

7. REALIST HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

a. Freethought, Religion and Education

Following the Freethought controversies of 1949 and 1950, there were a series of discussions in 1951 on the nature of Freethought, with Anderson's own contribution leaving no doubt as to the nature of his views.¹ Speaking on 'James Joyce', Anderson argued that independent thought could only be achieved in reaction to illusion, particularly when the illusory ideas are present in the artist or thinker himself. Anderson suggested that the artist such as Joyce may have to be an individualist in making a stand against what he may have even supported in the past and in like manner Anderson set himself squarely against the 'Freethinkers'.

It is in the name of freedom that these people embrace their servitude. The illusion of freedom is one of their greatest illusions. Joyce contrasts the kind of freedom that can be won by artistic consciousness with the merely negative notion of disbelief: he sets the negative notion of freedom as being untrammelled in doing this or that against the positive freedom of creativeness.²

Following papers by Maze, Armstrong and Baker, Anderson concluded the discussion series with a paper on 'Freethought' where he criticised Baker's claim that Freethought was simply a 'way of life', arguing that "Freethinking is not a question of adherence to the activities of a movement, but of a close study of theory and ideas, the aim of which is to expose the superstitious characteristics of other movements including the libertarian movement."³ Following these discussions, the Freethought Society was dissolved and in 1951 the Libertarian Society was formed by ex-Freethinkers and Anderson was not involved with this new society in any way. Hence the Freethought Society, which was originally a movement or vehicle for the expression of Anderson's 'freethinking' ideas, became, with the development of independent views among other freethinkers, an organisation or 'movement' whose life was independent of Anderson.⁴

Following the dissolution of the Freethought Society, Anderson's final years were not spent in quiet retirement and on several occasions he was again involved in

¹ See Baker Anderson's Social Philosophy p 132-6; McCallum op cit pp 71 -75; Ivison, D.J. 'Anderson as a Liberator' Dialectic 1987 pp 7 - 10

² Anderson, J. 'James Joyce' Honi Soit XXIII, 13/9/1951

³ Anderson quoted in McCallum op cit p 75

⁴ For the subsequent career of the 'Libertarian Society' see Docker, J. 'Sydney Intellectual History and Sydney Libertarianism' Australian Journal of Politics and History Vol. VII, 1, 1976, pp 40 - 47

public controversy. In particular, he was concerned with the issue of academic autonomy with the Orr case and the battle against the inroads of religious and commercial subjectivity into the university. In July 1951, Anderson launched the first of several attacks against the spread of religion in the university. In his address 'The University and Religion', Anderson argued that the demand for more religion in the university was a demand for the restriction of inquiry, although he did not merely oppose Christianity, but presented an intellectual critique of it. Anderson argued that the whole direction of modern thought and philosophy and even Protestantism itself, was away from theism and towards atheism. Agreeing with Bosanquet, Anderson argued that the content of the religious notion of 'the kingdom of God' could be understood in human terms as community or co-operation and that even Bosanquet's notion of human communication as 'manifestations of spirit' could be understood in a secular fashion. However Anderson argued that his own views can be regarded as more atheistic than Bosanquet's, for Anderson did not believe, as Bosanquet did, in "...an ultimate unity, a total community of which all particular communities are manifestations."¹ Anderson also agreed with Croce's doctrine of 'immanentism', not as the view that human activities are somehow governed from 'above', but as the view that if we seek the principles of things, we find them in things themselves.² However the more important issue for Anderson was that study was essential to the operation of a university and could not be subordinated to any other tradition or movement and especially not religion. "Study was the development of critical thinking; the recognition of types of problems and types of solutions (philosophically speaking, of 'categories'), and that development took place through contact with the great tradition of human learning, not through adherence to anything outside that tradition."³ In a follow-up article, Anderson stressed that he did not wish merely to make a rejoinder, but to open up more general theoretical questions.⁴ Anderson again returned to Croce's doctrine of 'immanentism' which he argued was the view that we can find principles within the observed material rather than having such principles imposed on that material. However Anderson's main concern was to defend the objectivity of logic in assessing any claims as to God's existence and of the independence of education in the development of a critical apparatus for students to use in assessing questions and beliefs.

Education takes place by one mind's learning from another how to work upon its own experience; how to build up a critical apparatus. The student of philosophy acquires this apparatus by getting in touch with the general philosophical tradition, and becoming acquainted

1 Anderson, J. 'The University and Religion' Honi Soit XXIII, 15, July 12, 1951, p 4.

2 loc cit

3 loc cit

4 Anderson, J. 'Logic and Dogma' Honi Soit XXIII, 18, Aug. 2, 1951, p 3.

with the main types of philosophical doctrine; but the acquisition depends also on his testing these in his own thinking and experience.¹

Further in a precursor to his later views, Anderson was particularly concerned to defend classicism in philosophy and education. "My own view is that works and cultures are classical in so far as they exhibit and contribute to objectivity of judgement, the interest in things as they are as contrasted with what they may be used for - that the classical view is thus opposed to the utilitarian outlook."²

Anderson returned to the question of religion and the university ten years later in his address 'Academic Autonomy and Religion' where he argued that the university was being less and less recognised as an independent and autonomous institution and that to oppose this and to avoid eclecticism in the university, there is the need for the development of a 'school' of philosophy for students to be presented with a strong central position which exposes the student to a body of learning.³ Further the fundamental opposition between religion and philosophy is that religion takes a 'personal' view of reality while philosophy takes an 'impersonal' view for "Philosophy is concerned to discover the forms of connection between things" while religion "...is a question of knowing what person you have to give your faith to".⁴ The movement in modern thought, he again re-iterated, has been anti-religious, even though it is less classical than it previously was. In a concise statement of his view of the history of philosophy, Anderson argued that it is only empiricism which can make the history of philosophy intelligible.

It is only when a person has a basic grasp of philosophical truths that he can understand the stream of human thought with its rationalism, empiricism, idealism, etc. The only defensible philosophic position (which is actually empiricism, though including realism) is the one which 'makes sense' of the history of philosophy, which explains the passage from one philosophic stage to another.⁵

Anderson's final defence of the university against religion came in a response to an attack on him by the Anglican Archbishop Dr. Gough, although again Anderson was not interested merely in rebuttal, but in the development of a theoretical consideration of the issues. Anderson was particularly critical of the unsoundness of the *rationalist* position on religion which is one

1 [loc cit](#)

2 [loc cit](#)

3 Anderson, J. 'Academic Autonomy and Religion' [Honi Soit](#) XXXIII, 17, July 27, 1961, p 4.

4 [loc cit](#)

5 [loc cit](#)

... which asserts a 'first necessary being' which is 'the cause of all other necessary and contingent beings', though no one thing could possibly have a *formal* connection with all other things. Such 'explanations of everything' could provide us only with empty phrases, not real connections which can be found only under *empirical* forms. It is as empirical connections that such relationships as implication, genus and species, cause and effect, must be understood; it is in consideration of forms of continuity and commensurability among things that any doctrine of procedures of inquiry can be opened up.¹

Philosophy then, is concerned with problems of method as a theory of types of problems and solutions and of logic as the integration of matters for investigation. Empiricism is, he concluded, "...the doctrine of ways in which situations stand towards situations (with no question of any reality either higher or lower than that of situations), sets out the procedures, the experimental procedures, by which investigations can be carried on; rationalism sets out *imaginary* connections, *pretended* ways of breaking through the discontinuities we set up by postulating 'principles' of a higher order than the situations we enter into."² Anderson argued that this empirical methodology was especially relevant in ethics and drawing on the work of Cudsworth, he argued that even if every good were commanded by God, its goodness would be its own and not reside in it being commanded by God. Hence God's commandments are irrelevant to something being good and any positive ethical theory has no need for any sanction or 'sanctioning figure' outside the field of ethics.³ The encroachment of clericalism in the university then will "...occasion the steepest drop in standards of academic work, that increased attention to religion will be seriously damaging to the study of ethics and increased attention to theology equally so to the study of logic and general philosophy, and that these are particularly *pressing* dangers now to what is left of the academic outlook".⁴

However Anderson recognised that the university was not merely being threatened by religious interference, but also, and perhaps more insidiously, by commercial and technological interests.⁵ Although Anderson was vocal in his defence of academic

1 Anderson, J. 'Religion and the University' The Australian Highway XLII, 3, Nov. 1961 p 52 (his emphasis). See also Walker, R. 'Public Controversies and Academic Freedom' in Dialectic 1987 pp 20 - 21

