, in other words, "the traditional philosophies carry with them the implication that historical knowledge is impossible", epistemology of history becomes of necessity a philosophic concern or a philosophic discipline. But philosophy of history must be more than epistemology of history. In the first place, epistemology of history is likely to be of vital concern only to certain technicians, and not to men as men. Above all, thought about historical thought must be thought about the object of historical thought as well. Hence philosophy of history must be both epistemology of history and metaphysics of history.³ Philosophy of history comes then first to sight as an addition to the traditional branches of philosophy. But philosophy hardly permits of mere additions. Certainly philosophy of history cannot be a mere addition: For the discovery on which philosophy of history is based concerns the character of all human thought: In other words, it was always admitted that the central theme of philosophy is the question of what [] Leo Strauss man is, and that history is the knowledge of what men have done; but now it has been realized that man is what he can do, and "the only clue to what man can do" is what he has done¹⁰; therefore, "the so-called science of human nature or of the human mind resolves itself into history", Philosophy of history is identical with philosophy as such, which has become radically historical: Collingwood was prevented by his death from elaborating his philosophy of history in the full sense of the term. He believed that he could do no more than to attempt "a philosophic inquiry into the nature of history regarded as a special type or form of knowledge with a special type of object"⁷. Since philosophy of history in the narrower sense admittedly points to philosophy of history in the comprehensive sense, it might seem that Collingwood unjustifiably postponed the discussion of the fundamental issue. But it is perhaps fairer to say that philosophy of history in the comprehensive sense presupposes philosophy of history in the narrower sense, or that the fusion of philosophy and history presupposes the soundness or adequacy of scientific history": Scientific history, being "now a thing within the compass of everyone", is the cooperative effort of a very large number of contemporaries which is directed toward the acquisition of such knowledge as "ideally" forms part of "a universal history" or of knowledge of "the human past in its entirety"²⁷. The attitude of the scientific historian, however, is not that of a spectator. Knowledge of what men have done is knowledge of what men have thought: Scientific history is thought about thought. Past thought cannot be known as such except by being re-thought, or re-enacted, or re-lived, or re-produced⁹⁷, . For the scientific historian, the past is not something foreign, or dead, or outside his mind: The point of view from which the scientific historian criticizes the past is that of the present of his civilization. Yet history will not be self-knowledge if the historian sees the past in the light of the present of his civilization without making that present his primary theme. Since scientific history is a peculiarity of modern Western thought, it may be described as the effort of present-day Western man to understand his peculiar humanity and thus to preserve it or enrich it. Since genuine knowledge of the past is necessarily criticism and evaluation of the past from the point of view of the present, it is necessarily "relative" to the present, i. The point of view of a given historian is "valid only for him and people situated like him"⁶⁰. Collingwood was not disturbed by this danger to scientific history cf. There were two reasons for his confidence. In the first place, the belief in progress, and hence in the superiority of the present to the past, still lingered on in his thought. He could therefore believe that if historical knowledge is relative to the present, it is relative to the highest standpoint which has ever existed. He took it for granted that the historian can and must distinguish "between retrograde and progressive elements" in the phenomena which he is studying. More than half of his book is devoted to a comparison of the modern scientific conception of history with "the medieval conception of history with all its errors"⁵⁶ and the classical conception with its grave "defects". The second reason why Collingwood was not disturbed by

the "relativity" of all history There are no ages of decline or of decay Augustine looked at Roman history from the point of view of an early Christian, and Gibbon did so from that of an enlightened eighteenth century Englishman: Each was the only possible for the man who adopted it" xii. The historian who sees the past from the point of view of a present must not be worried by the prospect of a future progress of historical knowledge: Being thus protected against the surprises which the future may have in store, the scientific historian can be satisfied that the historical knowledge which is relative to the present, and is based on the material accessible at present, fulfills all the requirements of certainty or science. The fact that all historical knowledge is relative to the present means that it is relative to the only standpoint which is possible now, to a standpoint which is in no way inferior to any standpoint which was possible in the past or which will be possible in the future. Regardless of whether or not Collingwood found a way for reconciling the two different reasons indicated, each of them, if sound, would justify him in assuming that understanding of the past from the point of view of the present is unobjection The procedure which we have just outlined is characteristic of The Idea of History. But he was not very much concerned with examining the means by which he tried to reach his goal. He vacillated between two different views of history, the rationalistic view of Hegel, and a non-rationalistic view. He never clearly realized that these two views are mutually incompatible. There is a tension between the idea of universal history and the view that in history "the mind of the present day apprehends the process by which this mind itself has come into existence through the mental development of the past" But the case of the modern Western historian who studies Chinese or Inca civilization is obviously different. Collingwood did not reflect on this difference. According to another view also held by Collingwood, one cannot speak of the furniture of the human mind, and not even of the human mind, which as such would be subject to the Leo Strauss "permanent and unchanging laws"; the idea of scientific history is not, in principle, coeval with the human mind but is itself "historical": Accordingly, Collingwood held that understanding of the thought of the past is not only compatible with criticism of thought of the past from the point of view of the present, but inseparable from it. On the other hand, however, he tended to believe that the ultimate facts of history are free choices which are not justifiable by rational activity; or that the ultimate facts of history are mere beliefs; and hence that history is not rational or that it is radically contingent or that it is, so to speak, a sequel of different original sins. Accordingly, he tended to hold that the historian cannot criticize the thought of the past but must remain satisfied with understanding it cf. His main preoccupation was with vindicating "the autonomy of history" against the claims of modern natural science. The view that historical knowledge is partly dependent on modern. History does not depend upon authority nor on memory It is because of its "autonomy" that history must be universal history Collingwood should not have hesitated to call this view "idealistic" cf. It is indeed not a solipsistic view: More precisely, it is inhabited by all present day historians. It is a house without windows: This decision had the additional advantage of keeping the subjectivity of scientific history within limits which, for Collingwood, were reasonable. If the "biographical" is sub-historical, it will as little go into the making of the subject which acquires or possesses historical knowledge, as it will become an element of the object of historical knowledge. Historical knowledge will not become relative to the individual historian. It will retain its objectivity by being relative to "the mind of the present day. The largest part of his book is devoted to a history of historical knowledge. That history is on the whole conventional. In studying earlier thinkers, Collingwood never considered the possibility that the point of view from which the present day reader approaches them, or the questions which he addresses to them, might be in need of a fundamental change. He set out to praise or blame the earlier thinkers according to whether they helped or hindered the emergence of scientific history. He did not attempt to look at scientific history, for once, from the point of view of the earlier thinkers. Furthermore, his history of historical knowledge is somewhat obscured by an ambiguity which he did not consistently avoid. In this crucial context Collingwood thus identified historical knowledge with accepting a tradition or living in a tradition. As a rule, however, he assumed that historical knowledge is not coeval with historical life but is an "invention" made at a certain time in Greece and developed later on by the heirs of the Greeks. The Greeks created scientific history. But since they believed that only the permanent is knowable or intelligible, they regarded "these catastrophic changes in the condition of human life" as unintelligible. They did not deny "that in the general pattern of these changes certain

