International Studies in Philosophy XXIII/3

COLLINGWOOD: AESTHETICS AND A THEORY OF CRAFT

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For many years I have been a practising potter, a maker of bowls, plates, teapots, and vases. If I may say so, the occasional pot which I have made has been truly beautiful, the occasional one has stirred deep emotions not only within myself, but also in many others, and the occasional one has certainly been what is called a work of art. Many have been none of these: they have been, as one would say, *simply* bowls, plates, and teapots. Some have been very much like what William Morris would have called the "abstract" products of a system of production based on an industrial model which he so vilified in his intense and impassioned writings. Some would certainly have been in the vein of what we now take to be the classical arts, those arts of reproduction, imitation, and practical knowledge which we easily identify with the artisans of Plato's Republic or Aristotle's artist. Certainly a number would fall within the vast history of traditional, community-based pottery, and be daily functional wares produced for common use, felt pleasure, community need, or even customer consumption, or for the earning of a wage. And there were countless others that were thrown away, smashed to smithereens because they were ugly, not functional, flawed, crooked, what we might call "unhappy" accidents, simply unattractive, and even for reasons which I do not understand to this day. There were others, needless to say, which fit with the fullness of daily life, its rituals, patterns and needs. They have all been produced by one of the oldest crafts known to humanity, that of pottery. I see the potter as the artist in earth and fire—spiritual companion to what some call "the mud and water man." Modern potters are allied with a tradition of countless ages, yet they work with practices of a new cultural world and with creative options seldom open to their forebears in pre-industrial times.

Given such a background, it should surprise no one that this article treats the craft/art distinction in Collingwood's philosophy of art as profiled in *The Principles of Art.*[2]

My interest in treating the craft/art distinction is to make a contribution to a theory of creative craft. To develop my interest I have divided this paper into three parts. The first deals presents the salient features of the craft/art distinction as presented in the *Principles;* the second draws attention to issues and problems related to Collingwood's contention that craft is a necessary condition of

great art but not sufficient to produce great art; and in the third, I propose to look at contributions for future theory of creative craft. Fethe has remarked that,

> Although the distinction between art and craft enters the history of aesthetic thought at a fairly late date, no earlier that the seventeenth century, it is now accepted as commonplace. This is in some ways unfortunate, for the separation of art from craft has led philosophers not only to neglect craft as a subject for study but to ignore or at least undervalue the role craft plays in the creation of art.[3]

1. The Craft/Art Distinction

Collingwood's outline of the craft/art distinction may be summarized as follows: craft is the skilled fabrication of preconceived ends; art is the expression of emotion. I have chosen to discuss only activities which produce *artifacts,* and the relations of these artifacts to *art.* I regard the varying relations of artifact to art as ciphers which we may use to understand more adequately the creative work of artists in their studios.

Collingwood holds that making is the conscious activity of producing a certain result. In the case of craft making, he contends that the result is foreseen and is wrought by skilled and planned manufacture. It is a form of reproduction, akin to the representational and copying activity of what is often called "art as imitation." In the case of what he called artistic making, the result cannot be foreseen. It is created by the imaginative activity of consciousness. Manufacturing and creating are distinct. He outlines the characteristics of craft by saying,

> (1) Craft always involves a distinction between means and end . . .
> (2) It involves a distinction between planning and execution . . .
> (3) Means and end are related in one way in the process of planning; in the opposite way in the process of execution . . .
> (4) There is a distinction between raw material and finished product or artifact . . .
> (5) There is a distinction between form and matter . . .
> (6) There is a hierarchical relation between various crafts, (PA 15-16).

And throughout his *Principles,* he characterizes art by saying, "The aesthetic use of the word 'art' . . . is very recent in origin" (PA 5). Collingwood's rather detailed and full analysis of the technical theory of art, i.e., the theory of craft, is used to separate that which he takes to be the non-esthetic use of the word "art" from its modern and proper use. He partially characterizes this use by saying,

> We shall have, later on, to consider in some detail what it is that the artist, as such and essentially, produces . . . Primarily it is an "internal" or "mental" thing, something . . . "existing in the head" and there only: something of the kind we commonly call an experience . . . There is no such thing as an *objet d'art* in itself; if we call any bodily and perceptible thing by that name, we do so only because of the relation in which it stands to the aesthetic experience which is the "work of art proper" (PA 37).
>
> But which of these two things is the work of art? The answer is implied in what we have already said: the music, the work of art, is not the collection of noises, it is the tune in the composer's head. The noises made by the performers, and heard by the audience, are not

> the music at all; they are only the means by which the audience . . . can reconstruct for themselves the imaginary tune that existed in the composer's head, (PA 137).

