

RICHARD FRANCIS ALLEN

THE
PLACE OF IRONY
IN
GEORGE MOORE'S PROSE-NARRATIVES

Ph.D THESIS
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Abstract

This study of George Moore's work attempts three things: an account of his development as a writer, an explanation of why he should have written what were, conventionally, idiosyncratic books, and a consideration of Moore as an individual responding to the situation of his class in society in the years 1880-1920.

In his first novels Moore tried to gain a reputation for himself in the romantic world of art far from the dying world of Galway. First he sought to gain notoriety as a leader of fashionable society, and then a more permanent fame writing serious Naturalist novels. But he could not sustain this sociological viewpoint or the belief in a new world because he felt that all progress was futile, and that the heroism necessary to confront the meaninglessness of the world was impossible.

He turned then to shorter novels which concentrated on the plight of individuals. Moral problems became passive subject-matter for a display of aesthetic skill, most noticeably in the use of irony. This is remarkable because effective irony demands a control of language and thought conspicuously lacking in the earlier novels. Moore ostensibly continued to believe in a new cultural renaissance, but in the long prose-narratives the intellectual consideration of the characters' motives becomes predominant and Moore uses characters as ironic reflections of each other to expose the falseness of the old world.

This irony is apparently based upon a "natural" way of life. But the value Moore really believed in was the work of art as a guarantee of stability in a shifting world. The tragedy was that he fled for security to his writings, but they could only remind him he could no longer hold his youthful dream.

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Preface

To indicate the sources of the quotations in the text I have adopted the following system. In the case of Moore's own works I have given in a bracket after the quotation first an abbreviation of the title of the work (usually consisting of the initial letters of the words of the title), then the date of the particular edition of the book I am referring to, and finally the page reference itself. Thus, for example, (BK(1916) p200) indicates that the quotation is taken from page 200 of the first edition of The Brook Kerith published in 1916. When the title of the work from which the quotation is taken is obvious I have omitted this; less frequently I have also omitted the date of the edition. In the first part of the Bibliography I have listed all of Moore's works from which I have quoted together with the abbreviations I have used for them in the text.

References to all other sources are given in a similar fashion. After the quotation I have given first the name of the author of the book, then the date of the work, and finally the page reference. For example, (Mansergh(1965) p166) indicates page 166 of Nicholas Mansergh's The Irish Question, 1840-1921 published in 1965. Full details of the editions I refer to are given in the second section of the Bibliography. Where more than one book by any author appears in the Bibliography the date of the edition shows from which I am quoting. In referring to collections of Moore's letters I have used either the name of the recipient of the letters or that of the editor of the collection in the reference. I have included details of these editions in both sections of the Bibliography.

1. Youth in Ireland

In the passing of the 1801 Act of Union between Britain and Ireland "all the arsenal of political corruption and chicanery were exhausted in order to inaugurate a series of remedial and healing measures. If the Act was not productive of such measures then it would be entitled... to be unequivocally condemned by history" - such was the opinion of Lord Randolph Churchill (Mansergh(1965) p166). It did not fulfil its aim however, and in the years around 1852 when George Moore was born, the Irish began to lose faith in this kind of relief and to turn more and more towards extra-Parliamentary action as a means of achieving an Ireland governed by Irishmen. The 1846 Famine finally proved that in the state it was in at this time the Irish agricultural system could not feed the Irish people. The founding of the Sinn Fein movement in 1858 marked the beginning of the course of action which was to lead via Parnell and the 1916 Uprising to the settlements of 1920 and 1923. In the years between 1858 and 1920 although successive governments passed measures of Land Reform equally often attempts to attack the problem at its roots by granting some degree of Home Rule were defeated. The suffering of the Irish people during these years was so great that no party was able to ignore the need for some form of relief. Although they were at root determined to preserve the estates and rights of the Irish land-owners who were their staunch supporters even the Tories who opposed Gladstone's Home Rule policies were eager to demonstrate that by twenty years of resolute government the problem might be solved. In all these years the fate of two classes of people, the normally Protestant landlord and his tenant, the usually Catholic peasant, most concerned those in power.

That these divisions were not uniformly rigid is shown by the Moore family. Although they were land-owners they could not be

counted among the greatest of that class. Moreover in the 1850s they were, like their tenants, Catholics and George Henry Moore sat at Westminster as a representative of the Tenant Right Party. J.C.Beckett has written that "with the disintegration of the Tenant Right Party at the end of 1852 Irish politics seemed to lose all sense of purpose"(Beckett(1966) p357), however G.H.Moore held his seat until 1857, now as leader of the Irish Independent Party. His standing during these years was high. During this time, when the Independent Party for a time held the balance of power in the Commons, he refused Lord Aberdeen's offer of the Chief Secretaryship in Ireland - as later he was to refuse Gladstone's invitation to sit on the Alabama Commission. But he too began to lose faith in Parliamentary action and in 1858 established contacts with the new Sinn Fein Party (his son Maurice even asserts that he took the oath, Moore(1913) p350). Two years before his death however G.H.Moore again entered Parliament; "He advocated reforms in the system of land tenure, and by enlisting the priests on his side was enabled in 1868 to win a memorable election, which broke the political power of the Mayo landlords for ever"(Hone(1936) p32). George Henry Moore's actions during the Great Famine might further seem to place him at the side of the peasant rather than the landlord for he,

had the satisfaction of knowing that not a single one of his tenants, over five thousand men, women, and children, died of want during those dreadful years (Moore(1913) p125).

But rather than seeing G.H.Moore at the side of the peasant manning the barricades it would be more appropriate to see him condescending to the peasant on the race-course. He took up racing again after leaving Parliament in 1857 and had some successes and an almost equal number of failures. Joseph Hone suggests in his biography of George Moore that it was in part the loss of his stables in 1868 that made his father return to politics (1936, p32). G.H.Moore's attitude to the peasants then seems more likely to

have been that of a paternalistic landlord than an equal comrade, and his efforts towards reform in land tenure were an attempt to preserve this conservative relationship. Financially his endeavours to help his tenants during the famine years later cost him dear. Many landlords took the opportunity of the unrest of the forties and fifties to cut down the number of their tenants and convert their land from arable to pasture, thus making them more productive and raising the standard of living of those tenants who remained. The number of George Henry Moore's tenants on the other hand remained too high either for them to earn a living, or to pay their rents and provide a living for their landlord. It has frequently been noted that in writing the racing scenes in Esther Waters Moore drew upon his childhood memories, but less attention has been paid to the similarities between the masters of Woodview and Moore Hall. G.H.Moore's racing successes enabled him to repay some of the debts incurred during the famines, to reroof and redecorate Moore Hall, and to send his sons to school at Oscott, but it was racing which also led him back into debt. The sense of insecurity that such an existence must have brought about, coupled with the progressive alienation of the family from their neighbours when G.H.Moore took up the cause of land reform, must have weighed heavily upon the family.

As the century progressed the kind of middle of the road position held by G.H.Moore, with its implicit attempt to ignore the financial bond between landlord and tenant, became increasingly difficult to sustain. In the country in general agrarian unrest had been increasing from the thirties and was to reach a peak after the founding of the Land League in 1879. Home Rule agitation was being arranged, first by Sinn Fein and later also by the Home Government Association which was founded in 1870. In Connaught conditions were the worst in Ireland - Synge was to set

The Playboy of the Western World "near a village, on a wild coast of Mayo". Despite George Henry Moore's kindness and goodwill the human relations between landlord and tenant became increasingly tense and the gulf which sprang up in George Moore's father's time then grew wider under his own absentee rule until, during the crises of 1880 and 1881, "Mayo was almost like a military camp"(Hone(1936) p190).

The sense of alienation which the Moore family felt was increased by the Protestant Ascendancy mores which the family, although Catholic, shared. This class and their attitudes were much to blame for Ireland's troubles and the later extreme nationalism of the early twentieth century. Their sights lay always across the sea in England, and their interest in Ireland was confined to such things as the Dublin season when the provincial court aped London. Before the Famine and his election to Parliament G.H.Moore may be said to have followed the pattern of Irish upper-class life in his irresponsible and irregular existence abroad and on the race-course. And when it came to choosing a school for his sons he naturally sent them to St Mary's College at Oscott, near Birmingham, the Irish Catholic equivalent of Eton where he himself had been a brilliant pupil.

In his book on Yeats Louis MacNeice remarks;

When I read Yeats's account of his childhood I find many things which are echoed in my own and in that of other Irish people I know - in particular, the effects of loneliness, of a primitive rural life; the clannish obsession with one's own family; the combination of an anarchist individualism with puritanical taboos and inhibitions; the half envious contempt for England; the constant desire to show off; a sentimental attitude to Irish history; a callous indifference to those outside the gates; an identification of Ireland with the spirit and of England with crass materialism (MacNeice(1941) p47).

Almost all these qualities can be detected in Moore's own childhood and in his accounts of it. Moore Hall had been built in 1795.

The successor to its builder, George Moore a merchant from Alicante

in Spain, was the "reflective and studious" George Moore whose main achievement was his vast and uncompleted "History of the British Revolution". By marriage he connected himself with the Marquis of Sligo and the Protestant Ascendancy proper. Hone describes the novelist's grandmother as,

a strong-minded woman, she took all the family affairs into her capable hands and permitted her husband to dream away his life in the library. Her word was law until she met her match in her eldest son (1936, p17).

It was the dominant personality of this strong willed son, the novelist's father, against which George Moore found himself pitted as a child. He was weak from birth and the match was something of an unfair one. His character, slow and unwilling to learn yet eager for mischief, seems to show a nervous child deprived of a sense of his own identity because of the power of his father's personality. He lacked any kind of close society beyond the family in which he could have developed any sense of his own identity. Readers of Joyce's

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man will need no introduction to the rigours of a Jesuit education, and when at the age of nine George was sent to begin his formal education at Oscott, following once again in his father's illustrious footsteps, the expected breakdown occurred. In Ave when Moore describes his schooldays and his childhood in general melancholy pervades both the recollection and the original scene;

it is difficult for me to believe any good of myself. Within the oftentimes bombastic and truculent appearance that I present to the world, trembles a heart shy as a wren in a hedgerow or a mouse along the wainscoting. And the question has always interested me, whether I brought this lack of belief in myself into the world with me, or whether it was a gift from Nature, or whether I was trained into it by my parents at so early an age that it became part of myself. I lean to the theory of acquisition rather than to that of inheritance, for it seems to me that I can trace my inveterate distrust of myself back to the years when my mother and father used to tell me that I would certainly marry an old woman, Honor King, who used to come to the door begging. This joke did not wear out; it lasted through my childhood; and I remember still how I used to dread her appearance, or her name, for either was sufficient to invite somebody to remind me of the nuptials that awaited me in a few years. I understood very well that I was such an ugly little boy that nobody else would marry me (A(1911) pp80-1).

To the end of his life he retained this nervous "feeling of being disliked by people, and... it was a great surprise to him to find sometimes that he had been mistaken"(Eglinton(1935) p92). The knowledge that he would in the future be the fourth George Moore to be the master of Moore Hall might, as he watched the ebullient behaviour of his father, have filled the young novelist with depression. On the other hand the sense that he was the eldest son of an established country family probably also gave Moore a feeling of superiority. The obedience of the family servants, that is, to set against his parents' occasional sarcasm; the result was to make him into "a docile child, yet a wilful one" (MDL(1921) pxiv).