antecedents normally led to certain consequents," and that these sequences can be established by observation; but they could not tell why "certain antecedents normally led to certain consequents": But their criticism could not go beyond making quite certain whether the eye witness really told what he had seen, and reaching a decision as to which of various conflicting reports deserved to be accepted. This conception of historical evidence limited history to the study of "events which have happened within living memory to people with Leo Strauss whom [the historian] can have personal contact"; it made impossible scientific history of the remote past: Some critical remarks seem to be necessary. When asserting that thinking historically and thinking in terms of substance are incompatible, Collingwood presupposed that "it is meta-physically axiomatic that an agent, being a substance, can never come into being and can never undergo any change of nature" Did the Greeks then not know that human beings, for example, come into being? Why then should the Greeks have been unable to observe and to describe the coming into being of substances and their changes? He did not even attempt to prove that the classics conceived of cities and nations as substances. But even if they did, their almost daily experience would have con Why then should the Greeks have been unable to observe and describe the coming into being and the changes of cities? To say nothing of the fact that it is safe to infer what men could do from what they did. But, to take the most obvious case, were there no Greek thinkers who taught that the human race had come into being, that in the beginning men roamed in forests, without social bonds of any kind and in particular without language, and hence without the Greek language? Certainly these thinkers did not merely contemplate the possibility of raising the problem of the origin of the Hellenic people, but they did raise it and, according to their lights, solved it. If they did not attempt to give historical accounts of the genesis of this or that nation, or of any nation, they had reasons like these: They did not have at their disposal historical evidence of events of this kind; they regarded the city as a higher form of society than the nation; and they thought that societies in their full vigor and maturity were more instructive regarding the highest possibilities of man than are societies newly coming into being. There may be a connection between these views and "substantialism. Prudence would have dictated to Collingwood to refrain from speaking of "substantialism" and to limit himself to saying that the classics were, for whatever reason, more concerned with the permanent and hence with the recurrent than with what is merely temporal and local, or that they believed that the unique can ultimately be understood only in the light of the permanent or recurrent. From this he could legitimately have concluded that from the point of view of the classics, history is inferior in dignity to philosophy or science. To prove his thesis, it would have been necessary for him to show, in addition, that the primacy of the concern with the permanent or recurrent precludes or endangers serious concern with what happens here and now or what happened there and then. He did not show this. To say nothing of other considerations, one may be chiefly concerned with the permanent or recurrent and yet hold that a given unique event the Peloponnesian War, for ex A man who held this view would of course study that unique event with utmost care, and, assuming that he was a superior man, he might have surpassed as a historian, i. Collingwood held that the Greeks had a "historical con This statement is, to say the least, very misleading. In other words, there was a greater awareness in Greece than elsewhere of the essential difference between the ancestral and the good.

Chapter 3 : The Idea of History by R.G. Collingwood

Comment: 2nd printing , good hardcover shows soem sparse internal highlighting, previous owner name at top of front end paper and some other mild trace wear, in very good + price-clipped dust jacket that shows tocuh of soil, hint of exposure toning along spine and some other light trace wear. pages.

Types[edit] In contemporary philosophy a distinction is made between critical philosophy of history also known as analytic and speculative philosophy of history. The names of these types are derived from C. Sometimes critical philosophy of history is included under historiography. Philosophy of history should not be confused with the history of philosophy , which is the study of the development of philosophical ideas in their historical context. Herodotus , a fifth-century BCE contemporary of Socrates , broke from the Homeric tradition of passing narrative from generation to generation in his work "Investigations" Ancient Greek: Herodotus, regarded by some[who? History was supposed to teach good examples for one to follow. The assumption that history "should teach good examples" influenced how writers produced history. In the fourteenth century, Ibn Khaldun , who is considered one of the fathers of the philosophy of history, discussed his philosophy of history and society in detail in his Muqaddimah His work represents a culmination of earlier works by medieval Islamic sociologists in the spheres of Islamic ethics , political science , and historiography , such as those of al-Farabi c. He introduced a scientific method to the philosophy of history which Dawood considers something "totally new to his age" and he often referred to it as his "new science", [8] which is now associated with historiography. His historical method also laid the groundwork for the observation of the role of the state , communication , propaganda , and systematic bias in history. Starting with Fustel de Coulanges " and Theodor Mommsen " , historical studies began to move towards a more modern scientific[citation needed] form. In the Victorian era , historiographers debated less whether history was intended to improve the reader , and more on what causes turned history and how one could understand historical change. Cyclical and linear history[edit] Further information: Social cycle theory Narrative history tends to follow an assumption of linear progression: Many ancient cultures held mythical concepts of history and of time that were not linear. Such societies saw history as cyclical, with alternating Dark and Golden Ages. Plato taught the concept of the Great Year , and other Greeks spoke of aeons eons. According to Jainism , this world has no beginning or end but goes through cycles of upturns utsarpini and downturns avasarpini constantly. Many Greeks believed that just as mankind went through four stages of character during each rise and fall of history so did government. The story of the Fall of Man from the Garden of Eden , as recounted and elaborated in Judaism and Christianity , preserves traces of a moral cycle; this would give the basis for theodicies which attempt to reconcile the existence of evil in the world with the existence of a God, providing a global explanation of history with belief in a coming Messianic Age. Some theodicies claimed that history had a progressive direction leading to an eschatological end, such as the Apocalypse , organized by a superior power. Leibniz based his explanation on the principle of sufficient reason , which states that anything that happens, does happen for a specific reason. In this way theodicies explained the necessity of evil as a relative element that forms part of a larger plan of history. Confronted with the antique problem of future contingents , Leibniz invented the theory of " compossible worlds ", distinguishing two types of necessity, to cope with the problem of determinism. During the Renaissance , cyclical conceptions of history would become common, with proponents illustrating decay and rebirth by pointing to the decline of the Roman Empire. Cyclical conceptions continued in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the works of authors such as Oswald Spengler " , Nikolay Danilevsky " , and Paul Kennedy " , who conceived the human past as a series of repetitive rises and falls. Spengler, like Butterfield , when writing in reaction to the carnage of the First World War of " , believed that a civilization enters upon an era of Caesarism [9] after its soul dies. The development of mathematical models of long-term secular sociodemographic cycles revived interest in cyclical theories of history see, for example, Historical Dynamics by Peter Turchin , or Introduction to Social Macrodynamics [10] by Andrey Korotayev et al. Sustainable history[edit] "Sustainable History and the Dignity of Man" is a philosophy of history proposed by Nayef Al-Rodhan , where history is defined as a