Collingwood made a simple identification of three terms which I would like to separate: "aesthetic emotion," "aesthetic (imaginary) object," and "work of art, properly so-called." And he made a neatly deep distinction between two terms which I would like more closely to ally: "craft" and "art." He called aesthetic emotion "the work of art, properly so-called" to distinguish it from the work and products of craft; and he called aesthetic emotion the "aesthetic object," because it is the *product* of artistic making. For him, aesthetic emotion is the emotional aspect of knowledge and its acquisition, what he calls the emotional "charge" on sensation, imagination, and intellection (PA 160-68).

Collingwood accepted that the activities of craft and the activities of art were forms of making: the "making" of craft was called "fabrication," and its product an "artifact." The "making" of art was called "expression" and its product an "emotional charge." Each type of "making" is identified or characterized primarily by the mode of conscious activity proper to it, and by the language of that mode.

The craft/art distinction may be delineated by referring to a number of statements about the elemental features attributed to each pole of the distinction. Collingwood claims that,

> The artistic activity which creates these habits and constructs these external records of itself, supersedes them as soon as they are formed . . . Every genuine expression must be an original one . . . Thus the dead body, so to speak, of the aesthetic activity becomes the repertory of materials out of which a different kind can find means adaptable to its own ends . . . This non-aesthetic activity . . . in itself is not art, but craft (PA 275-6).

This notion has support in other circles. As remarked by Isenberg, "Yet in general it is true that by technique alone we achieve only what we have done once before. But every work of art achieves something more—or let us say, something different."[4] Or as contended by Martland,

> Art, too, but not craft, bursts yesterday's dams with the pressures of today's experiences. Art, too, but not craft, avails that which its activities lay bare, never something which men grasp and predict beforehand . . . It (craft) is a service to categories which men have already completed, like to one which exists between a craftsman and his blueprint.[5]

Collingwood adds in other contexts, while discussing Michaelangelo for example,

> It is no less true, and no less important, that the skill here displayed (allowing the word skill to pass for a moment unchallenged), though a necessary condition of the best art, is not by itself sufficient to produce it (PA 27).

2. A Divided World

If one accepts that the primary relationship of craft to art is that of a necessary but not sufficient condition, there are peculiarities and idiosyncrasies in

Collingwood's aesthetics which one cannot resolve when we consider artifacts, physical works of art, and what he himself called "bodily expressions" (PA 234-41, 305-11).

My analysis will be primarily a criticism of the *priority* relations of art to craft which he posited as a model. It will question the legitimacy of using the necessary and sufficient relation to account for creative making, and it will note the value-laden aspect of thinking in this way. Although I will not cover all the aspects of "priority," I suggest that there are at least the following points to consider. His stance accepts that art is prior to craft in epistemology; the former is at the creative edge of knowledge itself, and the latter is a construct from what Collingwood called the "deposits" of this creative activity (PA 274-80). Secondly, to conceive of craft, one must presuppose the concept of art and the reality of art, and this signifies the conceptual and logical priority of art over craft. Thirdly, in the making of great art, the (created) image precedes (bodily) fabrication in a temporal sequence. Fourthly, the value orientation of Collingwood's language clearly places art in a higher value category than craft. That is, the value of the craft activity is taken as depending on the value of artistic activity and on the value of the use of its product. As poignantly and amusingly remarked by Howard,

> Craft, the handmaiden of Utility, poor sister of Art and Science, precursor of Technology, and alleged corruptor of aesthetic theories, stands in need of philosophical defence . . . [A] view of craft as "canned reaction" adding "no new factor to our experience" because it does no more than "crystallize prejudices into stereotypes". That is the prevailing philosophical opinion to which this essay gives resistance, notwithstanding . . . craft's humble status as Faithful Servant of Higher Ends.[6]