2 ibid p 53 (his emphasis)

3 loc cit

4 ibid p 54 (his emphasis)

5 For a full exposition of Anderson's practice of and views on education see Partridge, P.H. 'Anderson as Educator' The Australian Highway Sept. 1958 pp 49 - 52; Mackie, J.

freedom in relation to the Orr case, his views on this issue were not expressed in a particularly theoretical way.¹ The full exposition of his theoretical views on the university are to be found in his 1959 address 'The Place of the Academic in Modern Society' where he argued that universities only exhibit intellectual force and uphold culture through the operation of a vigorous operation to officialism and legalism. In particular, the academic as a social critic, in attacking the linked notions of welfare, progress and equality, is also attacking the false conception of 'universal educability' which in its process of 'levelling down' is "... destroying intellectual distinction and thus destroying education. It is only as *standing for* distinction (the distinction in particular of what is academic from what is not) that the academic can have any place in society; any social role."² The place of paid trainers, that 'mass of conventionalists who have much more notion of personal position than of objective thinking', within the university, is not the place for academics and on a pluralist interpretation of the university, the 'academic', during a period of cultural decline, finds his place in society to be 'nowhere'.³

But we have to take a pluralist view of the university as well of society in general and to that, within any so-called academic institution, there are non-academic and anti-academic activities - that what is academic (for it is a question of movements and traditions, and not of 'individuals') has to fight for survival against pseudo-academic 'philistinism' as well as against the incult social mass, that the struggle of culture against 'bourgeois society' exists also on the campus. ...In view of all this it could be said (although critical voices are raised here and there) that the place of the academic in modern society is nowhere.⁴

However Anderson's most developed view of education and the university was presented in his 1960 paper 'Classicism', where he contrasted the extrinsic or utilitarian conception of education as that which conceives of education in terms of its relationships to other things, with the intrinsic or classical conception of education which conceives of education in terms of its own character as the development of critical thinking.⁵ This intrinsic conception of education is the search for laws - the study of the ways of workings of actual things - which has *no*

'Anderson's Theory of Education' The Australian Highway Sept. 1958 pp 61 - 64; Doniela, W. V. 'Anderson's Theory of Education' Dialectic 1987 pp 63 - 77.

1 See Anderson, J. 'Anderson on Orr' Honi Soit XXIX, April 1957; 'The Orr Case and Academic Freedom' The Observer 10, June 28, 1958, p 293. See also Walker op cit pp 18 - 20.

2 Anderson Education and Inquiry p 221 (his emphasis)

3 loc cit

4 ibid p 216

5 Anderson Studies in Empirical Philosophy p 189

reference to finding things of practical value.¹ Through the influence of what he termed the growing 'industrialisation' of educational institutions, Anderson recognised the decline of the classical conception of education in the face of government 'reforms' and utilitarian demands of 'relevance'. Hence through the direction of students to industry and through the application of techniques of teaching, educational institutions are themselves becoming increasingly technological, "...overcoming 'wastage', learning how to turn out the maximum number of technicians - and losing scholarship in the process".² In a forceful passage which captures the mood of his classical concept of education, Anderson clearly expressed his view of the opposition between the classical and utilitarian conceptions of education.

The conception of education as an industry, then, with its raw materials, machines, machine-minders and turned out goods, is opposed to the conception of it as conversion, a turning round of the mind, or, as Arnold has it in his definition of culture, the turning of "a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits". It is true that Arnold himself is still somewhat bemused by the stock notion of 'the common good', but, at least, ...he allows that the "mass of mankind will never have any ardent zeal for seeing things as they are", and that men will be content for the most part to rest their practice on very inadequate ideas. "For", as he puts it even more forcibly on an earlier page, "what is at present the bane of criticism in this country? It is that practical considerations cling to it and stifle it. It subserves interests not its own. Our organs of criticism are organs of men and parties with practical ends to serve, and with them those practical ends are the first thing and the play of the mind the second; so much play of the mind as is compatible with the prosecution of those practical ends is all that is wanted"³

This classical conception of education is therefore opposed to the utilitarian demand that inquiry and research must be conducted with its 'practical application and relevance' foremost in our mind. The purpose of education in its proper sense then, is its critical examination of 'our stock notions and habits' and for the university conceived as an independent and intellectual institution, this is achieved by the study of the classics - 'the best of what has been thought or said'. Anderson's own teaching activities continued up to his retirement in 1958, although on a reduced

1 loc cit

2 ibid p 190

3 ibid p 191

level of activity when contrasted with his earlier years.¹ Following his retirement, Anderson continued his philosophical work writing several reviews as well as his penultimate logical essays 'Relational Arguments' and 'Empiricism and Logic'.²

b. Mind, Society and Power

During this period from 1952 to 1962, there was a marked development in Anderson's psychological, social and political theories in terms of his emphasis on the notion of *form*. Anderson's mature psychological theory was articulated in his 1952 address 'The Freudian Revolution' where he defended the 'revolutionary' character of Freudianism as a revaluation of ideas rather than a mere alteration of externals.³ Anderson argued that the revolutionary character of Freud's theories lay in its naturalistic or objective treatment of mind as conative, understood as a set of urges or drives.⁴ Although the common treatment of Freud's theories is in terms of an analytic or associative method, Anderson argued that such a method is more intelligible when understood as the work of active interests. "It is in terms of activity that the notion of disguise or substitution becomes intelligible; we are to think of a mental force as seeking outlet, encountering barriers on its path, spreading sideways along associative lines, and then finding a way out in the general direction of its original pressure."⁵ Anderson argued that the classical form of psycho-analysis as the investigation of mental forces in terms of their objects had proved particularly fruitful, although the notion of 'analysis' would be "...pointless without the connected notion of the synthetic force of mental activity".⁶ Anderson continued his realistic treatment of Freudian psycho-analysis in the following year in his paper 'Psychological Moralism' where he examined the relationship of mind to 'values'. Anderson argued that if 'values' are to have any content or positive character, then they must be studied by the same methods and in the same situations as anything else.⁷ Hence the treatment of good things as a species of mental activities will allow psychology to assist ethical science in its formulation of general

¹ Although Anderson's teaching duties continued up to his retirement, there are only three sets of lectures held in the Anderson archives; his 1955 lectures on 'Criticism' and his lectures on 'Greek Theories of Education'.

² See his reviews of Acton's 'The Illusion of the Epoch', Croce's 'My Philosophy and Other Essays', Caponigri's 'Time and Idea', Selver's 'Orage and The New Age Circle' and Bronowski and Mazlish's 'The Western Intellectual Tradition' as well as his address 'Classicism', all discussed below.

³ Anderson Studies in Empirical Philosophy p 359. For a full discussion of Anderson's theory of psychology see O'Neil, W.M. 'Some Notes on Anderson's Psychology' in The Australian Highway Sept. 1958 pp 69 - 71; Maze, J.R. 'John Anderson: Implications of his Philosophic Views for Psychology' in Dialectic 1987 pp 50 - 59; O'Neil, W.M. 'Psychology: Another View' in Dialectic 1987 pp 60 - 62.