endurable progressive trajectory in which the quality of life on this planet or all other planets is premised on the guarantee of human dignity for all at all times under all circumstances. Among other things, human dignity means having a positive sense of self and instilling individuals with respect for the communities to which they belong. Basic welfare provision and security are fundamental to ensuring human dignity. Environment and ecological considerations need to be addressed as well. Finally, cultural diversity, inclusiveness and participation at all levels, of all communities are key imperatives of human dignity. Within this civilisation are many geo-cultural domains that comprise sub-cultures. Nayef Al-Rodhan envisions human civilisation as an ocean into which the different geo-cultural domains flow like rivers, "The Ocean Model of one Human Civilization". At points where geo-cultural domains first enter the ocean of human civilisation, there is likely to be a concentration or dominance of that culture. However, over time, all the rivers of geo-cultural domains become one. Nevertheless, there are cases where geographical proximity of various cultures can also lead to friction and conflict. Nayef Al-Rodhan concludes that within an increasingly globalised, interconnected and interdependent world, human dignity cannot be ensured globally and in a sustainable way through sole national means. A genuine global effort is required to meet the minimum criteria of human dignity globally. Areas such as conflict prevention, socio-economic justice, gender equality, protection of human rights, environmental protection require a holistic approach and a common action. In *What is Enlightenment?* One is responsible for this immaturity and dependence, if its cause is not a lack of intelligence or education, but a lack of determination and courage to think without the direction of another. In a paradoxical way, Kant supported in the same time enlightened despotism as a way of leading humanity towards its autonomy. He had conceived the process of history in his short treatise *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*. On one hand, enlightened despotism was to lead nations toward their liberation, and progress was thus inscribed in the scheme of history; on the other hand, liberation could only be acquired by a singular gesture, *Sapere Aude!* Hegel developed a complex theodicy in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which based its conception of history on dialectics: Hegel argued that history is a constant process of dialectic clash, with each thesis encountering an opposing idea or event antithesis. The clash of both was "superated" in the synthesis, a conjunction that conserved the contradiction between thesis and its antithesis while subsuming it. Hegel thought that reason accomplished itself, through this dialectical scheme, in History. Through labour, man transformed nature so he could recognize himself in it; he made it his "home. Roads, fields, fences, and all the modern infrastructure in which we live is the result of this spiritualization of nature. Hegel thus explained social progress as the result of the labour of reason in history. However, this dialectical reading of history involved, of course, contradiction, so history was also conceived of as constantly conflicting: Hegel theorized this in his famous dialectic of the lord and the bondsman. According to Hegel, One more word about giving instruction as to what the world ought to be. Philosophy in any case always comes on the scene too late to give it. When philosophy paints its gray in gray, then has a shape of life grown old. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk. Philosophy is always late, it is only an interpretation of what is rational in the real"and, according to Hegel, only what is recognized as rational is real. The Whig interpretation of history, as it was later called, associated with scholars of the Victorian and Edwardian eras in Britain, such as Henry Maine or Thomas Macaulay, gives an example of such influence, by looking at human history as progress from savagery and ignorance toward peace, prosperity, and science. However, it was quickly transposed from its original biological field to the social field, in "social Darwinism" theories. These nineteenth-century unilineal evolution theories claimed that societies start out in a primitive state and gradually become more civilised over time, and equated the culture and technology of Western civilisation with progress. Ernst Haeckel formulated his recapitulation theory in, which stated that "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny": Hence, a child goes through all the steps from primitive society to modern society. This was later discredited. Progress was not necessarily, however, positive. After the first world war, and even before Herbert Butterfield harshly criticized it, the Whig interpretation had gone out of style. The bloodletting of that conflict had indicted the whole notion of linear progress. *The End of History and the Last Man* by Francis Fukuyama proposed a similar notion of progress, positing that the worldwide adoption of liberal democracies as the single accredited political system and even modality of human consciousness would represent the "End of