On his arrival at Oscott George seems to have felt himself to be following in his father's footsteps; he wrote later that he "could only think of the boys waiting to make my acquaintance" (S(1912) p281). Disillusion soon followed, and he remained stubbornly illiterate - but neither unintelligent nor wholly cowed as another anecdote in Hail and Farewell shows;

I remember one [priest], a tall bald-headed fellow about five and thirty who kept me one whole summer afternoon learning and re-learning lines that I knew quite well. Everytime I went up to the desk to say them his arm used to droop about my shoulders, and with some endearing phrase he would send me back. We were alone, and I could hear my fellows playing cricket outside. "I must send you back once more," and when I came up once more with the lines quite perfect his hand nearly slipped into my trouser pocket. At last the five o'clock bell rang and I was still there with the lines unlearnt. To be revenged on him for keeping me in the whole afternoon, I went to confession and mentioned the circumstance; I was curious to test the secrecy of the confessional. I was quite innocent as to his intentions, and the result of my confession was that a few days afterwards we learnt that he was leaving Oscott, and a rumour went round the school that he used to ask the boys to his room and give them cake and wine (S(1912) p294).

His time at Oscott was neither happy nor overall of long duration. It was probably during his holidays from the school that he first felt the romantic love of the melancholy countryside of Ireland which is to be found in his work. Ireland represented an escape from the harshness, drudgery, and restriction of his schooldays, and he no doubt resented being deprived of it through the summer of 1866, when he seems to have been kept at Oscott during the summer holiday, as much as he enjoyed the convalescences in Ireland on the occasions when he was brought home ill from England. Even his stays at home however could be made miserable by the public comparison of the Moore children and their neighbours at Cong, Oscar and Willie Wilde. After Moore's father was re-elected to the Westminster Parliament in 1868 the family moved to a house in South Kensington. The barren wastes of County Mayo must have made the materialism of mid-Victorian England more attractive at this time than it was later to be to the Moore who coined the label of the "Brixton Public", but the family must have missed the close-knit society of Ireland. George Henry Moore tried to discipline his two recalcitrant sons by employing an army tutor but the boys responded with little enthusiasm.

Among the raffish society of the West London suburbs George must have felt as alien as he had done in the family home in Mayo, but in his search for security his thoughts were eventually to turn to art. This new departure for him was attractive because here at last was an avenue of opportunity which he might follow without invidious comparisons being made with previous members of his family.

Even as a young man he could perhaps never have wholly repudiated his father, and after G.H.Moore's death in 1870 Moore's affection seems to have grown. In Confessions of a Young Man he spoke of his father as "the one true affection" of his life, although no doubt the emotion was increased by the power Moore felt in writing of his father now that he could not answer back. In Vale Moore is apparently able to appreciate his father's feelings when he says, "my father must have been ashamed of his queer, erratic son, and could have entertained little hope that eventually I would drift into a respectable and commonplace end"(1914, p29). But perhaps this is possible because the book is proof that he has not drifted into anything remotely resembling a "respectable and commonplace end". His description of his father's death also shows a confident superiority beneath the melancholy;

Every now and again I heard the wail of my mother's voice, and I sobbed too, thinking of my father whom I should never speak to again. At the same time I was conscious, and this was a source of great grief to me, that my life had taken a new and unexpected turn. In the midst of my grief I could not help remembering that my father's death had redeemed me from the Army, from Jurles, and that I should now be able to live as I pleased. That I should think of myself at such a moment shocked me, and I remember how frightened I was at my own selfish wickedness, and a voice that I could not restrain, for it was the voice of my soul, asked me all the way back to Moore Hall if I could get my father back would I bring him back and give up painting and return to Jurles? I tried to assure myself that I was capable of this sacrifice, but without much success, and I tried hard to grieve like my mother. But I could not (V(1914) p38).

The oscillation between his confidence as a writer and an inherent insecurity dogs Moore's early career. His confidence of his own importance made him rush into print, but the doubt about his abilities forced him immediately to revise what he had written. Although of course his capacity for revision was probably also a consequence of an egotistical feeling that whatever he wrote would be of interest to the public.

George Henry Moore no doubt inculcated into his son the fear of idleness paradoxically so common among the "decadents" of the nineties (the mood is summed up by some words of Beardsley dating from 1896, "...but after all there is a kind of morality in doing one's work when one wants to do other things more", Hone(1942) p122). The financial circumstances of the Moore family increased this feeling in Moore. Joseph Hone estimates the income of the George Moore who founded Moore Hall as around four thousand pounds a year (1939, p31), but after this the family's income, in a way scarcely unusual in Ireland at this time, steadily declined. There was an occasional windfall such as the success of G.H.Moore's horse Croaghpatrick in the 1860s which served to recoup some previous losses. Hone says that in 1861 G.H.Moore had debts of five thousand pounds which were paid off when Croaghpatrick won twenty thousand pounds for Moore and his two partners (1939, pp166-7). But in general Moore Hall was increasingly mortgaged. Despite his boastful statement in Confessions that he became "heir to a considerable property - some three or four thousands a year"(1888, p11), reports suggest that in later life Moore's income from the estate was only about five hundred pounds a year. All these circumstances contributed to Moore's sense of the apocalyptic fate awaiting the landlord class.

In 1869 at the age of seventeen, before his father could have drawn him into any of the business of the estate however strong the bond of affection might have been between father and son,

George Moore succeeded to the property. For the next few years the estate was in the hands of guardians and the Moore family continued to live in London. Ireland meant only the source of a meagre revenue, the grudging society of the gentry of Mayo who had been angered by G.H. Moore's taking up the cause of the tenants, and a romantic natural haven to set against commercial England. Although Moore, like his father was never a bad landlord he can scarcely be called an actively good one. Lacking even his father's sense of oneness with the tenants Moore never again lived at Moore Hall for more than a few months at a time, and then only when circumstances such as a shortage of ready money made this unavoidable. After 1890 he largely confined his visits to Ireland to Dublin, preferring the dream of the big melancholy house on the hill above the lake to the actuality of the estate business and the tenants.

But although he never again lived for long at Moore Hall, Moore could not slough off the house and the world around it quite so easily as he later did the flat in Victoria Street. Moore's desire throughout his life to maintain his status as an Irish land-owner and a member of the aristocracy was for instance largely a consequence of his birth and the class-consciousness which his upbringing had inculcated. Although he was an absentee landlord it is impossible to imagine him ignoring events in Ireland even at the very end of his life, and in his early years the successive attacks upon the power of the Ascendancy must have seemed blows aimed at his own personal survival. Moore's withdrawal from society in his later years perfectly fits the image of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy as described by Elizabeth Bowen in Bowen's Court, her study of her own family which was in a similar situation to Moore's;

Having obtained their position through an injustice, they enjoyed that position through privilege. But... they did not abuse their privilege - on the whole. They honoured, if they did not justify, their own class, its traditions, its rule of life. If they formed a too grand idea of themselves, they did at least exert themselves to live up to this: even vanity involves one kind of discipline... Isolation, egotism, and, on the whole, lack of culture made in them for an independence one has to notice... Independence was the first quality of a class now, I am told, becoming extinct (1942, pp338-9).

Before his involvement in the Irish Literary Revival Moore's major achievement dealing with Ireland was the novel A Drama in Muslin of 1886, and I think that a brief consideration of Moore's attitude to Ireland as expressed in this book will show certain characteristics emerging which play an important part in his subsequent development. Among Moore's early "Naturalist" novels A Drama in Muslin can claim to be the most rooted in actual facts and experience. He subtitled the serialised version of the story "an account of actuality", an impression reinforced by his own use of certain sections - the meeting with the tenants to discuss rents, the incident in which Bridget hires a man to murder her sister, and that in which the peasants stop the hunt - in Parnell and his Island where he sought "the blurred and uncertain effect of nature herself"(PI(1887) p235).

Disputes over land and the Home Rule Bill agitation form the main events of the years between Moore's succeeding to the estate in 1869 and the publication of A Drama in Muslin in 1886. The Home Government Association was founded in 1870, the Home Rule League in 1873, in 1874 the Home Rulers won fifty-four of the Westminster seats, and 1880 marked the rise to power of Parnell. This increased pressure to separate Ireland and England threatened to divorce the Ascendancy from the country they regarded as their home. Their existence was also threatened, they thought, by the pressure for reform of the law on land tenure which came not only from the Irish Home Rulers but also from the British Government

itself which the landlords believed was their natural ally.

In 1870 a Land Act was passed, in Gladstone's words,

to prevent the landlord from using the terrible weapon of undue and unjust eviction, by so framing the handle that it shall cut his hands with the sharp edge of pecuniary damages... Wanton eviction will, I hope, be extinguished by provisions like these (quoted, Beckett(1966) p372).

In 1881 the three "F"s of fair rent, fixity of tenure, and freedom for the tenant to sell his own right of occupancy, were granted, again by Gladstone. The Franchise Act of 1884, and the Redistribution of Seats Act of 1885, together with the Ashbourne Act of 1885 gave the tenants further rights, the Home Rulers more power, and again lessened the influence of the landlords. In these circumstances the introduction of the Home Rule Bill in 1886, the year A Drama in Muslin was published, together with the plans to further reduce the landlords' holdings must have seemed like the final blow aimed at the annihilation of Moore's class.

As the possibility of Home Rule drew nearer and the influence of the Irish Party in the British Parliament became greater the tenants grew bolder. The militant Sinn Fein organisation had already been active in attempting an abortive coup in Ireland in 1867 and carrying out the attack on Clerkenwell Prison in the same year. After bad harvests in the late 1870s the landlords carried out many evictions, and the ineffectuality of Disraeli's government in enforcing the existing legislation led to the further growth of the national movement. When Gladstone was returned to power in 1880 Parnell led the Irish into a policy of active opposition at Westminster and in Ireland where the tactic of "boycotting" was first introduced. It is against this background that A Drama in Muslin is set; one of the central incidents in the novel involves the Phoenix Park murders of 1882 and the demand for a stronger Coercion Bill which followed. These events were very relevant to 1886. The demand for a

Coercion Bill continued, and the brother of Lord Frederick Cavendish who had been murdered in the Phoenix Park, Lord Hartington, was prominent among the Tories who opposed the 1886 Home Rule Bill. The same questions and attitudes still filled the minds of the people. The scene in which Mrs Barton bargains with Captain Hibbert for Olive while Mr Barton bargains with the tenants for his rents indicates the impasse into which human and economic relations had drifted. The contrast of the Dublin Balls and the horrors of peasant life shows the division between landlords and tenants, and the sordid triviality of the Castle life emphasises the spiritual and material poverty of the Ascendancy. Moore sums up the mood of the day in describing the reaction of the dinner-party to the news of the Phoenix Park murders;

No-one spoke, and Mrs Barton's hospitable board was encircled with the vague abandonment of sailors who feel the sinking vessel for the last time lifting herself for a final plunge before settling down into the deep (ADM(1886) p240).

