COLLINGWOOD'S THEORY OF ART AS LANGUAGE
ABSTRACT

Collingwood's Theory of Art as Language

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The topic of this thesis is the identification of art and language made by R. G. Collingwood in *The Principles of Art*. Collingwood's importance in aesthetics is first surveyed together with his historical background. After a general examination of Collingwood's later aesthetics, the theory of the identity of art and language is considered in detail. Collingwood's ideas on the relationship of the artist and the community, and their connection with the rest of the theory are examined next. Criticism of Collingwood's theory of art as language shows that it gives too large a domain to art, and, in addition, that it leads to the collapse of earlier ideas of *The Principles of Art*, as well as making a useful relationship between artist and audience impossible. It is by assigning a full aesthetic status to the artistic object that the worthwhile parts of Collingwood's theory may be saved and a full relationship between the artist and the community established.
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I

INTRODUCTION

1. The Practical Concerns of Aesthetic Theory

The subject of this thesis is the identification by Collingwood, in The Principles of Art, of art and language. Their identity is summarized for us in Collingwood's statement that "every utterance and every gesture that each one of us makes is a work of art". One of the chief claims made by Collingwood in his later aesthetic theory is that language and art are coterminous. Art is not simply a language: art is language, and language is art. But this statement of the identity of art and language is a very important one for some of the conclusions of The Principles of Art and the value of the book as a whole.

Collingwood saw his work as something very practical. This he points out in the preface to The Principles of Art; he writes there:

I do not think of aesthetic theory as an attempt to investigate and expound eternal verities concerning the nature of an eternal object called Art, but as an attempt

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to reach, by thinking, the solution of certain problems arising out of the situation in which artists find themselves here and now.2

The three books of The Principles of Art are concerned with three major problems connected with art. The task of Book I is simply to clear up the distinction between art proper and various sorts of art falsely so called. Book II sets out to justify the conclusions of Book I from a philosophical point of view. Book III is that part of Collingwood’s work which is really directed towards practical applications.

Is this so-called philosophy of art a mere intellectual exercise, or has it practical consequences bearing on the way in which we ought to approach the practice of art (whether as artists or as audience) and hence, because a philosophy of art is a theory as to the place of art in life as a whole, the practice of life? As I have already indicated, the alternative I accept is the second one. In Book III, therefore, I have tried to point out some of these practical consequences by suggesting what kinds of obligation the acceptance of this aesthetic theory would impose upon artists and audiences, and in what kinds of way they could be met.3

The last part of the book is deeply involved in an examination of the task of the artist with regard to his audience and the community in general.

It will be my contention in this thesis that the identification of art and language nullifies the conclusions of Book I. In addition, I intend to show that the

2. PA, Preface, p. vi.  3. Ibid., p. vii.
identification prevents much of the practical theory of
Book III from being of real use to the community.

In connection with the question of the artist's rela-
tionship with the community, I have left the strict
limits of a discussion of the identity of art and lan-
guage and problems of theory alone. I have criticized
some of Collingwood's ideas on the relations of artist
and audience, for these ideas, I feel, should be of con-
siderable interest and importance to us today. In the
last few pages, therefore, I have ventured to give my own
ideas on the proper functions of artist and audience, and
the relationship which should follow on these functions.

2. Collingwood's Aesthetics Today

It is the very practical and down-to-earth side of
Collingwood's thought that makes The Principles of Art a
particularly valuable book. His concerns with actual prob-
lems in the world of art are all too rare among philoso-
phers of art today. His influence on English-language
philosophers has not been as great as it might have been.
When Collingwood's aesthetics is discussed today, it is
frequently in terms of linguistic analysis, and the very
practical bearing of Collingwood's theory is forgotten in
an examination of the possibility or validity of an expressionist theory of art.

Whether or not the criticisms of English-language philosophers are well-founded in regard to Collingwood, it should be remembered that the whole of the last chapter, as well as other parts of The Principles of Art, is devoted to the practical and important problems to be faced regarding the place and function of art and the artist in the community.

If we are to look today for the sort of work that is a development of a theory like Collingwood's, then it is to Italy that we must turn. Here much work has been done in the neo-idealistic tradition of aesthetics. But in Italy, of course, it is Croce and Gentile who have influenced later writers. 4

Whatever the direct philosophical influence of Collingwood, it is noteworthy that ideas similar to his, although perhaps not so rigorously worked out, are prevalent in the thought of artists and critics. Whatever the influence of linguistic analysts outside philosophy, articles depending on theories similar to Collingwood's are still plentiful in journals of aesthetics, art, and

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literature; and many books and articles on art have ideas like Collingwood's as a more or less conscious aesthetic and philosophical base.

The Principles of Art, therefore, is an important book. Indeed, it has been described as "the most important work in neo-idealistic aesthetics by a non-Italian author and the most significant English work in aesthetics written during the present century". 5

This last quotation points out two marked features of Collingwood's work: its neo-idealism, and its place in the tradition of Italian thought. Collingwood owes much of The Principles of Art to Italian philosophy. The influence of Gentile can be discerned in the book, but by far the greater debt is owed by Collingwood to Croce; so it is opportune at this point to take a look at the historical background of Collingwood's thought.

3. Croce and the Sources of Collingwood's Work

Collingwood's conception of art is very similar to Croce's; and, as is well known, this is no accident. The particular form of expressionist aesthetic theory common to the two philosophers is often known as the Ideal theory,

or the Croce-Collingwood theory of art. Although there is no mention at all of Croce with regard to the theory of The Principles of Art in the text of that book -- there is only one incidental reference to him in a footnote, and this on quite another matter than expressionist aesthetic theory -- Collingwood made no secret of his indebtedness to Croce and wrote in a letter to him:

In a few particulars I have modified or even controverted doctrines maintained in your original Estetica, but always in the belief that my modifications are true to the spirit of your own work and to the principles of which you have given us the classical expression. I have mentioned your name hardly at all [in The Principles of Art]; but that is in accordance with a method of writing which I inherit from a long line of English philosophers, and it will not disguise from you, or from anyone else who knows anything of the subject, the closeness of the relation which connects my thought with your own.6

Croce's historical account in his Aesthetic of the development of aesthetic thought is indicative of the origin of his own aesthetics, and, of course, of Collingwood's thought. His history of aesthetics is a markedly biased one; it is evident that it is written at least partly as a vindication of Croce's own position. But it appears certain that it is to Vico that we must look if we wish to see the true forerunner of Croce and Collingwood. Croce saw his own ideas as the fuller development of the "modern

concept of poetry and art" inaugurated by Vico in the

Scienza nuova. 7

Vico, Croce believes, was the philosopher who first
revealed the true nature of art and poetry. He raised up
poetry to make it a period in the history of humanity.
He discovered the primacy of feeling for poetry, and
pointed out that, as poetry is composed of passion and
feeling, the nearer it approaches to the particular, the
more true it is, while exactly the reverse is true of
philosophy. Croce holds that we can already find the
identity of art and language in the thought of Vico:

Poetry and language are, in Vico's estimation, sub­
stantially the same [and] he finds 'within the origin
of Poetry' the 'origin of languages and the origin of
letters'. 8

Vico believed that the earliest languages must have
consisted of "dumb gestures and objects which had natural
connexion with the ideas to be expressed". 9 He rebelled
too against the idea of a normative or logical grammar.

In truth, Vico belongs on one side to the vast Re­
yaissance reaction against formalism and scholastic
verbalism, which, beginning with the reaffirmation of
experience and sensation (Telesio, Campanella, Galileo,

7. Croce: Primi saggi, p. 172; quoted by Romanell in his
introduction to Croce's Guide to Aesthetics (India­
8. Croce: Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General
Linguistic, trans. Douglas Ainslie (2nd ed., London,
1922), p. 225.
Bacon) was bound to go on by reasserting the function of imagination in individual and social life: on the other side he is a precursor of Romanticism. ...

Vico especially undertakes to define and fully describe not the logical, ethical and economic moments... but precisely the imaginative or poetic.10

Vico is close to the heart of Croce's thought; and he is of importance too for the study of Collingwood. It is noteworthy that Collingwood translated Croce's book, The Philosophy of Giambattista Vico, in which a whole chapter is given over to a discussion of Vico's ideas on poetry and language. The importance of Vico in Collingwood's thought may not be as apparent to a reader as it should be, since Collingwood was not one of those writers who believed in detailed acknowledgement of his sources. References to Vico in his writings, however, suggest that he had a close acquaintance with that philosopher; and in The Principles of Art he agrees with Croce in seeing Vico as the originator of the philosophical theory of art as imagination.11

Despite the originality of his thought (or perhaps because of it), Vico had little influence on the aesthetic thought of the philosophers of the eighteenth century. Of all the Scienza nuova, Croce asserts, the pages devoted to aesthetic doctrine were the least read; and any

traces to be found in immediately succeeding thinkers are merely external resemblances.

Nevertheless, Croce does find himself able to trace certain important developments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the philosophy of language, Herder saw language as the reflection of the consciousness of man, and Hamann too recognized that language belonged to the "forefront of the problem of the spirit".  

In aesthetics itself Kant took up (in an ideal, not a literal sense) the problem of philosophy where Vico laid it down; but as a whole, Croce maintains, Kant's aesthetic theory was not a success, because his system lacked a profound concept of imagination. And as for Hegel, who asserted that art was a thing of the past, his aesthetics was "a funeral oration".

It is in the work of a lesser-known German philosopher and theologian that Croce finds a significant contribution to aesthetic thought. Croce believes that the work of Schleiermacher contains "a wealth of new truths, and of difficulties and problems not suspected or discussed before his day". Schleiermacher saw that the domain of art is immediate self-consciousness, and he realized too that aesthetic thought differs from logical thought. He came

to realize that it is the business of poetry to extract the individual from language; and he understood that "of the musical and the logical, the poet claims the first for his own ends and constrains the other to awaken individual images". 14

Despite developments in the philosophy of art on the one hand and in the philosophy of language on the other, Croce comes to the conclusion that the identification of language and poetry, and of the science of language with the science of poetry, the identification of Linguistic with Aesthetic, still found its least faulty expression in the prophetic aphorisms of Giambattista Vico. 15

The significance of Vico's thought for Croce and Collingwood can be clearly seen in the following passage from the Scienza nuova:

Men at first feel without perception, then they perceive with a confused and disturbed mind, finally they reflect with the pure intellect.

This axiom is the principle of poetical statements, which are formed with feelings of passion and emotion, whereas philosophical statements are formed by reflection with reasoning. Hence the latter approach truth as they rise to the universals, the former are more certain the nearer they approach the particulars. 16

Clearly it is Vico's doctrines of the primacy of poetry and the particularity of its statements that can

be seen to figure prominently in Croce's thought. Croce's own aesthetic position (before the changes of his later aesthetic thought) is stated clearly in the article entitled "Aesthetics" which he wrote for the Encyclopedia Britannica; significantly, the article was translated by Collingwood. Art may be defined, he writes, as poetry.

Poetry both presupposes the other forms of human mental activity and is presupposed by them. Without the poetic imagination giving contemplative form to feeling, it would be impossible for logical thought to arise.

Poetry cannot be considered apart from expression. Images are inconceivable without an expressive quality.

An image that does not express ... is an image that does not exist. ... This profound philosophical doctrine, the identity of intuition and expression is, moreover, a principle of ordinary common sense. ... Rem tene, verba sequentur; if there are no verba, there is no res. That identity which applies to every sphere of the mind, has in the sphere of art a clearness and self-evidence lacking, perhaps, elsewhere. In the creation of a work of poetry, we are present, as it were, at the mystery of the creation of the world.

Intuition, for Croce, is found and reigns solely in the imagination. Intuition is identified with expression.

Intuitive knowledge is expressive knowledge. ... To intuite is to express; and nothing else (nothing more, but nothing less) than to express.

17. This article is now displaced; it is reprinted as "Aesthetica in Nuce", in a different translation, in Croce: Philosophy, Poetry, History (London, 1966).
Croce, like Collingwood after him, believes that all erroneous theories of art arise from a confusion between the various forms of knowledge. The truth is that Aesthetic is one single science with Linguistic. Linguistic science,

in so far as what it contains is reducible to philosophy, is nothing but Aesthetic. Whoever studies general Linguistic, that is to say, philosophical Linguistic, studies aesthetic problems, and vice versa. Philosophy of language and philosophy of art are the same thing.  

Linguistic is Aesthetic simply because it has as its object the essentially aesthetic fact, expression -- for language, after all, is sound employed in expression. In The Principles of Art Collingwood discusses the mistakes made by theoreticians of language, and I shall note his comments when I come to deal specifically with his theory of art and language. But in a different way, with reference to the problem of Italian linguistic unity which was much discussed in his own day, Croce points out that the search for a model language, for a way of reducing linguistic usage to unity, "arises from the superstition of a rationalistic measure of the beautiful, from that concept which we have called false aesthetic absoluteness".  

A significant feature of Croce's thought is his doctrine that every expression, every truly linguistic act is entire and complete in itself: "Every expression is a single expression." Croce explicitly declares that language is perpetual creation. What has been linguistically expressed is not repeated, save by reproduction of what has already been produced.

Like Collingwood, Croce holds that language cannot be subjected to fixed and rigid rules of logic or grammar. A model language would be a paradox, a self-contradiction; it would be "the immobility of motion". Language is not vocabulary; and it is not a collection of abstractions. "Every one speaks and should speak according to the echoes which things arouse in his soul, that is, according to his impressions."