Insofar as Collingwood was willing simply to *define* art by reference only to a certain facet of consciousness, I am not overly concerned about his theory; it is what I would call trivial. Insofar as he wanted to discuss physical or bodily works of art—what he also called "real" works of art—and the human community's appreciation and awareness of art and aesthetic experience, a host of problems arises. This is so because neither the making of bodily works of art, nor the place of the community (even the aesthetic community) may be assimilated to a state of consciousness or its features. There could be many questions raised, namely: what could the relations be between bodily things and the constructive activities of consciousness; what might it mean for these activities to be "constructive"; why need one accept his unitary model concerning the relations of "feeling" to "intellect," in which there is only one order to the acquiring and structure of knowledge; what has the dialectic which he outlined in *Speculum Mentis,* to do with "bodily works of art"; how could the proper use of "art" language be simply the designating of states of consciousness. These constitute too vast a domain to cover in this paper, but they are hidden in the considerations he eloquently argued, and in the thrust of what I explore.

I take the remark that craft is necessary to the best art to be an acknowledge-

ment that all great art is what Collingwood variously called "real," "bodily," or "physical." Insofar as craft involves preconception and plan, this would suggest that there is artistic intention in great art. Secondly, it seems clear to me that only *some* art, namely, the trivial, incidental and the minor, could be "only in the head" of the artist. I personally would question whether even this is the case, but will not debate that in this paper. Thirdly, it would appear that what he designated "bodily expression" is somehow "fused" with, or bound up in, craft activity. I take this to be one of the more interesting and exciting aspects of Collingwood's theory of art. The place of skilled mastery in "bodily expression," i.e., painting, potting, sculpting is as yet unexplored. Fourthly, since craft activity is a non-aesthetic activity and art is aesthetic activity, one could reasonably conclude that aesthetic activity is a necessary but not sufficient condition for non-aesthetic activity. This particular possibility occurs not infrequently in *Speculum Mentis* and *The Essays,* and embodies how he viewed various phases or facets of the dialectic.

2.1 Collingwood presents a few examples which reveal some meanings of the phrase "necessary to." His example of the work of an engineer shows one outline of the relationship.

> From being a mere plan existing in people's heads, it [the bridge] has become the form imposed on certain matter. Looking back from that point of view, we can now say that the engineer's plan was the form of the bridge without its matter, or that when we describe him as having the plan in his mind we might equally have described him as having in mind the form of the finished bridge without its matter. . . Making an artifact, or acting according to craft, thus consists of two stages. (1) Making the plan, which is creating. (2) Imposing that plan on certain matter, which is fabricating (PA 132-3).

For Collingwood, first the craftworker is *given* the image or idea of the bridge (either by another or by the imagination), and afterwards by implementing skill and material, the engineer can manufacture what has been planned and given in imagination. That is, art plus craft equals the fabrication of the artifact. Art is the creation of the image; craft is the employment of skill. Skill is the knowledge necessary to the fabrication of the material artifact (PA 28). His example of representational portraiture gives another instance for examining what "necessary to" means. In that case, the artist is instructed what to do; before doing it, the artist must have had both the experience of seeing the model which is to be reproduced or represented, and the painterly skills to emulate the model. In playing music, the player works from a score or with a conductor. Without the ability to play music, i.e. the musical skill, there could be no "heard" music at all. The bases of *this* necessity are the musician's understanding and skill *and* the actual playing itself. For there to be "heard" music, the composer must write the (imaginary) music down. The example of Mozart, who reputedly simply copied onto paper what was in his mind, is paradigmatic for the way Collingwood saw the relation of art to craft and visa versa. Art is creating the music; craft is copying it onto paper, or reproducing it by playing.

