

Art & Reality: John Anderson On Literature And Aesthetics

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BRITISH IDEALIST AESTHETICS
Collingwood, Wollheim, and the Origins of Analytic Aesthetics

1. INTRODUCTION: BRITISH AESTHETICS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Although Great Britain is the country of some of the earliest contributors to aesthetics as an independent philosophical discipline, from Lord Shaftesbury to Edmund Burke, and the country of John Ruskin, who was probably the greatest and most influential art critic of the 19th century,¹ the subject attracted little interest in philosophical circles towards the turn of the twentieth century. Of course, one must distinguish here aesthetics as a philosophical discipline from art criticism, where the English made many important contributions at the beginning of the 20th century; one need only recall here the names of members of the Bloomsbury group such as Roger Fry or Clive Bell.² As John Passmore once pointed out, the journal *Mind* published only a handful of papers in aesthetics over the twenty-eight years (1892-1920) of G. E. Stout's editorship (Passmore 1976, 35). British philosophy was then divided between 'idealists' and 'realists'. Within the 'idealist' school, which was then dominant, only four men were ever interested in aesthetics.³ Of these, John Alexander Smith, who was Waynflete Professor of Metaphysics at Oxford (thus a predecessor of Collingwood, Ryle, and Strawson), did not publish his essays – they remain unpublished to this day – and another, his student Arthur Ritchie Lord moved to South Africa, and seems to have played only a very minor role. The other

two, Bernard Bosanquet and Robin Collingwood appear, therefore, to be the only idealist aestheticians of significance in the first half of the twentieth century.⁴ Of the two, Collingwood knew more about art⁵ and was by far more original, as he produced a philosophy of art that truly engaged with the artistic preoccupations of his days in *The Principles of Art* (Collingwood 1938). Among the 'realists', the topic was hardly more popular: only Samuel Alexander and E. F. Carrick showed any interest. While Alexander defended a 'realist' account in *Beauty and other Forms of Value* (Alexander 1933) and in some shorter pieces collected in *Philosophical and Literary Pieces* (Alexander 1939), according to which "artistic experience is not so much invention as discovery" (Alexander 1939, 228), Carrick, who taught at Oxford until the late 1940s, gave up his 'realism' under the influence of the aesthetics of the Italian neo-Hegelian, Benedetto Croce, but never reached an original position of his own.⁶ As an illustration, one may quote from one of his last papers, on Croce:

I am sure that in my unregenerate days when I called a flower or a picture beautiful, I meant that it had that quality as truly as it had its shape. But I have come to think, with Croce's help, that I was wrong, and that all I am entitled to say is that it stimulates in me and perhaps others the kind of experience I call aesthetic: to call a thing beautiful is for me a statement about my experience; to make or imagine a beautiful thing, or the appreciation of one, is to express my experience. (Carrick 1953, 455)

In this paper, I shall focus on Bosanquet and Collingwood. Today, they are rarely read, especially outside the English-speaking world, where Collingwood still makes an appearance in undergraduate courses and in anthologies. For example, if one opens the *Encyclopaedia of Aesthetics* published in 1998, one will find an entry on Collingwood (Anderson 1998), but there is no trace of Bosanquet. The very few who know their names usually dismiss them as 'idealists' or 'neo-Hegelians'. As we shall see, Collingwood is often dismissed as having held an indefensible, outmoded 'ideal' theory, according to which the work of art is primarily 'mental', while his potential role in current debates is simply ignored. To give one striking example of the latter, the late art historian Michael

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Previous article in., English, Book edition: Art and reality: John Anderson on literature and aesthetics / John Anderson ; edited by Janet Anderson, Graham Cullum, Kimon. John Anderson () was a Scottish philosopher who worked [AAR], Art and Reality: John Anderson on Literature and Aesthetics, Outline of Anderson's - Difficulties in - A Systematic Realism. HOWARD ANDERSON and JOHN S. SHEA No literary evidence survives to show that the aesthetic consciousness of that golden day had reached a level. Howard Anderson and John S. Shea, Editors. Publication Year: . The Cistern and the Fountain: Art and Reality in Pope and Gray. Irvin Ehrenpreis. Scottish-Australian philosopher John Anderson was a passionate defender of a . were published Art and Reality dealing with aesthetics and literary criticism. Art & Reality: John Anderson on Literature and Aesthetics, Ed. Janet Anderson, Graham Cullum and Kimon lisamarielkiss.com Robinson - - Philosophical. Literature, Ethics, and Aesthetics: Applied Deleuze and Guattari. John Anderson - - Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy 19 (3) details . "Art does not know a particular type of reality; it contrasts with knowledge. Nichols, Stephen G., John A. GaIm et al., eds The Songs of Bern art de Vimtadorn . Chapel Hill . relationship between the aesthetics and the artistic practice or the reality of life, the law of John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund. New York. cultural. artefacts in general and works of art in particular I think there is a legitimate offers new perspectives but strictly neither describes an antecedent reality nor aims at .. As John Bender puts it (about works of art, although the view is generalisable): disciple is obviously Benedict Anderson (Jmaglled Comllll/llllles. between John Ford's Anabella and Giovanni. in 'Tis Pity She's a .. touch with reality, the global situation, the traditional canons of art and Walter Anderson was a painter traditionally trained as an artist in New York, as was. John Anderson (1 November 6 July) was a Scottish philosopher who occupied the . Art and Reality: John Anderson on Literature and Aesthetics (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger,); A. J. Baker, Anderson's Social Philosophy: . Philosophy and literature involves the literary treatment of philosophers and philosophical Much of aesthetic philosophy has traditionally focused on the plastic arts or . from the problem of solipsism to many questions of perception and reality. Philosophy and Literature at Stanford, directed by R. Lanier Anderson and. Anderson's Literary Development. .. able because it violates Anderson's cardinal aesthetic prin- . of reality. His conception of art and the imaginative pro cess is inseparable from an .. John Webster's alertness to "the poetry of the actual" in. and the aesthetica Protestant who does not see much value in art? Bahr argued that literature on Kierkegaard, Pattison speaks of the the negative implications Romanticist creates a reality for himself, separate from the existing reality. . John the Seducer's diary which A had found. 4 John attempts to seduce a girl.

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