Collingwood's main points are already to be found in the earlier work of Croce. Before Collingwood came to write *The Principles of Art*, Croce had already made clear the fundamental expressive character of art. It was Croce who showed the primacy of poetry in the development of language. He pointed out too the particularity of poetry and art in contrast to the universality of philosophy, the uniqueness of each expression, and the basic

23. Croce: *Aesthetic*, p. 20; the Italian reads: "Ogni espressione è un'unica espressione."
incompatibility of logic and language. All these points are to be found in Collingwood's theory. But, most important of all with regard to the later work of Collingwood, Croce quite simply identifies art and language.
II

COLLINGWOOD'S THEORY OF ART

1. Introduction

The specific topic of this thesis, as I have stated, is Collingwood's identification of art and language. But before I proceed to a detailed examination of that identification, it will be necessary to give a brief summary of Collingwood's aesthetic position and the development of *The Principles of Art*, explaining some of the terms that are used. Collingwood's terminology has a certain individuality, and an acquaintance with its exact meaning is important for an understanding of any part of his theory of art.

The business of *The Principles of Art* is stated in the very first sentence; it is to answer the question: What is art? The question cannot be answered at once. In everyday language the word 'art' is used equivocally, and Collingwood believes that at the very beginning of our examination of 'art', we must distinguish from among the many various common usages of the term the one usage that is truly aesthetic. And this will not be a matter
of prescribing arbitrarily a certain definition for 'art': it will be a perfectly genuine examination of ordinary linguistic usage.\textsuperscript{1}

The word 'art' has its proper meaning "hedged about with well-established obsolete, analogical, and courtesy meanings".\textsuperscript{2} There are, according to Collingwood, three main types of "art falsely so called": art as craft, art as magic, and art as amusement. Before we can engage in the positive work of an examination of art proper, we must look carefully at the three sorts of false art. We must have in our head not only a clear idea of the thing to be defined, but a clear idea as well of all those things by reference to which one defines it.

2. Pseudo-art: Craft, Magic, and Amusement

The first sort of false art is craft. Craft is what is meant by \textit{ars} in Latin and \textit{τέχνη} in Greek. Its chief characteristics are, first, that it makes a distinction between means and end; second, that there is always intended a preconceived result (with, in consequence, a division between planning and execution); third, that it separates raw material and final product, and form and matter; fourth,

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{PA}, pp. 1-2. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{2} \textit{PA}, p. 9.
that it involves a hierarchical relation between different crafts and, additionally, three kinds of hierarchy: materials, means, and parts (that is to say, one craft may use the finished product of another craft as a raw material, a tool, or a component of its own product).³

Art as craft was the basis of the classical theory of art; Plato and Aristotle both made the identification. It is true that they only spoke in detail of poetry, but, Collingwood believes, other arts like painting and sculpture were considered to be analogous crafts. The art of poetry was ποιητική τέχνη; the poet was a skilled producer, whose business it was to bring about in his consumers certain states of mind and certain preconceived effects. Like a craftsman, the poet of antiquity had to know the end he was aiming at, and how he might be able to attain it most skilfully.

It is because of the classical meaning -- essentially an obsolete one -- that art is identified with craft. A confusion of the obsolete and proper meanings results in that error, as Collingwood believes, which is called the technical theory of art.

Although the theory of art as craft is obsolete, Collingwood saw an attempt by psychologists to bring

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3. PA, pp. 15-17. 4. PA, pp. 17-20.
about its rehabilitation. Psychologists wanted to conceive the work of art as an artifact designed as a means to the realization of a particular state of mind in the artist's audience. Collingwood characterizes this as a "stimulus-reaction theory"; in fact, he points out, it is an old theory, traceable to Plato's Republic, Aristotle's Poetics, and Horace's Ars Poetica. But this theory of art, although based on facts, is based on the wrong facts: it is based on the facts not of art but of art falsely so called. Art may indeed stimulate certain reactions without ceasing to be art, but it is not art because it does.  

In Collingwood's view, the theory that art is a craft breaks down quickly when examined in detail with the generally accepted criteria of a craft kept in mind. It is evident that a poem is not a means to the production of a certain emotion in the audience from the fact that if the desired end fails to come about, it is not always clear that the poem itself is a bad one; this would not be the case at all if poetry were a craft. There need be no preconceived plan with a work of art as there must be with a pure work of craft. There is no question of the poet's making use of raw

5. PA, pp. 29-36.
material (e.g., words, or, perhaps, emotions) in the way that a blacksmith does (e.g., of iron). And, finally, there is no dichotomy of form and matter in art. In fine, it is obvious that art proper cannot be identified with craft. 6

Before we consider the erroneous belief that art is magic, Collingwood feels that we should be clear about what magic really is. Magic, he insists, is not a pseudo-science, an erroneous belief on which much anthropological work of the past was based. Magic is not neurosis; Freud had seen magical acts as similar to compulsion-neurosis. The characteristic of magic is, in fact, not that it is wishful thinking but that it is the means whereby wishful thinking may come true. According to Collingwood, if we want to theorize about magic correctly, we must approach it from the side of art, for "magical practices invariably contain ... as central elements, artistic activities like dances, songs, drawing or modelling." 7 In one way the function of these elements resembles the function of amusement, that is, their end is the arousing of emotion; and, of course, because they are a means to a preconceived end, they are not part of art proper, and belong to

craft. Yet magic arouses emotion, not, like amusement, in order that it shall not interfere with practical life by being discharged (catharsis), but by canalizing it so that it is directed upon practical life. Collingwood believes that these are the only effects which magic is intended to produce.

The primary function of all magical acts ... is to generate in the agent or agents certain emotions that are considered necessary or useful for the work of living; their secondary function is to generate in others ... emotions useful or detrimental to the lives of these others.²

Magical art, it should be noted, may be judged by aesthetic standards to be good or bad, but the aesthetic sort of goodness or badness has little connection with its efficacy in its own proper work. If magical art does reach a high aesthetic level, this is because society demands of it more than the degree of competence necessary for it to fulfil its magical function. An example of magic reaching a high aesthetic level is to be found in the artistic work of the Middle Ages, and significantly, for Collingwood, "the change of spirit which divides Renaissance and modern art from that of the Middle Ages consists in the fact that medieval art was frankly and definitely magical, while Renaissance and modern art was not."³

² PA, pp. 66-67. ³ PA, p. 70.
Much artistic production has always had a magical quality. Examples are the native art of the poor (particularly folk-art), and the "traditional lowbrow arts of the upper classes" (e.g., the "prose of the pulpit", hymns, band-music, drawing-room decoration). In the case of religious art the evocatory function is obvious. Patriotic art too is an easily discerned example of magic, as are many sports, often regarded as methods of 'training character', and many ceremonies of social life, such as weddings, funerals, dinner-parties and dances, all often surrounded by carefully arranged ritual. In their magical aspect, these ceremonies of social life "literally, though selectively, represent the practical activities they are intended to promote". Aesthetically, such rituals are mediocre for the artistic motive in them is enslaved and subordinated to the magical. Their primary function is wholly non-aesthetic: it is to generate specific emotions. While the artistic and magical motives are felt as distinct, as they are among us, magical rituals can never become art.

Whereas magic is useful, in so far as it excites emotions with a practical function as an end, the third

10. PA, p. 76.  
11. PA, p. 77.
form of pseudo-art, amusement, is only enjoyable with a division between its world and the world of common affairs.

To establish a distinction between amusement and practical life is to divide experience into two parts, so related that the emotions generated in the one are not allowed to discharge themselves in the other. In the one, emotions are treated as ends in themselves; in the other, as forces whose operation achieves certain ends beyond them.12

To discharge emotion without affecting practical life, a make-believe situation has to be created, and it has to be one which represents the corresponding real situation. The chief feature of amusement, however, is its innocuousness: it is not to affect practical life, which is "to go on exactly as if nothing had happened". In fact, amusement art is identical with play, something with which art proper has been identified:

Comparisons have often been made, sometimes amounting to identification, between art and play. They have never thrown much light on the nature of art, because those who have made them have not troubled to think what they meant by play. If playing means amusing oneself, as it often does, there is no important resemblance between play and art proper; and none between play and representative art in its magical form; but there is more than a mere resemblance between play and amusement art. The two things are the same.13

Art proper, to which we can now turn our attention after the study of the forms of pseudo-art, is neither

craft, nor magic, nor amusement. But studying the various kinds of pseudo-art is not a wasted effort; it prepares us for the positive side of our examination of art.

3. Art Proper: Imaginative Expression

An erroneous philosophical theory is based not on ignorance but on knowledge. It expresses a high degree of insight into its subject and contains many truths, "but it cannot be dissected into true statements and false statements; every statement it contains has been falsified." To isolate the preconceived idea at the root of the distortion of truth, we must reconstruct the formula of the distortion and reapply it. In this way we may correct the distortion and find out what the people who invented or accepted the theory were trying to say. To a greater or lesser extent "the results of this analysis will be found useful as a starting point for further inquiries".14

It would be wrong, therefore, to suggest that now we should simply go back to the beginning of our examination of art and start again. The erroneous technical theory suggests to us a distinction in art between means and end. The true distinction to be found within art proper -- one

resembling that between means and end -- was misunderstood. The 'end' was taken to be a relation between art and emotion: it was misconceived as the arousal of emotion. The 'means', it was seen, concerned a relation between art and making: it was wrongly believed to involve craft. The corresponding true distinction within art proper is in fact between the expressive activity and the imaginative activity.

The end of the first stage of Collingwood's argument is that art proper combines expression and imagination. In his treatment of expression and imagination, Collingwood still claims to be dealing with questions of usage and not questions of theory. The two components of art are each examined in turn.

Expression presents few problems of understanding. It should be remarked that it is easily confused with externalization, even by Collingwood himself, as I shall show later. But it is clear that expression proper is only internal:

By creating for ourselves an imaginary experience or activity, we express our emotions; and this is what we call art. 15

The work of art is located "in the artist's head": it is not the collection of noises that we hear (in the case of

15. PA, p. 151.
music), but the tune in the composer's head. It must be realized that

the noises made by the performers ... are only means by which the audience, if they listen intelligently (not otherwise), can reconstruct for themselves the imaginary tune that existed in the composer's head.16

Art is not a material product. "The work of art proper is something not seen or heard, but something imagined."17

It should be noted too that although emotion is there before we express it, we confer upon it "a different kind of emotional colouring" as we express it.

In one way, therefore, expression creates what it expresses, for exactly this emotion, colouring and all, only exists so far as it is expressed.18

Understanding what is meant by 'imagination' presents greater difficulties, and the problems raised need to be discussed at length. The whole of Book II of The Principles of Art is in fact devoted to "The Theory of Imagination". That part of it which concerns language will be examined in detail in Chapter III; and here I shall confine myself to a treatment of Collingwood's theory of imagination proper.

Collingwood's idealism entails a difference between thought and feeling; thought is essentially public, while feeling is private.

16. PA, p. 139. 17. PA, p. 142. 18. PA, p. 152.
There is a special kind of privacy about feelings in contrast with what may be called the publicity of thoughts. A hundred people in the street may all feel cold, but each person's feeling is private to himself. But if they all think that the thermometer reads 22°F Fahrenheit, they are all thinking the same thought: this thought is public to them all. ... And what is here said of the relation between different persons in respect of what they feel and think respectively is equally true of the relation between different occasions of feeling and thinking respectively in the life of a single person.19

However, between the life of feeling and the activity of thought there is another activity, the point at which the first two make contact, and without this intellection is impossible. (Collingwood equates it with the φαντασία of Aristotle.) It is distinct from sensation on the one hand and intellect on the other; it is the province of the Humean 'ideas' as distinct from 'impressions'. At the very beginning of his Treatise Hume makes the following statement:

All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call impressions and ideas. The difference betwixt these consists in the degrees of force and liveliness, with which they strike upon the mind, and make their way into our thought or consciousness.

Collingwood interprets Hume's doctrine to mean that "the distinction between real sensation and imagination is resolved into the distinction between our inability and our ability of set purpose to control, excite, suppress,

or modify our sensory experiences". Hume saw the distinction which Collingwood makes use of; but the final resolution of the problem comes with Kant:

Instead of trying to conceive real sensa and imaginary sensa as two co-ordinate species of the same genus, ... [Kant] conceived the difference between them as a difference of degree. For him, a real sensum can only mean one which has undergone interpretation by the understanding, which alone has the power to confer the title real; an imaginary sensum will then mean one which has not yet undergone that process. 20

It is imagination which forms the link between sensation and intellect, "as Aristotle and Kant agreed in maintaining". 21 The task of imagination is to express emotion.

The conclusion of Collingwood's treatment of imagination is, first, that "feeling proper, or psychical experience, has a double character: it is sensation and emotion" (firmly united as it comes to us). But "feeling proper is an experience in which what we now feel monopolizes the whole field of our view". 22 To assert any relation between feelings means that feeling "must cease to be mere feeling and enter upon a new stage of its existence", a stage which is reached by the very act of attention to the feeling. 23 By our attention to them, and by our self-assertion over them, feelings become states where

20. PA, p. 187.  
21. PA, p. 198.  
22. PA, p. 221.  
23. PA, p. 222.
we experience our own activity, and, "from being impressions of sense, they thus become ideas of imagination".\textsuperscript{24}

The activity of consciousness which tames sensation is a kind of thought. It is in this activity that the artistic experience finds its origin. Consciousness is a distinct level of experience "intermediate between sensation and intellect, the part at which the life of thought makes contact with the life of purely psychical experience". But consciousness is still thought: "it is a level of thought which is not yet intellect". There is both a wide sense of thought which includes consciousness, and a narrow sense, "thought par excellence, or intellection".\textsuperscript{25}

By showing that the origin of artistic experience is to be found in pre-intellectual thought, Collingwood rules out all theories which see the genesis of art in sensations or emotions of the purely psychical type, as well as those which see art as an activity of the intellect and the use of concepts. Theories emphasizing one of these levels as the origin of art are useful in so far as they serve to point out what art is not; but we must always bear in mind that art derives from neither of them.