⁴ ibid p 360

⁵ loc cit

⁶ loc cit

⁷ ibid p 365

laws of mental processes and by the demonstration of the way in which mental processes interact with good activities, such assistance being possible only if ethics is an independent study in its own right.¹ However the importance of the Freudian theory lay in its emphasis on continuity and of the inter-relatedness of mind to other aspects of its environment. "The importance of the Freudian theory of the 'unconscious' lay not just in its dispelling of formal confusions but in its indication of a concrete, continuing thing with its own characters, no matter how much or how little it might know or be known at any given time; and one condition of the working out of this theory, of the study of the transactions between the continuing mind and its surroundings, was the recognition of its complexity, of its *internal* transactions (including conflict) continuous with its external transactions."² Anderson rejected the Freudian division of mind into id, ego and super ego as individualistic and atomistic, with the important ethical conclusion being the participation of the individual in social activities which are continuous amongst various lives or 'forms of activity'. "The main point is that a person's development of moral characters and his recognition of them depend alike on his coming to participate in continuing 'ways of life', *forms* of activity, which do not depend on him either for their existence or for their character."³ The understanding of such 'ways of life' as passing continuously between people sheds light on psychology for "...the operations of a mind are strikingly illuminated by a knowledge of the 'ways of life' among which it exists and develops. ...The question is of participation, of the ways in which things and persons *belong together* in concrete forms of activity or ways of living".⁴ Anderson's rejection of the individualistic conception of mind and his emphasis on the formal aspect of psychological life was clearly evidenced in his treatment of religion and punishment as examples of social phenomena which cannot be accounted for in terms of the operation of the infantile mind as the Freudian's believed, but "...as features of the life in which that mind is embedded, help to determine the character of its interchanges with its surroundings or exhibit *forms* of such interchange."⁵ In particular it is only in terms of the social theory of religion, that its history can be understood as the development of the *rites* of a certain social activity into the *symbols* of a continuing, although different, social organisation.⁶ Similarly Anderson argued that punishment is ill-conceived as the mere infliction of pain, with its true importance being "...a certain disfranchisement or curtailment of rights, a loss, greater or less, temporary or permanent, of the privileges of *participation*".⁷

1 ibid p 366

2 ibid p 369 (his emphasis)

3 ibid p 370 (my emphasis)

4 loc cit (his emphasis)

5 loc cit (his emphasis)

6 loc cit (his emphasis)

7 ibid p 371 (my emphasis)

The importance of the notion of *form* was also evidenced in Anderson's social theory where in his 1960 paper 'Orage and the *New Age* Circle', he argued that "...just as what gave its cultural character to 'the socialist movement' was Socialism as a *form* of social criticism and not as an object of social advocacy, so the positive content of the doctrine of the Guilds was the place of craft in industry or, more generally, of 'the producer' in society; it rested on a view of history, a general standpoint of cultural criticism."¹ The importance of Socialism then lay in it being a *form* of criticism and this notion of form also appeared in his discussion of politics where drawing on de Tocqueville, he argued that "...democracies are not interested in questions of *form* (it is only custodians of traditions that would be so) - their outlook, in other words is materialistic'.² The importance of the continued existence of such traditions was emphasised in his 1952 article 'Democratic Illusions', where Anderson stressed the importance of cultural traditions, and particularly the academic tradition, for the existence of civilised society.

Without a variety of cultural including political and economic, traditions there can be no civilised life, but the maintenance of that variety is impossible unless each tradition has its special body of custodians with their special privileges - as is illustrated in academic custodianship, at least till recently, of the educational tradition. This is what is attacked by egalitarianism, the doctrine of the rejection of privilege, of the breaking down, supposedly in the interest of the 'under-privileged', of social distinctions. And it is not hard to see that the tendency of such social levelling, as it actually occurs, is downwards - is towards a lowering of the general level of social life.³

The extension of these egalitarian and progressivist doctrines interferes with the operation of democratic political life where "...as against a polity, the condition of which is non-interference, a certain balance, among different ways of living, we have increasing interference not only with the rights of institutions but with the rights of individuals".⁴ Anderson's opposition to such egalitarian and progressivist doctrines was clearly expressed when he argued that, "There is, at any rate, in the current conflict no field in which cultural decline can be halted except by people who are not afraid to attack progressivist and egalitarian dogma and to uphold privilege."⁵ Further in his 1952 paper 'Empiricism and Logic', Anderson rejected the Marxist notion of 'social revolution' as the common measure of terrestrial events, a

1 Anderson Art and Reality p 242 (my emphasis)

2 Anderson Studies in Empiric; I Philosophy p 187 (his emphasis)

3 Anderson, J. 'Democratic Illusions' Hermes, New Issue, 54, 1, 1952 p 17

4 loc cit

5 ibid p 18

role which could " ...only be filled by something *formal* ".¹ In this article, Anderson now denied his earlier contention in 'Marxist Philosophy' that the Realist philosopher would "...see his intellectual levelling as an integral part of social levelling", arguing that the denial of different levels of existence "...has no connection whatever with being opposed to social privileges and distinctions".² Recurring to his earlier statement in 'The Freudian Revolution' that the only true revolution is a 'revolution in ideas', he argued that such a 'revolution' is

...what the work of intellectual producer ...resides in; not 'social levelling' or any other 'practical' undertaking but simply making discoveries - rejecting conventional or customary associations ...and being concerned simply with following an intellectual tradition within an intellectual institution. It is the custody of such traditions and institutions that requires privileges or 'charters', and the work of egalitarianism in breaking these down is one of the major causes of injury to intellectual activity in our present period. It is true, of course, that social equality is a mirage, but devotion to it has still much to contribute to the destruction of culture. Culture, on the other hand, is concerned with the maintaining of boundaries, with opposition to levelling, to the treatment of everyone as of the same standing in any cultural field, and, in the intellectual field particularly, with the search for what is the case as opposed to what can be secured, with the discovery of the laws according to which society works as against *ignoring* such laws and proposing to make society go according to personal decisions.³

The 'ethic of the producers', which Anderson had earlier taken to be characteristic of the working class, he now argued was untypical of the workers and such *disinterested* activity was even rare within intellectual institutions.⁴ In particular, modern scientists, "...are not concerned with *form*, or, in substituting for questions of *form* questions of technical procedures or devices, they are really giving to the material or subject-matter of their science functions it is unable to carry out, they are using it to set aside the exact studies that can be made of formal questions and that can bring out issues would otherwise be missed."⁵

1 Anderson Studies in Empiric: I Philosophy p 185 - 6 (his emphasis)

2 ibid p 186

3 ibid p 186 - 7 (his emphasis)

4 ibid p 187

5 loc cit (my emphasis)

The relation of politics to ethics was the subject of Anderson's 1954 review of Croce's Politics and Morals where he argued that Croce's distinction between politics and ethics can only be supported in terms of an empiricist treatment of them as qualitatively distinct and not, as Croce held, as different aspects of the 'liberal spirit'. "It would be some justification of Croce's 'ethico-political' view if it were found that (as I believe to be the case) a much more illuminating and systematic account can be given of 'States' in the broad sense (distributions of powers, with constant re-distribution, among social interests or ways of life) in terms of a positive ethics than in any other terms; but this would not justify his conception of a single 'liberal spirit' which comprehends all human phenomena..."¹ Anderson argued that political and moral action can be distinguished as being governed by the opposing principles of immoralism and moralism, although he denied Croce's definition of politics in terms of utility for such a definition would leave politics indistinguishable to economics, as both would in some measure be a theory of demands.² Anderson also supported Croce's view of the crudity of certain political divisions such as monarchy, democracy and aristocracy and of the unending conflict between Church and State for neither can succeed in supplanting the other.³ The distinction between politics and morals then will be in terms of *qualitatively* different activities. "There will be ethics, then, if certain activities can be empirically described as good or bad, and there will be politics (political theory) if there is empirically found to be a certain distribution of powers (with particular *mechanisms* of that distribution) among these and other types of activities."⁴ Anderson's mature psychological, social and political theories were therefore characterised in terms of the notion of form and although he did not specify a precise meaning for this term, it was to become the central notion in his systematic and unified conception of philosophy.

c. History as the Story of Liberty

During the nineteen fifties Anderson wrote extensively on the history of ideas and the philosophy of history and although these articles were not included in Studies in Empirical Philosophy and have not been reprinted since, these historical writings have not been discussed in any detail and this neglect is surprising when one considers the importance that these articles have for a thematic account of Anderson's philosophy. As early as 1932, Anderson had argued that history must be thematic when he argued that a good historical novel "...will be good mainly as history (as a structural presentation of a certain social complication); though even here it artistic goodness will not depend on the fact that all the incidents actually