Moore's professed stance in the novel is that of the impartial Naturalist observer, but he found this impossible because the problems of the characters were too near his own. Writing about the Bartons he is writing directly about a family similar to his own; the peasants were like his tenants to him; and the future of the Bartons was the same as his own. He brilliantly describes the triviality of Mrs Barton and her matchmaking, but Mr Barton's complete inability to deal with the economic situation in Ireland should not escape the reader's notice. Like Moore himself he sees no way out except a flight to the Continent. The descriptions of the lower classes in Dublin have the typical mingled horror and fascination of the Naturalist novel. For Moore the presence of the poor in Dublin threatened society from without as Mrs Barton's behaviour threatened it from within, and in his fear the novelist's gaze dehumanises the poor and the rural peasants into mere sticks and stones. The only course of action presented in the novel

as laudable is that of Alice's escape to England - an England not of liberal progressiveness but of bourgeois suburban Tory life. The Moore's themselves had already made this move in the early seventies, but whereas George Henry Moore perhaps never absolutely abandoned the idea of reform his son seems to have believed the situation utterly intractable. He had learnt well Gautier's dictum that "our boasted progress is but a pitfall into which the race is falling"(CYM(1888) p79). Throughout Moore refuses almost entirely to regard his characters as human beings rather than as morons or psychopaths (Alice herself seems to be the only exception to this). He is incapable of identifying with any kind of progress and change; Alice and Dr Reed seem to abandon their work in Ireland with Moore's consent to move to Kensington and set up what amounts to a rest centre for those who escape from the torture chamber of Ireland. To see Moore's early attempts at the Naturalist novel as merely a mystic response to French literature is to ignore the fact that in this kind of novel Moore found echoes of his own sense of the imminent disintegration of Ireland. In 1888 he wrote, "I cannot think of the place I was born in without a sensation akin to nausea" (CYM(1888) p150). No doubt the publication of A Drama in Muslin in 1886 was a response to current interest in Ireland and an attempt to exploit this, but more importantly it was an attempt to show the causes and events which were leading to the destruction of Irish society.

2. England: Freedom and Chaos

After the close-knit and introverted society of Ireland London must have given Moore a new sense of freedom when his family moved there in 1869. George Henry Moore tried to discipline his sons by putting them into the charge of an army tutor, but they only cut the lessons and spent most of the time betting on horses. George Moore possessed to a marked extent "the constant desire to show off" which Louis MacNeice thought a typical Irish characteristic, however, and he was soon dissatisfied with this rather conventional throwing over of the traces. Since it seems then that painting, which he took up at this time, was at first a way of rebelling against respectability and asserting his own independent mind, it is ironic that it was probably his father who first planted the seeds of the idea in his mind. According to Maurice Moore, when George Henry took his sons to the National Gallery in London George put on "airs of superior knowledge"(Hone(1936) p34). There was also an opportunity to see an artist at work at the studio of Jim Browne who, like the Moores, came from Mayo. Moore went for a time to the School of Art in the Kensington Museum but he did not follow his studies with any enthusiasm. The dreary world of the School, intent only on technical perfection, no doubt fared badly in contrast to the wild free life of Jim Browne. Art, particularly as practised by Browne, represented a new and exciting life to the shy and illiterate boy from Ireland, for at this time "the tea-cups of Queen's Gate and Bayswater clinked to the sound of animated conversations on the theme of art". Fame and Fortune awaited "the academic painter who knew how to cover a sufficient area of canvas with the politely sentimental or the discreetly erotic" like Edwin Long, whose "Babylonian Marriage Market" was sold in 1875 for £1,700 and resold only seven years later for £6,615 (Laver(1951) p136). Even though Browne's paintings had been hung only once in the Royal Academy and graced only the houses

of his native Ireland Moore found the impact of the vast, leonine, canvases irresistible. He later rejected them scornfully in Vale (1914, p62), but in his youth they seemed the ultimate in rebellion against conventional behaviour.

Moore credits Browne with being the first to suggest that "if you want to learn painting you must go to France"(V(1914) p65). And to Moore France could only mean Paris, which was not only one of the artistic centres of Europe but also the place where the Victorian aristocracy went in search of excitement - as he said later, "people do things in Paris that they would not do in London"(LS(1916) p90). His father died in 1870 and Moore went to Paris immediately he came of age. Although he was then theoretically entirely responsible for the family estates, in practice he ignored them and left them in charge of his mother and his agent. Nevertheless his behaviour in Paris was not entirely reckless. He tried unsuccessfully to find an heiress to revive the family's fortunes, and then he took lessons in painting and drawing at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Both courses probably served the same purpose, for the gay round of Society Balls and then the belief that he had some talent as an artist appeased the nagging sense of his own inadequacy.

The real sequence of events which led him out of obscurity to the Café Nouvelle Athènes is lost in the mists of Moore's editing of his memories. William Rothenstein described the Café Rat Mort, where Moore first met Bernard Lopez and Villiers de l'Isle Adam, as having "by night... a rather dubious reputation"; during the day it "was frequented by painters and poets. As a matter of fact it was a notorious centre of Lesbianism"(Rothenstein(1931) i,p59). It is easy to imagine the young Moore staring with equal fascination at the strange people he saw there. In contrast the Nouvelle Athènes wore a more serious air. Moore only started to go there after meeting Villiers when he had discovered that his real vocation was to be a writer, and it was in this café that he was eventually

introduced to Manet.

Towards the end of his life and after his death Moore's art criticism and his memories of the French painters came under heavy fire. In 1937 Jacques-Emile Blanche, a close friend of Moore, claimed that "all George Moore's articles on art... were inspired by someone, and I was often the person to whom he applied for advice"(Blanche(1937) p142). Then, in 1945, Douglas Cooper devoted an article in Horizon to a systematic attempt to discover the truth about "George Moore and Modern Art". Although he said his intention was not to "discredit" or to "mock" Moore, Mr Cooper concluded that Moore exaggerated his friendships with the Impressionist painters and did not appreciate either their aims or their work. The careful plotting of the inaccuracies in Moore's writings is important but in one respect Mr Cooper's article is lacking, for he nowhere considers why Moore, who dined out for almost sixty years on his recollections of the French painters, should have lived for so long on his memories. The Café and the company of the artists delighted Moore because it contrasted with the almost unremitted isolation of his earlier life in Ireland, London, and Paris. Moore, who had had as friends the trainer of his father's race-horses, Jim Browne, and Lewis Weldon Hawkins, was now accepted into a circle of true and important artists. The society of these men also seemed to Moore more suited to his status than many of his English friends; as William Gaunt writes in The Aesthetic Adventure,

it is easy to understand how much the inner intimacy of the Nouvelle Athènes appealed to Moore. The aloofness, the aristocratic disdain with which the Impressionist circle defended themselves against the jeers of the mob and brushed aside the criticism of the ignoramuses appealed to the country gentleman and the snob in him (1945, p71).

The key to Moore's reactions may be found in the description of his first meeting with Manet which he gives in Vale;

It is pleasant to remember my longing to be received into that circle, and my longing to speak to Manet, whom I had begun to recognise as the great new force in painting. Evening after evening went by and I did not dare to speak to him, nor did he speak to me, until one evening! - thrice happy evening - as I sat thinking of him, pretending to be busy correcting proofs, he asked me if the conversation of the cafe did not distract my attention, and I answered: "Not at all; I was thinking of your painting". It seems to me that we became friends at once (1914, p134).

In this account Moore has already given up painting to be a writer, although he is still able to anticipate the development of modern art. One of the characteristics of Hawkins which first attracted and then repelled Moore was his easy facility with a brush which contrasted with his own crude attempts, and the freer world of literature was perhaps therefore attractive to him because the absence of any equivalent of the Ecoles des Beaux Arts meant that he could work by himself without the result being constantly compared with the efforts of his fellow students. In the cafe where the painters gathered furthermore Moore sits "correcting proofs" - evidence not only that he is a writer but also that he is published. In the description Moore arranges the meeting so that it is Manet who speaks first to him. The account is thus in keeping with the fact that he was accepted into the circle not as a fellow-artist but as an "ideal model for his portrait" and a "close and eager observer of life around him" (a contemporary account, quoted Nejdefors-Frisk(1952) p22). By casting himself as an English writer Moore was able to avoid any competition with the painters but was able to keep their company. I think that this is also in keeping with Moore's insecure nature in that he always preferred not to compete rather than be second. By setting himself apart from traditional forms of art he made sure that his work could not be judged by accepted standards. This is apparent from the beginning, for he clearly wanted to write the first "French" novel in English. Throughout his life he compared his work to French fiction, and the only English writers he said he took as

models were such minor figures as Landor.

Moore was forced to leave Paris in 1879 by the difficulty of collecting the Irish rents, but this was no disaster for him since his future career as a writer now required that he return to England. In Paris he was never more than an intelligent follower of either the Impressionist or the Naturalist schools, but in England he could boast himself Zola's "ricochet" and a pioneer of the Impressionists with little fear of competition. His description of himself at this time in Confessions of a Young Man is probably not far from the truth; he wrote that he was

covered with "fads"... Naturalism I wore round my neck, Romanticism was pinned over my heart, Symbolism I carried like a toy revolver in my waistcoat pocket, to be used in an emergency (1888, p246).

In the following years he exploited his knowledge of French painting in the articles he wrote for The Speaker. D.S.MacColl's criticism in The Spectator was as advanced as Moore's and probably more perceptive, but through the articles he wrote for various papers, which he collected in Impressions and Opinions and Modern Painting, he managed to show himself as the pioneer of the new art. Beardsley is said to have thought Impressions and Opinions contained "just what one had been wishing to know about"(O'Sullivan(1959) p35). Moore published this book in 1891, whilst MacColl's Nineteenth Century Art did not appear until 1902. This kind of public reputation became even more valuable to Moore when the new art in its turn grew respectable.

On occasion Moore admitted the chance nature of his Parisian education. He told Vincent O'Sullivan that "the great happening" in his life was that he "went to Paris and knew the right people" (1959, p21), and in Avowals he describes his days in Paris in a way which contrasts with the section of Vale from which I have just quoted;

it was my luck for several years to be taken in hand by men of genius and literally pulled along, all working together, each contributing something... why this unique advantage of development should have fallen to my lot has been a matter of wonder to me all my life, for there was nothing in my verses nor in my drawings to entreat Manet's consideration, and I dare not allow my memory to recall the crude opinions I used to pick up and express in those years (1919, p277).

The original motive behind his first attempts at literature - a book of poems called Flowers of Passion published in 1878, and the novel A Modern Lover of 1883 - was a desire for the same scandalous reputation as was automatically associated with France and French art. The book of poems seems to have achieved its aim for 'Edmund Yates, reviewing Flowers of Passion in The World under the heading of "A Bestial Bard", said that the author should be whipped at the cart's tail while the book was being burnt by the common hangman'(Hone(1936) p69). But it was not a commercial success. The impression A Modern Lover makes upon the reader is of the same kind of sensational melodrama as characterised the supposedly serious French novel. The novel was also for 1883 "candidly erotic"(Bennett(1901) p249). A hero like Bertie Cecil in Ouida's Under Two Flags(1867) is basically an innocent figure of romance, but he also provides a discreet element of sexual excitement for the bored middle-class lady reader as he survives numerous Algerian mayhems to protect the heroine from dishonour. Lewis Seymour in A Modern Lover is more openly attractive in a sensual way but he is a helpless figure. Far from protecting the helpless women he is himself in need of care from them. The conventional situation is thus reversed and the dominating affection of Mrs Bentham and Lady Helen is as maternal as the upright male figure who cares for the helpless female in Victorian fiction is paternal.

By setting one long section of the story in Paris Moore pandered still more to this demand for excitement, but he also gave the book a personal significance for himself. Parisian society

provoked a mingled fascination and disapproval among the English middle-classes, and Lewis Seymour represents the epitome of the Englishman contaminated by an irresponsible society from whose influence every respectable mother sought to protect her child. Moreover the descriptions of Paris and the carriage drives in the Boulevards show that Moore was interested in showing the city only as a symbol of the fashionable fast life. There is then no mention of the upheavals of 1870, and Paris in A Modern Lover is still that which Napoleon III urged Baron Haussmann to build. In Volume Two of the novel Lewis and Mrs Bentham visit the Opera, designed by Charles Garnier to be the "crown" of the new Paris but not in fact finished until 1875 five years after the fall of the Second Empire; "within and without... loaded with decoration in all the styles known to history" the Opera was designed as "a worthy setting for the luxury and splendour of Second Empire society, where Napoleon III and his Empress might shine amidst the wealthiest nouveaux riches and the most beautiful courtesans" (Cobban(1965) p170). If the author of such a novel had led the Bohemian life of an artist, what should be more natural than that he should be identified with his artist-hero?