On the imaginative activity of consciousness every further development of thought is based; and only with

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24. \textit{PA}, p. 222. \\
\end{flushright}
further development of thought can different feelings be compared. But feelings that are compared -- it should be noted -- do not remain separate: at the level of imagination they fuse into one idea. If I summon up a new idea while I am already enjoying one, "the two ideas fuse into one, the new one presenting itself as a peculiar colouring or modification of the old". The object of imagination is always "a single indivisible unity"; and like feeling, it is "a sheer here-and-now".26

Imagination, then, should be seen as having qualities derived from both thought and feeling. The ideas of imagination belong to thought. But, most importantly, although they are part of thought, they still retain the immediacy of feelings.

4. The Nature of Language

Art proper, as is shown in Book I of The Principles of Art, must be both expressive and imaginative; working through Book II, we are at last able to answer the question, "What kind of thing must art be, if it is to have the two characteristics of being expressive and imaginative?" Art, Collingwood tells us, must be language.

26. PA, p. 223.
'Language' here is a wide term, and the sense in which it is being used will turn out to be one that embraces all conscious activity.

In Collingwood's view language is both imaginative and expressive. Simply, "to call it imaginative is to describe what it is, to call it expressive is to describe what it does".\(^{27}\) It comes into existence with imagination "as a feature of experience at the conscious level".

As an imaginative activity language is at a stage that is both prior to, and necessary for, its later development as an intellectualized activity possessing symbolistic functions. It comes eventually to be modified by the requirements of the intellect, but it never loses its original character of being imaginative and expressive. The basic function of language is to express emotion; and this is how it comes to be identified with art. Words are expressive, or, to put it more exactly, the activity of using words, the activity of making sounds, is expressive.\(^{28}\)

It may seem that Collingwood is emphasizing verbal language above other sorts of expressive activity. It is important, therefore, to stress that verbal language is an example of other forms of language. What exactly is meant by Collingwood's use of 'language' has to be made clear.

27. \(PA,\) p. 225. 28. \(PA,\) p. 228.
'Language' is not to be interpreted in its narrow sense but in the sense in which it includes "all activities of any organ which is expressive in the same way in which speech is expressive". Bodily actions expressing certain emotions are language as much as speech is. Collingwood states that "language is simply bodily expression of emotion, dominated by thought in its primitive form as consciousness", that is, by thought that is not yet truly intellect. 29 A theory like this sees the usual way in which we use the word 'language' as only a highly developed and highly specialized use of the word. It is to be understood that verbal language is not representative of the "universal and fundamental character" of language.

Beneath all the elaboration of specialized organisms lies the primitive life of the cell; beneath all the machinery of word and sentence lies the primitive language of mere utterance, the controlled act in which we express our emotions. 30

To think that verbal language is pre-eminent in the expression of thought is to misunderstand the true nature of speech. Speech is not really a system of sounds as such; like other forms of language, it is a system of gestures, "having the peculiarity that each gesture produces a characteristic sound". 31 Every kind of language, says Collingwood, is originally an offshoot from a language

of total bodily gesture. The primacy of gesture is not one to be found in the past, but is to be placed quite definitely in the present. It is the case that "each one of us, whenever he expresses himself, is doing so with his whole body, and is thus actually talking in this original language of total bodily gesture".32

The specialized verbal development of language is never altogether detached from bodily gesture, its parent organism. Bodily gesture is "nothing but the totality of our motor activities, raised from the psychical level to the conscious level". Collingwood goes on to say:

But that which is raised from the psychical level to the conscious level is converted by the work of consciousness from impression to idea, from object of sensation to object of imagination. The language of total bodily gesture is thus the motor side of our total imaginative experience.33

To think of language as written rather than vocal is to make an even greater mistake, as Collingwood points out to us:

We get still farther away from the fundamental facts about speech when we think of it as something that can be written and read, forgetting that what writing, in our clumsy notation, can represent is only a small part of the spoken sound, where pitch and stress, tempo and rhythm are almost entirely ignored. ... The written or printed book is only a series of hints, as elliptical as the neumes of Byzantine music, from which the reader thus works out for himself the speech-gestures which alone have the gift of expression.34

32. PA, pp. 246-47. 33. PA, p. 247. 34. PA, p. 243.
This is what makes a theory of language distinct from a theory of logic. Croce points out that a part of language is irreducible to logic: that part is "the spell of the music which abides even in the language of prose, governing the phrases, words, and syllables, all the parts of the discourse".  

It is precisely the non-logical quality of language that is important:

Every kind of language is ... a specialized form of bodily gesture, and in this sense it may be said that the dance is the mother of all languages.

Basically language consists of non-logical gestures; and it is with this character of language that we are concerned in the study of art.

5. Speaker and Hearer

As the language of gesture is prior to verbal language, so the importance of language as simple expression is prior to its importance for communication from speaker to hearer. Collingwood makes clear to us the primary self-expressive quality of language:

36. PA, p. 243.
In its most elementary form, language is not addressed to any audience. A child's first utterances are so completely unaddressed that one cannot even describe them as addressed to the world at large or to itself.  

Collingwood suggests that the importance of the speaker and the importance of the hearer come late, and develop together.

Language is primarily self-centered; it is basically concerned with self-expression. This fact is important for the unity of the artist's emotion (which his consciousness has converted from impression to idea) and the expression of this emotion (as idea). "When language is said to express emotion, this means that there is a single experience which has two elements in it." It is worth noting that here Collingwood differs to some extent from Croce; for the latter, who is concerned with 'intuition' rather than 'imagination', intuition and expression are to be identified. There can be no intuition if there is no expression; however, the two are not even theoretically separable. But, for Collingwood, expression is not a sort of dress which is made to fit an emotion that is already in existence: it is an activity without which the experience of the emotion cannot exist. Thus, although the letter of Croce's theory is different from

37. PA, p. 247.  
38. PA, p. 249.
that of Collingwood's, the spirit and the practical result are the same. For Collingwood, emotion and expression are separate elements, it is true, but they cannot exist independently: "Take away the language and you take away what it expresses; there is nothing left but crude feeling at the merely psychic level."\(^39\)

Since the expression is inseparably united with, and not an afterthought to, the idea, "the idea is had as an idea only in so far as it is expressed."\(^40\)

As soon as speech is a function of self-consciousness, a speaker, conscious of himself as speaking, is also a listener to himself: "The experience of speaking is also an experience of listening." The speaker becomes his own first hearer, with the result that he not only expresses his emotions but learns about them too. In this way we come to be faced with what seems at first to be a paradox:

Two statements are both true, which might easily be thought to contradict each other: (1) it is only because we know what we feel that we can express it in words; (2) it is only because we express them in words that we know what our emotions are.\(^41\)

But the problem is quickly resolved; in the first statement we describe ourselves as speakers, and in the second statement as hearers.

\(^{39}\) PA, p. 244. \(^{40}\) PA, p. 249. \(^{41}\) PA, p. 249.
Thus we come to understand other people's ideas in the way that we understand our own: the hearer "speaks to himself with the words that he hears addressed to him, and thus constructs in himself the idea which those words express". The reconstruction of the speaker's ideas in the hearer's consciousness is the basis of communication by language.

6. Language, Grammar, and Logic

The intellectualization of language is to be considered as a secondary development of the language of expressive gesture. This is not to be taken, however, as an indication that intellectualization is of no interest to the aesthetician. The emotions language expresses are not those of a conscious experient alone: they include the emotions of a thinker. The sort of work, such as analytic or abstract work (which thought can do and imagination can never do), ensures that language has to be adapted to intellectual expression, undergoing certain changes. It is because of the intellectualization of language that there comes about grammatical analysis.

By means of the various stages of grammatical analysis, the grammarian endeavors to convert language from a...
state in which it expresses emotion into a secondary state in which it can express thought. This idea, which is essentially Crocean, was perhaps expressed more clearly and completely by Croce in his Aesthetic. There he writes about the fictions of grammar in the following words:

It is false to say that the verb or the noun is expressed in definite words, truly distinguishable from others. Expression is an indivisible whole. Noun and verb do not exist in it, but are abstractions made by us, destroying the sole linguistic reality, which is the sentence. This last is to be understood, not in the way common to grammars, but as an organism expressive of a complete meaning, which includes alike the simplest exclamation and a great poem. This sounds paradoxical, but is nevertheless the simplest truth.42

The logical analysis of language, the complement of grammatical analysis, aims at making language a perfect vehicle for the expression of thought. In effect, however, logical analysis proposes "the conversion of language into something which, if it could be realized, would not be language at all".43 The logician's modification, like the grammarian's, can never be carried out in its entirety, for then language would no longer be language but symbolism. Language can retain its function only in so far as its intellectualization is incomplete. The grammarian's and logician's failures show us that language can in fact never be more than partially intellectualized. As

42. Croce: Aesthetic, p. 148. 43. PA, p. 262.
Croce points out, language is a living idiom which cannot be assimilated to the deadness of logic. 44

However, because of the dual nature of language, we should beware of seeing language as possessing two functions, one of expressing thought, the other of expressing emotion. Collingwood states that

the expression of a thought in words is never a direct or immediate expression. It is mediated through the peculiar emotion which is the emotional charge on the thought. 45

Even the most intellectual language expresses emotion as well as thought. In short, all language (including intellectual language) is expressive.

7. True Expression and Corruption of Consciousness

The activity of speech, the use of language (in the wide sense) is the conversion through consciousness of a psycho-physical activity, on which a given emotion is a charge, into a controlled activity of the organism. Some writers have seen psychical experience as the origin of art; although it is not the origin, psychical experience is a necessary element of art. But it does not survive in its crude state. The primitive psychical feelings are

converted into ideas which are incorporated into the whole of imaginative experience. The relation of the imaginative activity to emotion is a twofold one:

In one way it expresses an emotion which the agent, by thus expressing it, discovers himself to have been feeling independently of expressing it. This is the purely psychical emotion which existed in him before he expressed it by means of language. ... In another way it expresses an emotion which the agent only feels at all in so far as he thus expresses it. This is an emotion of consciousness, the emotion belonging to the act of expression. But these are not two quite independent emotions. The second is not a purely general emotion attendant on a purely general activity of expression, it is a quite individual emotion attendant on the individual act of expressing this psychic emotion and no other. It is thus the psychic emotion itself, converted by the act of consciousness into a corresponding imaginative or aesthetic emotion.46

Once all this is understood, certain problems are easily resolved. Since language is a pure activity, it cannot be 'used': it is not something that is utilizable. To 'use' language is in fact to use only the products of language: this is language, and art, "denatured". Every genuine expression in language and art is an original one. If new artistic expression is found to resemble previous artistic expression, it is only because a unique emotion happens to resemble emotions that have been expressed before. The genuine artistic activity does not borrow or repeat expressions: it creates language anew as it goes.

46. PA, p. 274.
along. Art falsely so called makes use of the dead body of the aesthetic activity of artistic creation, galvanizing what was once a living body into an appearance of life; it is a craft utilizing the products of language (not the living language of art) to produce certain states of mind in its audience.

As a theory which identifies art and language illuminates the distinction between art proper and art falsely so called, so it provides a solution to the problem of separating good art from bad art. Collingwood maintains that any theory of art should be able to show how an artist can tell whether he is pursuing his artistic work successfully or unsuccessfully. But if the artist can do this, he is not indulging in a critical activity following the completion of the activity of expression.

The watching of his own work with a vigilant and discriminating eye, which decides at every moment of the process whether it is being successful or not, is not a critical activity subsequent to, and reflective upon, the artistic work, it is an integral part of that work itself.47

It is important not to confuse bad art with bad expression: to express an emotion, 

and to express it well, are the same thing. To express it badly is not one way of expressing it (not, for example, expressing it, but not selon les règles), it

47. PA, p. 281.
is failing to express it. A bad work of art is an activity in which the agent tries to express a given emotion, but fails. A bad work of art is the activity of a corrupt consciousness; the person has failed to become conscious of his emotion: "what he has done is either to shirk it or to dodge it." This process takes place neither in the region below consciousness nor in consciousness itself; it occurs on the threshold that divides the psychical level from the conscious level of experience. Since this person cannot express a given emotion, he cannot at the same time know whether he is expressing it or not. As a bad artist he is a bad judge of his own art.

Corruption of consciousness is a constant experience in the life of every artist. All artists, and indeed everyone, should be in a constant state of war against it. We can guard against it only by being continually aware of the importance of our every gesture, and by remembering how we have expressed ourselves successfully on other occasions.

Collingwood's strictures against bad art are intended not only for the 'artist' (as we usually understand that term). It is important for us to realize

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48. PA, p. 282.
that they are meant for all those who use language, or, more precisely, engage in linguistic activity (in the wide sense). We all express ourselves, and we must all guard against corruption of consciousness, by taking care to express ourselves successfully. As artists we have all to be continually aware of every gesture we make. And it is in connection with his relations with others that the artist has to be particularly vigilant against any corruption of his consciousness.