2.2 For Collingwood, artistic experience is logically, epistemologically, and temporally prior to skilled activity. As he says, "[E]xpressing an emotion is the same thing as becoming conscious of it" (PA 282), whereas "skill is a form of specialized knowledge"—a "deposit" of artistic activity. "[T]he activity of expression creates deposits of habits in the agent, and of by-products in the world, these habits and by-products become things utilizable by himself and others for ulterior ends" (PA 275). The aesthetic object, the "work of art properly so-called," is aesthetic emotion expressed in the imagination. This imaginary object is fabricated as a *bodily object* by the activity of craft. These phrases "imaginary object" and "bodily object" have dramatically different locutions even though Collingwood argued that the one *object* was simply the reproduction of the other *object.*

Generally then, Collingwood contends that craft is necessary to art in at least the following three ways: firstly, without the intervention of skill, the physical existence of great art would not come about. My interest lies primarily on just this point, namely, *given* that craft is a non-inventive, plan-following, knowledge-based, repetitive action of reproduction, *how could it work?* Secondly, the artifact is necessary to the existence of spectators, i.e., for there to be any aesthetic community at all (PA 300-11). One is reminded that his investigation is not simply an investigation about the systematic use of language, even though he occasionally suggests that it is. It is about the proper use of language in a world of real objects, and about the understanding as to what these objects actually are. Thirdly, the artifact's existence fulfils the logical requirement of his concept of "concrete" art.

For the first point, I would agree that if an artist does not know how to use a brush, a potter's wheel, shape clay, use pigments, control kilns, and such other common technical feats, great art will never see the light of day. We say of the technical blunderer, the incompetent worker, that what they make is inadequate, inept, and unfit. If great artists did not master the medium, tools, methods, and forms of an art type, we would with difficulty call them "great." In this setting, mastery is the accumulation of unitary techniques, the total of which is necessary to the reproductive actions of copying. Mastery is an addition of segments of knowledge.[7] For him, the craft of great artists is their ability to reproduce what was already known or imagined.

In the second instance, craft was deemed to be necessary to art in that the presence of the bodily work of art was the means whereby artist and spectator came into contact with what we might call the "subject" of art. This is that setting in which the spectator is also seen as an artist (PA 285, 308-11). That is, if the artist did not fabricate a bodily work of art, the spectator would not be a spectator and the likelihood of a specific aesthetic experience would be virtually nil. The manufacture of the real work of art is therefore necessary to the spectator's being a member of an aesthetic community.

Thirdly, Collingwood held that aesthetic emotion may be expressed independently of any particular bodily works of art insofar as he claims that the

"work of art, properly so-called" lies within the birth and maintenance of knowledge. It can be, as he says, "only in the artist's head." He is concerned, however, and rightly so I would add, not to lose touch with actual working artists and the things which they make. For instance, he remarks that the artist works with pigments, struggles in front of the easel, etc. This is the theme that goes back to his work *Speculum Mentis* and *The Essays,* and he maintains the thrust of the idea which he posited at that time, namely that "concrete" art is the marrying of the classical and the romantic, and of the assertive as well as the expressive, or of the immediacy and mediation of art experience (SM 84ff., E 214ff.).

2.3 To say the least, the word "necessary" is ambiguous in these examples. In the first, the issue appears to be that if artists do not have skill they cannot make great art which means simply that the image and emotion will never appear except to consciousness. In the second, the word "necessary" is used to assert backhandedly that if there were no physical thing, there would be no aesthetic community. And in the third, he has the word "necessary" showing that physical objects, bodily actions, and the experience of the "outward element" are integral aspects of work and activity which actual *artists* do—as distinct from an abstract consciousness. My belief is that the assertion that craft, or skill, is necessary to but not sufficient for art, conforms to what I would call one of the common sense point of view about what is taken as *the* relation of craft and art in the twentieth century.[8] This is more or less a building block model in which one sees the upper levels resting on the lower. My point, to come up later, is that the conceptual difference between the making process and the made product is taken as a concrete difference in the actual making itself, and as a conditioner of that process. This common point of view is that craft reproduces what art provides.

It would appear to most people, and I include myself in this group, that artists make what Collingwood called the "real," or "bodily" work of art in the *Principles.* He did assert, however, that the "work of art, properly so-called" *could* be solely the experience of the aesthetic emotion. On this point it seems to me that he confused the activity of the imagination with the activity of working in a studio, and it is the word "make" that is the turn phrase for this confusion. Although he frequently was at pains to point out that the language of "fabrication" could only be used metaphorically with respect to the activities of consciousness, I think that the word "making" has set him onto a manner of speaking which he never quite escaped. I am not speaking only of language and confusion about words. I believe that the language shows a deeper rift, one that I think cannot be mended once it is opened. The rift is not simply between talk about imaginative making and talk about bodily making. On the one hand, it is about the separation of the conscious activity into the unplanned but creative, and the planned and technical. On the other hand, it is about the division of human activity into the imaginative and the bodily. Behind each of these is the dichotomized world of the aesthetic and the non-aesthetic.