The sort of reputation Moore sought for himself at this time is also plain from the way he exploits what was in Victorian England something of a stock opposition between the masculine world of commerce and industry and the feminine world of the senses. Towards the end of the century the stature of the "masculine", which was identified with Progress, began to decline in the opinion of the middle-class cultured élite. The "feminine" sensibility which became the ideal of this class meant living on the nerves and being subject to fits of hysteria and sentimental incapacitation (a portrait not far from the truth of the sexually and emotionally repressed Victorian wife). Taking up the notion of the artist as the Byronic neurotic outcast, "aesthetic Brompton"

began to cultivate an intensity and strain which bore fruit in the "spasmodic" school of poetry. The general connotations of the word "feminine" at this time can be shown by a quotation from a review of the histrionic acting of the adored Sarah Bernhardt in Sardou's Fedora, first performed in Paris in 1882; the critic calls Bernhardt

feline and impassioned, gentle and violent, innocent and perverse, neurotic, eccentric, enigmatic, woman-abyss, woman I know not what. Mme Sarah Bernhardt always seems like a strange person returning from far away; she gives me the feeling of the exotic, and I thank her for reminding me that the world is wide... and that man is a multiple being, and capable of everything (Skinner(1967) ppl93-4).

In Confessions of a Young Man Moore uses this word of himself, and in writing about Villiers de l'Isle Adam in the same book ("feminine hand", 1888,p135), and of Lewis Seymour in A Modern Lover ("his feminine grace seemed like a relic of ancient Greece", 1883,i,p2). By linking Seymour with this mood, which was again basically French in origin, Moore obviously sought to associate him with a style of life which was his ideal in these years. The aesthetic Frenchified contempt for things English and commercial also comes out in the condescension towards the picture-dealer in this book.

Moore further attempts to exalt Lewis by comparing him to the great painters of the Renaissance - his face is "as suggestive as a picture by Leonardo da Vinci"(1883, i,p59), and his name is elsewhere coupled with those of Michelangelo, Raphael, and Andrea del Sarto. The most crude idealisations of Seymour are in the descriptions of his character in the opening chapters of the story. Before he dare present himself in Sussex he has to buy new clothes;

Some silk shirts with cords tempted him so much that he was restless until he possessed them. A great deal of money was also spent in scent, powder, nail polishers, etc., for although he had had little opportunity in his life of becoming acquainted with such luxuries, he divined their use as if by instinct, and his white feminine hands as they strayed over the shop counters seemed to love the touch of all things connected with the toilette table (AML(1883) i,pp98-9).

Later at the tennis-party Moore writes that "the sun turned the brown hair that fell on his neck to gold; the weak but delicately featured face looked beautiful, and the too developed hips gave a feminine swing to his walk"(i, p184). Lewis' appearance does not appeal to all the guests, but Moore uses this to berate philistine standards rather than to devalue Lewis' character. Despite his efforts however, even in the first section of the story Moore cannot sustain this idealised portrait for long. Telling of the encounter of Lewis and Gwynnie Lloyd he writes that "Lewis believed in passion, eternal devotion, and above all fidelity", yet only seven pages further on he has Lewis hope that Gwynnie "would not in any way try to mar his future prospects" (1883, i,pp75,82). The apparent inability to decide whether Seymour is to be criticised or idealised continues, but eventually the criticisms seem to become predominant; he becomes "a fashionable painter, that is to say, the artist who lives surrounded by grand people, and who rarely speaks to an artist"(ii, p215). Overall however, instead of a Naturalist portrait of a painter Moore seems only to have created what he attacked as the conventional Don Juan of the nineteenth century - "a pretty boy with whom numerous women fall in love"(SD(1888) piv).

The stories of the three women are on the other hand more consistently interesting and powerful. Tinsley's reader, or perhaps Moore himself, seems to have noticed this since the novel was announced for 1883 under the title of "A Story of Three Women" (ironically an advertising supplement listing this title was bound in with the first edition of A Modern Lover). Moore seems

to have openly recognised this by describing the story in the preface to the 1916 revision as follows;

Three women undertake to work for a young man's welfare: a work-girl, a rich woman, and a woman of high degree. All contribute something, and the young man is put on a high pedestal. One worshipper retains her faith, one loses hers partially, and one altogether (LS(1916) pviii).

However the increased idealisation of Seymour in the revision also suggests that although he could see the confusion of his book he could not resolve it. In the 1883 version Gwynnie Lloyd's moods are devalued by an occasional touch of melodrama - for example when she feels "an infinite desire to beat herself against the walls, to be crushed out of sight"(i, p45) - as the descriptions of Mrs Bentham are also diminished by the rather luscious evocations of Sussex, but in general these two characters are convincing. The depiction of Lady Helen is perhaps most successful of all once the opening scenes are past. Her battles to persuade her parents to accept Lewis as her husband are especially noteworthy, and inspire Moore's most vigorous prose in this book. At the end of the novel moreover, all three women are presented with a weight and feeling which only emphasise the reader's sense of the triviality of Seymour.

The self-consciously avant-garde atmosphere of the novel is shown in a more serious way by the descriptions of the feuds between the artistic schools. Thompson's work recalls that of the French Naturalist and Impressionist schools whilst even Seymour's failures are experimental. L.V.Fildes in his book about his father, the famous Academy and Court painter, describes a painting his father submitted to the Academy in which the principal figure has "red hair" against "a background of a red velvet curtain". Fildes comments that this was "a daring touch" at the time (Fildes(1968) p108). But the date of the painting is 1887, four years after the publication of A Modern Lover where Seymour's painting of Salomé in red on a red background is criticised by the Moderns as old-fashioned.

But the discussions among the Moderns about art seem in the end to be merely a peg upon which to hang a great deal of rather soft and gratuitous description. Moore pictures the scene during the tennis-party in Sussex as follows;

Lewis and the two ladies stopped as they left the wood, to gaze on the flaming garden of colours that stretched along the horizon, out of which the sun glowed like an enormous sunflower. In the valley below, reflecting all the stillness of the reeds, the river glided like a white dream between the two hills, through the glittering reaches down to the shimmering sea. Drowned little by little in a bath of gold, the sun sank, and the rays went up on every side, piercing some fluffy white clouds high up in the blue immensity, deluging the landscape with light, awakening the half-sleeping insects, and revealing every outline of the distant trees which stood against the sky (AML(1883) i, pp205-6).

In the third volume he gives Lady Helen's reasons for choosing the villa at Teddington for her honeymoon;

She had heard of the high trees where nightingales sang, and of the green swards leading to the water side, shaded by willows where one could sit, talk, or sleep in a hammock slung from the branches; she had been told that the rooms were papered with the most delicate greens and blues, and hung with choice specimens of art, old Italian mirrors, whose ledges and brackets were covered with quaint china; that the carpets were utterly soft, and strewn with low-cushioned seats, that Chippendale chairs, and beautiful majolica vases stood in the corners; that the windows were filled with flowers and surrounded with Virginia creepers, and that a wonderful grey parrot talked all day long to an immense Angora cat who slept on the white fur rug (iii, pp39-40).

These passages smack of the literary indulgence one might expect from the fact that during these years Moore wrote regularly for an ephemeral society paper, The Hawk, edited by his brother Augustus "Masher" Moore. The brothers also collaborated on a translation of the operetta Les Cloches de Corneville which was to play such a large part in A Mummer's Wife.

However Moore's work before 1890 is not without its valuable side. The most immediate influence on Moore in Paris was Zola. Like Moore he came from a claustrophobic middle-class world which

seemed to be in a state of decline. Of all the contacts Moore made among the French artists his relations with Zola seem the most tangential, but this was more than made up for by the extent of Moore's desire for the kind of wealth and public position Zola had achieved. In A Mummer's Wife Moore showed his allegiance to Zola by adopting his technique of collecting notes as a preparation for writing the novel, and this gives it a firm basis in experience like A Drama in Muslin rather than A Modern Lover, Spring Days, or Mike Fletcher. It is only this more serious approach to writing which I wish briefly to stress here. This quality can also be found in Moore's first books of criticism, Impressions and Opinions(1891) and Modern Painting(1893).

Douglas Cooper ruthlessly attacks the latter which he says consists of "extraordinarily glib essays" displaying "an equal lack of historical knowledge and perspective, especially concerning his contemporaries". Lacking "any positive or connecting theme", they seem only "to echo endlessly half-digested ideas picked up from others"(Cooper(1945) p125). But I think that this is to demand of Moore's criticism a twentieth century rigour which he would neither claim nor desire. The purpose of his journalism was only to convey the critic's individual response to art, rather in the manner of Pater and Arthur Symons.

On the other hand some of the novels he wrote before 1890, notably Spring Days, Mike Fletcher, and A Mere Accident, seem to demand to be included in any list of the worst novels in the English language. In retrospect A Mummer's Wife and A Drama in Muslin seem moderately successful novels, but they did not give Moore the reputation he craved which would somehow combine serious critical attention for his work and notoriety for himself. In these three novels and in Confessions of a Young Man he concentrated on trying to give his readers the impression of himself as "one who lived an exciting inward life, pulsating with adventure and ecstasy, of a purely mental kind"(Gaunt(1945) p114). Two of these novels,

Spring Days and Mike Fletcher, formed in Moore's mind a sequence of novels with A Drama in Muslin - his idea being presumably some kind of imitation of Balzac or Zola. He wrote that,

my readers will remember the note that preceded the "Drama in Muslin". I then promised a companion book, dealing with a group of young men, in which the women will be blotted out, or rather in their turn constitute the decorative background (SD(1888) piv).

Furthermore several of the characters in Mike Fletcher had already appeared in A Modern Lover. But in attempting this grandiose scheme Moore achieved only lamentable failure. Were it not for A Drama in Muslin it would be tempting to conclude that the degree of success Moore achieved in these years was inversely proportional to the length of the book, in that Vain Fortune often seems the best display of his skill and the series of novels the least convincing. He himself recognised this in refusing ever to reprint the "three hundred pages of twaddle" of Mike Fletcher (quoted, Elwin(1939) p79). The depth of feeling involved here is clear since this was the only novel he was ever to surrender to oblivion in this way. Strangely however, whilst saying that there is "no book I dislike more than Mike Fletcher. It would be difficult to say which is the worst - the composition or the writing. A detestable book"(Hone(1936) p379), he still confessed to liking Spring Days. Furthermore, whatever Moore's intention, A Drama in Muslin steadfastly refuses to be part of a sequence which includes these other novels. It is set in a different country where the people are troubled by problems which have totally different causes from those described in the English novels. Moreover the Irish story has a felt quality about it which is entirely absent from the English ones, which smack only of a pandering to literary and social fashion. The reason why Moore tried to pin the label of Naturalism on the books may well be a commercial one, for at this time Vizetelly's translations of Zola were selling at the rate of one thousand copies a week. By the time Vizetelly

was brought to trial in 1889, the year the last of Moore's "Naturalist" novels, Mike Fletcher, was published, there were reputed to be a million copies of the translations of the yellow-backed novels in circulation.