8. The Artist's Experience and Externalization

On an initial reading, Collingwood admits, the theory contained in his book suggests that an artist, as a person who expresses himself, in no way needs the co-operation of an audience: art, as the expression of emotion, is not necessarily addressed to anyone at all.

The audience would seem to consist at best of persons whom the artist permits to overhear him as he speaks. Whether anybody so overhears him or not makes no difference to the fact that he has expressed his emotions and has therefore completed the work in virtue of which he is an artist.49

Following this, it seems evident that the artist's efforts to bring himself into relation with an audience

49. PA, p. 300.
must be the result of non-aesthetic motives. This sort of interpretation, Collingwood says, is a mistake: it is to assume that the aesthetic experience is a purely inward one which takes place wholly in the mind of the person enjoying it. Before we can correct this mistake and thus understand what goes on between the artist and his audience, we must examine the relation between the artist's aesthetic experience and the objects in which it is externalized. Simply, the externalization of the experience is necessarily connected with the aesthetic experience itself, and in fact becomes part of that experience.

This is an important point; although several critics of Collingwood's theory are quite correct in maintaining that the work of art is solely the "inner" experience, they have been in a sense unfair to it by not stressing sufficiently the necessity of externalization. A painter, for example, finds that his experience only develops and defines itself in his mind as he paints. In support of this statement, Collingwood reports a real painter as saying:

You see something in your subject, of course, before you begin to paint it (though how much, even of that, you would see if you weren't already a painter is a different question); and that, no doubt, is what induces you to begin painting; but only a
person with experience of painting, and of painting well, can realize how little that is, compared with what you come to see in it as your painting progresses. ... [A] good painter -- any good painter will tell you the same -- paints things because until he has painted them he doesn't know what they are like.50

Thus there is no question of 'externalizing' an inward experience which is already complete in itself. There are two experiences: an inward, imaginative one called 'seeing' and an outward one called 'painting', which together form one single indivisible experience, 'painting imaginatively'. The inner experience grows to include the experience of its own externalization, in this way becoming a fuller and richer experience. (Of course, the experience itself of externalization is still an 'inner' one.) What the painter records in his picture is "not the experience of looking at the subject without painting it, but the far richer and in some ways very different experience of looking at it and painting it together".51

9. The Relationship of Artist and Audience

Having understood the nature of the full experience of the artist, we must turn to the problem of an audience's relation to the artist. The question of collaboration was,

50. PA, pp. 303-4. 51. PA, p. 308.
for Collingwood, very much of a real and contemporary problem; it was certainly not just an academic matter. (This I have pointed out in my Introduction.) It is well worth noting that Collingwood believed that artists in the twentieth century were becoming more interested in problems connected with the functions of an audience.

There are many indications that [artists] are more willing than they were, even a generation ago, to regard their audiences as collaborators. It is perhaps no longer foolish to hope that this way of conceiving the relation between artist and audience may be worth discussing.52

Ideally, according to Collingwood, the spectator in looking at a picture has an experience which repeats the rich experience of the artist. Through the external artistic object the spectator is enabled to reconstruct the true work of art, the original experience of the artist. A picture when seen by someone else, or by the painter himself (once he has actually finished the activity of painting the picture), produces in that person sensuous-emotional, or psychical, experiences. These experiences, following Collingwood's theory of imagination, are raised from impressions to ideas by the imaginative activity of consciousness. They are transmuted by consciousness into a total imaginative experience that is identical with the

52. PA, pp. 312-13.
original experience of the painter. This is the ideal situation, which, it seems, can never be attained in actuality; the problems involved will be explored below. The audience attempts "an exact reconstruction in its own mind of the artist's imaginative experience". This is an endless quest; and the reconstruction can be carried out only in part. An artist may merely accept this, giving himself airs and seeing himself as a kind of transcendent genius whose meaning is always too profound for his audience to grasp in a more than fragmentary way; or he may take his audience's limitations into account as he creates his work, and see its members as determining the subject-matter or meaning of the work itself. So he will see it as his business not to express his own private emotions but to express the emotions he shares with his audience. "Instead of setting up for the great man who (as Hegel says) imposes upon the world the task of understanding him, he will be a humble person, imposing upon himself the task of understanding his world, and thus enabling it to understand itself."\(^5\) Instead of mere communication from artist to audience, there will be something more, collaboration between artist and audience.

53. \textit{PA}, p. 312.
In an expressionist theory of art like Collingwood's, if the artist attaches importance to the judgment of his audience, it must be because he believes that he shares his emotions with them. The audience will be present to him as a factor in his artistic labor, in fact as a definite aesthetic factor:

[The artist] undertakes his artistic labour not as a personal effort on his own private behalf, but as a public labour on behalf of the community to which he belongs. Whatever statement of emotion he utters is prefaced by the implicit rubric, not 'I feel', but 'we feel'. And it is not strictly even a labour undertaken by himself on behalf of the community. It is a labour in which he invites the community to participate; for their function as audience is not passively to accept his work, but to do it over again for themselves. If he invites them to do this, it is because he has reason to think they will accept his invitation, that is, because he thinks he is inviting them to do what they already want to do.54

Indeed, the position of an audience is "very far from that of a licensed eavesdropper"; a performance would not be complete without it. The audience determines by its reception of the performers how the performance will be carried on.

Quite how the sort of communication in question here takes place is not examined. Collingwood gives an example to illustrate what he means.

54. PA, p. 315.
A person accustomed to extempore speaking, for example, knows that if once he can make contact with his audience it will somehow tell him what he is to say, so that he finds himself saying things he had never thought of before. This sort of communication seems to be out of place here, in so far as Collingwood is concerned to be exploring the means of conscious artistic expression. He seems in the example to be harking back to his conception of pre-conscious communication, and giving an example of the communication of psychical feeling rather than conscious emotion; he suggested in an earlier part of The Principles of Art that a sort of 'sympathy' can exist between men and animals, and between men and men, giving as an example the spread of panic in a crowd. The example of the extempore speaker seems to involve that 'indefinable feeling' about an audience rather than anything so tangible and consciously expressive as simple applause. Indeed, applause would probably be the simplest form of conscious communication between an audience and the artist.

Nevertheless, in whatever way communication occurs, an audience is indispensable for the artist. It is the lack of an audience and the consequent impossibility of two-way communication and collaboration which

55. PA, pp. 322-23.  
explain for Collingwood the unsatisfactory nature for artistic purposes of the gramophone, cinema, and wireless.

The importance of the relation between speaker and hearer is not to be found just in the presence of an audience: something much more is involved. According to the technical theory of art, as Collingwood points out, the relation between speaker and hearer is not one in which the speaker communicates his emotions to the hearer; here, "to speak of communicating an emotion, if it means anything, must mean causing another person to have emotions like those which I have myself". With the technical theory, we can at best only know that such emotions are similar. Artist and audience, therefore, can go no further than comparing their emotions, although since one cannot know for certain what another person's emotions really are, even the possibility of comparison seems to be questionable. In their collaboration artist and audience cannot, so to speak, 'go to work' on the same emotion. Because Collingwood's artistic emotion is an 'idea' it can be shared by both artist and audience; and so, he seems to maintain, criticisms based on solipsism do

57. PA, p. 249.
not apply to his theory in the way that they do to a technical theory of art.

Collingwood notes, too, that the artist is dependent on the approbation of his audience, which is in fact very necessary for him.

The man who feels that he has something to say is not only willing to say it in public: he craves to say it in public, and feels that until it has been thus said it has not been said at all.58 And the reception the artist receives from his public cannot be a matter of indifference to him; although he may proclaim to himself that his work is good, unless he sees his own proclamation, "This is good", echoed in the faces of his audience -- "Yes, this is good" -- he wonders whether he was speaking the truth or not. In order for a person to judge an artist's work, Collingwood goes on, he must feel the emotions the artist has expressed. Consequently, the artist invites the community to participate in his labor, "for their function as audience is not passively to accept his work, but to do it over again for themselves". This is true communication and a step towards full collaboration as Collingwood sees it.

Quite literally members of the audience become artists themselves, and in this way true collaboration

58. PA, p. 313.
between the (original) 'artist' and the audience can come about. In order to feel the artist's emotions, in order to become conscious of them, they must re-express these emotions to themselves. And indeed, the audience is to cease being an audience in the everyday meaning of that word, for Collingwood proposes that what is needed for the betterment of art is the creation -- in the case of drama and music, for example -- of "small and more or less stable audiences" in the manner of a club "where the audience are in the habit of attending not only performances but rehearsals, make friends with authors and performers, know about the aims and projects of the group to which they all alike belong, and feel themselves responsible, each in his degree, for its successes and failures".59 Measures of a similar but appropriate kind must be taken in connection with the other arts.

Only in this way can art be saved; and only in this way can our civilization be saved. The community must once more become involved in art. The artist and the community must collaborate, for the artist is the spokesman of his community. The Principles of Art comes to an end with the following conclusion:

59. PA, p. 329.
The artist must prophesy not in the sense that he foretells things to come, but in the sense that he tells his audience, at risk of their displeasure, the secrets of their own hearts. ... The reason why they need him is that no community altogether knows its own heart; and by failing in this knowledge a community deceives itself on the one subject concerning which ignorance means death. For the evils which come from that ignorance the poet as prophet suggests no remedy, because he has already given one. The remedy is the poem itself. Art is the community's medicine for the worst disease of mind, the corruption of consciousness.

10. Some Weaknesses of Collingwood's Theory

Collingwood's concern with the community and his rejection of artistic individualism in the last chapters of The Principles of Art probably come as a surprise to most readers. The conclusions of the earlier theories of the book have made the idea that art has a public character and importance a more or less unacceptable one, despite Collingwood's denials that art is merely self-expression. What has actually happened?

On the one hand, Collingwood agrees that expressionist theories of art in general are fundamentally solipsistic. On the other hand, he maintains that this is not the case with his own theory. He rounds severely on the individualist theory of art as self-expression; he sums up the theory succinctly:
We think of the artist as a self-contained personality, sole author of everything he does: of the emotions he expresses as his personal emotions, and of his expression of them as his personal expression.60

But what else can be the case with Collingwood's own theory of artistic expression?

Collingwood insists, it is true, that although feelings themselves are private, the conversion of feelings to emotions, of impressions to ideas, means that they are now part of thought (albeit at the lowest level), and as such they are public. Ideas, unlike feelings, can be shared; and ideas can be reconstructed time and time again in the consciousness of the same or different persons. But ignoring practical problems, we can find difficulties enough in theory. It is important to remember that the context of the reconstructed idea will be different (and almost always significantly different). Does the artistic idea exist in a self-contained isolation, quite complete in itself and unaffected by its context? Or will the context have an important bearing on the actual reconstructed idea? Even more significantly, the work of art to be reconstructed is not strictly the idea itself, but the very activity of thinking that idea, of expressing it to consciousness. According to Collingwood's idealism, ideas can be shared;

60. PA, p. 315.
but is it possible that the expressive activity can be shared in the same way?

It is easy to discern certain paradoxes in an avowedly non-solipsistic theory like Collingwood's. True collaboration between artist and audience would seem to be impossible since emotions have first to be expressed before they can be shared. The artist has first to express his own emotions; the audience can share them only after this self-expression. But the most important practical question is: If an audience shares an emotion, how is it to know that it does? At best, the audience can only know that it is experiencing similar emotions.

The artist is basically unsure of his audience. Collingwood himself uses the weak word 'think'; the artist attaches importance to his audience because he "thinks that the emotions he has tried to express are emotions not peculiar to himself"; and this must be true of the audience as well. The artist, and each member of his audience, is certain only of his own individual self-expression. Collingwood must be the object of his own strictures:

We even forget what it is that [the artist] expresses, and speak of his work as 'self-expression', persuading ourselves that what makes a poem great is the fact that it 'expresses a great personality', whereas, if self-expression is the order of the day,

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61. PA, p. 315.
whatever value we set on such a poem is due to its expressing not the poet -- what is Shakespeare to us, or we to Shakespeare? -- but ourselves.62

In Collingwood's theory it is in the end only the artist, or the solipsistic individual considered as an artist in the idealistic sense, who counts. It is Collingwood's implicit view that the artist is paramount, a view which leads to what can only be described as a rather weak conception of the sort of collaboration which should be going on between the artist and his audience. It is a weak conception of collaboration so long as the audience is considered as an audience; a strong idea of collaboration can only be developed by making artists (in the usual sense of the word) of the audience, who are actively to take part in the fulfilment of the artist's creative functions.

Despite Collingwood's denials, the central position of the 'imaginative experience' in his theory ensures that it is the artist's expressing himself -- the very activity of expressing himself -- that is art. Since the genuine linguistic act is, in Collingwood's view, expressive rather than communicative (and, in any case, communicative only in a special sense),

62. PA, p. 316.
the audience sees only the product and not the artist's whole activity itself.

Of course, this is inevitable in Collingwood's theory. The audience is to re-create the artistic activity for itself. This function of the audience, however, does not detract from the artist's paramountcy for Collingwood, because he concerns himself chiefly with the expression of the artist's ideas rather than with the audience's correct reconstruction of them. Yet it is surely the problem of how correct reconstruction by the audience is going to take place that is important in a consideration of the artist's relationship with the community.

If we follow Collingwood's theory, we must concede in addition that art is the activity in which we find out about our own emotions, not about those of others. The artist can know only his own emotions, and the same is true of the audience, indeed, of each individual member of the audience. Even if we find out about those emotions we believe we share with other people, we find out about them only because, and only in so far as, they are our own. It would appear that there is no way of saving the conception of emotions from a slide into the solipsism that Collingwood holds
to be a property of feelings. The word 'know' need be given no unrealistic and unattainable meaning for us to have to admit that to know that we share an artist's ideas is impossible.