In outlining the relation of art and craft Collingwood has set up a sequential pattern which I think distorts through what appears to be oversimplification. I say "appears" because what he outlines is not all of what I think is going on. He envisages that imagining precedes and gives the basic data to the craft or technical process. This latter is simply the ability to copy into a material form what has already been created by expressive imagination. One form of making is seen to follow another form of making. He takes what he thinks is the creative and actual *origin* of the "artifact" to be the idea or image which the maker has, and the *means* of manufacture to be the skill of the craft in reproducing this image.[9] Art plus craft equal great art. In fact, however, for him *any* bodily art appears to be the addition of the two forms of making.[10] It may even be fair to say that any *artifact* fabricated by craft activity is also the addition of the two forms of making. The only possible exception appears to be "conscious bodily expression." The two basic problems with this stance are: firstly and more traditionally, that the relation of the "mental" and the "bodily" is seen as one of basic similitude. What is imagined can be reproduced in the world and be known to be so produced, because they are fundamentally alike. The second is that, as he uses them, the terms "classical art," "fabrication," and "craft" are in fact applicable more to the domain of industrial manufacture, mechanical reproduction, or perhaps in the training of an apprentice, than they are to studio craft work.

For Collingwood, art is imaginative making. It is imagining. As articulated in the *Principles,* the word "expression" has a very tightly bound locution. Technically, the word "expression" means that what was *felt* has become *known.* Such words get much of their impact from *Speculum Mentis* and *The Essays,* and these works should be seen as providing the backdrop. "Expression" signifies that there is no mediating act, and no preconception of either image, artifact, or emotional state.

What then could "bodily expression" be? I think Collingwood wanted this phrase to indicate that physical, or real, works of art could be made by the immediate activity of the body as it expressed the emotional charge of artistic or imaginative activity. By "immediate activity," I mean that in the artistic situation, artists would not have already thought about what they were going to make, and that their "making" would be spontaneous. This appears to me to be the one setting in which craft is not seen as necessary to but not sufficient for art. This situation is one in which the work of the artist is a "fusion" of what seem to be incompatible elements. He says,

> What our painter is saying then comes to this. The painted picture is not produced by a further activity upon which he embarks, when his aesthetic activity has already arrived at completion, in order to achieve by its means a non-aesthetic end . . . It is produced by an activity which is *somehow or other* [emphasis mine] bound up with the development of that experience itself (PA 304).

From my point of view, such activity is readily exemplified by the *work* of what I will call the "individual," "studio" or "humanist" craftsperson and not by what he called artistic consciousness. Notions such as these were beginning to develop during the nineteenth century, and were fairly clear by the end of the first world war.[11]

3. Humanist, Creative and Modern Craftwork

I indicated that I had two concerns generated by Collingwood's aesthetics. The first was the priority aspect of the "necessary to but not sufficient for" relation of craft to art. The other is that, while he recognized the new aspect of the "aesthetic" in conjunction with what one normally would call "art," he neglected to see that, in the world normally called "craft" even well before his day, there had been deep and significant shifts in the enterprises and undertakings in which craft workers themselves were involved. In a significant sense, Collingwood's outline of the characteristics of craft crystallizes an abstract opposite against which his notion "art is the expression of emotion" is measured. When I analyze his philosophy of art, I see that the terms "craft" and "art" are used as polar opposites which engender meaning in one another. They are set up to cover the scope and breadth of conscious input to human making which covers such diverse activities as spontaneity and preconception. I think that these two notions are "abstract," to use Collingwood's term from *Speculum Mentis.* It seems to me that one of the reasons that seeing craft as necessary to but not sufficient for art is so difficult to delineate, is that Collingwood tried to relate these abstract terms to "concrete" art.