1 Anderson, J. 'Politics and Morals' A.J.P., XXXII, 3, Dec. 1954 p 218 (his emphasis)

2 ibid p 216

3 ibid p 219 - 20

4 ibid p 218 (his emphasis)

happened, but on its *working-out of a human theme*." ¹ Further in 1939 Anderson argued that "...the working out of a social theme was *history*" ² and in his 1942 article 'Emperor and Galilean' he praised Croce for having an artistic approach to history where "...history is the story of liberty, and on this view all the events related will assume what significance they have in the light of that conception and be built up around it". ³ In several ethical articles written from 1942 onwards, Anderson supported Croce's conception of history as the story of liberty and in his 1954 review of Croce's Politics and Morals, he reinforced his earlier support of Croce. ⁴ "If, then, we can still take liberty as the subject of history, this will be because in terms of it (or its vicissitudes) alone is any continuous narrative possible..." ⁵ Such a doctrine is 'immanentism' or 'humanistic idealism', where the liberal or ethical spirit has its own ways of working and is superior to authoritarianism because 'immanentism' can justify authoritarianism and make it a part of itself by transcending it. ⁶ However Anderson argued that Croce's distinction between liberalism and authoritarianism is only possible in terms of the recognition of objective truth, although Croce did not make this advance but lapsed into subjectivism and relativism. ⁷ Anderson argued that it is possible to maintain against Croce's 'optimistic' view of history, a 'historical pessimism' - "...there is nothing in the existence of a period or region of 'darkness' itself to show that *from it*, regeneration must emerge" - a pessimism which would not be a directive to action and which recognises that the ethical or liberal spirit is something that has its own ways of working. ⁸ "Thus his (Croce's) 'immanentism' permits of such recognition of independent ethical and political phenomena as the ordinary type of dualistic theory (of external direction) cannot provide." ⁹ Anderson returned to Croce's theory of philosophy in his 1959 review of Croce's My Philosophy and Other Essays, where he argued that Croce's conception of the subject matter of philosophy as 'self-consciousness' implies that either "...'self-consciousness' is also a concept relative to a historical context and no more fitted than any other to provide a permanent subject-matter (to philosophy) or it is bereft of content and can never *generate* concepts or to 'fuse' with any set of particular problems." ¹⁰ Further in response to Croce's claim that "...true progress is our own progress, the progress of the world in and through us, which is always going on and is without end. We all feel this progress in every good or useful action, in every new truth, in every

1 Anderson Art and Reality p 4) (my emphasis)

2 ibid p 256 (his emphasis)

3 ibid p 148

4 See Chapter Six 'Freedom as Liberty'.

5 Anderson 'Politics and Moral:' op cit p 219

6 ibid p 215

7 loc cit

8 ibid p 219 (his emphasis)

9 loc cit

10 Anderson, J. 'My Philosophy and Other Essays on the Moral and Political Problems of our Time' A.I.P., XXXVII, 3, Dec. 1959 p 256 (his emphasis)

experience of beauty", Anderson argued that to assert that goods are progressive does not imply that everything 'spiritual' is progressive nor that we inhabit a 'spiritual' world.¹ However while Anderson recognised that the stimulus to philosophical problems may arise from historical or cultural problems, he argued that this was no ground for asserting that philosophy and history are identical and for not distinguishing between the two in terms of form and content.

Also, it might be admitted that it is especially from cultural or historical problems that philosophical thinking comes, that it is the 'difficulties' of practical life that stimulate our discovery of formal distinctions and connections - and that it is for this reason that philosophy, treated as one 'specialism' among others, is so barren. But this would give no ground for saying of philosophy and history that 'the whole of one is the whole of the other', for taking all problems as having a human *content* and not distinguishing from special contents the *forms* which are to be found in human and non-human material alike.²

Anderson argued that Croce's weakness on the formal side of philosophy was particularly evident in his treatment of classification as merely of instrumental value, for Croce did not show "...how such classifications can have even instrumental value if they do not direct attention to certain objective facts, or what is the *formal* distinction between what is called a broad generalisation and what does invariably happen."³ Although Anderson found in Croce's aesthetic theory an approximation to a theory of the 'formal principles of criticism' which would be operative in any field of human inquiry, Croce upheld an "...expressionist aesthetic in which creator, appreciator and work are all run together" and which belong to 'the unity of self-consciousness' which therefore denied any positive theory of aesthetics.⁴ Similarly in his ethical theory, Anderson argued that Croce confused the 'two grades of practical activity' - the good and the useful - for Croce "...cannot, if good is qualitative, treat the good and the useful as complementary terms, and he cannot, if the question is of two relations (say, being commanded and being demanded), give any reason for taking either as subordinate to the other."⁵ Further Anderson again argued that Croce takes a 'cheaply' optimistic view of history which, while it may coalesce well with religion, leaves the concept of 'liberty' without any specific content, a content that can be found in Marx's theory of production which imparts a

1 loc cit

2 ibid p 256 - 7 (his emphasis)

3 loc cit (his emphasis)

4 ibid p 257 - 8

5 loc cit

more positive character to 'liberty' than any doctrine of 'inwardness' can.¹ The fundamental error with Croce's 'philosophy of spiritual reality', then, is that it takes any concrete content, to be characteristic of reality as such, which produces an irreconcilable conflict.

On the one hand, this (philosophy of spiritual reality) leads to an evasion of real problems of 'spirit' (of mind and culture) in the assumption of a metaphysical 'sanction' and support for forces which in fact have constantly to work and struggle with *alien* material... On the other hand, in substituting for questions of *form* questions of 'matter' or concrete content, or in amalgamating the two, it is cutting at the root of exact and detached (or 'objective') thinking. Thus, while it may be conceded that Croce has opened up a number of philosophical questions, the general conclusion remains that in his anti-formalism he is anti-philosophical.²

Although Anderson defended Croce's artistic or thematic conception of history, he also held that history is scientific in being concerned with the operation of deterministic and objective historical laws. Hence in his 1960 review of Caponigri's Time and Idea, Anderson argued that Caponigri's interpretation of Vico's conception of 'providence' in history as something which is only known through its *effects* in human life, is something which can in fact only be known as a *phenomenon* of human life.³

'Providence' is simply the fact that things can 'go right' *of themselves*, that activities in which we are engaged can be assisted or sustained in ways that were not planned either by ourselves or by anyone else, that there will be natural laws of social activity - though their operation will also have to cover the actual planning or 'legislating' that occurs, and though it will be possible also for things to *go wrong* in unplanned and unexpected ways. This is quite compatible with the Vichian view that men can know history scientifically because they have made it; the field of study is composed of human activity, but clearly Vico does not think that the agents must (or even can) know all about these - only that their agency gives them the opportunity of having scientific knowledge.⁴

1 ibid p 259

2 ibid p 259- 60 (his emphasis)

3 Anderson, J. 'Time and Idea: The Theory of History in Giambattista Vico' A.I.P., XXXVIII, 2, Aug. 1960 p 166

4 ibid p 166 - 7 (his emphasis)

Anderson argued that it is not apparent how the synthesis of the opposition between time and idea, as Caponigri's interpretation of Vico requires, could take place "...except between things that have been separately grasped ...except, indeed, between things that were *both* processes, both concrete, each *already* exhibiting the supposed synthesis."¹ Vico's historical view of things, then, is that there are natural human as well as non-human processes and the existence of 'ideality' gives the human no peculiar logical status.² Similarly Caponigri's conception of providence as the synthesis of 'transcendence' and 'immanence' is likewise rejected by Anderson in typical fashion. "It is not enough merely to say that the relation between immanence and transcendence is not 'rigid'; either they are incompatible and there is no synthesis or they are perfectly compatible and there is no problem, no opposition or 'alternality' between them"³ According to Anderson, such a view of the 'synthesis' of time and idea is not Vico's contribution to a 'science of society', who emphasised rather that it is in

...the concrete and continuing social activities that he finds the driving forces of human history; it is by their place in (the way they 'belong to') such activities that he accounts for the various phenomena of human life. In doing so, of course, he finds himself concerned with philosophical problems, problems of method, problems of process and 'intention', but it is still by the illumination that he gives to empirical questions that the success of his work on these problems is brought out.⁴

Caponigri's account of providence had been connected with the question of 'sacred history' whereby the function of providence is to restore to integrity the 'broken world' of man's 'awakening self-consciousness'.⁵ "Sacred history" Caponigri had argued "is the image of the unbroken movement of the human spirit towards its ideal supposition; in this movement it is sustained by a power which, in its pure otherness, mends that fracture."⁶ However in response to this claim, Anderson argued that the only thing that could mend this fracture is a historical process and that if 'sacred' history is history, then it will be worked out in terms of the same principles that Vico applies to history in general and to claim that sacred history is the 'norm' of profane history would require the abandonment these principles.⁷ "No serious student of society would assert that the cultural forms of sacred society are to be regarded as

1 ibid p 165 (his emphasis)