Collaboration, however, is impossible for another reason. Collingwood has already pointed out that emotions can only be known through expression. How, then, is the artist to know the emotions of the community in order that he may express them? For him to become acquainted with them they will have to be expressed; but, according to Collingwood, it is precisely the business of the artist to express them in order that they may become known. It is difficult to understand how the artist is to go about having the emotions of his community so that his expressing of them will have communal significance, before the emotions in question have been expressed at all. If, on the contrary, the artist does have the emotions of the community, then they must already have been expressed, and the artist's work has been done. The confusion is quite serious, and can be due only to an attempt by Collingwood to deny the individualistic consequences of the artistic activity and language. If Collingwood's theory is to remain unmodified, the conclusion the reader must draw is that any
collaboration between the artist and the community cannot even be initiated.

Nevertheless, this difficulty need not be a fatal one, if a change is permitted in Collingwood's theory. As the theory stands, it appears certain that true collaboration, in the sense that artist and audience 'go to work' on the same emotion is impossible. True collaboration is possible, I believe, only if an aesthetic importance is given to the artistic 'product' (the 'work of art' in the everyday sense). Quite what I think is the significance of the artistic 'product' and of externalization in general, I hope to show in Chapter IV. There too I shall discuss the nature of the audience's functions, for they are distinct from those of the artist. Collingwood has to make artists of his audience to solve the problem of communication and collaboration (although this idea itself fails in the end); but artist and audience are separate, and must be kept so, for their functions are both complementary and necessary to each other.
III

THE BREAKDOWN OF COLLINGWOOD'S THEORY

1. The Artistic Nature of All Language

At first we may baulk at the suggestion that all expression is language and all language is art. This is certainly the natural reaction of 'common sense' to the problems involved. But I believe that even if Collingwood's theory is understood and considered sympathetically, it will be found to break down. The theory, when we examine its consequences, ends in extravagance and pointlessness. I hope to show in this chapter that the conclusion of Collingwood's theory must be that we cannot apply in an aesthetic sense to conscious activity such concepts as genuineness, truth, and goodness, for all our conscious activities will be found aesthetically equal in these respects.

As we read The Principles of Art, we realize that Collingwood is suggesting that expressiveness is a sufficient condition of art as well as a necessary one. Yet many expressive utterances are trivial beyond consideration; and many so-called expressive acts are, in another
way, abstractly intellectual. But this is not Collingwood's belief. "Collingwood's definition," says Alan Donagan in his book, The Later Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood, "entails that you must recognize as works of art, on the one hand, every racy and lively contribution to conversation, every significant gesture; and on the other, every scientific and philosophical treatise written with an eye steadily on its subject."¹ Collingwood readily admits that not only conversation but gestures too fall within the province of art; an Italian peasant, for example, carries out fully expressive linguistic acts in gestures and hence creates art: "a dispute between Italian peasants is conducted hardly more in words than in a highly elaborated language of manual gestures," a language which is fully expressive, and as such is art.² And the most intellectualized language too is still artistic, however much its user may try to rid it of its expressiveness:

Language intellectualized by the work of grammar and logic is never more than partly intellectualized, and ... it retains its function as language only in so far as its intellectualization is incomplete.³

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¹ Donagan: op. cit., p. 130.  
² PA, p. 242.  
³ PA, p. 263.
Language is expressive, and Collingwood believes that expressiveness is a sufficient condition of art; all discourse is art. T. M. Knox has seen this idea as one of Collingwood's later aberrations; and it may fairly be said that Collingwood did not grasp for some time the full implications of his aesthetic theory. Yet Croce had seen from the start that if art is expression, then all living speech is art.

This is one of the statements in aesthetics that contemporary English-speaking philosophers typically find unacceptable. Even Donagan refuses to accept it fully by making a distinction -- nowhere present as an aesthetic consideration in Collingwood's later work -- between major art and minor art; he writes that "there is, however, all the difference in the world between a major artist and an ordinary man whose utterances are genuinely expressive". One point that Collingwood's theory makes is precisely that there is not all the difference in the world between the two; in the matter of expression itself there cannot be such a difference.

The distinction Collingwood himself draws is rather between the work of a person who is self-consciously

an 'artist' and the artistic activities of everyday people. If there is a distinction, it is to be found in people not in activities; for aesthetically, activities are equal. But even the distinction between an artist and an ordinary person is one that is not much stressed; in any case, it is not relevant to the arguments of The Principles of Art.

To talk of the artist as 'self-conscious' in this connection means no more than that the audience is present to him as a factor in his work. But the presence of an audience is not a determining factor in art: it is one aesthetic factor among others.

The audience is perpetually present [to the artist] ... as an aesthetic factor, defining what the problem is which as an artist he is trying to solve -- what emotions he is to express -- and what constitutes a solution of it.6 The distinction between the 'artist' and the ordinary person is not parallel to the distinction between art and what is not art.

In using language, in engaging in linguistic activities in a creative way, we are all artists. To describe Collingwood as distinguishing between 'major' art and 'minor' art for aesthetic purposes, and to suggest that there is all the difference in the world between

6. PA, p. 315.
the artist and the ordinary man is misleading. Even as members of an audience we are artists in the true sense of that word: "If art is the activity of expressing emotions, the reader is an artist as well as the writer." Most importantly, Collingwood states explicitly: "There is no distinction in kind between artist and audience." Nor is there any difference in kind between the 'artist' and the ordinary man, although it is easy to use the term 'artist' as if there were; as Collingwood himself points out:

I have been speaking of 'the artist' ... as if artists were persons of a special kind, differing somehow either in mental endowment or at least in the way they use their endowment from the ordinary persons who make up their audience. But this segregation of artists from ordinary human beings belongs to the conception of art as craft; it cannot be reconciled with the conception of art as expression.

The non-qualitative nature of the distinction between linguistic acts was made very clear by Croce in his *Aesthetic*:

The whole difference [between artistic intuition and 'ordinary' intuition] is quantitative, and as such, indifferent to philosophy, *scientia qualitatum*. Certain men have a greater aptitude, a more frequent inclination fully to express certain complex states of the soul. These men are known in ordinary language as artists. Some very complicated and difficult expressions are not often achieved and these are called works of art.

Naturally, the sort of artist with whom Collingwood deals at the end of *The Principles of Art*, is the artist who is aware of an audience as able to collaborate with him, and is concerned to express himself in a significant way, setting about his work in a self-conscious manner. But this sort of 'self-conscious' art is not the concern of the artist alone; even here, 'artist' is not a term referring to a special sort of man. If the artist succeeds in achieving a true relation with the community, then his audience too will have become artists.

It is important to keep in mind that there is in Collingwood's theory no qualitative difference between the expressive activity of the artist and the expressive activity of the ordinary man. Each person's expression is open to the same aesthetic considerations and criticisms. Having understood this, we may go on to consider the implications of a theory which identifies art and language.

2. The Results of Identifying Art and Language

It is obviously difficult to agree with Collingwood's statement that every utterance and every gesture each one of us makes is a work of art. It is no less easy to agree that it is because of this that each one of us has to be
conscious at all times of the effort towards expression of emotions and the effort to overcome corruption of consciousness. Prepared as we are to accept that we must always use language (both words and gestures) with the utmost care, we may find it difficult to acknowledge that we should do this because our every gesture and utterance is a work of art. Is this not going to make art in effect an empty concept? If everything we say or do is, or should be, a work of art, how can 'art' become for us an adequately clear concept, or retain any sort of peculiar meaning?

A problem similar to the one encountered here has occurred and been criticized in Italian philosophy of art. One of Gentile's pupils, Ugo Spirito, took Gentile's dictum that artistic experience is a necessary component of every act of consciousness, and carried it to the extreme of identifying art and life. Inevitably, the result is that any art criticism becomes impossible, since no human experience can rightly be considered to be less 'artistic' than any other. In the case of Collingwood's ideas, examination of his belief that every linguistic act is a work of art leads us to discover a


12. For a short but full treatment of this development, see Calogero: "Aesthetics in Italy", in Philosophy in the Mid-Century, Volume III (Florence, 1958).
similar impossibility. 'Art' becomes a term so all-embracing that aesthetic criticism is ruled out.

Granted even that art is identical with language, the term 'art' surely distinguishes one sort of linguistic activity from another. We might be able to succeed in separating 'art' (genuine linguistic activities) from 'art falsely so called' (linguistic activities which are in some sense not genuine); we might be able to go on to distinguish good art (successfully expressive linguistic activities) from bad art (linguistic activities that have failed to be expressive); yet it would still be evident that 'good art' must exclude many linguistic activities where expressiveness just is not in question at all -- activities which would still be quite legitimate and 'good' from a linguistic point of view.

We should have to say that such linguistic activities come under the rubric of 'not art'. Since language and art are identical, it would seem to follow naturally if we were to call these activities 'language falsely so called' (but not, I suppose, 'art falsely so called', since, with few exceptions, nobody has ever sought to call them art). Yet such functions as communication (the conveying of information) seem to belong genuinely to language. Collingwood, however, is forced
to maintain that there can be no true linguistic acts which are purely informative: every linguistic activity is of necessity expressive. Even "Two and two are four" must as a linguistic act be expressive (and hence must be art). At this point the theory, at least implicitly, seems to approach absurdity.

The fact is that by developing Collingwood's theory of art, language, and expressiveness, we find eventually that all conscious activity is art. The aesthetic becomes a universal feature of consciousness. Quite how this comes about has now to be shown in more detail, by re-examining other parts of Collingwood's theory of art.

3. The Imaginative and the Intellectual

In order to see how Collingwood's theory leads to an extreme position (to which Collingwood himself would certainly not have subscribed), we must first consider the basic distinctions made by Collingwood in the earlier parts of The Principles of Art, and compare them with the statements he makes about language in the last sections of the book. It will then be easy to understand how an absurd position regarding the nature of art is bound to follow; it is a position which not only contradicts the
main points of the first two parts of Collingwood's book, but which also, since it leaves no room for anything that is conscious activity and yet not art, leaves no unique meaning to the concept of art. Thus, any form of general aesthetic discussion as such comes to be ruled out, at least in the way in which discussion of art takes place at the present time (that is, a discussion centering on such questions as "Is this art?" or "Is this good art?").

In The Principles of Art there are three important distinctions drawn by Collingwood. Art is to be distinguished from pseudo-art (or 'not art', or 'art falsely so called'); good art is to be distinguished from bad art; the imaginative is to be distinguished from the intellectual. Each of these distinctions must be considered in turn: it will be best to start with the last one.

To believe that all language is art, that all language partakes (or should, or could legitimately, partake) of expressiveness, that all linguistic acts contain some non-rational element, is to overemphasize the non-rational aspect of language at the expense of its logical aspect. It is an overemphasis that is complemented perhaps by the way that other thinkers have ignored the non-rational in their efforts to make sense logically of language. It is true that Collingwood does not deny that there is a logical
element in language, but a logical element does not seem to him to be part of language proper. He believes, however, that there is a non-rational expressive quality in every genuine linguistic activity, and even in purely logical languages. The result is the disappearance of the distinction between symbolism (such as logic and mathematics) and language proper, not through an assimilation of language to logic, but rather through the presence of expression in the apparently pure symbolism of logic, mathematics, and other intellectual disciplines.

A mathematical or logical or any other kind of symbol is invented to serve a purpose purely scientific; it is supposed to have no emotional expressiveness whatever. But when once a particular symbolism has been taken into use and mastered, it reacquires the emotional expressiveness of language proper. 13

And the same is true of technical terms.

The source of this extreme view is to be found in Croce, who, distinguishing between the imaginative and the intellectual, qualifies his distinction by stating that the two forms of knowledge, aesthetic and intellectual or conceptual, are indeed different, but this does not altogether amount to separation and disjunction, as of two forces each pulling in its own direction.

The independence of the intellectual and the aesthetic is not reciprocal, for the intellectual cannot stand without the aesthetic. 14 Thinking itself has an aesthetic quality.

The man who thinks has impressions and emotions, in so far as he thinks. His impression and emotion will be ... the effort of his thought itself, with the pain and the joy, the love and the hate joined to it. This effort cannot but assume an intuitive form, in becoming objective to the spirit. To speak is not to think logically; but to think logically is also to speak.¹⁵

In this way the difference between language and logic, a difference which Collingwood insists strongly upon at times, cannot fail to disappear, simply because of the extreme nature of Collingwood's (and Croce's) theory. Language may not be logic, but logic in the end must become language. Admittedly, there are still differences between language and logic, or language and mathematics. But are these differences relevant to aesthetic questions? Language and logic, language and mathematics are equivalent in their possession of expressiveness, although they may have, according to Collingwood, their own sorts of expressiveness.

The distinction between the imaginative and the intellectual had already implicitly broken down in the work of Croce, as indicated above, before Collingwood set about writing The Principles of Art. The aesthetic and the intellectual are not reciprocally independent of each other: logic is also language. But if this is true, logic and language, the aesthetic and the intellectual,

surely cannot be two distinct, and in some sense equal, forms of knowledge. The conclusion to be derived from Croce's statements must be that all knowledge is aesthetic but some has an intellectual content. "There is poetry without prose, but not prose without poetry."\(^{16}\) If conceptual thought has to "assume an intuitive form, in becoming objective to the spirit", the question whether whatever is under consideration has 'arisen' in the intellect or in the world of feeling ceases to be aesthetically relevant, since everything has, so to speak, to 'pass through intuition' to find its expression. The intellectual, as well as the 'purely' intuitive, becomes intuitive knowledge. To say that the intuitive and the intellectual are two forms of knowledge -- a statement that bestows implicitly some form of equality on them -- is misleading. It is the case rather that the intellectual is knowledge subsidiary to intuitive knowledge: in so far as the intellectual is knowledge it is intuitive knowledge. The case is the same with Collingwood, who, in talking of scientific discourse, maintains that even the symbols of logic and mathematics, when they form part of the activity of man and become a language, acquire the expressiveness of language proper.