It is just possible to exhume some meaning from Spring Days and Mike Fletcher. For example one theme seems to be that a character like Frank Escott or Mike Fletcher should reject the febrile ways of society and pay more attention to the life-giving force of the instincts. But even this has little relevance to any concept of the novels as Naturalist studies of differing groups of people in their separate environments. The books not only fail as "French" novels however, for they also lack almost entirely the ingredients one expects of any novel. Most of the characterisations are insubstantial, trite, or non-existent - I think particularly for example of the Horlocks and Mr Berkins in Spring Days, and of the lords and John Norton in Mike Fletcher. Characters are also mentioned in Mike Fletcher and footnotes direct the reader to A Modern Lover or Spring Days, yet the gain in meaning from this cross-referencing is consistently negligible. Scientific comments rest fairly easily on A Mummer's Wife and A Drama in Muslin, but they are thrust into these other novels with a tedious intrusiveness only equalled by the prolixity of the philosophical digressions in Mike Fletcher. The settings equally lack reality and seem at times to consist only of idealised descriptions of the English countryside or lengthy digressions about the Temple. In Spring Days the plot is at once so complex and so uninteresting as to be unmemorable. Moore seems to have tried to overcome this in Mike Fletcher by concentrating on Mike, but the attempt is unsuccessful because the central character is still not strong enough to support the book. Because of this Moore has also to drag in irrelevant material to fill up the story; the section involving "The Pilgrim" and Mr Thigh, for example, is entirely

unnecessary and as contrived as the other wills and inheritances which punctuate the plot of this novel like those of so much second-rate Victorian fiction. Finally large sections of this novel - for example the visits to the music-hall and the slang of the demi-monde - seem to be included only to convey the same fashionable atmosphere Moore had sought to describe in A Modern Lover.

Nevertheless three impressions do emerge from the chaos of these novels which are important for an understanding of Moore's character. Firstly, consciously or unconsciously Moore identifies with Mike Fletcher as he had done with Lewis Seymour. Often he seems to draw the character from his own real life, so that for example Fletcher is a collaborator on "The Pilgrim" as Moore was a collaborator on The Hawk. But at other times Moore used the character to fulfil his own dreams. He set out to create his men characters in the image of the Lovelace of 1888;

Our young man would have to be five feet eleven, or six foot, broad shoulders, a thin neck, long delicate hands, a high instep. His nose would be straight, his face oval and small, he must be clean about the hips, and his movements must be naturally caressing (CYM(1888) p319).

In contrast Susan Mitchell described Moore, albeit some years later, as follows,

a man of middle height with an egg-shaped face and head, light yellow hair in perpetual revolt against the brush, a stout nose with thick nostrils, grey-green eyes, remarkable eyes, a mouth inclined to pettishness, lips thick in the middle as if a bee had stung them. He had champagne shoulders and a somewhat thick, ungainly figure, but he moved about a room with... grace (Mitchell(1916) p13).

The difference between the two descriptions shows the extent of the sense of inadequacy Moore had about his own appearance. This accounts for the lack of restraint in his portrait of Mike Fletcher, and for the way the other characters find Mike so irresistible. Moore describes how Mike's,

beautiful figure appealed to Frank's artistic sense; and he noticed it in relation to the twisted oak columns of the bed. The body was smooth and white as marble, and the pectoral muscles were especially beautiful when he leaned forward to wipe a lifted leg. He turned, and the back narrowed like a leaf, and expanded in shapes as subtle. He was really a superb animal as he stepped out of his bath (MF(1889) p61).

In Confessions of a Young Man(1888) Moore wrote that in Paris his "nature" had been "too young and mobile to resist the conventional attractiveness of nude figures, indolent attitudes, long hair, slender hips and hands"(p19). The fact that in Mike Fletcher Moore so obviously ignores his own insight into the follies of his youth is a measure of how overwhelmingly attractive he found this crude pastiche of beauty and sophistication, and of how loath he was to abandon his attempts to emulate it in his own behaviour.

He tried so hard to win the reputation of leader of the rather sharp world exemplified by Fletcher, Lubini's, and the slang of the demi-monde, that he seems to have been unaware of the banalities he perpetrated. For example, in the passage from Mike Fletcher I have just quoted Mike's body seems inevitably to be compared to "the twisted oak columns of the bed". In Spring Days an absence of control again produces bathos when Lady Helen and Frank Escott leave their box at the theatre; she demands, "give me my cloak... now give me your arm"(1888, pp135-6). Little seems to have been accomplished since the publication of A Modern Lover where Moore had written that "the big drawing-room was literally filled with bridesmaids and bridal presents. The former were mostly cousins" (1883, iii,p12). In none of these novels does Moore really succeed in any sustained conveying of emotion; in Mike Fletcher Lily's death is reduced to banal pathos when she hands Mike the flowers with the words, "Take them they will live almost as long as I shall"(1889, p249). In Spring Days when Frank talks of Paris and painting (1888, pp167-8), what ought to be the most ordinary dialogue between characters is pathetically stilted and remote from any trace of actuality.

A second impression which emerges from these novels is that Moore as hopelessly idealised his writing about the English countryside and its people as he did the characters of his heroes. In a letter of the 11th September 1893 Moore wrote to his brother, "My love of England is monstrous, preposterous. I know and I have poured all this great love into Esther Waters. I suppose this love and loving comprehension of England is some form of atavism"(Owens(1966) p298). Throughout his life, like so many of the Irish Ascendancy, he sought relief from present problems in England. In view of this it is hardly surprising that his "loving comprehension" in fact only produced pastoral dreams and nostalgic visions of the feudal past; at the end of Avowals he wrote,

I... am the optimist, finding happiness in the thought that in about one hundred years the population of England will begin to dwindle, and in about two hundred years there will be fields and gardens where to-day there are cinder-heaps... coal and petrol are not endless even in America; and as soon as both are among the gone, the world will start on a new race again; the pack-horse will be seen on the down; the archer will be met in the forest bending his bow to catch the swift deer with a swifter arrow as he crosses the glade; women will come back to the cottage doors to spin the thread for the weaving of the sheets they lie in; pottery will be made on the wheel; and men will paint it, having recovered the use of their hands, and a new idea of beauty will be given to mankind (1919, p310).

Although he had lived in London for some years before then, Moore first experienced English rural society when he stayed with the Bridgers at Southwick in 1886. The bourgeois urban dream of the end of A Drama in Muslin was converted into the idealised rural world of Spring Days as a direct result of Moore's stay in Sussex and the book is even set in Southwick. Moore said that he attempted to copy the work of Jane Austen here, for example the unruly daughters bring to mind Pride and Prejudice, and the secret tennis-party the theatricals of Mansfield Park. The attraction of Jane Austen as a model was probably the way the surface confusions of the comedy of manners are underpinned by the presence of strong

and certain values beneath the surface. But Moore could not express the same certainty, and as a result the central characters of Spring Days lack depth and Jane Austen's controlled comedy of wit becomes an incoherent intrigue.

Finally the reader has the impression that Moore handles the idyllic secret family of Willy Brookes in Brighton with a simplistic and uncritical veneration. Perhaps again he was writing about a dream of what his life seemed to lack, in this case reinforced by the memory of the close-knit Moore family who had ruled part of County Mayo from the Big House above Lough Carra. As the eldest son of this family it would clearly have been George's duty to marry and continue the line of the family, yet this he never did. Moore's relations with women will doubtless be a source of endless conjecture, for there is simply an absence of precise evidence unsullied by personal malice, and he himself was incapable of remembering his life without editing it into a work of art. However it seems at least possible that around 1890 when Moore was thirty-eight and had enjoyed almost twenty years of independence and freedom he might have thought with regret of the way his father had lived at Moore Hall surrounded by his family. Beside this must be set the fact that the most permanent relationship with a woman he ever had, with Maud Cunard, began when he was forty-two and that this was immediately followed by her unhappy marriage to Sir Bache Cunard. Throughout his life Moore was a lonely man. Something always cut him off from deep relationships with women, and he seems to have preferred the friendship of such great society figures as Lady Cunard or Mrs Hunter, or the many brief flirtations which he referred to perpetually in his conversation and his reminiscences. The friends of his life to whom he felt closest were all men - in Ave he lists Dujardin, Yeats, Martyn, and Symons as possible "boon-companions", and one might add to these

names Eglinton, AE, and the members of the New English Art Club. Despite the important part played by his brother in Hail and Farewell, Moore seems usually to have turned away from any family with disdain. The reasons why this should have been so are no doubt complex but they are, I think, certainly related to the sense of his own inadequacy which perpetually nagged him. Because of this, relationships with other people inevitably became in Moore's eyes contests which could only be settled when he had proved himself his adversary's superior. This contributed to the consistent regression to dreams and fantasies of success and security which in its turn was largely responsible for the chaos of these early novels.

3. 'A Mummer's Wife' and 'Esther Waters'

Moore's first novel was published in 1883 when he was thirty-one. All the books I have discussed in the previous chapter were written in the seven years following this at an average of one a year. They are a distinctly unpropitious beginning for an author who was later to make great claims for the perfection of his style. The absence of any trend towards the better in these stories is perhaps the most disturbing fact. Yet in these years he also wrote A Mummer's Wife, A Drama in Muslin, and started Esther Waters; three novels which do much to redress the balance in his favour. The inability to distinguish between the good and the appallingly bad continued to the end of his life. Around 1921 he created an alter ego, "Amico Moorini", who was made responsible for the dross which he might well have been content to let slip into oblivion. For him perhaps the dross was valuable as evidence of the presence of the gold for which the struggle was unceasingly waged. Charles Morgan, perhaps the most perceptive of Moore's critics, saw this struggle as the central thread of Moore's life; "the astonishing thing", he wrote,

is the persistence of the unregenerate Moore. To the very end of that long life, he had to be tutored and whipped and expurgated... In every book he wrote George Moore went through the whole process of self-renewal; he went back to the beginning and taught himself to write all over again (Morgan(1935) pp11-12).

A Mummer's Wife and Esther Waters are novels for which he considered the struggle easily won. In contrast to the extensive revisions of A Modern Lover and A Drama in Muslin, when they were republished A Mummer's Wife and Esther Waters were only slightly altered. Esther Waters perhaps did not even require this purification, for its prose, written in 1894, already resembles the revised Muslin of 1916 more than the Spring Days of 1888 or even the 1898 Evelyn Innes.

In the preface to Spring Days Moore said that he had followed

"the way of art" scorning "all facile success". A Mummer's Wife, the first of Moore's novels to be published by Vizetelly in his series of "One Volume Novels", is still seen as almost the only Naturalistic novel in English. In Esther Waters on the other hand, published under the more respectable imprint of Walter Scott, Moore turned back to a more English type of novel. In both he seems to have put aside his desire for facile notoriety and to pursue his aim with a remarkable degree of seriousness. Furthermore in both he achieved a considerable amount of success; Peter Ure has even written of the climactic moment when Esther Waters decides that her future lies with William and Jackie and that "Them's my good"(EW(1894) p289) that it is 'one of those crystallising moments like "Nelly, I am Heathcliff" or Madame Merle's "Everything!" that the novel achieves less frequently than Elizabethan drama' (Ure(1968) p268).

Grandiose and exotic descriptions such as I have quoted from A Modern Lover in the previous chapter can of course be found in A Mummer's Wife, especially in the sections dealing with the country around Hanley. But here they are used with a Naturalistic aim in mind to evoke the English industrial landscape, and hence to do for England what Zola had done for France. The description of the brickyard is an example of this;

All was red - generally red-brick turning to purple, and it blazed under a blank blue sky. No spray of green relieved the implacable perspectives, no aesthetic intention broke the frigidity of the remorseless angles. Wide widths of red walls, bald rotundities of pottery ovens, iron, and brick, reigned supreme; before them nature had disappeared, and the shrill scream of the steam-tram as it rolled solemnly up the incline seemed to be man's cry of triumph over vanquished nature (AMW(1885) p73).