2 ibid p 167

3 ibid p 168

4 ibid p 168-9

5 ibid p 169

6 loc cit

7 loc cit

standards or models for profane peoples".¹ However the more important conclusion for Anderson's argument is that Vico's conception of the 'new' science cannot admit of any dualism between 'sacred' and 'profane' and that the same critical principles that apply to one people, applies to all peoples.² Anderson argued further that Vico's doctrine of 'corsi e ricorsi' implied either the progression of history as a whole or that progression is compatible with retrogression in history. Both Caponigri and Croce in their defence of a 'totalistic' and 'progressivist' theory of history reject this latter view, although Anderson argued that this rejection is not implied in Vico's conception of the union of philology and philosophy.³

It is in no way prejudicial to a doctrine of ethical progress (or growth in goodness) to say that, in any given instance, that it comes to an end - this does not at all mean that it never happened. And, in the same way, there can be a period of cultural progress (a 'classical' period) which comes to an end, and is not to be thought of as 'rising again at a higher level' when a new one comes into existence. Classical Westernism appears now to be relapsing into a 'barbarism of reflection' just as classical Hellenism did; but while there are connections between the two, there is no reason for saying that one is part of the other or that they are parts of the history of the same thing - or, again, that the latter is a more advanced form of the earlier, or, for that matter, that either of them need be succeeded by something 'more advanced'.⁴

Anderson particularly supported Caponigri's contention that the Enlightenment gave rise to the '*barbarian* of reflection' in figures such as Voltaire, Helvetius and Condillac, although he argued further that it is only in the present age where such a type is becoming predominant, that can be truly described as a '*barbarism* of reflection'.⁵ However Anderson concluded that what is important in Vico's New Science,

...is just that laws can be discovered in the human subject matter itself, in its own drives or ways of working, instead of being laid down from above or in any case, coming from outside. It is in departments of social life or types of social activity that the true content of religion, of language, of politics, is to be sought. This, I should

1 ibid p 170

2 loc cit

3 ibid p 170-1

4 ibid p 171

5 loc cit

contend is the only way in which Vico's 'New Science' can be made coherent and intelligible and it involves the adoption of an empiricist philosophy and the rejection of all normative and totalistic doctrines.¹

Anderson's scientific and artistic conception of history was also illustrated in two other reviews written at this time. In his 1959 review of Acton's The Illusion of the Epoch, Anderson defended a determinist and objectivist interpretation of Marx against Acton's voluntarist and individualist assessment. Anderson argued that the fundamental thesis of Marxism, that "...coherence rests on the historical character of things, on the commensurability and inter-relatedness of social, psychological and other processes", is one which would never appear in Acton's individualistic interpretation of Marx.² Further Marx's productive conception of history, which Anderson had earlier held had more positive content than Croce's conception of liberty, is one which treats history as social process.

A historical view of things can be understood as a doctrine of reality as process, and this, as we have seen is part of Marx's meaning. But there is also the more special meaning of 'history' as *social* processes. And the 'materialist' interpretation of history, in this sense, is the doctrine that productive organisation is what distinguishes social from other processes, is the 'subject' of history or that which continues (though having distinguishable phases) while a society continues.³

However against the Hegelian contention that social history should be 'identified' with a 'postulated movement of things in general', Anderson defended a pluralistic recognition of the "... distinction of any process from surrounding processes and of an irreducible plurality of processes within it".⁴ However it will still be the case, he continued, that "...only with the recognition of specific types of social activities and interactions can there be any social theory or any account of 'history'".⁵ Both mental and social activities are therefore material processes and it is because a materialist view of history is pluralistic as well as deterministic, that Marx's doctrine of 'single-track social development' is a departure from his professed materialism.⁶ Further Anderson argued that there is no question of social processes having a reality inferior to psychological processes, for if "...we are to give a serious account

1 ibid p 172

2 Anderson, J. 'The Illusion of the Epoch' A.I.P., XXXVII, 3, Dec. 1959 p 160

3 ibid p 160 (his emphasis)

4 ibid p 160 - 1

5 ibid p 161

6 loc cit

of a man's life, we must present the interrelation (including the clash) of *forms* of activity in which he and others participate - of which he is the 'vehicle' rather than an initiator. It is, for Marx, the development and sequence of *forms* of productive activity in particular that is social history (history in the usual sense)..."¹ Anderson argued that it is these 'forms of activity' and not 'isolated individuals' which keep the historical process going, for rather than individuals being 'fused and transmuted' into social movements, it is 'forms of activity' which make up individuals.² Although Anderson argued that Marx had too narrow a conception of productive activity, he supported the deterministic and objectivist features of the general Marxist position where "...the search for the continuing 'subjects' of social processes is a condition of determining their regularities (laws) and of having an objective social theory."³ Further Anderson argued that is Acton's individualism which prevents him from getting a firm grasp of Marxist ethics which is the position that "...moral or ethical questions are questions of concrete social activity and that the notion of right (or required) conduct is misleading when, as it commonly is, it is put forward without specification of the activity for which it is required, the sort of life which the conduct keeps going".⁴ The scientific and positive treatment of ethical issues which much Marxist theory supports is therefore opposed to Acton's treatment of 'moral obligation'.

If there is anything that has an ethical character of its own, then the question of its nature and history can be gone into, and ethics will be the positive science of ethical processes (more particularly, good activities) - it will be quite a side-issue whether anyone wants them or not, and there will be no question of the pursuit of them being 'absolutely required' of anyone or of their being among 'the principal purposes of human life'. And, however incomplete Marx's account of the going on of such processes may be, it is still no reproach or ground of objection to his position that he recognises positive goodness while rejecting 'moralism' or the 'ethics' of categorical imperatives; while at the same time any deviations into moralism on his part do not affect the strength of his 'materialist' view. It is those who take ethical assertions as something other than the assertion of certain historical occurrences who are really jettisoning the science of ethics.⁵

1 ibid p 162 (my emphasis)

2 loc cit

3 ibid p 164

4 loc cit

5 ibid p 165

Anderson argued that it is positive inquiry and not any vague notion of 'ideology' which recognises that the 'illusion of the epoch' is the belief in 'absolute sanctions' which purport to govern human conduct, a recognition which is not the mere 'collection of data', but a critical apparatus which involves a philosophical examination of the *forms* of inquiry.¹ Anderson rejected therefore the 'separatism' of Acton's interpretation of Marx and defended Marx's own materialist insistence on continuity, an insistence which implies the rejection of dualism, individualism and relativism.

The vital consideration is still that of continuity, and it is this that Marx is upholding in his 'materialism'. In doing so, whatever his incidental errors, he has contributed notably to the philosophical criticism of dualism or the setting up of different kinds of reality, individualism or the postulation of any kind of atomic entity, and relativism, or the doctrine of constitutive relations, which is only one example of relativism or the doctrine of 'natures' as opposed to transactions, alike within anything and between it and any other things.²

Similarly in his 1961 review of Bronowski's and Mazlish's The Western Intellectual Tradition Anderson rejected the authors anti-intellectual and humanistic attitudes of voluntarism and subjectivism and defended an objectivist and scientific view of things.

In so far as modern views are voluntarist, they are not intellectualist and do not constitute an 'intellectual tradition'. But the point here is that there has been in modern thought a constant *struggle* between objectivist views and humanist or 'practicalist' views - e.g., the view that an historical conception of things is a conception of them as *relative* to human wants, with their changes and varieties, instead of a conception of wants as incidental to social movements.³

Anderson argued that Hegel was of particular importance in the defence of objectivism, for his main philosophic aim was the rejection of all dualisms.⁴ Thus Hegel's doctrine of the 'rationality of the real' is no more than the claim that "reality is systematic and thus intelligible" where "...mind and nature, though contrasted, belong equally to the 'rational' whole, so that neither is outside the reality of which

1 ibid p 166

2 loc cit

3 Anderson, J. 'The Western Intellectual Tradition: From Leonardo to Hegel' The Australian Journal of Politics and History, VII, 2, Nov. 1961 p 283 (his emphasis)

4 loc cit

the other is a feature".¹ However Anderson's main concern in this article was to stress the intimate relation between liberty and culture and the opposition of both to egalitarian and progressivist doctrines.