In what follows I try to illustrate a few of the features of what I call "concrete" craft, I will use the case of a studio potter to focus my thought. I will have recourse to the work of the renowned potter, Bernard Leach, to exemplify what Morris called the "artist-craftsman," or Read might have called either the "humanist artist" or the "abstract artist," and which Leach himself called the "studio" or "individual" potter.[12] Each of these titles articulates a nuance to the activity and products of craft which are missing in the work of Collingwood, and which embody the concept of the aesthetic, the creative, and the *human* in craft activity and products.

I contend that the basic model which Collingwood used for craft can be best understood by referring to the repetitive activities of mechanical and industrial reproduction. One of the contributions made to this line of thinking by William Morris and Sir Herbert Read is their argument that, with the advent of the industrial revolution, one finds a fundamental shift in the meaning of language connected to the arts. For Morris, the distinction between craft and art arose because of mechanical and capitalist industrial technology. He argued that during the industrial revolution, "art" had come to mean the leisurely activity of certain groups as they removed themselves from work or labour routines. He argued that this activity (art) had been divorced from valuable labor in com-

munity. He contended that what had then been called "craft" had been reduced to meaning the mechanical reproduction of prototypes of what he disdainfully called "abstract" products—products with no bond to community need. Craft and art were defined by Morris in the context of the industrial revolution and not by reference to imagination or consciousness. For Read, the two kinds of artists (abstract and humanist) were both capable of aesthetic input and creation when it concerned their products, because their products were viewed as the result of *human* action.

The contribution of Morris and Read which interests me is an idea that was picked up by the potter Bernard Leach. That is, the actions of such workers as Read and Morris described, whether called "craft," "art," "art/craft," or "handicraft" are best understood if they are seen as actions undertaken by *human beings*—by *persons in community* (PB 1-25). I accept that these ventures are not adequately understood if they are measured by industrial models, models of mechanical reproduction, or by pictures of an abstract and autonomous consciousness.[13] Leach shifted the emphasis in the craft/art distinction from activities characterized by the mental/bodily, the autonomous/mechanical, and the original/reproductive, to the role which human makers and producers played in their working and artistic communities. Leach placed the master potter as the central person in a small working community—the studio.

One of the points raised by Morris and concretized by Leach is that, if one sees artifacts as the product of two unrelated means of production, i.e., if one sees "great" art as the addition of two kinds of activities or products, then one accepts that the object itself is bifurcated. In this classical or antedated notion, the "best" art is the addition of the incidental to the essential. It thereby becomes increasingly difficult to see the artifact as a whole thing, rather than as the incidental material production of "the work of art, properly so-called." After having read the *Principles,* one has the nagging suspicion that the artifact *itself* is incidental to art. The relation of artifact to art is portrayed as akin to the relation of "decoration" to "form" in traditional pottery; it is "added" as Morris snidely points out (AS 229-37). In a different but not dissimilar context, Cook has remarked in his article "Human Beings,"

> The problem is rather like that of getting substance and quality to lie down together again: the separation has been so prolonged as now to be virtually in the nature of things. In each case the difficulty seems to be that we have saddled ourselves with a pair of spurious entities. In the latter case it the "bare particular" and qualities designed to "clothe" it; in the former case it is the "body" and "private objects".[14]

Leach remarks as he introduces the idea of the modern craftworker, that "The potter is no longer a peasant or journeyman as in the past, nor can he be any longer described as an industry worker: he is by force of circumstance an artist-craftsman" (PB 1). By 1918, Leach had firmly established that the modern studio potter has assuredly surpassed the situation of a worker in a Wedgewood factory and the industrial means of production found therein. Collingwood's examples