Moore wrote A Mummer's Wife at Moore Hall. As Professor Ure remarked it is a "strange, hot and alien book to have been composed in such a place"(p259), and perhaps because of this the description fails ultimately to convince. The tone seems arch, as does that of most of the sections devoted to life in Hanley, because Moore did not

feel the force he described. He worked from notes, for example in the long and slightly tedious description of the visit to the pottery factory, rather than from felt experience. Moore's prose in this book can also still too easily be slipshod. He uses "facile" instead of the more appropriate "easy" in the phrase "not too facile a task"(1885, p244), and thus destroys the sense. The metaphor of "she freed herself from the weight of ten years of work which pressed upon her, and trod the heaviest tread on the head of her anterior life"(p248) seems to require a degree of physical contortion. And in a novel where the stress in the latter half is on the extent to which Kate is still controlled by the harsh values of her early life it is perhaps a little inappropriate to describe her already in Hanley, dreamy as she is, lifting her eyes to Dick "liquid with love"(p83). In contrast in Esther Waters this kind of phrase (here "liquid with invitation", p170) is applied appropriately to the empty emotions of the prostitutes in the Strand. In the later novel the sections dealing with Esther and William's love stand out for the restrained and felt quality of the dialogue and description. In contrast the description of feelings in A Mummer's Wife is marred by the Naturalistic framework into which Moore frequently forces the story. Kate's actions and moral decisions then lack the reality of Esther's sufferings when she is forced to choose between Fred Parsons and William Larch. The Naturalist crudeness is apparent also in the following passage from A Mummer's Wife. Kate rummages in Dick's trunk when he first comes to the house and Moore catalogues what she finds; "The foie gras suggested delicacy of living, the chemise immorality, the bottle of scent refinement of taste, the bracelet she could make nothing of" (1885, p94). Furthermore the revolutionary and realistic author shows an odd hesitancy in describing those unpleasant things on which the Naturalists were supposed to dwell. Kate first suspects that she is "enceinte"(p261), and the artificiality of this is brought out by her "sudden naturalness" later in telling Montgomery that

she is "in the family way"(p266). But Moore slips back into sentimentality when on the next page he writes,

The last streak of yellow had now died out of the sky, in the dusky meadows the cattle slept under the light of a few shimmering stars, and, penetrated with a sentiment of fathomless content, Kate watched the flying landscape (p267).

Moore set out his intention of being the ricochet of Zola, "the Homer of modern life"(PH(1885) pvi), in the pamphlet Literature at Nurse(1885). His method of quoting passages from supposedly respectable novels and claiming they are indecent is based upon Flaubert's conduct at the trial of Madame Bovary. He declared that his aim was to create a climate in which the novelist

will be allowed to describe the moral and religious feelings of his day as he perceives it to exist, and to be forced no longer to write with a view of helping parents and guardians to bring up their charges in all the traditional beliefs (LAN(1885) p21).

The novelist must fall in with "the spirit of scientific enquiry that is bearing our age along"(p17). This kind of "scientific enquiry", initiated by Zola, aimed at relating character to heredity and environment and Moore lives up to this in A Mummer's Wife in part through the realistic descriptions of events and scenes. The presentation of the travelling band of actors is especially vivid and testifies to Moore's personal experience of the Maitlands' company. The descriptions of Hanley are perhaps less vivid but still adequate to make up the other part of a scientific experiment based upon the dictum he used as a prefatory quotation in the first edition;

Change the surroundings in which a man lives, and, in two or three generations, you will have changed his physical constitution, his habits of life, and a goodly number of his ideas.

In Esther Waters the racing and betting at Woodview and "The King's Head" also show Moore emulating Zola's ability to make his characters "swarm". According to Naturalist dogma these environments are shown to form the characters of those who live there. The various

lodging-houses constitute an illustration of what is home for the travelling player, and also are a parody of the ideal family life which Kate seeks in Hanley and with Dick. The free and easy life of the servants' hall at Woodview, symbolised by their Ball, causes the downfall of Esther. Moore might even be said to follow the example of the Naturalists too closely, for an analysis of A Mummer's Wife soon leads to the conclusion that it is simply a pastiche of various French novels. Kate's dreams about romantic heroines copy those of Flaubert's Emma Bovary; the shift in the circumstances of her life parallels Thérèse Raquin; her success in her new life with the Opera Company and her subsequent failure and decline amidst drunkenness and petty-bourgeois jealousy imitates the life of Gervaise Coupereau in L'Assommoir; and finally her death rather weakly echoes the cataclysmic end of Nana. But instead of relating the book to social and political events Moore stops short at a fuller description of the physical features of people and things. There is no sense either that Kate is representative of a wider class of Beings. Moreover the impact of her death, when only the mad Mrs Forest is present, comes from its intensity as an isolated event rather than from its close relation to the state of society in general.

Instead of portraying in often crude and grandiose terms the downfall of a whole class of society Moore became gradually more concerned with particular dilemmas within the general problem. His final response was often equivocal, and he came eventually to prefer to state the problem of an individual as clearly as possible without offering a solution. He himself said of his method in Esther Waters;

Betting may be evil, but what is evil is always uncertain, whereas there can be no question that to refrain from judging others... is certain virtue. That all things that live are to be pitied is the lesson I learn from reading my book (EW(1899) p7).

The chain of questions relating to the betting in the book is irresolvable. Should William stop betting in "The King's Head",

thus depriving the neighbourhood of a source of excitement which at times brightens their humdrum lives and causing Esther and he to starve? What alternative hope can there be in the dreary lives of these people? Can there be one law for the rich and one for the poor in this matter? If betting is acceptable on the race-course why not in "The King's Head"? Is any activity on the other hand justified which causes such hardship and death at Woodview and in Soho? If the betting were stopped wouldn't the people find some equally reprehensible and possibly less fair means of injecting hope into their lives?

However, set beside this apparent inability to make judgements a parallelism in the stories of Kate Ede and Esther Waters shows the gradual development of a demand for a clear moral decision. The notion which is introduced here is again quite different from the ideas of the Naturalists. Both characters give birth to a child whilst living in an environment which is inimicable to their natures. The death of Kate Ede's baby is part of the general hopelessness of her plight. The scene is far from the realism of the early part of the novel and the precepts of Zola in that a hostile, supra-natural, moon is introduced as the agent of death. The relapse into the supra-natural and into melodrama here seems to show an uneasiness about the incident in Moore. In contrast Esther Waters' child lives, and the question of his survival becomes the point of the major part of the novel. Instead of a study in decline the novel becomes self-consciously heroic; for Moore Esther's story "is a heroic adventure if one considers it: a mother's fight for the life of her child against all the forces that civilisation arrays against the lowly and the illegitimate"(EW(1894) p163). The novelty of the ethic which Moore depicts here lies in the fact that heroism is linked not to the preservation of a simple human will and dogmatic faith alone, for when William comes back into her life the demand becomes one for flexibility of moral action. However the ethic does implicitly demand also an almost automatic acceptance of an

unquestioned "natural" life, and in this sense it is conservative and static. This aspect is foreshadowed in A Modern Lover where Lady Helen, aware of Seymour's infidelities, still thinks, "he was her husband, and the father of her child, and she would have to make the best of it"(1883, iii, pp191-2).

Esther must then answer a series of questions; notably, how she should behave to William after he has seduced her at Woodview, what she should do with her child, whether she should marry Fred Parsons or William, and whether she should accept the betting against which her whole upbringing has set her. Most of these dilemmas are presented in a very dramatic way but none more so perhaps than the choice between Fred and William;

She lay in bed weary with arguing with herself, wishing that the matter could be decided for her; wishing that she might go to sleep and wake the wife of one or the other. As she fell asleep she felt that her life must be all one thing or all the other; and she did not feel herself equal to either course. She felt that she would prefer a middle course; and as film after film of sleep fell upon her brain the miracle was achieved. She dreamed of a husband possessed of the qualities of both, and a life that was neither all chapel nor all public house. But such illusions could not last; soon the facts separated, the grotesque followed the ideal, and Esther awoke in terror, believing she had married them both (EW(1894) p226).

The passage particularly stresses not only the choice open to Esther but also the inevitable fact that these questions, unlike those about the betting, must be answered. Because of her rigid Plymouth Brethren upbringing, at Woodview she responds wrongly to the first question put to her in the story. By refusing to see William as anything but an evil seducer she becomes at least a little responsible for driving him into the arms of Miss Peggy. To some extent then the life of hardship from which Miss Rice rescues her is of her own choosing. When she does marry William rather than Fred Parsons however, she chooses rightly and the result is a happy family home which is broken only by the death of William. Moore later gave a key to the principle which he suggests ought

to guide her behaviour in Salve where he wrote, "if our deeds go down one set of lines and our ideas go down another, our lives are wasted"(S(1912) p32). In deciding whether she should marry William of Fred, Esther ought to heed the "deeds" - the existing, if stillborn, family of William and Jackie - and form her "ideas" accordingly. Thus the moral law will be made to echo the natural marriage. There is thus a marked difference between the Naturalistic world of A Mummer's Wife where, as in the world of Zola, "attention is easily diverted from questions of personal responsibility to considerations of typicality"(Nicholas(1962) p95) and the more open world of Esther Waters. The idea continued to obsess Moore. It recurs in his discussion of George Eliot, whose style he traces to "a conflict between theory and conduct"(CES(1924) p79), and in some words he used of himself to Charles Morgan, who was then his prospective biographer, "your story is of a man who made himself because he imagined himself, and you must discover when his imagination went with his nature and when against it"(Morgan(1935) p3).

William Larch's character and fate in Esther Waters are also comprehensible in these terms. Although in becoming a footman, in seducing Esther, and then running off with Miss Peggy he seems to be an opportunist who could never fulfil his mother's ambition, through the bookmaking he does eventually raise up, however briefly, the family's fortunes. His use of the phrase, "my little wife", when he first seduces Esther and later again when he persuades her to marry him suggests that his love for her is sincere from the beginning, and that he only abandoned her when she rejected him. In using the betting and the public house to make money William again shows a flexibility in responding to circumstances, but ultimately he fails the test. He continues to gamble and to take bets when the more advisable course would be to abstain, and as a result loses the licence of "The King's Head" and falls ill. His fault here is only saved from criticism because, like Esther fighting for her child, he shows such nobility and heroism; through

this his error becomes tragedy.

The emphasis upon the motives and actions of individuals obviously demands a concentration and fineness foreign to the sweeping gestures of Naturalism. Moore also rejects the aloof detached description of characters as pawns of fate which he might have found in Flaubert. Jean-Paul Sartre has written that,

Flaubert wrote to disentangle himself from men and things. His sentence surrounds the object, seizes it, immobilises it and breaks its back, changes into stone and petrifies the object as well... The determinism of the naturalistic novel crushed out life and replaced human actions by one-way mechanisms (Sartre(1950) pp197-8).

This was one of the characteristics which had made Naturalism so attractive to Moore, and both A Mummer's Wife and A Drama in Muslin display this quality of dehumanisation. Moore seems to echo Flaubert's notion that the novelist "should treat men as they do mastadons and crocodiles... show them, stuff them, pickle them... but judge them, no"(Frierson(1925) pl87) when he writes,

Like rabbits come out to disport themselves in the evening, the inhabitants of Hanley had come out of their brick burrows and were enjoying themselves in the market-place (AMW(1885) pl56).