History ". Unlike Maurice Godelier who interprets history as a process of transformation, Tim Ingold suggests that history is a movement of autopoiesis [17] A key component to making sense of all of this is to simply recognize that all these issues in social evolution merely serve to support the suggestion that how one considers the nature of history will impact the interpretation and conclusions drawn about history. The critical under-explored question is less about history as content and more about history as process. In Steven Pinker wrote a history of violence and humanity from an evolutionary perspective in which he shows that violence has declined statistically over time. His history of great men, of geniuses good and evil, sought to organize change in the advent of greatness. Most philosophers of history contend that the motive forces in history can best be described only with a wider lens than the one he used for his portraits. Danto, for example, wrote of the importance of the individual in history, but extended his definition to include social individuals, defined as "individuals we may provisionally characterize as containing individual human beings amongst their parts. Examples of social individuals might be social classes [Dray, Rainbow-Bridge Book Co. For example, to read about what is known today as the " Migrations Period ," consult the biography of Attila the Hun. Before he can remake his society, his society must make him. Some argue that geography see geographic determinism , economic systems see economic determinism , or culture see cultural determinism prescribe "the iron laws of history" that decide what is to happen. Others see history as a long line of acts and accidents, big and small, each playing out its consequences until that process gets interrupted by the next. It should be noted that even determinists do not rule that, from time to time, certain cataclysmic events occur to change course of history. Their main point is, however, that such events are rare and that even apparently large shocks like wars and revolutions often have no more than temporary effects on the evolution of the society. Karl Marx is, perhaps, the most famous of the exponents of economic determinism. For him social institutions like political system, religion and culture were merely by-products of the basic economic system see Base and superstructure. Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under given circumstances directly encountered and inherited from the past. Social progress and Progress history Theodicy claimed that history had a progressive direction leading to an eschatological end, given by a superior power. However, this transcendent teleological sense can be thought as immanent to human history itself. Hegel probably represents the epitome of teleological philosophy of history. Thinkers such as Nietzsche , Michel Foucault , Althusser , or Deleuze deny any teleological sense to history, claiming that it is best characterized by discontinuities, ruptures, and various time-scales, which the Annales School had demonstrated. Schools of thought influenced by Hegel also see history as progressive, but they saw, and see, progress as the outcome of a dialectic in which factors working in opposite directions are over time reconciled see above. History was best seen as directed by a *Zeitgeist* , and traces of the *Zeitgeist* could be seen by looking backward. Hegel believed that history was moving man toward " civilization ", and some also claim he thought that the Prussian state incarnated the " End of History ". In his *Lessons on the History of Philosophy*, he explains that each epochal philosophy is in a way the whole of philosophy; it is not a subdivision of the Whole but this Whole itself apprehended in a specific modality. Historical accounts of writing history[edit] Further information: Historiography A classic example of history being written by the victorsâ€”or more precisely, by the survivors [21] â€”would be the scarcity of unbiased information that has survived to the present about the Carthaginians.

Chapter 4 : R. G. Collingwood Idea of History

R.G. Collingwood: R.G. Collingwood, English historian and philosopher whose work provided a major 20th-century attempt to reconcile philosophy and history. Deeply influenced by his father, a painter and archaeologist who was a friend and biographer of John Ruskin, Collingwood was educated at home until he was

Biography[edit] Collingwood was born 22 February in Cartmel , Grange-over-Sands , in Lancashire , the son of the artist and archaeologist W. He was taught by the historian and archaeologist F. Haverfield , at the time Camden Professor of Ancient History. After several years of increasingly debilitating strokes Collingwood died at Coniston , Lancashire, on 9 January He was a practising Anglican throughout his life. Philosopher[edit] Philosophy of history[edit] Collingwood is widely noted for The Idea of History , which was collated from various sources soon after his death by a student, T. It came to be a major inspiration for philosophy of history in the English-speaking world and is extensively cited, leading to an ironic remark by commentator Louis Mink that Collingwood is coming to be "the best known neglected thinker of our time". He suggested that a historian must "reconstruct" history by using "historical imagination" to "re-enact" the thought processes of historical persons based on information and evidence from historical sources. Collingwood pointed out a fundamental difference between knowing things in the present or in the natural sciences and knowing history. To come to know things in the present or about things in the natural sciences, "real" things can be observed, as they are in existence or that have substance right now. Collingwood held following Croce that works of art are essentially expressions of emotion. For Collingwood, an important social role for artists is to clarify and articulate emotions from their community. Collingwood developed a position later known as aesthetic expressivism , a thesis first developed by Benedetto Croce. The essence of this conception is He was, during his time, a leading authority on Roman Britain: The family home was at Coniston in the Lake District and his father was a leading figure in the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological Society. However, recently, Grace Simpson, the daughter of the excavator F. It was finally published in by his student R. He also published two major archaeological works. The first, somewhat surprisingly for a philosopher was The Archaeology of Roman Britain, a handbook in sixteen chapters covering first the archaeological sites fortresses, towns and temples and portable antiquities inscriptions, coins, pottery and brooches. Mortimer Wheeler in a review, [11] remarked that "it seemed at first a trifle off beat that he should immerse himself in so much museum-like detail" but I felt sure that this was incidental to his primary mission to organise his own thinking". However, his most important work was his contribution to the first volume of the Oxford History of England, Roman Britain and the English Settlements, of which he wrote the major part, Nowell Myres adding the second smaller part on English settlements. The result was alluring and influential. It is a philosophy which, as Anthony Birley points out, [14] has been incorporated by English Heritage into the conditions for Scheduled Monuments Consent. Still, it has always been surprising that the proponents of the "new" archaeology in the s and the 70s have entirely ignored the work of Collingwood, the one major archaeologist who was also a major professional philosopher. He has been described as and early proponent of archaeological theory.

Chapter 5 : Collingwood's Aesthetics (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Robin George Collingwood, or R. G. Collingwood as he is more usually known, was Waynfleet Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy at Oxford University from to During his career Collingwood attempted to integrate and understand human experience and knowledge, and to bring together history and philosophy.