If freedom is viewed positively as culture (as intellectual and artistic activity), then it has no connection with such vague notions such as 'the self-fulfilment of man' or 'the unfettered development of individual personality' and it is quite inadequately expressed as 'the right to dissent' although dissent from egalitarianism would in these times be one of its major manifestations ...What makes it impossible for upholders of modern science to exhibit any real continuity of thought (or intellectual tradition) is, more specially, their progressivism, in terms of which all social trends are unified and the constant struggle of intellect or culture against a hostile environment is lost sight of, and, more generally, their lack of a critical philosophy and especially of a theory of *categories* ...in which the interrelation of quality and quantity, substance and causality, etc., would be demonstrated, as against the piecemeal and incoherent treatment which is all that the conception of them as human devices can yield. The intellectual weakness of 'science' comes out particularly in the neglect of the true intellectual tradition (going back to the Greeks) of systematic philosophy and the amateurish substitution therefore of a mixture of professional devices (tricks of the trade) with philosophical odds and ends. The scraps of logic, epistemology, ethics and politics which scientists are continually putting forward as serious doctrines are well represented in this book, and what they manifest is the *alienation* of what is now called science from the intellectual tradition.²

Anderson's theory of history was therefore both an artistic and scientific account of social phenomena which emphasised liberty as a continuous theme in history but which was nonetheless determined in terms of the operation of universal causal laws. This thematic conception of history was also reflected in his mature philosophical theory, when he argued that the predominant theme of the history of philosophy was that of objectivism.

d. Objectivism as the Theme of Philosophy

1 loc cit (his emphasis)

2 ibid p 284 (his emphasis)

During this period from 1952 to 1962, Anderson was not only concerned with historical writings and he also sought to present a unified conception of philosophy as involving ethics, aesthetics and logic in terms of the concept of *form*. In his 1952 article 'Hypotheticals', Anderson argued that it is the logician's task to

...cut through forms of speech to real content; and the main aid to his doing so is absorption in the philosophical tradition. But such absorption depends, again, on his rejection of eclecticism, rejection, in particular, of an external view of philosophers as exponents of this or that ('ideas', 'transcendental unity', etc); it depends on his own sense of what is vital in their work, of what is the connecting philosophic *theme*.¹

For Anderson, this theme was that of "...objectivism versus subjectivism, of the issue versus the purpose, of truth versus satisfaction" and it was this theme alone that could make inquiry and philosophy intelligible.² This conflict between objectivism and subjectivism was, as he stated in his review of Croce's Politics and Morals, the 'supremely important' historical and philosophical antithesis.³ In 'Hypotheticals' Anderson argued that "...'finding the logical form' of any utterance is finding what it purports to convey as truth, as objective, as 'the case', and ...that it is by considering what can be true, or what can be the (what is the form of) an issue, a question of truth and falsity, that we determine what *are* the logical forms."⁴ The 'issue' in its broadest form can be expressed as "Is it so or not?" which implies that the forms of the proposition are all categorical.⁵ However it was in his review of Acton's The Illusion of the Epoch that Anderson first stressed the notion of the *form* of inquiry, when he argued that inquiry is not concerned with "...a mere collection of 'data' ", but has a critical apparatus that involves "...a philosophical examination of *forms*".⁶ Further Anderson also criticised those scientists who "...are not concerned with *form*, or, in substituting for questions of form questions of technical procedures or devices, they are really giving to the material or subject matter of their science functions it is unable to carry out".⁷ This stress on the notion of *form* began to assume more importance for Anderson, not merely in its logical sense, but also in relation to his ethical, aesthetic and social theory and indeed was the concept which provided for a unified conception of his philosophy. Anderson's *thematic* treatment of philosophy as objectivist was remarkably similar to Croce's thematic

1 Anderson Studies in Empirical Philosophy p 137 (his emphasis)

2 loc cit

3 Anderson 'Politics and Morals' op cit p 215

4 Anderson Studies in Empirical Philosophy p 137

5 ibid p 137 -8

6 Anderson 'The Illusion of the Epoch' op cit p 166 (my emphasis)

7 Anderson Studies in Empirical Philosophy p 187 (my emphasis)

conception of history as the story of liberty and the relationship between liberty and objectivism, and of the importance of the ethical meaning of form, had been emphasised some years earlier in lectures to students when he asserted "...ethics is the study of interest in objectivity, that ethics is a study of social movements which maintain logic, the sense of what is objective, permanent or *formal*, contrasted with material."¹ He argued further that the study of ethics and the study of logic are intimately connected in that there is no separation of logical and ethical issues, as there is no separation of liberty from culture.

..the point is that while in speaking of logic objectively we speak of certain types of inter-relation of things or formal ways in which things exist, we think of those forms as defining types of problems for us, and the solving is part of our activity, to recognise what are leading types of problem and in this way logic and ethics coincide, or the studying of logic would be part of the study of ethics. In the same way, we can take Croce's formula that "history is the story of liberty" (*with liberty being equal to culture*) that liberty is the only permanent thing - the only thing which exhibits continuity or communication between past and present. This continuity maintains a certain spirit, enables us to live in a tradition.²

This notion of form was also of importance to Anderson's aesthetic theory and in his 1958 paper 'Realism', Anderson described the notion of beauty as articulated structure as *form*.³ Similarly in his 1953 address 'Literary Criticism' where Anderson defended aesthetics from the 'dreariness' that John Passmore had accused it of, he asserted that "To deny that there is a common subject-matter of the arts is not to deny that there are common aesthetic principles (principles of beauty), and, failing such a basis, there would be no ground for speaking of principles of literary criticism"⁴ These formal principles are to be found most prominently in the works of Joyce.

In Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* Stephen Dedalus elucidates the aesthetic doctrine of Aquinas that three things are required for beauty, 'wholeness, harmony, and radiance' (*integritas, consonantia, claritas*). Dedalus finds these principles, indeed, to be involved in all disinterested perception, all recognition of things as

¹ Anderson, J. 'Lectures In Criticism' (unpublished lectures. Copy obtained from B.C. Birchall) p 23 (my emphasis)

² *loc cit* (my emphasis)

³ Anderson, J. 'Realism' *The Australian Highway* Sept. 1958 p 56

⁴ Anderson *Art and Reality* p 160

they are in themselves independently of our purposes. We perceive the object as *one* thing, as a *thing*, and as the thing that it is.¹

However in an important passage, Anderson went on to develop his views on aesthetic structure and its relation to the nature of logical predication.

Further developments of aesthetics would take the form of showing more fully what is meant by structure or harmony. In my view the question is similar to that of definition in logic, to the setting out of the 'essential features' of anything. A theme is grasped when we recognise characteristics which together constitute it. Thus, if we took the conventional view of the theme of the *Iliad* as 'the wrath of Achilles', we should say that the goodness of the work depended on its exhibiting the 'moments' or leading features of wrath. It is to be understood that these features are not simply juxtaposed, that there is development from one to another or that... they form together an articulated structure.²

Anderson clearly argues here that definition in logic - the assertion of a predicate to a universal class of objects - has the same logical structure as the 'development of a theme' and although he later argued that this notion of 'development' is not relativistic, this is precisely the criticism that he had made of Hegel almost thirty years earlier.³ Finally Anderson's belief in the importance of form in aesthetics is also illustrated in 'Further Questions in Aesthetics' where in considering the various arts he argued that in all art there is some kind of arrangement and this arrangement cannot be "...simply a collection of bits and pieces. It must be built round some *theme* forming what I have called the structure of the work."⁴ Anderson's objectivist philosophy can therefore be seen as a *thematic* theory of philosophy which unified the distinct subjects of logic, ethics, aesthetics and history and this thematic conception of philosophy was in marked contrast to his early doctrinal conception of philosophy.

e. Realism, Empiricism and Logic

At the time of his retirement, Anderson, in an address to the Worker's Educational Association, presented a restatement of his defence of philosophical Realism. Realism he argued, had its period of greatest vigour in the first three decades of the

1 *loc cit* (his emphasis)

2 *ibid* p 262

3 See Anderson 'Realism' *op.cit* p 56 and *Studies in Empirical Philosophy* p 81

4 Anderson *Art and Reality* p 265 (his emphasis)

twentieth century as a reaction to Absolute Idealism, with both of them having "...greater sweep and force than the piecemeal philosophies (or sets of devices passing as philosophies) which nowadays almost monopolise the field"¹ Anderson argued that although the general heading of Realism covered a wide range of different tendencies, they all made for "...an objective view of things and the denial of the privileged position which Idealism had claimed for mind - treating it, indeed, as qualifying all reality".² Anderson argued that Idealism was made to turn on the question of relations, with the Realist's having no difficulty in demonstrating in terms of the question of knowledge, that relations are external.³ In particular, the 'new Realist' doctrine of independence demonstrated that