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Collingwood himself comes to admit that any distinction between the imaginative and the intellectual breaks down. Vico and Croce saw philosophy and poetry as separate and opposed, as the universal to the particular; yet Collingwood has in the end to admit that artistically they are the same. He says that

the distinction between philosophical writing (and what I say applies equally to historical and scientific writing) and poetical or artistic writing is either wholly illusory, or else it applies only to a distinction between bad philosophical writing and good poetic, or bad poetic and good philosophical, or bad philosophical and bad poetic. Good philosophy and good poetry are not two different kinds of writing, but one; each is simply good writing. In so far as each is good, each converges, as regards style and literary form, with the other; and in the limiting case where each was as good as it ought to be, the distinction would disappear. 17

The dichotomy between the imaginative and the intellectual ceases to exist. But this is not all that breaks down. It remains to be seen how Collingwood's other two distinctions, between art proper and pseudo-art, and between good art and bad art, are bound to collapse, once the implications of Collingwood's theory are worked out.

17. PA, p. 298.
4. Art and Pseudo-art

The distinction between art and pseudo-art is one which Collingwood takes much trouble to explain. Indeed, it is the very foundation of The Principles of Art; for until art has been separated from what is not art and what is falsely called art, its true nature (and, consequent on that, the true function of the artist) cannot be established. Art is not craft, magic, or amusement: it is imaginative expression. It should be noted, however, that examples of pseudo-art may very well be works of art; but if it is the case that they are, it is not in virtue of their being craft, magic, or amusement.

In fact, the distinction between art and pseudo-art cannot survive the identification of art and language. It should be made clear that Collingwood makes three kinds of statements regarding the identity of art and language. First, he suggests that only some linguistic activity need be art, while non-artistic activity is very necessary for society; for example, "magic is a thing which every community must have".18 Second, he seems to insist that every linguistic activity should be art (if we can assume that language should also aim at truthfulness);

18. PA, p. 278.
but he leaves open the possibility that it might fail to be art without ceasing to be language. He says: "It is a matter of fact that discourse in which a determined attempt is made to state truths retains an element of emotional expressiveness." \(^{19}\) Third, he categorically states that every linguistic activity is (ipso facto, it seems) art: "Every utterance and every gesture that each one of us makes is a work of art." \(^{20}\)

Obviously only the third of these statements is compatible with the identification of art and language and the view that every linguistic activity is art. The second statement could perhaps be modified to read that every linguistic activity should be good art (since it should aim at truth), if we allow for the time being that good art differs from bad art. It is incompatible with the statement that every linguistic activity is art, because it allows that language, although it should be art, may in fact not be art. The first statement simply cannot be accepted with the assertion that art and language are identical.

To point this out is not to suggest that there is no such thing as craft or magic or amusement, Collingwood's three kinds of 'art falsely so called'. But they

\(^{19}\) PA, p. 264. \(^{20}\) PA, p. 285.
must be classes within 'art' as a whole, rather than classes that are in some sense equal with (but not exclusive of) the class of 'art'. They are all activities of consciousness: they consist of gestures or verbal utterances, and so they must be art. Collingwood's all-embracing dictum, that our every gesture and utterance is art, is not an aberration, as Knox suggests; it is an inevitable corollary of the identification of art and language. It means that nothing can be craft or magic or amusement and not be art; it means that we should have to say, for example, that craft is that particular linguistic activity, that particular sort of art which is craft. Craft, magic and amusement are not, therefore, types of pseudo-art, but genuine art.

Just as the distinction between the intellectual and the intuitive or imaginative breaks down with the result that an intellectual quality becomes a possible attribute of the imaginative, so craft, magic, amusement, and art cannot be seen as various forms of activity: the first three are rather possible forms of the artistic activity. The most that can be said is that to think that art is craft will not lead us into the mistake of judging a work of craft to be a work of art (for this is evidently no longer a mistake); but it will lead us to
employ the wrong criteria in judging the work of craft as a work of art. Art may not be craft, magic, or amusement; but craft, magic, and amusement are all art.

5. Good Art and Bad Art

It seems that all we have left of Collingwood's original distinctions is the one between good and bad art. So far it is still intact. But on examination, it will be found that it has to disappear. In the chapter on art and truth Collingwood states that "an imaginative construction which expresses a given emotion is not merely possible, it is necessary". It is necessitated by the emotion it expresses, for it is the only construction which will express it. The artist creates a particular work of art not because he can create it, but because he must.

Yet is it not plain that warnings against corruption of consciousness must now cease to have any point? It has already been admitted by Collingwood that a person cannot recognize bad art for what it is at the time he produces it (although this statement conflicts with a previous one to the effect that criticism is not subsequent to the activity of creation). However, the artist is able to protect

himself against bad art by resorting to his memory in order to remember what good art is like, that is, how he has expressed himself successfully on previous occasions. But it is important to note that this can be done only when the artist's failure to express himself is in effect complete. According to Collingwood, the corrupt consciousness shirks what it is its business to face. A false consciousness disowns its feelings, by saying to itself that that particular feeling is not its own (although this is impossible if it is true that feelings are immediate to consciousness). A bad work of art is the unsuccessful attempt to become conscious of a given emotion, that is, to express it; but a person who tries to become conscious of a given emotion and fails is no longer in a state of sheer unconsciousness or innocence about it. It seems, therefore, that the artist has the choice between expressing his emotions and avoiding expressing them.

However, immediately after the section on corrupt consciousness, Collingwood writes:

If what an artist says on a given occasion is the only thing which on that occasion he can say; and if the generative act which produces that utterance is an act of consciousness, and hence an act of thought; it follows that this utterance, so far from being indifferent to the distinction between truth and falsehood, is necessarily an attempt to state the truth.
So far as the utterance is a good work of art, it is a true utterance; its artistic merit and its truth are the same thing.23

Collingwood's talk of corrupt consciousness in the previous section implied quite definitely that it is a state we can do something about, even at the time of our activity. But with the rider that we can only do something about the corruption of consciousness after a corrupt activity is over, the falseness of a corrupt consciousness seems less certain. In the passage above Collingwood insists that whatever we express, we must express it at the time, and only in one way; this entails, in fact, that even the expressions of a corrupt consciousness are genuine expressions at the time they are made. What the artist says is the only thing he can say; resulting from an act of consciousness, it is necessarily an attempt to state the truth and a genuine expression. In order for the expressions of a corrupt consciousness not to be genuine, the artist would have to know what true expression was simultaneously with his corrupt activity; yet, if the artist knew what true expression was, true expression would have already taken place in his consciousness. If the artist knew what he was doing in this way, his consciousness would not be

23. PA, p. 287.
corrupt. The expressions of a corrupt consciousness are genuine enough from the artist's point of view.

There is here, I believe, a confusion between expression and externalization. Collingwood repeatedly says that the artist 'tries' to express a given emotion; but, in order for him to try, it is necessary for the artist to know what it is that he is trying to do. If he does know what he is trying to do, then the emotion has already been expressed. Thus, there can be no question of trying; the emotion either is or is not expressed. A discussion of 'trying' does not make sense in connection with the problem of 'expressing' an emotion understood as 'becoming conscious' of an emotion. But the problem of trying to 'externalize' an imaginative experience can be considered, as I hope to be able to show later.

It is evident that the artist must create what he does create. The activities of a corrupt consciousness are in fact perfectly genuine examples of expression. Indeed, corruption of consciousness, since it is not actually in consciousness itself, but on the threshold dividing the psychical level from the conscious level, should be seen as a 'facet', and a perfectly genuine part, of the emotion as it is expressed in consciousness.
It seems in any case that to talk of a corrupt consciousness is itself to make use of a misnomer; the damage is done, so to speak, before emotions have reached consciousness proper. At the true conscious level, the emotion expressed (corrupt or not) is perfectly genuine. Either this is the case, or Collingwood’s theory of the imaginative experience as immediate must be abandoned. If the artist somehow stand back -- and he would have to be able to do this for Collingwood’s ideas about corruption of consciousness to remain unchanged -- so that experience and object of experience were separate, then there could be no claims of immediacy with regard to experience at the imaginative level.

The activity of a corrupt consciousness, considered as activity, is actually an expression: it turns out to be a true expression of a corrupt consciousness. Failed expression is no expression at all, and therefore not subject to aesthetic criticism. But "to express, and to express well, are the same thing". 24

Truth is therefore present even in the falsified expressions of a corrupt consciousness. Artistic merit and truth are the same thing: there can be no difference between what was formerly described as good art and bad

24. PA, p. 282.
Although the collapse of the third distinction is due not to the identification of art and language but rather to making the presence of expression the criterion of good art, the reinstatement of a division between art (as imaginative experience) and language, between the artistic activity and the linguistic product, is one way of distinguishing once more good art from bad. I shall go more fully into this in the next chapter.

6. The Need to Separate Art and Language

If we develop Collingwood's theory through to its natural conclusions, all conscious activity turns out to be true expression and, consequently, art in the fullest sense. And all art, it is now seen, must aesthetically be equal in its validity, genuineness, truth, and goodness.

From the view that expressive language is art, we progressed through the notion that our every gesture is art to find that art includes even intellectual thought and language. And Collingwood's aesthetic position can be shown analogically to extend to the inclusion within art of all conscious activity. (From here it is only a short step to accepting the dictum that "all life is art".) The theory which at first seemed very 'sensible', whether one
disagreed with it or not, seems to have degenerated into one which ends, not just by blurring the distinctions it used as the starting-point of its argument, but by obliterating them altogether, thus leaving the concept at the center of the argument effectively meaningless. Art ceases to be one human activity among others, and becomes all conscious human activity. There can no longer be any difference between art and art falsely so called; but, in addition, there can no longer be any difference even between good art and bad art, between the activities of a true consciousness and those of a corrupt consciousness.

The sort of problems that arise from Collingwood's theory are not confined to his theory alone. In fact, they are bound to arise in any theory that identifies aesthetics and the philosophy of language. Once such an identification has been made, there can no longer be any way of distinguishing for aesthetic purposes one linguistic activity from any other. One is bound to conclude that all human conscious activity, both of an intuitive or imaginative nature and of an intellectual nature is truly art.

Collingwood himself sees that the world is wholly art for the artist. This idea is not the same as the idea that all activity is art, yet in some ways the two
ideas are obviously closely connected. "The artistic consciousness (that is, consciousness as such) does not distinguish between itself and its world, its world being for it simply what is here and now experienced." Consequently, the artist's world and his knowledge of it is his knowledge of himself; his world is his language, and it is the language in which his emotion utters itself to his consciousness. His world is a world consisting of language: it is "a world where everything has the property of expressing emotion".25

Yet this universality of emotion for the artistic consciousness (and that is, it should be emphasized, consciousness as such) seems to be going too far. It is only by seeing that some things at least can be non-artistic that the concept of art can be given a full value. The very universality of expressiveness (and thus of art) obliterates the useful distinctions Collingwood has made earlier in The Principles of Art. It is my belief that it is these distinctions which should be saved, while a theory of universal art should be abandoned. The chief fault is to be found in the identification of art and language; once we come to see that art differs from language, Collingwood's distinctions between what is art and what is not art may be

25. PA, pp. 290-91.
restored, and in addition to this, a better relationship between the artist and the community may be conceived.

The remainder of *The Principles of Art* can survive without the section on the identity of art and language. Indeed it will be strengthened. It is only by realizing that art and language are separate, that the distinctions between art and pseudo-art can be maintained. It is only by giving language a function of its own that there can be the fullest collaboration between the artist and his audience. The way in which the problem may be solved I intend to show in the next chapter.
IV

ART, LANGUAGE, AND THE COMMUNITY

1. The Place of Expression in Communication

As we have seen, Collingwood's identification of art and language leads to extreme conclusions. This fact, however, ought not to hinder our seeing the useful points and insights of the theory, as well as its importance as a base for understanding the relationship of art and language, and of the artist and the community. Of course, it has to be acknowledged that if we see all linguistic activity as expression and art, we are left with little that is worth saying about art as such. Aesthetic judgments, surely, are to be applied only to certain fields of conscious activity.

True, we can maintain the universality of the artistic activity and begin some kind of meaningful discussion, if we distinguish, as Donagan does, between major art and minor art: we can see certain activities as complete 'works of art' and other activities as only involving artistic qualities without being complete works of art themselves. But this is already to be unfaithful to Collingwood's own theory. To distinguish between major art and minor art
is to set about making the qualitative distinctions which Collingwood disallowed for aesthetic purposes -- by saying, for example, that this activity is true art, whereas that activity only has aesthetic qualities, and is not art in any full sense.

The sort of distinction that does have to be set up in order to make of art a meaningful concept is not a qualitative one within the concept of art, but rather a distinction between what is art and what is not art. This Collingwood has already done in the first chapters of *The Principles of Art*, but his identification of art and language, as I have shown, destroys the careful distinctions he has drawn between art and the various sorts of pseudo-art. It is evident that to be able to make real use of the concept of art, it is necessary for us to see art and language as separate.