The implication is that those things are improperly so-called, that is, are commonly but wrongly called art. But in fact it is worse than this. Art proper is often found within the context of those other things; even particular works of art proper may at the same time be instances of those things. The task, then, is to distinguish the concept from those of many other competing related human activities, and to claim that it alone deserves to be called art. In fact, the theory of craft, along with the thesis that art is not craft, suffices to show that art proper is a distinct activity from the other three things, by showing that they are essentially crafts. A baker, for example, whips the egg whites in course of mixing the batter, for the eventual end of baking a cake. A carpenter, for example, assembles bits of wood according to a plan for say a table, and for the most part, the more exact the plan, the better. The point is not that works of art never display any of these features; the point is that some works involve none, without its detracting from their status as art. Therefore the essence of art cannot have to do with any features correctly treated by a theory of craft. A pure case might be the poet for whom the poem simply comes to mind, unbidden, without its being written down or even said aloud. There is no distinction to be drawn between planning and execution in such a case, and none between actions as means and actions as ends. If the poet had in mind something analogous to a blueprint for the poem, he would already have composed it. It might be tempting to think of the words as the raw material, the poem as the finished product. Eliot for example did not choose the words needed for *The Wasteland* and then proceed to arrange them into the poem. Collingwood simply leaves this point hanging, because it would require his own positive account of art as expression to explain it; that will come later. He also neglects the possibility that the raw material of the poet is simply the language as a whole. Finally, the distinction between form and matter as it applies to art is not the sort required by 5. That distinction requires that the self-same matter be capable of having different forms placed upon it; if we cannot identify the matter in the first place, then the distinction cannot get a grip. It bears repeating that the claim is not that no works of art have any craft-like features; it simply that any definition of art in terms of those features would exclude some unimpeachable works of art. Or rather, success in being craft is strictly immaterial to its being art; no craft-features make an object into a work of art. Collingwood is well aware that for example an opera requires a great deal of planning, technique, raw materials, and so on. But this is to assimilate works of art to mere means; Collingwood is quite serious in his denial of this. It is plainly a matter of skill, of technique, since one can envisage a successful outcome before undertaking it. So art cannot be representation. But the theory that it is is so venerable and influential that it demands separate attention. Not, however, because of Plato and Aristotle; Collingwood holds that despite popular opinion, they did not hold it! Collingwood advances a very liberal notion of representation, such that a great deal more artefacts than one would initially think could rightly qualify as representative. For the standard for fidelity is not resemblance, but that the feeling evoked by the artefact resembles that evoked by the original. Representation comes in three, overlapping degrees. The first is that of the ordinary photograph, or paintings and the like which attempt that sort of literalness. At the extreme, he may paint mere patterns of, for example, a dance, leaving out the dancers. Collingwood does not say what the exact difference is between representation and expression, but I assume that it depends first of all on whether or not the artist has a clear conception of what he is trying to represent; if he does, then his activity is craft, not art proper. As we will see below, this is not implausible because the artist, at least according to Collingwood, does not literally know the expressive content of his artwork in advance of expressing it. Nor is it explicable as Freudian neurosis, which assumes that every society employing magical practices is to that extent sick. Magic is the ritualized representation of useful emotion, not for the sake of catharsis, but for the practical value of the emotion. The war-dance, for example, instills courage by dint of drums and spears, and frightens the enemy should he catch a glimpse. Of course false beliefs may play a role, which the theory of magic-as-bad-science

seizes upon; the rain dancer may think he increases the probability of rain. The Freudian theory regards the representation as omnipotent wish-fulfilment and therefore fails to account for this latter effect, which indeed Collingwood supposes to be vital to any healthy society. Happily, our society, or our societies, are replete with magical phenomena. Religion, patriotism, sport, social customs such as dinner parties, weddings, funerals, dances, and so on all involve in one way or another ritualized actions that are undertaken at least partly for magical reasons. Of course magical phenomena are probably on the wane. Religious art—say a twelfth-century crucifix—may be aesthetically fine as well as induce a pious awe in the mind of the believer. But the fact that a suitably kitschy product may also serve the latter purpose shows that the magical effect can be aimed at independently from the aesthetic admittedly, Collingwood underestimates the problem of disentangling these purportedly different responses—for some people, only an aesthetically fine thing can generate strong pious emotions; perhaps Collingwood can allow that some art proper may be instrumentally necessary for the achievement of magical ends. Frequently, the particular form of this mistake is to think that an attitude towards the subject-matter embodied in a work is rightly taken as the object of purely aesthetic criticism. Most of literature and drama are actually amusement—not only for example Thackeray but most of Shakespeare are included. But remember that amusement and art proper can co-exist, i. Collingwood stresses—in “the rise of decadent amusement works, especially pornography but also for example the case of literature or film appealing to our love of imaginatively dwelling amongst the upper classes. Now all this is by the way; amusement is craft, not art. But the points he raises in this connection are important to his main subject, because a certain tradition wrongly identifies the success-conditions of arts of amusement as the standard of taste for art proper. Hume, for example, wrote as if the criterion for success in a work of art is the excitation of pleasure in suitably refined individuals. Art as Expression If art proper is not the stimulation of preconceived emotion, and not the representation of it either, then what precisely does it mean to say that, nevertheless, art is the expression of emotion? The key is to remember that art is not craft—Collingwood assumes that the reader will accept this, once it is pointed out—and hence the distinction between means and ends does not, strictly speaking, apply. Nor does the distinction between planning and execution. Instead, Collingwood writes in a passage that is often quoted, when a person expresses an emotion, he is conscious of a perturbation or excitement which he feels going on within him, but of whose nature he is ignorant. While in this state, all he can say about his emotion is: This is an activity which has something to do with the thing we call language: It also something to do with consciousness: It also has something to do with the way in which he feels the emotion. As unexpressed, he feels it in what we called a helpless and oppressed way; as expressed, he feels in a way from which this sense of oppression has vanished. His mind is somehow lightened and eased” The following three points emerge from this. To express is to become conscious of an emotion: Expression individualises; rather than describing the emotion in words whose signification is in principle general, the expression is a feature of the utterance itself although he does not credit him, this is an evident example where Collingwood follows Croce. Thus we cannot speak of the emotion embodied in a work of art as if it were the content which the art provides the form. It is the achievement of clarity, of focus of mind, which may indeed intensify what is felt rather than attenuate it though typically it does not. Betrayal can even occur that is wholly unconscious; one can blush without noticing it. The relation between expressive object and emotion is that of embodiment or realization, not of inference. Art as Imaginative Creation To conceive art as the craft of emotional stimulation or arousal—whether for the sake of amusement or magic—is to regard the material work of art as the intended means towards a preconceived end. The falsity of that conception—assuming that art is essentially the expression of emotion—shows that the work of art as not an artifact at all so artworks are not artifacts; Collingwood was aware that language sometimes suggests theoretical mistakes. Instead, the artistic process is a specialized type of making that Collingwood calls creation: Now take for example a lecture given on a scientific topic. The lecture as a created thing, and the lecture as a particular sound-event. The former may be complete in advance of, or indeed without ever, being uttered or written down: And so it is with works of art. The actual making of the tune is therefore alternatively called the making of an imaginary tune. This is a case of creation—Hence the making a tune is an instance of imaginative creation. The same applies to the making of a poem, or a picture, or any other work of art. What