...there is nothing *mental* about the logic of relations itself or about logic in general. Logic is just as objective as any other study; it is concerned not with devices we employ in arranging our material or with 'norms' imposed on it from above but with the ways in which things actually occur. But to drive this home it is necessary to go beyond the rather vague notion of 'objectivity' (the most obvious meaning of which would simply be capacity for being studied) and to give some specification to the character of the real.⁴

Anderson argued that this specification of the 'real' was to be found in Alexander's doctrine of the spatio-temporality of all things, a doctrine which meets the Realist requirement that 'being real' should be unambiguous.⁵ However in a significant qualification of his earlier views, Anderson argued that it is an error to regard the 'target' of Realism as Idealism, for the common enemy of both Realism and Idealism is "...rationalism or the doctrine of natures (as distinct from what 'has' the nature), and, though this is well exemplified in the 'mentalist' forms of 'that whose nature it is to be perceived' and 'that whose nature it is to be percipient', it has many other manifestations of at least a less obviously relativist kind".⁶ It is significant that one such manifestation was the later philosophy of Moore and Russell whom Anderson argued had moved steadily away from their Realist origins.⁷ Anderson also stressed that Alexander presented his Idealism as part of a general *empiricist* doctrine which defended mind as a particular field of objective study.⁸

1 Anderson 'Realism' op cit p 53

2 loc cit

3 loc cit

4 ibid p 54 (his emphasis)

5 loc cit

6 loc cit

7 loc cit

8 For Anderson's detailed assessment of Alexander's ontological theory see his 1949 lectures on Alexander's Space-Time and Deity held in the Anderson archives at Fisher library at the University of Sydney.

It is as spatio-temporal, as belonging to a single order of events, that mind is a member, even of a particularly 'gifted' one, of the 'democracy of things'. Things being thus, whatever their special qualities, equally objective, there is no such thing as 'the subjective' (subjective reality) but only false subjective *theories* of what 'exists in itself' or has a peculiar 'inwardness'.¹

However Anderson re-iterated that Alexander's philosophy was also infected by Cartesian rationalism in his doctrine of consciousness and he argued that the only alternative to this rationalism is to take a "...thoroughly pluralist view in which there is not only an unlimited multiplicity of things to which the single logic of events applies but anything whatever is infinitely complex so that we can never cover its characters in a single formula or say that we know 'all about it'."² The extension of Realism into ethics implied the treatment of ethics as a field of facts and not as the application of 'norms', with there being no ethical end in itself and nothing which is absolutely required in itself.³ Similarly in the field of aesthetics Anderson defended an objective theory of beauty, although he was critical of Alexander's attempted amalgamation of the aesthetic impulse and beauty itself.⁴ Anderson argued that an objective aesthetic theory as a theory of beauty as articulated structure or worked out theme, is one which is not open to the charge of relativism.⁵ "One important feature of the doctrine of beauty as *form* is that it applies equally to all types of material, human and non-human, and thus encourages a detached or 'objective' attitude to the human entanglements presented in literature, while discouraging the reading of a human or 'literary' content into plastic or musical structures."⁶ It is particularly important to note that Anderson also defended Alexander's theory of the 'tertiary qualities' of truth, goodness and beauty arguing that "...it is clear from the very description 'tertiary qualities'... that it is '*the object*', and not any amalgamation of it with something else, that the 'aesthetic experience' purports to be describing."⁷ The treatment of truth, goodness and beauty as 'tertiary qualities' is consistent with a general application of the Realist principles of external relations to the traditional 'forms' of philosophy and Anderson concluded that Realism provides therefore for a "...systematic account of

1 loc cit (his emphasis)

2 ibid p 55

3 loc cit

4 loc cit

5 ibid p 56

6 loc cit (his emphasis)

7 loc cit (my emphasis)

the major departments of human culture" and is opposed to Sophistic 'illusions of progress' which characterise much of contemporary philosophy.¹

Anderson's mature philosophy was therefore only nominally 'Realist' and in his 1962 paper 'Empiricism and Logic', he described his mature conception of philosophy as *empiricist*, understood as the doctrine of one way of being. Empiricism is, he argued, "...a doctrine of what is real as situations, and that therewith goes the denial that anything can be *known* except as situations, which is to say as spatio-temporal and except in *propositional* form"² Whenever we find a situation, he argued, there is a 'nest' of situations or propositions and there is never a question of 'separate regions of the existent or the knowable' and always "...complex and interrelated states of affairs".³ Further, as he had argued in 'Relational Arguments', the occurrence of qualities and relations is always in terms of a single situation. "The point is that we are always confronted simultaneously with questions of relations and questions of qualities, that relations and qualities are linked in the recognition, as in the existence, of any situation, any complex states of affairs, and that there is nothing less, and nothing more, than a complex spatio-temporal situation that we can be confronted with in dealing with any material, i.e., in any recognition of or search for connections and distinctions."⁴ The 'empiricist', as he had argued in his 1927 'Empiricism' article, considers things or situations in terms of what can be said about them and to do so is to consider them in terms of propositions.⁵ However Anderson now argued that his earlier view that the 'proposition' is a 'tertium quid', that it is *about* something, was untenable and that the important point is that the proposition, with its distinction between subject and predicate functions as locating and describing, is situational in its exposition. "The fact that any term can have either function (is both locative and descriptive) brings out the fact that the *term* also is situational in its content, but to be presented with a single state of affairs that we consider we have to be presented with a proposition; it is a single issue, not a group of issues, and is not 'about' any other issue."⁶ The 'form of the issue', as he had argued in 'Hypotheticals', as 'Is it so or not', implies that there are not different kinds of truth and that there is only one copula, "the unambiguous 'is' of existence" or of "being the case" which demonstrates that the forms of the proposition are all categorical.⁷ Hence the fact that a proposition is, or raises, an issue "...already implies the distinction of quality (affirmative and negative); what has further to be brought out is that it implies also the distinction of quantity (universal and

1 loc cit

2 Anderson Studies in Empirical Philosophy p 162 (his emphasis)

3 loc cit

4 ibid p 161

5 ibid p 17

6 ibid p 169

7 ibid p 138

particular)".¹ Similarly the assertion of 'X is Y' or 'Y is X' is the assertion of two distinct propositions, (even though they share the same terms) with their difference being expressed in terms of a difference in propositional function - of subject terms which locate and predicate terms which describe.² Anderson also argued with respect to one of the principal objections to his logic - the 'false' proposition - that there is no situation with the attribute 'falsity' and that what is meant by a 'false proposition' is that someone *mistakes* X to be Y.³ "No coherent position can be got by dividing the class 'propositions' into two species, 'the true' and 'the false' (the species 'what is' and the species 'what is not')and the treatment of every proposition as a subject of inquiry and dispute (of seeking and mistaking) is opposed to the treatment of the proposition as a tertium quid, which would make any discovery, any *outcome* of discussion or inquiry, impossible."⁴ Empiricism then, is a doctrine of the 'continuity of things', a continuity which would be broken by the postulation of different kinds of reality and Anderson was particularly critical of the 'unphilosophic scientist' who seeks to preach to philosophers what their proper study should consist of, and spread, instead, their own rationalist and dualist confusions. One such 'scientific' philosopher was Gilbert Ryle who in 1951 had published an examination of Anderson's philosophy in the A.J.P. and who, Anderson argued, conspicuously falls into errors of discontinuity and division.⁵ Anderson argued that Ryle did not recognise that the logician is not concerned with a 'miscellaneous bunch of types of question', but is rather concerned with a "...group of types of question which apply to a common ground, which hang together in any inquiry and thus apply to any subject matter".⁶ This 'common ground' is

...the ground of Space and Time (or of being situational) in terms of which the universal application and the interlocking of logical questions appear. It is because questions in all the categories are spatio-temporal, because they all arise within any region or 'contour', to use Alexander's expression, that they are not *dis-continuous* with one another but all form part of a common inquiry... Apart from such a common ground, there would be no such thing as logic, no sort of connection between one inquiry and another, and thus no inquiry.⁷

1 loc cit (his emphasis)

2 loc cit

3 ibid p 170

4 ibid p 170 - 1 (his emphasis)

5 loc cit For a full discussion of this conflict see Cumming, L. "Ryle on 'Logic and Professor Anderson' " Dialectic 1987 pp 109 - 116

6 ibid p 172

7 loc cit (his emphasis)

Ryle had called attention to Anderson's apparent assimilation of philosophy and science and in his reply, Anderson clarified his earlier view arguing that both philosophy and science are concerned with situational reality and that what distinguishes them is that "...philosophy is concerned with the *forms* of situations or occurrences, science with their *material*; but it is only as forms of such material, as material with such forms, that they can be known. But this means that, if the work of inquiry is to be carried on, it must be at once scientific and philosophic".¹ Although such a statement again emphasises the importance of the notion of *form* in Anderson's mature philosophy, his final assessment of Ryle was succinct.