suggest that the craft activity follows artistic activity. Leach, however, proposes a picture of a master potter working in a studio in such a way that the masters were seen not only as having a mastery of technique, but also as those capable of undertaking innovative adventure in their studio work. He asserted that the master potter was one who invented new form, new color, new techniques, and whole new ways of looking at the functional or preconceived aspect of traditional work. He presented a further picture of the master potter not as someone who copies anything, but as someone who invents, creates, is inspired by others, and gives birth to new work through ritual, discipline, practice, and exploration. Rather than having a model which uses autonomy of consciousness and preconceived repetition as the poles, and which joins these two opposites together to explain great art, Leach uses the notion of an artist-craftsperson "making things for full human use" as its taproot (PB 15). In this model, craftspeople do not simply have a picture in mind which instructs them when to start and when to stop. They decide when to stop; they assert their human strength by stopping when the work is deemed to be "right." Now, I think that "right" need not mean only that the material object conforms to a mental image. The object is taken to be right in part because the craftsperson asserts that it is. The life of the object in the community is the feedback on the value of the object, and the craftworker's presence in the community affects the extent to which certain works seem right at any given time. Following Leach, my commitment is to articulate the place of human practices and traditions, and the authenticity that these phenomena accorded to certain enterprises. This point has been more recently affirmed by MacIntyre as he argues,

> The discussion so far I hope makes it clear that a practice, in the sense intended, is never just a set of technical skills, even when directed towards some unified purpose . . . What is distinctive in a practice is in part the way in which conceptions of the relevant goods and ends which the technical skills serve—and every practice does require the exercise of technical skills—are transformed and enriched by these extensions of human powers and by that regard for its own internal goods . . .[15]

With the advent of the craftwork and extensive writings of Leach, placed partially by reference to Morris and Read, the term "craft" has itself taken on some of the aesthetic impact which Collingwood wanted to assert was the exclusive claim of art in the twentieth century. The art he defined is not as distinct from what contemporary craft actually is. This contemporary craft activity is by no means simply an activity of consciousness. In saying this, I am also asserting that the question about how artifacts are created is most adequately answered by reference to an overall human involvement. From my perspective, the involvement of the human hand may quite rightly be called *the* creative source of this bowl, at this place and time. This does not imply that there are no other contributing factors, orientations, or slants which require a significantly different account, if the question about sources is directed to another mode of thought.

It also still allows for non-trivial discussions about human imagination being a source as well.

The general stance which I take towards creative action and artistry when I use the model of the studio potter, has in part been stated by Ginsberg when he says, "Making principally occurs through the exercise of hands and words. In creative expression, one lays one's hands upon things and transforms them. We take the world into our hands."[16] He goes on to talk about this transforming in a manner which shows some influence of the classical model of art, whereas my point is that the words "art," "artistry," and "creative" get their most concrete meaning not by reference to an inward vision, but through concerted interaction with settings in which one finds media like clay, wood, pigment, plastic, or voice, i.e., settings which demonstrate and involve considerable skill, affirmation, assertion, and decisions. Post-industrial revolution craft activity, especially since the early part of this century, has been seen as having this innovative side to it. This side does not exclude the ritualistic, disciplined, and skilled aspects of the work. Skill is not taken solely as the means of reproduction, or as a tightly knit package of knowledge. It includes ambiguity and affirmation, abilities akin to a birth process, or an intense labor management negotiation.[17] It allows for work to be seen as a beginning-to-end process, with the "end" not having being completely foreseen on the one hand, or absolutely not foreseen on the other.

4. Summary

When Collingwood posited a severe conceptual distinction between craft and art, he also made it extremely difficult—virtually impossible—then to account for the bodily work of art as a creative enterprise. That is, one is unable to account for the world of art objects as they function in human life as objects which are handled, moved around, and valued, or which sit in galleries and homes as cultural phenomena. One also unable to render the creative *making* itself more intelligible. This latter point about making is my concern. I think one can begin to make sense of this making by weaving aspects of his theory of craft (the technical theory of art) with his aesthetic theory of art, and using his notion of "bodily expression" as the focal point. But this can be a useful option only if one sees such "bodily expression" as richer than simply the expression of a moment of conscious action. One should look at it as *human* action which takes place in a concrete setting, which takes place within a spectrum of human actions and innovative undertakings, and certain not as something which is separate from the lived lives of working artists. His model for craft is abstract, and could be much improved if it were to have taken into account much of what actually had been going on in the craft world in his own time. Craft work is undertaken by individual human beings working in studios, controlling the overall process and means of production, the development and invention of ideas, as well as techniques and objects. These craftspeople work interdependently within fairly well defined traditions which themselves allow for

innovation, change, creation and invention. The reason for this is that craft enterprises are human practices, and they take place in cultural settings. The place of these practices and traditions constitute the heartland for further investigation into creative human making.