precisely is the motivation for this move, the conception of the work of art as imagined or ideal object? Leave aside the special cases of music and poetry, which Richard Wollheim notes have the special feature that they can be written down see Wollheim Why not conceive painting, for example, as the creation of certain painted objects? This would be consistent with the thesis that painting is a not craft. The answer given by Collingwood is clear, but leads to trouble when we consider the question of interpretation. These phenomena are not literally features of the canvas, but they are in some sense features of the work. So Collingwood, in brief, includes within the work of art proper all that would normally be ascribed to the correct interpretation of the artwork. But there is no reason to accept this, any more we should include all the relational factsâ€”sowing, fertilization, watering and so onâ€”that contribute to a growing plant to the plant itself. On contrary, the position makes it impossible for two spectators to disagree on the interpretation of a work. Irrespective of the concern with the privacy of the experience, if they attribute different properties to the objectâ€”that is, they find different properties in their respective total imaginative experiencesâ€”they are simply concerned with different objects, and their verdicts are compatible. As a matter of speculation, Collingwood perhaps thought that aesthetically relevant propertiesâ€”expressive propertiesâ€”have to be intrinsic properties of the work of art; in that case, perhaps his conclusion does follow. But it is much more satisfactory to hold that what we are arguing over when we disagree over the expressive properties of a work of art is the same object. A Theory of Expressive Imagination Not a great deal hangs on that thesis, at any rate. A great deal more hangs on the thesis that art essentially is, or without prejudging the ideal view, exercises, the expressive imagination. The difference between the imagined lecture and the tune is that the content of the lecture is verbal and cognitive, and brings those departments of mind into play; whilst the tune, among other things, brings the emotional department of the mind into play. At the most basic level Collingwood distinguishes thinking from feeling. Thoughts can be true or false, justified or not, where *sensa* have no such duality: There is sense in which *sensa* can be said to be real or unreal, true or false for example in hallucination , but this not an intrinsic feature of *sensa* themselves; that distinction applies only to thoughts involving them. Thus for example every colour carries with it a certain emotional quality. Not that they are invariably experienced with their particular emotional charge; the charge is more like a disposition to be experienced a certain way, under certain circumstances. *Sensa* are occurrent phenomena, and therefore fleeting If I hear the bell striking the hour of four, the experience comprises many passing *sensa*, each no sooner generated than gone.

Chapter 6 : W. H. Walsh, R. G. Collingwood's Philosophy of History - PhilPapers

Remarks on Leo Strauss's Critique of Collingwood's Philosophy of History Sophie Marcotte
ChÃ©nard Collingwood, Idealism, Realism, and the Possibility of Historical Knowledge Timothy C. Lord
Reading The Idea of History through The Principles of Art: Collingwood on Communication and Emotions Parysa Clare Mostajir.

Collingwood was born in Cartmel Fell, Lancashire, at the southern tip of Windermere in Collingwood was taught at home until the age of thirteen when he went to preparatory school and the following year to Rugby School. Before his final examinations in he became a fellow of Pembroke College. On beginning his philosophical studies he came under the influence of the Oxford realists, especially E. Carritt and John Cook Wilson. Until around he was a professed realist; however, his realism was progressively undermined by his close engagement with continental philosophy, especially the work of Benedetto Croce and Giovanni Gentile. This was partly the result of his friendship with J. Smith, Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy from to At the same time he was engaged in serious archaeological work, from onwards spending his summers directing excavations of Roman sites in the north of England. Although he sometimes described his archaeology as a hobby, he became an authority on the history and archaeology of Roman Britain, conducting many excavations, writing hundreds of papers, and producing books still in use to this day, in particular his work on Roman inscriptions. In late he wrote a survey of the history of the ontological proof together with an analysis of the argument. In Collingwood wrote *Speculum Mentis*. This was a dialectic of the forms of experience: During this period he was also lecturing on ethics, Roman history, the philosophy of history and aesthetics: To add to his self-imposed burden of overwork, his abilities as a polymath able to read scholarly work in English, French, Spanish, Italian, German, Latin and Greek were in great demand from onwards in his capacity as a Delegate to the Clarendon Press. In April he suffered complications arising from chicken pox and began to suffer from high blood pressure. He was granted leave of absence by the university; following his return, in the Autumn of , he began writing an important new book, regarded by many as the pinnacle of his philosophical achievement â€” *An Essay on Philosophical Method* This had its origins in the methodological introduction to the lectures on moral philosophy he had been delivering annually over the preceding decade. It was a sustained investigation into the nature of philosophical reasoning through an examination of the distinctive character of philosophical concepts. Following publication of the *Essay*, he focused his philosophical energies on the philosophy of history and the philosophy of nature. The lectures he delivered at this time later formed the basis of the posthumously published *The Idea of History* and *The Idea of Nature* In Collingwood succeeded J. He delivered his inaugural lecture on *The Historical Imagination* in October of that year. These two lectures were later incorporated into *The Idea of History*. In he wrote *The Principles of Art*; whilst correcting the proofs he suffered a stroke, the first of many to come. From this time onwards he was aware that he was writing on borrowed time. His *An Autobiography* records his determination to put on record an account of the work he hoped to do but might not live to complete. During a recuperative voyage to the Dutch East Indies in â€”9 he wrote *An Essay on Metaphysics* and began work on what he regarded as his magnum opus, *The Principles of History* not published until On his return to Oxford he lectured on moral and political philosophy and worked at *The New Leviathan* which he saw as his contribution to the war effort. He wrote the book against a background of increasingly debilitating strokes. Collingwood died in Coniston in January ; he was nearly He is buried in Coniston churchyard in an unassuming grave between his parents and John Ruskin. He was succeeded in the Waynflete Chair in by Gilbert Ryle. Philosophy, according to Collingwood, is a second-order enquiry whose task is to offer a reflection on first-order forms of knowledge. The subject matter of philosophical analysis is thus the fundamental concepts and principles which govern different forms of investigation and define the subject matters of the first-order sciences. According to this doctrine, the concepts and principles with which philosophy is concerned allow for complete extensional overlap. Moral philosophers, for example, are concerned with the distinction between dutiful and expedient actions. The distinction between dutiful and expedient actions is not an empirical classification since actions which conform to the principle of utility could also be instances of the principle of duty, and moral

