

Soul History:
Looking Back
From The Baroque

Science · Philosophy · Literature

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Worringer and Scholasticism

- Worringer (1881 ~ 1966), *Abstraktion und Einfühlung*, (1908) (turnover of worth of European central art)
- It was developed along with the movements of modern abstract painting and expressionism etc. initiated by Kandinsky, Klee et al. who deconstructed grammars and forms of concrete painting beginning with the Renaissance.
- *Form in Gothic*, (*Formproblem der Gothik*), 1911: a chapter of “The Psychology of Scholasticism,” at the nearly end of this book
- “It cannot therefore be said that scholasticism wished to approach the Divine by means of intellectual knowledge. It desired far more to participate in the Divine by means of its manner of thinking, this intricate movement of thought so chaotic yet in its logic so deliberate.” (pg.171)

Polyphony in Scholastic Style

- “It was not the result of thought, but the abstract process of the movement of thought, which bred in the scholastic that intellectual ecstasy which stupefied and liberated him, -- in the same way as the abstract process of movement in the line, which he made visible in ornament, or in the same way as the abstract process of movement in the energies of stone, which he made visible in architecture.” (pg.171)
- They found the relationship with truth of ” participate in the Divine ”, not as a conclusion at the end, but as ”movement” of Scholastic unique methods that considered lots of differing disputations (*disputatio*).
- This “Polyphonies” would lead to medieval Polyphony (*polyphonia*).

The Importance of Style in Philosophy

- “It is *one* definite will to form, which governs all these manifestations, causing them to produce identical resultant phenomena in spite of their material differences.” (pg.171)
- It seems that Worringer’s exciting tone suggested that the absolute importance of style in Philosophy.
- Most of the standardized styles that one perceives today in Philosophy date back to the 19th century.
- Unreasonable prejudice: the styles in Schola can be “completely” translated into the styles of 19th style.

Criticism of the Modern Progressive View of History

- “It was a catastrophe which gave a wrong direction to all mediaeval thought and threw it out of its course when, owing to the Renaissance, thought, which till then had been an end in itself, was degraded to a mere means to an end, namely, the knowledge of external scientific truth, when the *purpose* of knowledge became everything and the *process* of knowledge nothing.” (pg.171)
- Naturally, the abstract painting that Worringer and his contemporaries created included radical criticism of the Classic modern (concrete) paintings of the Renaissance.
- Modern monophony from about the 16th corresponded with single perspective from the Renaissance. It also was along with Cartesian Human subject. These movements were regarded comparative (relative) in (early) 20th century.

The Last Gleaming of the Medieval Soul /Baroque

- Benjamin (1892~1940)
- *Origin of German Tragic Drama* (written in 1923~25, published in 1928)
- It belongs among the monumental works of the 1920`s together with Wittgenstein`s, *Tractatus Logico – Philosophicus*, and Heidegger`s, *Being and Time*. I regard Benjamin`s work as the very classic in modern philosophical classics.
- As an “epistemic introduction,” it compares Baroque tragedy (Trauerspiel) with Greek tragedy, and it finds one of the springs of Baroque allegory in Eastern Byzantine culture, and it exhorts compatibility between aphorism style and its study.
- It discusses Leibniz as a Baroque philosopher.

Bacon/ Baroque

- F.Bacon (1561 ~ 1626) a contemporary of Shakespeare.
- It is in the late 18th century that people found Shakespeare. Carnival loud laughter (Benjamin also thought Shakespeare as a typical Baroque.)
- That is, as Bakhtin correctly mentioned, the medieval era.
- Praise of “aphorism” by Bacon.
- These characteristics of styles had naturally been ignored and slighted in the framework of 19th century philosophical history.
- Emphasis on induction (*inductio*) and invention (*inventio*) (as Vicco did.)
- The uniqueness of grammar of thought from liberal arts to humanism (rediscovered since 1970`s).