To understand how it is possible to distinguish between art and language, it will be best to deal first with the informative aspects of language. It must be admitted that language is often used not to express emotion (with no primary regard for an audience) but to communicate information specifically to another person. It is interesting to examine Collingwood's ideas about the necessity of emotion in communicative, and
seemingly non-expressive, statements. (I shall use the word 'communicative' rather than 'informative' to talk about scientific discourse, for example, in order to stress the fact that it is not self-referential in the way 'expressive' discourse seems to be; expressive discourse, it should be noted, is informative as well, albeit in a different way from scientific discourse.)

Scientific statements are among the most significant examples of communicative rather than expressive language. It is often true, as Collingwood points out, that nevertheless intellectual statements can be truly expressive.

The emotions of consciousness are expressed by language in its primitive and original form; but intellect has its emotions too, and these must have an appropriate expression, which must be language in its intellectualized form. ... When someone utters scientific discourse, saying, for example: 'The chemical formula of water is H₂O,' the tone and tempo of his voice make his emotional attitude towards the thought he is expressing clear to any attentive listener. ... But in our writing and printing there is no notation for these tonal differences. ... [The reader] is tempted to believe that the scientific discourse is the written or printed words, and that the spoken words are either simply this over again, or this plus something else, namely emotional expression. ¹

But this is precisely what is the case on most occasions; and the examples Collingwood gives to show that emotional expression is significant are quite obviously exceptions.

¹. PA, pp. 264-65.
What is of importance with regard to scientific discourse -- whether or not Collingwood's belief, that emotional tone always accompanies scientific discourse, is true -- is that the emotional tone of the speaker is, as a general rule, quite irrelevant to the statement he is making. The teacher may be bored with the chemistry lesson, with the result that his statement that the formula of water is $H_2O$ is made in a markedly tired tone of voice; but we must remember that a particular tone has nothing to do with a statement about the formula of water (or most other scientific, logical and mathematical statements) in the way it would usually have something to do with the statement, say, "My love is like a red, red rose." A difference between the imaginative and the intellectual is the relevance of expressiveness.

Of course there can be exceptions: the teacher may say a particular sentence in a bored tone with the intent, not of informing his class of the formula of water, but rather of expressing intentionally to them his disenchantment with the subject of chemistry. Then we should be inclined to say, not that the expression is irrelevant to the meaning of the sentence, but that the particular meaning (that is, the scientific meaning) of the statement made is largely irrelevant to what the teacher is
intending to express. (It is not completely irrelevant, since if the teacher is trying to express a disenchantment with chemistry, it is appropriate that he should express his boredom through a sentence connected with chemistry.) It should be remarked in addition that, in any case, the teacher's pupils should, in normal circumstances, be concerned to disregard as completely as possible the emotions of the teacher in so far as they are irrelevant to the chemistry lesson. The emotions of an artist in his expressive activity are most certainly not to be disregarded.

It is evident that there is a considerable difference between true artistic expressiveness and the expressiveness that may be involved in intellectual discourse. It is a difference found in the relation of any emotions expressed to the meaning of what is actually said. Any expressiveness that may be involved is usually irrelevant to the statements made by mathematicians, logicians or scientists.

It is not the case, however, as Collingwood would have us believe, that scientific discourse has its own peculiar emotions, different from the ones involved in the more 'everyday' sort of speech and action. It should be noticed that the emotions concerned in Collingwood's
own examples of scientific discourse seem, in fact, to be the emotions involved in 'ordinary' linguistic activity; we are given no clues at all regarding the nature of emotions peculiar to scientific discourse.

The confusion -- for so I believe it is -- is illuminating. It shows us clearly (as does the exceptionalness of an example like Collingwood's "The king of Utopia died last Sunday", where expressiveness is relevant) that there are a large number of statements (and gestures too, for it would be easy to show, in a way similar to the treatment of intellectual statements above, that emotion is not relevant to all gestures) which do not, or are not intended to, express either principally or incidentally a subjective state of the 'artist'. Such statements are intended to communicate to an audience information about a subject quite external to the speaker, or to perform some other function completely unconnected with the speaker's emotions.

While recognizing that there are other kinds of linguistic activities, we could, regarding linguistic activities relevant to this discussion, make a rough division of them into expressive and communicative activities, into those that are self-centered and those that are directed towards other people. Yet to divide
language into expression and communication still leaves untouched Collingwood's main problem, the relation of the artist to his audience. In this respect, criticisms of a theory that art is primarily expression are still valid. Scientific language could be seen as fully communicative, while artistic language might still be thought of as solipsistic. The audience, it might still be maintained, could attempt to re-create the artistic experience only through what is fundamentally guesswork.

Collingwood believes that language is basically expression. Despite his denials, implicit in his beliefs is -- as I have shown -- the idea that language is self-expression. In addition, language, properly speaking, is not the linguistic 'product' but the linguistic activity itself. These two points together reinforce each other in demonstrating to us, as I have already pointed out, that expression, language, and art cannot be anything but solipsistic. To give Collingwood's theory any consequence for the community, it is necessary to bring communication back as a genuine function of all language, and to reinstate the linguistic product as fully a part of language proper.

If the artist wishes to express his emotions to an audience as well as himself -- and the 'self-conscious'
artist, it will be recalled, actually needs an audience -- then, it must be conceded, the artistic activity must involve not just expression but expression and communication together. If the artist could only think that his audience could understand him, and if he studied Collingwood's theory of artistic and linguistic activity with its inevitable solipsistic consequences, he would almost certainly admit defeat from the start and would scarcely be able to care whether his work was available to an audience.

Regarding the conception of the artist's relationship with the community, the last sections of The Principles of Art are at variance with the rest of the book. One suspects that Collingwood had somehow realized at last the calamitous social consequences of a theory stressing the linguistic activity at the expense of the 'product'. The last chapters seem an attempt to rescue the conception of art proper from the taint of solipsism, in order to give art meaning for society as a whole.

2. The Aesthetic Status of the Linguistic Product

Before continuing further with a criticism of Collingwood's ideas on the artist and the community (in particular of his elitist conception of an audience), I feel
that the question how Collingwood's theory of language may be modified should be answered. It is necessary to understand the importance of the linguistic product and its relationship with the work of art proper (the imaginative experience). Once this is done, it can be seen that an artistic elite is no longer necessary.

What is needed is a solution to the problem of the status of language; but it must be a solution which will not do violence to the rest of Collingwood's theory. It must leave intact the significance of imagination and expression, and the distinction between art proper and the various forms of pseudo-art. Such a solution is to be found, I believe, in the thought of Gentile. This is not inappropriate: Gentile collaborated with Croce, and, in addition, undoubtedly influenced Collingwood.²

Idealist theories of art, seeing the work of art in the mind of the artist or the reader, inevitably lead, implicitly or explicitly, to the view that there are as many works of art as there are members of the audience. In the case of books, for example, Gentile originally maintained that

the book which is read is not ... the book of the first author, but the book of the reader. In other

words, every book can be said to have as many authors as it has readers.\(^3\)

Indeed, Collingwood suggests as much in his discussion of how communication by language works.

The hearer ... takes what he hears exactly as if it were speech of his own: he speaks to himself with the words that he hears addressed to him, and thus constructs in himself the idea which those words express. At the same time, being conscious of the speaker as a person other than himself, he attributes that idea to this other person. Understanding what some one says to you is thus attributing to him the idea which his words arouse in yourself; and this implies treating them as words of your own.\(^4\)

And Collingwood goes on to describe a relationship between speaker and hearer, which, in view of the later importance he attaches to the relations between artist and audience, are characterized by a certain casualness. There can be no absolute assurance that the hearer understands the speaker.

The only assurance we possess is an empirical and relative assurance. ... If they understand each other well enough to go on talking, they understand each other as well as they need; and there is no better kind of understanding which they can regret not having attained.\(^5\)

It is obvious that Collingwood would have to accede to the ideas contained in Gentile's earlier work. Collingwood agrees that it is up to the hearer to bring

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4. PA, p. 250.
5. PA, p. 251.
about in his own consciousness the reconstruction of the idea expressed by the words he hears. But since the linguistic product cannot be considered an intrinsic part of the artistic activity, the two experiences of the speaker and hearer remain quite separate and distinct. The so-called reconstruction, therefore, would seem practically to be no more than a simple 'construction' of a work of art in the hearer's own consciousness.

However, there is a way of escape from this solipsistic position. In his later work Gentile put forward the idea that art should be viewed as self-translation. It is an idea that can be of considerable use in the criticism of Collingwood's thought.

[In translation] the translator has put both [languages] into relation within his spirit and can pass from one to the other, as from one part to the other of the same language. And this language is truly single, it is truly there for the translator: it is neither one nor the other, but the togetherness of the two in their relation or unity. Whoever translates begins to think in one way, from which he does not cease, but which he transforms, continuing to develop, to clarify, to render always more intimate and subjective to himself that which he began to think. And in this passage from one moment to another of his own thought, in his single language, that which takes place, considered empirically, is called translating, as a passage from one language to another. And does not the same perhaps occur when we read that which is written in our own language, by others or by ourselves?

Here we begin to see the artist and his audience as sharing some sort of actual unity. The internal dialogue of the artist, which takes place as the work of art is created, can broaden into an external dialogue of hearer and speaker through the artistic object. And it is only in this kind of way that we can give the audience (as an audience) any real importance of its own.

It is only by giving the bodily work of art a very real artistic value of its own that the solipsistic consequences of Collingwood's theory can be eliminated. The product is the middleman between artist and audience, as Collingwood realized, although he assigned aesthetic importance to internal experiences alone. In an idealistic sense, the product, considered purely as an external object, is without aesthetic value; the artist's imaginative experience as such must exist only as internal. But once the internal experience has been externalized, its externalization is not something extraneous to the work of art, but very much a part of it. The original work of art, the imaginative experience, is joined not just by the experience of the activity of externalization, but by the activity itself and its product to form a more complete work of art. Through the external linguistic product, a book, say, is not your book (the book of the artist)
or my book (the book of the reader) but our book. The external product connects the imaginative experiences of the artist and the reader, making of them not two conjoined works of art but the unity of a single work of art. It is external language which provides the common ground of the imaginative experiences of speaker and hearer; it is not merely the means for the creation of experiences.

3. Expression and Externalization

It is important to realize the significance of externalization in art, and to distinguish between externalization and expression. The expression of emotions is no more than the bringing of emotions to consciousness. Collingwood realized the real artistic value of externalization, at least in his apparent confusion of expression and externalization in The Principles of Art. He makes clear in several places the importance of externalization. We are told -- this is a theme behind much of the book -- that expression is effected through some sort of bodily action (including verbal language): it is an activity connected with the "thing we call language", for the artist "expresses himself by speaking". On the other hand expression may be

7. PA, p. 109.
found solely in consciousness: "By creating for ourselves an imaginary experience or activity, we express our emotions: and this is what we call art." And in another passage Collingwood states categorically: "Expressing an emotion is the same thing as becoming conscious of it." We express emotions through imagination in our consciousness; expression is not externalization.

The bodily action of a painter, for example, does not express an emotion in a picture, but 'externalizes' or 'records' in this picture the painter's imaginative experience. An imaginative experience is already conscious, and so expression is complete before (but not necessarily temporally before) its externalization. (As I mentioned previously, externalization is included in the ideal work of art, not physically in itself, but imaginatively as part of the total imaginative experience.)

For his paradigm of expression, therefore, the reader must choose between an expression realized in bodily action and an expression found in imaginative activity. Obviously it is the latter type of expression which is more readily compatible with Collingwood's theory that the work of art is to be found in the mind. It is, I believe, by clarifying the distinction between expression

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and externalization that Collingwood's theory of art may be rid of some of its confusions and contradictions.

If we hold that expression is the imaginative experience, and externalization the bodily action, then the distinctions of art and pseudo-art, of good and bad art, and of the imaginative and the intellectual, may be rein-stated. To do this, we must include externalization as an integral part of art, although not a necessary one. In this way we can find the meanings of Collingwood's distinctions (which, with his theory unchanged but extended, were found to disappear) in the relation between the imaginative experience and externalization, and not in the imaginative experience, or expression, itself.

4. Art and Language

Most importantly, it has to be maintained that art cannot be identified tout court with language. It is not only an imaginative experience that language relates to the rest of the world. Language -- and this is still language in the wide sense used by Croce and Collingwood in their work -- is more than art alone. Language is often the form in which an emotion is expressed; but fundamentally, language is what externalizes an imaginative
experience. Art is not its only field. Language may have no connection with an imaginary experience at all; and by recognizing this we are enabled quite simply to separate the imaginative and the intellectual. Aesthetic use of language is that use of language behind which lies an imaginative experience, and an imaginative experience that is genuinely relevant to the language used. This is why emotions connected with intellectual work do not disprove this point. Scientific statements as such are neither better nor worse for any emotions connected with them. If it is true that a scientific treatise does have artistic merit, this is not in virtue of the scientific thought it contains or in virtue of its language, but rather because the scientific thought of the treatise has undergone an imaginative transformation in the mind of the writer. This makes it open, as it was not before, to aesthetic considerations.

Similarly, in considering the distinction between art and pseudo-art, we must decide whether there is present, in the instance concerned, a unique imaginative experience. Of course, language is bound to be present; it is what underlies the language that is important. We may indeed take the chapters Collingwood devotes to magic, craft and amusement as they stand, if the relationship of
language and expression is properly understood. While we can accept the earlier parts of *The Principles of Art*, the chapter on the identity of art and language has to be rejected. It is this chapter that nullifies many of Collingwood's other conclusions regarding the nature of art and the business of the artist.