philosophers would want to distinguish between such principles even in circumstances where prioritising one principle over the other would make no difference to the action one has to perform. Aesthetic distinctions, like moral ones, are distinctions without a difference. Thus poetry and music may be jointly instantiated in a song but we may still want to distinguish between the lyric and the melody. Philosophical distinctions, in other words, are semantic distinctions to which there may not correspond any empirical difference. The task of the philosopher is precisely to distinguish concepts which coincide in their instances. Philosophical distinctions differ from empirical classifications because the coordinate species of an empirical genus, unlike those of a philosophical one, form mutually exclusive classes. Whilst the principle of duty and that of utility may be jointly instantiated in an action, no object can be both blue and red all over, both a cow and a goat. The mind-body distinction, according to Collingwood, is similar to the distinction between duty and utility; it is a semantic distinction between concepts which coincide in their instances. Philosophical distinctions, whether they are found in ethics, aesthetics or the philosophy of mind, are semantic distinctions without an empirical difference. This is why what philosophers do differs from what natural scientists do: It follows from this that philosophical concepts cannot be justified empirically precisely because an object which illustrates one concept could also illustrate another, even at the same level of generality. Whilst a geologist may explain and justify the distinction between sedimentary and crystalline rocks by pointing to specimens of these, such an option is not open to the moral philosopher who cannot justify the concept of duty by pointing to instances of dutiful actions because, given the overlap of classes, an action which illustrates the concept of duty could also illustrate that of utility. The justification for philosophical concepts lies in the fact that they enable us to make crucial distinctions, such as the one between duty and utility, music and poetry, actions and mere bodily movements. The justification of philosophical concepts is accordingly neither inductive nor deductive. It is not inductive because philosophical concepts need to be presupposed in order to make the relevant distinctions. It is not deductive because philosophical concepts do not possess the status of Cartesian first principles on which the edifice of knowledge is deductively built. They are rather more like Kantian categories that are presupposed and implicit in ordinary judgments. To justify a philosophical concept involves regressing from a claim to the conditions of its possibility in the manner of a transcendental argument. Philosophical justification is therefore inevitably in a way circular, since in a regressive argument, unlike a deductive one, the truth of the premises is not established independently of the conclusion. Rather, the entitlement to employ philosophical concepts lies in the fact that they ground our knowledge claims. The extension of a concept is the class of objects that it denotes. The intension of a concept is what it means. Collingwood argues that the intension of a concept is not reducible to its extension. As he puts it: His refusal to define concepts in purely extensional terms is crucial for his account of philosophical concepts because, as we have seen, philosophical distinctions are for him purely semantic in nature. Philosophical concepts do not carve out a segment of reality but rather provide a way of describing it: As we have seen, whilst an empirical concept may be justified extensionally with reference to the class of objects that it denotes, no such justification is available in the case of philosophical concepts. It is the task of philosophical analysis to make explicit principles which are implicit in the practices of first order sciences. Thus, for example, it is the task of a philosophy of history to reflect on the explanatory practices of historians and to tease out the fundamental assumptions that govern them. The fundamental assumption which governs history, understood as a science of the mind, is the view that what occurs is an expression of rational rather than causal processes and that historical explanations must take the form of rational reconstructions rather than inductive generalisations. They are not metaphysical propositions because they do not assert the existence of metaphysical kinds mind and matter but of the methodological assumptions that govern the study of mind and nature. These propositions are, as Collingwood puts it, philosophical propositions which define the domains of enquiry or subject matters of the science of history and nature. Philosophical propositions, unlike metaphysical propositions, make an epistemological claim, rather than an ontological one. They assert that mind exists for the historian and that matter exists for the natural scientist. Further, philosophical propositions cannot be accommodated within a Humean epistemology since they are neither about relations of ideas nor about matters of fact. They are not propositions about matters of fact because they are not empirically verifiable. They are not propositions about relations of ideas