1 William Morris, *On Art and Socialism,* London, John Lehman Ltd., 1947, for example. This work is referred to as AS.

2 Robin George Collingwood, *The Principles of Art,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977; first published Clarendon Press, 1938. All references to this work will occur in the text and be marked PA followed by the page number. Note also Robin George Collingwood, *Collingwood–Essays in the Philosophy of Art,* A. Donagan, ed., Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1964, referred to as E; *Speculum Mentis,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963, referred to as SM.

3 Charles B. Fethe, "Hand and Eye: the Role of Craft in R. G. Collingwood's Aesthetic Theory," *British Journal of Aesthetics,* vol. 22, #1, Winter 1982, p. 37. Note also Charles B. Fethe, "Craft and Art: A Phenomenological Distinction," *British Journal of Aesthetics,* vol. 17, #2, Spring 1977, pp. 129-37; Rose Slivka, "Erasing The Line Separating The Arts from the Crafts," *The Smithsonian* (USA), vol. 8, pt. 12, 1978, pp. 86-93.

4 Arnold Isenberg, "The Technical Factor in Art," *The Journal of Philosophy,* vol. xliii, #1, January 1946, p. 8.

5 T. R. Martland, "The Art and Craft: The Distinction," *British Journal of Aesthetics,* vol. 14, #3, Summer 1974, pp. 233-4.

6 V. A. Howard, *Artistry: The Work of Artists,* Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company, 1982, p. 5; Jane Duran, "Collingwood and Intentionality," *British Journal of Aesthetics,* vol. 27, #1, Winter, 1987, pp. 32-8.

7 Recent doctoral theses add significantly to this debate; Rachelle A. Jacobson, *A Master Potter's Dialogue With Clay, Glazes and Fire: A Study in the Creative Process,* Ph.D. Dissertation, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1985; Janet C. Mainzer, *The Relations between The Crafts and The Fine Arts in the United States from 1876 to 1980,* Ph. D. Dissertation, New York University, 1988.

8 As Arnold Isenberg has put it, "Accomplished mastery can never account for any masterpiece; but a masterpiece *without* the basis ofmastery will never be seen." *Aesthetic and The Theory of Criticism,* W. Callaghan et al. eds., Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1973, p. 58.

9 As has been noted elsewhere, Collingwood appears to be trying to demonstrate that "the work of art is imaginary, where it touches on its nature, by considering the way it comes into being." Richard Wollheim, "On an Alleged Inconsistency in Collingwood's Aesthetics," in Michael Krausz, ed., *Critical Essays on the Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972, p. 71.

10 Alan Donagan, *The Later Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1962, pp. 116-19.

11. I will use Leach as an instance of this approach but one could consider the Bauhaus as a movement that exemplified it as well.

12 "Our discussion of the general nature of art has left us with two distinct types: *humanistic art,* which is concerned with the expression in plastic form of the human ideals or emotions; and *abstract art,* or non-figurative art, which has no concern beyond making objects whose plastic form appeals to aesthetic sensibility." Sir Herbert Read, *Art and Industry: The Principles of Industrial Design,* Bloomington, Indian University Press, 1961, 36-7, referred to as AI. Bernard Leach, *A Potter's Book,* London, Transatlantic Arts, 1972; first published 1945, referred to as PB; Bernard Leach, *The Potter's Challenge,* London, Souvenir Press, 1974, pp. 1-25.

13 A further position against which this might be directed is argued in T. R. Martland, *Art and Craft: The Distinction,* pp. 231-5.

14 John Cook, "Human Beings," in *Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein,* Peter Winch, ed., London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969, pp. 150-1.

15 Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue,* 2nd ed., Notre Dame, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 1984, p. 193.

16 Robert Ginsberg, "Creativity and Culture," in *Creativity in Art, Religion, and Culture,* ed., Michael H. Mitias, Amsterdam, Editions, Rodopi B.V., 1985, p. 99.

17 For example, Henry Mintzberg, "Crafting Strategies," *Harvard Business Review,* August/September 1987, pp. 66-75.