It is this rationalism, this separatism, this breaking up of reality into sundered sections, that is the mark of the scientist who is not a philosopher, who instead presumes to teach the philosophers his own rationalism, his own devotion to ultimates and unquestionables, his own 'analysis', on the basis of his own practicalism - of what he takes to be absolute ends. It is just because of its *concrete* concerns that the scientist takes his science to be more capable of criticising philosophy than philosophy is of criticising it, and thus we find a variety of 'philosophies' which, in accordance with the concrete interests of their authors lay down the law for technical philosophy, knowing next to nothing of philosophy's history; cling to subjectivism in ignorance of the case for or against Realism or objectivism, and finally, with their 'practical' resources, intimidate the professional philosophers into showing less and less interest in the philosophic tradition and more and more subservience to 'science'. Thus with what is esteemed to be the scientific progress of the twentieth century has gone philosophical retrogression.²

Logic then, is not concerned with the 'egoistic rumblings of the analytic machine', but is concerned with *continuity* and *coherence* which is a concern with the logical nature of things.

Professor Ryle speaks of what logic *tells me*, with the suggestion that I am laying claim to some private communication or even special revelation. What I maintain is that there can be no logic unless it is of the facts, unless their logical characters are found in any facts (or situations) of which we are aware. And what I take to be informed of by what might be called my 'logical sense' is the *continuity* of things or their *coherence*, their 'making sense' because they have a common

1 ibid p 183 (my emphasis)

2 ibid p 184 (his emphasis)

ground, their negating all 'breaks in reality', all doctrines of units or realms.¹

This emphasis on continuity is the mark of the empiricist logician and to avoid the incoherence of a 'piecemeal logic', Anderson argued that one has to 'run questions together' and it is this emphasis on *formal* inter-relatedness which he takes to be characteristic of his 'logical sense', a sense which he also described as

...a sense of *form* ; and it is because form is not additional *matter*, but is characteristic of any matter that may be in question, that one can speak of logic (or philosophy) as governing or directing science, and not the other way round - just as it is *taking* it the other way round, making matter do duty for form, making science do duty for philosophy, that has produced the intellectual chaos of the present day.²

It is also important to note that although Anderson had earlier praised Marx for upholding in his 'materialism' an emphasis on *continuity*,³ he now emphasised that a 'common measure of terrestrial events' could only be something *formal*,⁴ for as he had earlier stated, "...no one *thing* could possibly have a *formal* connection with all other things".⁵ Therefore in Anderson's mature philosophy, the distinction between form and content provided for the distinction between philosophy and science, as it also provided for the distinction between philosophy and history, for it is only logic in this philosophic sense which can provide a general apparatus of judgement that unifies all types of criticism. 'In fact, what is broadly called 'judgement' (embracing knowledge of the basic types of objective issue and of the major types of human error) is operative in all criticism, and this is why all investigators in the cultural field are engaging in philosophy, even though they may not realise it."⁶ It is not only the scientist then, but also the historian and the artist who must draw upon philosophy for a formal theory of criticism and this interlocking of the major compartments of culture - art, science and history - that Anderson held to be a classical conception of culture.

f. Classicism as a Unified Theory of Culture

1 ibid p 185 (his emphasis)

2 loc cit (his emphasis)

3 Anderson 'The Illusion of the Epoch' op cit p 166

4 Anderson Studies in Empirical Philosophy p 185-6

5 Anderson 'Religion and the University' op cit p 52 (my emphasis)

6 Anderson Studies in Empirical Philosophy p 200

Anderson's Classicism was both a historical and philosophical theory which stressed the systematic unity of culture. As a philosophical theory, Classicism was a unified theory of culture which exhibits the systematic and objective nature of judgement and recognised the necessity of opposition as part of the natural order of things. Classicism is, he argued, the study of those works "...which so fully expound and illustrate objective principles or expose subjectivist illusions that they have critical application in any age and do not depend on passing fashions."¹ It is these principles of the scientific study of things and the aesthetic realisation of meaning which provide for the unity of culture, the opponents of which, he directed his most pointed criticisms.

Indeed, the most insidious foe to classicism and the objective outlook is the specialism which cuts some department of culture off from the rest and is therefore antagonistic to that solid core of philosophical criticism which is corrective of any attempt to have one set of critical principles for one subject and a separate set for another, with intellectual chaos where they come into conflict. Classicism, in short, stands for the unity of culture against all forms of subjectivism and interestedness.²

Anderson did not believe that Classicism would ever achieve a utopian permanency, as Socialists believed in a future society free from want and conflict, but was, like Socialism, a constant and permanent struggle against existing social forces and never an end to be achieved. It was, he argued, part of the Classical perspective that it recognised the natural opposition between things and that the classicist must constantly oppose the encroachment of the utilitarian mentality on thinking and education.³ Therefore the Classicist

...will continue to work 'against the stream', as culture in all ages has had to work or (to use the Hegelian terminology) as 'objective mind' has constantly had to struggle with the entanglements of 'bourgeois society' i.e., the economic system. He will indeed observe the more and more direct attacks on culture, the constant pressure, on the part of those who want to make society 'go in the way it should', towards making learned institutions follow the same path, however much learning may thus be sacrificed.⁴

1 ibid p 201

2 ibid p 202

3 ibid p 199

4 loc cit

As a historical doctrine Anderson argued that Classicism referred particularly to the period of philosophical Hellenism, which he praised for adopting an objective outlook and turning critical intelligence of all subjects including the subject of human activities.

It is indeed, part of the classicist position to see ...as in the notable example of Socrates, that culture exists in the struggle with superstition and backwardness... Socrates upheld the objective treatment of all subjects - and specifically of the subjects such as religion, ethics, aesthetics, in which subjectivism still seeks a refuge.¹

However Socrates cannot be regarded as exclusively objectivist for in his belief in 'ultimates', he betrayed a mystical or romantic streak which was in striking contrast with the thorough-going objectivism of his predecessor, Heraclitus, who was "...unremitting in his attack on subjectivist illusions, on the operation of desire or the imagining of things as we should like them to be, as opposed to the operation of understanding or the finding of things ...as they positively are, with no granting of a privileged position in reality to gods, men or molecules, with conflict everywhere and nothing above the battle."² However while Heraclitus had a sense of the 'interlocking of all materials and all problems', he had not worked out a critical apparatus as a doctrine of all types of problems and forms of solution in any inquiry, as Socrates and Plato did. Therefore Anderson concluded, "...for a general conception of the objectivist outlook, on classicism on its basic philosophical side, of the 'judgement' which applies to all subjects and the 'literalism' which is always ruinous to inquiry, we have to go to both these sources."³ Although Anderson despaired at the 'barbarism of reflection' initiated by Bacon and Descartes - "Classical Westernism appears now to be relapsing into a 'barbarism of reflection' just as classical Hellenism did"⁴ - he singled out Hegel, his supposed arch-rival in other respects, for praise as a classical figure in the modern period, for Hegel "...steadily opposed the breaking up of reality into separate realms, for whom philosophy was intertwined not merely with the broad history of thought, but with history in general, who greatly stimulated philosophical interest in the works of the Greeks and who gave great impetus to the development of objective aesthetics, objective ethics and objective social theory - of an objective view of the whole of culture."⁵

1 ibid p 193

2 ibid p 193 - 4

3 ibid p 194

4 ibid p 171

5 ibid p 200 - 201

John Anderson died on the sixth of July, 1962 and if anything can be said to epitomise his life as a philosopher and social critic, it would be this extract from his 1933 address to the A.I.P.P. on the topic of 'Philosophy and Life'.

A life spent in philosophy is a life of struggle, of struggle against problems, a struggle for knowledge against forces of error and ignorance, which were particularly strong in this society, and might perhaps exist in any possible society. Thus intellectual opposition is a course which arises in demands in opposition to obscurantism, but the demands do not remove the evils, and only the existence of definite social forces can sustain the struggle.¹

¹ Baker op.cit p 127