When we come to look at the difference between good art and bad art, we find that it is one which is not so easily made clear, granted a distinction between art and language. The difference may be found in two places: in imagination and in externalization.

Collingwood identifies bad art with failed expression. He points out that there can be no such thing as bad expression: to express at all is to express well. Failed expression, then, is no expression at all; and since there is no expression, there can be no room for the application of aesthetic considerations. How are we to tell that expression was even attempted?

I have mentioned that this is the case in connection with the expression of an imaginative experience. There is either expression or there is not; this cannot offer a criterion for telling good art from bad. An example of failed expression is an example not of bad art, but of something that has failed to be art. (This
is clearly the case if expression is interpreted as a feature of consciousness. I shall discuss below how things stand if expression is understood as externalization.)

Regarding the question of telling good art from bad art, I believe that we can make a distinction on the basis of the qualities of the emotions themselves which are expressed. One of the things that does differentiate a good artist from a bad one is the quality of what it is that he expresses. An artist may doubtless express emotions that are no less genuine for being, for example, trivial or commonplace. But trivial art is not good art. Considerations based on factors like these should provide us with a basis for distinguishing good art from bad art.

In addition, we may find a distinction between good and bad art in the activity and product of externalization. Externalization is not only a part of the work of art, but also an activity which involves craftsmanship. It is here that I must disagree considerably with Collingwood, who, of course, denied that craft had anything to do with art as it ought to be conceived today. That craftsmanship does come into art is, I think, sufficiently evident in such artistic creations as those of architecture and sculpture, where what can and cannot be done with the imaginative experience involves practical considerations. And these are
considerations which require at the very least a fair knowledge of a particular craft, and they are of an importance that cannot be ignored. For example, one must have close regard to the nature of the tools and materials available. Craftsmanship does make an artist a better artist in so far as he is better able to externalize his experience. It is externalization, of course, which counts for communication between artist and audience: it is through the external object that communication succeeds or fails.

Here we can say that a distinction can be made between good art and bad art according to how well an audience may reconstruct the imaginative experience which the artist has externalized. The imaginative experience cannot of its own accord bring about its own perfect externalization. The degree of perfection that externalization reaches will be a matter of craft. But it must be emphasized that if we take craft into account in considering aesthetically an external object, we shall not be concerned with a question of craftsmanship alone. We have rather to consider the craftsmanship of the external activity and object in its relation to the imaginative experience of the artist. Craft that is produced by a dead imagination is not art.
It is, too, with regard to externalization, not expression, that talk of shirking or dodging expression is appropriate. To dodge expressing something, we must know what is to be expressed. Hence it is expressed anyway (that is, expressed in our consciousness). If emotions are immediate to consciousness, they cannot be treated as if they were something apart from our consciousness of them. But we can talk of shirking or dodging the externalization of an emotion. We can shirk or dodge expressing our emotions to other people and disown the emotions we know we possess.

5. Artist and Audience

Externalization is important for communication between artist and audience, whose relationship has as its basis the external object. This object deserves attention as part of the artistic activity; but this Collingwood does not allow. With externalization as a part of art, the audience's function may be better conceived. The bodily work of art has a rightful place as a necessary part of artistic activities supposedly oriented towards the community.

Unmodified, Collingwood's theory leads us to see art as solipsistic self-expression. His ideas on the artist in
the community make audiences as such virtually superfluous. His solution for this problem is not to work out how the audience may have a stronger function, but to eliminate the audience altogether, making it a part of the community of artists. The problems of an artist's relationship with his audience are abolished by abolishing the audience as such. Of course, they could still be called an audience, but in so far as they take full part in the artistic activity they are as much artists as the 'real' artist himself.

Collingwood's abolition of the audience has serious consequences. In seeking to give its members an active artistic role, he creates an elite. Inevitably, "small and more or less stable audiences" like those of "a theatrical or musical club" can only involve an elite. The danger for the community is obvious. The hope that an elite like this will "bridge the gap" between the artist and the community is, regrettably, hopelessly in vain. The members of the erstwhile audience, now artists themselves, will become as divorced from the community as the original artist ever was. The artist has not gone out to join the community; he has merely brought in selected members of that community to join him in his own world.
The results of Collingwood's ideas, as I have set them out here, seem to be a parody of his real intentions vis-à-vis the relationship between the artist and the community. Yet there are hints from Collingwood that the select are indeed the community as he understands it, or at least the only part of the community that matters. He condemns, for example, "the promiscuous dissemination of books and paintings by the press and public exhibition" which creates "a shapeless and anonymous audience". The audience seems once again to be of only secondary importance in itself; Collingwood suggests that it is there to serve the artist and help him mature, and this is the reason for his concern with the audience. The artist, he points out, cannot, in his early days when he still needs help, "crystallize" an audience of his own "out of this formless dust of humanity" (that is, the readers of promiscuously distributed books, and others). In short, audiences must be select and small, and belong to a particular artist. 10

Of course, it may be that everybody is supposed eventually to become part of one or another special audience; but this would be an all too obviously unattainable, ideal solution. The actual state of affairs which

would develop, one feels, would be one where artists and their special audiences would be as remote from the community as the artists alone had been before. Because of this, if the community and civilization were in danger at all, they would still be in as great a danger after Collingwood's solution as ever they had been. Art, surely, if it is to save the community, must reach as many people as possible.

To develop in full a theory of the best relationship between the artist and the community would hardly be in place here. Suffice it to say that if language and art are identified, and if art is held to be purely expressive and only a matter of the imagination, audiences must be small and select. In order to understand the artistic activity at all, an audience, as Collingwood shows us, must in effect become artists themselves (and, here, 'artists' in the everyday sense as well as the idealist sense). The sort of collaboration in creative activity that this involves means that activity would only be effective in small groups.

If the artist's relationship with his community can only find fulfilment in the creation of small groups of the select, then we should have to say that Collingwood's attempts to devise the reconciliation of artist
and community have broken down. On top of the solipsism of the artist, with which Collingwood's theory of expression is strongly tainted, we have what might almost be called the solipsism of a group. Whether a single artist or an artistic group is concerned, artistic expression, as it is conceived by Collingwood, seems of necessity to be confined to a few people. At the end of The Principles of Art, the circle of artists is appreciably wider, but the real community is as far off as ever.

It must be remarked, however, that even if it were possible for all the members of the community to join one or another select 'club', and in this way fully to take part -- as true 'artists' -- in the creative process, it would not be desirable. Collingwood develops an ideal solution of the problem of the audience which altogether destroys the audience as such. Members of the audience can only realize themselves to the full by becoming artists. Where Collingwood considers the audience in its own true capacity, it has a very poorly defined role.

Here and there in The Principles of Art Collingwood implicitly recognizes that his ideal solution for the audience, if it could actually be implemented, would be undesirable. He wants to make artists of the audience, it seems; yet he wants an orthodox audience as well. This is
clearly illustrated by his reference to the unsatisfactory
quality of dress rehearsals.

In the rehearsal of any given passage, scenery, lighting and dresses may all be exactly as they are at a public performance; the actors may move and speak exactly as they will 'on the night'; there may be few interruptions for criticism by the producer; and yet the spectator will realize that everything is different. The company are going through the motions of acting a play, and yet no play is being acted. This is not because there have been interruptions. ... What happens at the dress rehearsal is something quite different from interruption. It can be described by saying that every line, every gesture, falls dead in the empty house. The company is not acting a play at all. It is performing certain actions which will become a play when there is an audience present to act as a sounding-board. It becomes clear, then, that the aesthetic activity which is the play is not an activity on the part of the author and the company together, which this unit can perform in the audience's absence. It is an activity in which the audience is a partner.\footnote{PA, pp. 321-22.}

If all the members of a 'club' audience (as artists) had successfully collaborated in the production of the play, surely it would be the case that all would be part of the company and take part in the production? Or once artistic collaboration is over, must the members of the audience go back to their seats and behave in traditional and conventional style? And, if a play means anything at all, does it not mean quite as much to the performers, stagehands, production-staff, and others involved actively in putting it on the stage, as it does to an audience? Is it
not as much a play for the performers alone, as it is for the performers with an audience? Indeed, according to the theory of the earlier parts of *The Principles of Art*, a play should mean at least as much to the performers as to an audience, and probably even more than it does to an audience. If the play has significant meaning for the performers alone, surely it is as much a play when performed without an audience as it is when an audience is present in the theater?

The contradictions which inhere in a theory that requires the audience both to sit in their seats for a play, behaving in an orthodox manner, and to take an active, creative part as artists in the production, quickly become evident to the reader. What are needed in Collingwood's theory are true artists and true audiences. In the passage quoted above, Collingwood indicates the very problem which his own ideas of fully collaborative art would give rise to.

Certainly, an audience is needed; and this is why the members of an audience (as an audience) cannot become artists. The functions of an artist and an audience overlap considerably; but the emphasis in their functions is to be found in different places. It is the audience's function to criticize rather than to create.
To each, then, artist and audience, a proper function must be allotted. The members of the audience cannot become artists; if they wish to be fully an audience, then they have, in addition to their enjoyment of the imaginative experience which they create for themselves through the external artistic object, their own critical task to perform. And their criticism is not the equivalent of the self-criticism of the artist proper, but the type of criticism that is appropriate to an audience.

Nor can the audience be considered ideally as an elite; this is no way to set about saving the community as a whole, if this is indeed the task before the artist.
Collingwood's ideas on the artist and the community are not the result of his identification of art and language. The identity itself of art and language says nothing about the proper relationship between artist and audience. But the problems raised by Collingwood's conception of the relationship cannot be cleared up until the functions of art and language are conceived as separate and distinct.

Language may still be defined in the wide sense Collingwood gives to it in *The Principles of Art* and *The New Leviathan*. Here I disagree with many previous critics of Collingwood, who have taken particular exception to the wide definition of 'language'. This definition can stand, so long as its differences from the everyday use of 'language' are made clear. My concern in this thesis has been with the wide definition of 'art' and its equivalence to that of 'language'.

The artistic function is just one function of language; its other functions need not partake of an artistic
quality. It can be seen that language is used to exter­

 nalize and translate for others the imaginative experience
 of the artist. The external object alone is not the sub­
 ject of aesthetic judgments; externalization is to be
 judged in its intimate connections with the imaginative
 experience of the artist and the re-creative activity of
 the audience. It is in this way that the artist is able
 to say: "This line won't do." ¹

 Collingwood's ideas on the aesthetic status of the
 imaginative experience need not be abandoned. The imagi­
native experience alone, without any externalization, may
 still be the work of art. Externalization is not a neces­
sary factor in art. However, the creation of an external
 object is not something extrinsic to aesthetic considera­
tions; once externalization has taken place it is fully a
 part of the work of art proper and cannot be excluded
 from a critique of it. To say that a work of art is al­
 ready complete as an imaginative experience is not to say
 that it is necessarily in a final state.

 Externalization has a further significance. It is
 in connection with externalization rather than true ex­
 pression that the artist, as I have shown, must combat a
 corrupt consciousness. Collingwood's examples themselves

¹. Cf. *PA*, pp. 283-84.
refer to the self-critical task of the artist in terms of externalization rather than (idealistic) expression. It is in the bodily work of art that the artist is able to compare a present attempt with previous attempts to express himself, as Collingwood suggests he must if he is to avoid corruption of consciousness.

The audience creates for itself an imaginative experience; but its primary public function is a critical, not a creative one. Instead of collaboration merely between artists, there is a fuller relationship to be taken advantage of between creator and critics. Most importantly, because of the audience's changed function, art need no longer be confined to small groups (as it must be if everyone is to be creative and art is basically self-expressive). A critical audience may be large or small; and the artist may reach, and be helped by, as many members of the community as he wishes.

The conclusion of this survey of Collingwood's theory of art as language must be that art and language cannot be identified. A fair proportion of language is quite certainly not expressive or aesthetic. But, further than that, if art is only expression, then even art and artistic language cannot be identified as completely one, unless we are willing to accept artistic solipsism.
This is the case because if we took art to be solely the imaginative experience, language proper could not be external. On the other hand, if we took art and language to be identical, meaning by language the external product, then we could not take account of the imaginative experience of the artist. Art (as expression) and language must be separate, with language translating externally the internal experience of the artist. Language and art (as the total work of art including externalization) overlap in the external object, but their identity need be no more than that.

With regard to Collingwood's theory of art itself, the important and brilliant distinctions that he made, between art and pseudo-art, between good art and bad art, between the imaginative and the intellectual, obliterated by the identification of art and language, can be reasserted as meaningful.

Indeed, it can be maintained that it is the first two books of The Principles of Art (as far as the chapter which identifies art and language) which present a cohesive and worth while theory of art. The last book (in particular the last chapter on the artist and the community) seems to present to us a struggle that ends in failure. Collingwood's attempt to bring the artist
and the community together, at variance with both the rest of the book and itself, cannot succeed.

I hope that I have shown that an identification of the artistic and linguistic activities is implicitly absurd in itself, leading inexorably to conclusions that make the concept of art so universal as to be worthless. I have tried to indicate as well that, although the identification of art and language does not create an elitist artistic community, it does, because of its equation of language with self-expression, prevent the artist from achieving a proper relationship with the whole community. With language as external and truly communicative, the audience may include many different sorts of people, who are representative of the community as a whole, rather than a few artistic connoisseurs. If 'art' is to mean anything of value, aesthetically or socially, language must be seen not as art but as its vehicle.
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