Aesthetics Area Readings
Summer 2013
Supervisor: Glenn Parsons

Format
- We will meet to discuss the readings; two meetings a piece for each sub-topic, for a total of six.
- The meetings will be two hours apiece, and I’ll expect you to come prepared to discuss the material and answer questions on it. I will NOT be lecturing, presenting material etc.
- In conjunction with me, you will formulate a set of roughly four questions per topic.
- You will then write answers to four of the questions on your list (two answers will come from one subtopic); these written answers should each be around 2000 words (4-5 pages of 1.5x spaced text).
- Answers to all questions are due by 15 August 2013.

I. Collingwood’s Aesthetics

Readings

Questions
1. To what, in Ridley's original defense of Collinwood, is Dilworth objecting? How strong are his objections, and how plausible is Ridley's reply? Does anything Collingwood himself writes (especially in the Introduction and Book I) support one of their readings over the other?

2. Ridley writes that Collingwood's categorization of 'art-proper' and 'not art' in Book I is not, despite appearances, an essentialist definition of what art is. Why does Ridley say so, and what other arguments could be made in support of this claim? Is this a plausible reading of what Collingwood is doing in Book I?

3. What is the theory of mind that grounds Collingwood's claims about the imagination in Book II? What aspect(s) of it might philosophers be most likely to find objectionable??

4. What is language, according to the account Collingwood puts forth in Chapter XI? How does his account of language relate to his account of the imagination advanced in the preceding chapters, and how does it relate to his account of art-proper as expression?
II. Expression

Readings

Questions
1. Is there any significant difference between the philosophy of mind employed in Croce's account, and that employed in Collingwood's account of art? If there is any significant difference here, does it affect their resultant view of art in any interesting way?

2. How does Tolstoy's conception of the social function of art differ from Collingwood's? How are these differences related to their different interpretations of the concept of expression?

3. How do the expression theories of Tolstoy, Croce and Collingwood fit into Nahm's historical picture of the progression of Ancient Greek, Platonic-Aristotelian and Romantic accounts of art?

4. What are the salient differences between Davies' and Levinson's theories of expression in 'pure' music? What are Davies' arguments against Levinson's theory? What are Levinson's arguments against Davies'? Which theory, on the whole, is more plausible?

III. Imagination

Readings
3. Matravers, D. [the paper version of his talk given in November, which I will obtain from him in July]

Questions
1. How do the non-Idealist accounts of imagination proposed by James, Ryle and Currie compare with Collingwood's theory in Book II of "The Principles of Art"? Might any apparent similarities or compatibilities be of use in reading Collingwood's theory more plausibly? (In other words: do they point to a way in which to 'de-Idealize' Collingwood's theory of Imagination similar to the way Ridley was trying to 'de-Idealize' his theory of art?) Are there objections against these apparent similarities or compatibilities?