because they are not self-evidently true analytical propositions. Yet although philosophical propositions cannot be accommodated within Humean epistemology, accepting them does not entail a commitment to the metaphysics which Hume wanted to reject. As already mentioned, philosophical propositions are not presented as necessary existential claims but as methodologically necessary ones. Philosophical problems arise because there are certain distinctions which do not map onto the empirical classification of reality. The distinction between mind and matter, as we have seen, is one such distinction, *i.* They arise because of our implicit commitment to two concepts, that of mind and matter, which entail a radically different way of looking at the world and of explaining what occurs in it. Some contemporary philosophers of mind then try to explain the persistence of the mind-body problem by claiming that there are two radically different modes of access to the mind and the body and, given the ineradicability of these two modes of access, we will continue to have two radically different descriptions of reality. Admittedly, this position bears some surface similarities to that defended by Collingwood, but it is in fact very different. It is rather due to the fact that we mean very different things when we speak about mental phenomena than when we speak about physical ones. As long as we will make distinctions to which there correspond no empirical differences there will be a role for philosophical analysis. The role of philosophy is to discern different senses even when there is only one referent. Thus moral philosophers distinguish between the principles of duty and that of utility even when there is no difference in the actions one has to perform, and philosophers of mind distinguish between the human being and the person, even if a person and a human being are in another important sense not two different things. This is not the case with Collingwood who thought that, in order to be possible, metaphysics should undergo an epistemological reform and be transformed from an ontological enquiry to an enquiry into the heuristic principles which enable us to cognize reality. Understood as an ontological enquiry or as the study of pure being, metaphysics is not a possible science because it lacks a subject matter of its own. According to Collingwood, a science in the Latin sense of the word *scientia* must have a method and subject matter of its own. Thus, for example, the study of mind history and the study of matter natural science are sciences in this sense of the term for they approach reality with a particular set of questions and with a particular set of presuppositions. The historian asks after the motives which inform actions because the goal of the historian is to understand. The natural scientist enquires after constant conjunctions because the goal of the natural scientist is to predict. In order for either form of enquiry to be possible, historians and natural scientists must make different presuppositions about the nature of reality. Historians must assume that the real is rational for otherwise they could not explain what occurs as an expression of rational processes. By contrast, natural scientists must presuppose that nature is uniform, or they would be unable to formulate the inductive generalisations on which their predictions are based. Metaphysics, traditionally understood as an ontological enquiry, possesses no subject matter of its own since it undertakes to carry out a study of what exists without asking any specific questions and making any presuppositions. If therefore metaphysics is to be possible at all, it must be subjected to an epistemological reform; it must take the form not of ontology or a study of pure being, but of a study of the presuppositions that underlie different forms of enquiry. This is what Collingwood calls sense I of the term cause. When we move from sense I to sense III we effectively remove a teleological framework of explanation. The main difference between sense II and sense III of the term is that whereas in the practical sciences of nature the cause of an event is an antecedent state of affairs considered from the point of view of an interest in controlling and manipulating the natural environment, in the theoretical sciences of nature the causes of natural events are viewed independently of any impact that agents can have on the natural environment:

Philosophy, Robin George Collingwood, R.G. Collingwood, philosophy of history, History of Philosophy R.G. Collingwood and Leo S. Klejn on the Archaeologist and the Detective It is argued that Klejn's comparison of archaeology to forensic science is more accurate than Collingwood's comparison, of history and forensic science.

Both an acknowledged authority on the archaeology of Roman Britain and a renowned philosopher of history, Collingwood is remembered for his philosophical system in which he analyzed the relationships between art, religion, science, history, and philosophy. The first of these, the basic tenet of his historical theory, states that the historian can only achieve knowledge by recreating prior acts of thought. Another of his central ideas is the convertibility of history and philosophy, a concept which implies that a thorough study of either discipline will ultimately lead to the same end. According to this theory, every form of science which includes historical inquiry seeks to achieve truth by posing and then answering questions. This complex of questions, however, must finally rest upon a system of presuppositions—accepted absolutes that can be deemed neither true nor false. His father was a painter and archaeologist who passed his interest in Roman archaeology on to his son. Raised in a relatively poor family with three sisters, Collingwood was educated at home under the tutelage of his father and mother until the age of thirteen. He spent five years at Rugby beginning in 1891, assisted financially by a wealthy family friend. Although he disliked the school, he continued there and later matriculated at University College, Oxford. He began working on his Religion and Philosophy at this time, and served as a tutor until the outbreak of World War I. During the hostilities he joined the Admiralty Intelligence Division of the British Armed Forces, employing his considerable knowledge of foreign languages. After the war Collingwood returned to writing and teaching as a professor-lecturer at Pembroke College between 1919 and 1921 and later at Oxford until 1925. During this period he developed his mature philosophical system, which he constantly revised throughout his career. In 1923 he suffered a stroke that forced him to take an extended leave of absence from teaching. In the interim he continued to focus attention on his writing, and later resumed teaching. In 1926 Collingwood was named Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical History and in 1927 received an honorary doctorate from St. Andrews. Continued strokes devastated his health over the course of the decade, however, forcing him to resign his post in 1930, and eventually leading to his death on January 9, 1937. Major Works In one of his earliest works, Religion and Philosophy, Collingwood defined many of the problems that would characterize his philosophical career. In it, he stated that in order to understand the nature of knowledge the human mind must be examined historically rather than psychologically and that history and philosophy were identical disciplines, an idea that he later retracted, although he continued to acknowledge deep affinities between these two fields of study. By 1925 he had formulated his Theory of Presuppositions—outlined, he later noted, in a destroyed manuscript of 1919, but not published until 1954 in An Essay on Metaphysics—and realized his goal of developing a philosophical system. The result was his Speculum Mentis, in which Collingwood delineated five types of experience and their guiding principles. These five—ranging from those that rely on imagination to those that most closely approach concrete truth—were experiences relating to art, religion, science, history, and philosophy. Thus, art involves an imaginative experience guided by a perception of beauty, while philosophy renders truth through self-knowledge and the awareness of the limitations of the other four forms of experience. In his later works, Collingwood refined, reevaluated, and in some cases rescinded these evaluations. In Faith and Reason he dropped his former idea that religion was a symbolic form of experience reliant upon imagination and inferior to philosophy. This elevation of religious and historical experience led Collingwood to expand his definition of philosophy in An Essay on Philosophical Method, calling it not only an awareness of the limitations of natural science, religion, and art, but also a source of true knowledge, both categorical and universal, achieved through "critical reflection" on these other disciplines. In the field of aesthetics Collingwood had adopted a language-based theory of art by the late 1920s, a position which led him to view artistic creation as a phenomenon of expression as well as one of imagination. He documented this revised conception in The Principles of Art. In The New Leviathan; or Man, Society, Civilization and Barbarism, the last book he published during his lifetime, Collingwood discarded many of his doctrines of an

earlier period and stated the precepts of his ethical and political theories. After his death, Collingwood was labeled a neo-idealist and his philosophy described as a "systematic synthesis of British empiricism and post-Kantian idealism.

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Collingwood's philosophy of history was a consistent fight against the influence of natural science on the study of history, his aim being to free the latter of being, as he used to call it, 'under pupillage' of the former.

Chapter 9 : Robin George Collingwood (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

*R. G. Collingwood () was primarily a general philosopher and philosopher of history, and considered his work in aesthetics "the principal work being his *The Principles of Art*" as secondary. But the work in aesthetics has enjoyed a persistent readership that continues into the present.*