This kind of alienated gaze can at times be in character, as when Kate wanders alone in London. But Moore's evident knowledge that at this point hers is a disturbed and pathological state does not prevent him employing the same stance as author. Susan Mitchell commented acutely that in A Mummer's Wife "he degraded the runaway wife as if he had learned his doctrine of retribution in the plain black and white it would have been taught him by any parish priest in Connaught"(1916, p44). Moore seems to have become conscious of the sterility of this position when later he accused Zola, his one time master, of failing to provide his "extraordinary evocations of the externals of human life with human souls"(IO(1913) p78). The tendency to write with what Matthew Arnold called in Flaubert an impotent and bitter "petrified feeling"(Arnold(1888) p276), survives residually in some of the minor characters of Esther Waters,

for example in Esther's sister Jenny. When she comes to ask Esther for money in the hospital she seems rather an embodiment of the threats to Esther and her child. The whole of Esther's family disappears from the story whilst she is in hospital, and Jenny's appearance only reinforces the idea that this is a crude trick introduced to stress how Esther is being forced even more into isolation. In general however Esther Waters is notable for a warmth and charity in the portrayal of the main characters which led Moore himself to speak of Esther as "a woman living in the deepest human instincts"(Gerber(1968) p110), and a critic to see the novel as "written in the central British tradition of the philanthropic novel"(Howarth(1958) p33). These comments need to be qualified however because Moore's sympathy is to some extent the result of a certain detachment from his book. This was possible because the subject did not impinge on his own life; the characters are not embodiments of his dreams and ambitions, and the English countryside was not a source of his income.

Esther Waters is obviously not in the tradition of the "English novel" which Moore himself described as having been "from the first... looked upon as a means by which the intolerable leisure of the drawing-room might be whittled away"(Eglinton(1942) p32). He claimed to have based Esther on a real Emma who had been his landlady's servant in the Strand and who he had described in Confessions of a Young Man. Evidence for this can be found in an occasional similarity of incident, for example Esther meets William in London, as Emma met her young man, "a-coming from the public 'ouse with the beer for the missus' dinner"(CYM(1888) p216). But the treatment of the two servants has otherwise little in common. Moore describes how he "used to ask" Emma "all sorts of cruel questions, I was curious to know the depth of animalism you had sunk to, or rather out of which you had never been raised"(p209) - an attitude to his subject which has more in common with French Naturalism than his championing of Esther. Moore rejected the

French novel in writing Esther Waters and took up the Russian. The incident where John Bingley tries to tempt Esther to steal the half-crown from his room may well then be based on similar incidents in Dostoievski's The Idiot and The Possessed. But the more important influence here was probably Turgenev. His work was frequently cited as diametrically opposed to that of the French Naturalist 'whose delight was "to rake together the garbage of life"' (Gettman(1941) p93). Turgenev was also suitably recherché. In 1879 Blackwood's "scornfully observed that a delight in Turgenev was a kind of test by which the illuminati recognised each other"(p89), and even later when, around 1885, Tolstoi's fame began to grow, "in the opinion of critics of an aesthetic complexion, he was, as a novelist, inferior to Turgenev"(ppl36-7). To Turgenev Moore owed the blend of aesthetic fineness, warmth of character, and moral questioning which characterises Esther Waters. His example also partially inspired the tone of the end of the novel for Turgenev believed that "not happiness but human dignity is the chief goal of life"(p174). The atmosphere of warmth in Esther Waters is also the result of the idealistic pity possible in a member of the higher classes for one of the lower, which causes him to read the dreams of his own class into the actions of Esther. After breaking with the French novel, as well as coming under the influence of the Russians, Moore also seems to go back to the nineteenth century English novel for inspiration. Indeed Esther Waters perhaps possesses more similarity to the conventional English novel than Moore himself might have liked to admit.

The theoretical interaction of the subject of the novel and his environment in the Naturalistic novel was normally by no means either impartial or scientific. Brian Nicholas writes that

the choice of the easily movable object to meet the barely resistible force is hardly a very searching way of "studying" the complex question of the interaction of personal and social forces (1962, p96).

This can be seen in the character of Kate Ede. As the story progresses

the prejudices of her middle-class character are so easily overcome that there is a risk of the apparent validity of the novel as a scientific experiment being destroyed. And it is as a scientific experiment that the novel claims seriousness. In Esther Waters this imbalance is corrected yet the interaction is still hardly equal. The emphasis is now upon the heroine's struggle against the world, and she is aided not a little by Moore's own idealism. To the end of his life when accused of immorality, that most "French" of faults, Moore would round on his critics with a copy of Esther Waters. But this was the novel which, he claimed, had finally destroyed the Victorian "three-decker" novel and its parasite the circulating library; in A Communication to My Friends (1933) he said that after Esther Waters "the censorship" of the libraries was "dead beyond all hope of resurrection" (p73). Confessions of a Young Man suggests that he first became interested in the story of the servant-girl because it was unconventional and would shock the genteel middle-class reader. When Esther Waters appeared, the press and public responded with characteristic "pained reproach" to this novel by Moore which was rumoured to be based on Mademoiselle de Maupin (Bennett (1901) p233). But after a while they began to realise that Moore had written a novel which contradicted most of his earlier work. Instead of social degradation or fashionable gossip there was moral uplift. Moore wrote about servants ostensibly from their own point of view, but he did so with idealism and charity - in Dramatis Personae Yeats perceptively criticised Moore's portrait of Esther as "a personification of motherly goodness, almost an abstraction" (1936, p24). A reader might scarcely notice the novelty of the book; the Naturalistic descriptions of the conduct of the unrepentant villain Bill Evans are brief in the first edition of the novel and were to become even briefer in subsequent editions. J.C.Noel quotes the Daily Chronicle of the 3rd May 1894 where, under the heading "The boycott of Esther Waters What George Moore says", Moore claimed,

"I wrote Esther Waters in sincere love of humanity, out of a sincere wish to serve humanity"(Noel(1966) p257). In fact this meant that the standpoint in the novel, like that of the end of A Drama in Muslin, is in praise of the middle-class Tory values he had so miserably failed to embody in Spring Days, which were the normal standards of the run-of-the-mill Victorian novel. In the second part of the book therefore Esther is happy because "The King's Head" provides a home for her. The stress must surely be placed on the adjective when she chooses to marry William rather than Fred because she "would like to see a little life"(p225). This would have been even clearer if Moore had gone ahead with his earlier intention of calling the public house "The Traveller's Rest" and the novel "Mother and Child" (Dujardin(1929) p33; in 1933 he himself found this title "sententious", CMF(1933) p67). The satirical portrait of the upper-class in the descriptions of the judge who sentences Sarah Tucker is in keeping with these values. In short, if Moore in Esther Waters "recreated the English novel" as Charles Morgan suggests (1935, p2), then he did so by balancing the middle-class basis of the values, which provided security, against the adventurousness and novelty of the racing and the betting. Even there, for example in the Derby Day chapter, Moore seems to emulate the high-Victorian paintings of Frith rather than the avant-garde French painters ostensibly so dear to his heart.

Moore's claim that he had banished the "three-decker" from serious literature must also be treated with a certain amount of scepticism. Vizetelly's six shilling "One Volume Novels" certainly put original first editions for the first time within the range of readers who could not afford the thirty-one shillings and sixpence for a three volume first edition. But for a long time it had been common practice to reprint almost all three volume novels in one volume cheap editions varying in price from sixpence to six shillings soon after their first appearance. If one compares a "one volume" novel like A Mummer's Wife with a one volume edition of a novel

like Mrs Henry Wood's East Lynne it is clear that the difference is more apparent than real. It is simply a matter of whether the initial six shilling publication in one volume could cause sufficiently high sales to offset the loss of the lucrative revenue from the libraries' standard order for the three volume first edition. The avant-garde nature of the subjects together with the use of serial publication in newspapers and periodicals ensured this for Moore. But again this does not mean that, because of novels like Moore's, the British reading public was suddenly open to a new and more adventurous kind of novel, but rather that Vizetelly tapped a market that had always existed, and which he had always supplied, for the salacious or less serious material which had never aspired to more than one volume. Thus "serious" came for a time to be identified with the "daring" rather than the "moral". Susan Mitchell tells how "W.B.Yeats had forbidden his sister to read" A Mummer's Wife, "I gulped guilty pages of it as I went to bed of nights"(1916, p43). Gertrude Atherton also remembers Moore at this time as having the reputation of a dangerous writer of pornography (1932, pl64). The actual demise of the bulky three volume form probably owes as much to an unwillingness to pack the novel with the same variety of material as the mid-century novel, and to the rise in popularity of the short story, as to Moore's efforts to bring a new seriousness to the novel. Neither the old "three-decker" nor the new short novel which took its place can in the end claim any superior moral seriousness. The ordinary "three-decker" was based on a feeling that society either was, or ought to be, a stable and benevolent organism. The one volume short novel on the other hand was often full of the premonition that all values had broken down, and that the only remaining standard was the perfect, detached, objectivity of the aesthetic work. Neither could lay any claim to containing any real sense of free moral enquiry.

Both A Mummer's Wife and Esther Waters can be divided as if they

were three volume novels. In A Mummer's Wife the three volumes would deal with life in Hanley, life with the Opera Company, and the decline of Kate into drunkenness. The flight with Dick, the death of the child, and the death of Kate would be the climactic events. In Esther Waters the volumes would deal with life at Woodview, Esther's trials in London, and finally her life at "The King's Head". The focal points would be the birth of her child, her marriage to William, and the loss of the licence followed by the death of William. One of the innovations of Esther Waters, the way the events of Esther's life seem to return upon themselves, may indeed also owe something to the lengthy repetitive time scale of the Victorian novel - seen for instance in East Lynne when Isabel returns as a nurse to the house where she had lived as a wife. Moore's achievement is only to adapt this to refer to more localised incidents and to divorce it from the cradle-to-grave pattern of the Victorian novel. Moore's desire throughout his life to write long novels, which must have some analogy to this cradle-to-grave pattern, contrasts with the several short novels around 1890 which stress only one incident in the lives of the characters.

It could be said perhaps that Moore was the first to attempt the single volume novel and could not escape from the tentacles of the "three-decker" structure. But to this one must add that neither could he escape from the moral conventions of the traditional three volume novel. Both A Mummer's Wife and Esther Waters fit in with a Victorian pattern of sin and retribution with more meaning than they do the scientific cause and effect chains of Naturalism. Kate Ede is punished for her dissolute life as surely as William Larch by his death reaps the just rewards of the sin of gambling. But in the pessimistic way characteristic of Naturalism Kate Ede does not gain any illumination from her suffering, and her death is simply part of a headlong flight to nemesis. On the other hand in Esther Waters Moore allows a distinct suggestion that through suffering comes a higher state. Esther is received

into Miss Rice's service as one of the blessed after her "hard fight"(1894, p176). William also undergoes a miraculous conversion during his illness which makes him realise that consumption is "the punishment come upon me" because "I wasn't always good to your mother, Jack"(pp356-7). The sentiment is the same as Mrs Henry Wood's when she reproves Isabel for "not bearing your cross", or when she comments that, "if ever retribution came home to woman, it came home in that hour to Lady Isabel"(Wood(1861 iii,pp111,76). Peace comes to Lady Isabel at the end of the book, as it comes to Esther, as of right. The need for personal moral responsibility, which I think is also stressed in the character of Esther, is overall subsumed into this Tory mood. In his discussion of the novel Peter Ure wrote;

conscience... is a process by which the individual's "ideas" or "thought" will shape his deeds; if they fail to, "if our deeds go down one set of lines and our ideas go down another", a life is wasted. For a novelist, this implies the possibility of tragedy or comedy (1968, p257).

But Moore is in fact not wholly committed to either of these states, for the last happiness of the "comedy" when Esther returns to Woodview lacks conviction. The sudden presentation of Jackie as a soldier seems an appeal to jingoistic sentiment, and the descriptions of Esther's state of mind in these last chapters testifies only to an inability to find a real substitute for the conventional death-bed ending of the novel. Moore does not even attempt this much in disposing of William through the well-worn device of consumption.

The standard recourse of popular Victorian novelists in moments of doubt or high emotion was sentiment. The locus classicus of this is to be found in the novels of Charlotte Yonge, where the characters seem utterly deprived of the ability to feel any strong emotion by the easy rush of tears to their eyes. Perhaps there was a fear of strong emotion, and hence a reluctance to portray it, because in such states the mind is beyond the control of the conventional values of society. Subconsciously there is perhaps also at root

a fear that the values of society may lack validity. The hope, epitomised in Tennyson's "In Memoriam", is that ultimately Faith and Hope may come to replace Beliefs which are no longer tenable. Moore, following the example of Flaubert, depicts a debased version of this kind of sentiment in the character of Kate Ede seeking escape in novelettish dreams from the absence of thought or hope in Hanley. But if sentiment be more loosely defined as the substitution of facile emotions for real feelings which are unbearable, then there is sentiment too in the novel when Moore retreats into despair and melodrama from the apparently hopeless life facing Kate. Sentiment is also present in Esther Waters. Esther comes to tell William who is dying that the horse he had pinned his hopes of life on has lost; she expects him to despair but instead he tells her,

I don't suppose it made no difference; it was to be, and what has to be has to be. I've got to go underground. I felt it was to be all along. Egypt would have done me no good; I never believed in it; only a lot of false hope. You don't think what I say is true. Look 'ere, do you know what book this is? - this is the Bible; that'll prove to you that I knew the game was up. I knew, I can't tell how, but I knew the mare wouldn't win. One always seems to know. Even when I backed her I didn't feel about her like I did about the other one, and ever since I've been feeling more and more sure that it wasn't to be. Somehow it didn't seem likely, and to-day something told me that the game was up, so I asked for this book... There's wonderful things in it (1894, p347).

There is a similar vacuity of feeling at the very end of the story when Esther finally turns to Mrs Barfield and the crude moral sense of her childhood religion which she has spent most of the book refining into something more subtle. Moore describes this religious emotion in Mrs Barfield;

An expression of great beauty came upon her face, that unconscious resignation which, like the twilight, hallows and transforms. In such moments the humblest hearts are at one with nature, and speak out of the eternal wisdom of things (p369).

That Moore shared these sentimental feelings is clear from a letter he wrote at the time;

I have just written the last page of Esther Waters - the two mothers living alone, tilling their garden and thinking of their sons. For the first time in my life I cried over my work (Gerber(1968) p80).

Moore turned from the pessimism of A Mummer's Wife and A Drama in Muslin but the sentimentality I have described indicates that he could find no real constructive hope.

This analysis of certain points about A Mummer's Wife and Esther Waters allows finally two questions to be answered about Esther Waters. How far is it a new departure for Moore? and how far is this new departure good and productive? First I should like to stress again the importance of the fact that the aims and technique of the novel can be the subject of this kind of analysis, since this implies that Moore had abandoned the superficial search for notoriety and the crude pessimism to which he so readily resorted in the novels written before 1890. With these novels and A Drama in Muslin Moore "made a reputation with the serious critics for writing novels that examined social conditions and moral dilemmas honestly and objectively"(Gerber(1968) p34).

The most obvious gain in Esther Waters is in the sureness of the characterisation. Critics have seen in Dick Lennox a character of subtlety and complexity (Gerber(1968) p51), but it would be more accurate to say that not until William Larch does Moore succeed in creating a major character foil to his heroine. Even the minor characters of Esther Waters are redeemed from the sub-Dickensian grotesqueness which pervades A Mummer's Wife, and in general there are few sections of Esther Waters where the writing seems recklessly to crash on of its own momentum regardless of any overall controlling vision. The most significant failure in the novel comes, not as in Spring Days from an uncertainty of moral vision, but from the tension inherent in the moulding of new ideas about the treatment of time and personal conduct into a literary form. Moore comes to use the idea of time and events repeating themselves more and more - perhaps the thoughts of Yeats helped Moore here - until in

the end it dominates most of his work. But in Esther Waters its use, in the device of having the same words describe Esther's return to Woodview as had been used in the first paragraph of the book, seems a little contrived. It is unclear whether it is to be seen as pessimistic or optimistic. If it indicates that the whole cycle of suffering is to begin again then the arrival of Jack is either glib or wantonly and savagely ironic. If on the other hand Moore is implying that Esther has survived her perilous journey and is now fit to return to the state of bliss, then the barrenness of Woodview and the other notes of doubt in the passage jar. Moore seems to have changed his mind midway. He introduced the meeting of Esther and Mr Alden whilst William is seeing the doctor in the hospital, and this seems to serve no other purpose than to brusquely announce the death of Miss Rice. This sets Esther in the direction of poverty after William's death, for otherwise a return to Miss Rice's haven would have been natural. Yet in the end Moore brings Esther back to Woodview, her childhood religion, and her final equivocal state of happiness, leaving only the note of ambiguity in the end to contradict the otherwise easy optimism.

The ability to have faith in the bourgeois life, although scarcely the discovery of a universal panacea, was for Moore an advance upon the desire for the meretricious and merely fashionable. But the most important feature of the story remains the discovery through the character of Esther of the notions of morality which were to dominate Moore in the future; the opposition of dogma, rigidity, and darkness, to flexibility, change, and light, and the clear formulation of the notion that "if our deeds go down one set of lines and our ideas go down another, our lives are wasted". Even though this idea is not exploited at the end of the book, its presence in the earlier part is sufficient to make Esther Waters - otherwise something of a finished achievement - a promise of the novels and prose-narratives still to come.

4. Portrait of the Artist

When Moore writes about artists, actors, and writers he often seems to be thinking aloud about himself and his own work. He shared the problems of Lewis Seymour, Kate Ede, Alice Barton, and Hubert Price, and the solutions he gives to their problems throws a light on his own character. No doubt this is true of all writers, but it seems particularly necessary to say it of Moore because he was so close to his characters. Anyone who has read both Moore's novels and his criticism and reminiscences soon realises that he continually used himself the words he gave to his characters and acted out through their fictional lives his own real life. The point Moore makes most frequently about art in these cases is that it is an expansionist force. It causes Kate Ede, Alice Barton, and later Evelyn Innes to follow the pattern Moore set in his own life by breaking from the accepted values and fears of middle-class life.

Kate Ede reacts against her mother-in-law's spartan religion and the drabness of Hanley, and, in dreams "made out of the red and blue dresses of the picture" which announces the arrival of the Morton and Cox Opera Company, she expresses her ambition to go beyond the hills that shut in the town. She has been pushed straight from adolescence into marriage, so that the joy and happiness which ought to have been part of her affair with Ralph has been repressed and transformed into the idealised sentiment and passion of cheap fiction. For Alice Barton too art is part of a rejection of the values of the world into which she has been born. The importance of art to her is reinforced by her final escape from Ireland to Kensington, for the Alice of the last chapter is not the wife of a worthy doctor but a serious lady novelist. The portrait of Hubert Price opposes success as a dramatist to a restricted life of poverty and misery. In all three cases success seems also to be equated with the same kind of settled family life. Moore also

suggests that in the expanding consciousness of the true artist there is necessarily an element of agony and loneliness. It is the tragedy of an artist manqué like Lewis Seymour or Hubert Price that under "the pressure of" material "necessity ideas died within him"(VF(1891) p45), but for someone like Thompson or Alice Barton the ability to endure the pressures of isolation or poverty in order to make their art takes on a note of defiance.

At first, in Seymour's frivolous Bohemianism as much as in Thompson's serious Naturalistic ideas, art is simply a means of rebelling against established values. In the discussions of the first volume of A Modern Lover the principles of Thompson and the "Modern" school are merely set down by Moore. They seek to express "modern life in all its poignancy and fullness", finding a new faith in "the seething mass of human life". They proclaim that "our age is a logical one, and our art will not be able to hold aloof any longer from the general movement"(1883, i, pp119,76). Through these opinions Moore sought to nail his colours to the masthead of serious reform, and because of this these passages have an almost purely discursive value. In Volume Three however Thompson is revealed as having feelings other than the joyous rapture of the reforming rebel;

He thought of the past; there it lay before him, concentrated into a few yards of canvas, but of the cost and worth, who could speak but himself? What could his friends tell of? A few years of perseverance and privation, but only he knew of the terrible drama of abdication, of the life that might have been, of the life he had let lie in the limbo of unborn things, of the love, the dreams, the joys and sentiments that he had ruthlessly torn out of his heart and flung like flowers under the resistless wheels of the chariot of art, that most implacable god, the most terrible of all Juggernauts (iii, p105).

This tension between art and life also appears, in a different form, in A Drama in Muslin. For Alice art represents an ideal life far from reality. A little idealistically she gives some money to May Gould to help her through the birth of her illegitimate child in Dublin; after this the girls meet again in Galway,

when May left the room Alice felt her despair grow thicker; it descended upon her gloomily, silently. Was this all she had worked for, was this all she had striven for? She had attained her end, but, oh, how trivial it appeared when compared with the terrible anxiety that had gone to achieve it. And, without pausing to consider if she were right, her soul revolted from accepting as an adequate result of her sufferings this somewhat gross picture of satisfaction. And is it not ever so? Does not the inevitable grossness of those who fight in the outward battle always jar the pensive sadness of those who see life from a distance as a faintly drawn landscape veiled in delicate twilight, and whose victories are won over themselves rather than over circumstances and opponents (ADM(1886) p263).

The inevitable association of art with an expanding life and sorrow is clearly made. Against "the old, the terrible dream, the grey fear of having been born to die without having lived" Alice puts not the peace and calm of "the elegant sanctity of cloistered... life" but the stoic affirmation, "I have my work"(p263).

As time passed Moore came more and more to qualify the extent to which any simple satisfaction could be gained through art. Even in the beginning he could not sustain the facile success achieved by Lewis Seymour. The 1916 revision of the story seems to stress even further his original determination to make Seymour a hero, yet the final image of both the texts is of the triviality of his character beside that of Mrs Bentham. Moore seems to have realised the crudeness of his equation of art with freedom and success, and in A Mummer's Wife he accepts Kate's inability to bear the loneliness of the Bohemian life as inevitable. As author he too rejects the abandoned freedom he had revelled in for the superior disdain of the Naturalist. By concentrating on the character and downfall of Kate Moore, using an inverted sympathy, raised her above the other characters of the novel, but otherwise the only approval he bestowed was upon the somewhat grudging humanity of Dick. From his position of superiority as a Naturalist novelist Moore criticised the novelettish quality of Kate's dreams;

a beautiful young woman with a lovely face... was married to a very tiresome country doctor. This lady was in the habit of reading Byron and Shelley in a rich, sweet scented meadow, down by the river which flowed dreamily through smiling pasture-lands adorned by spreading trees. But this meadow belonged to a young squire, a superb man with grand, bold shoulders, who day after day used to watch these readings by the river, without, however, venturing to address a word to the fair trespasser. One day, however, he was startled by a shriek; in her poetical dreamings the lady had slipped into the water. A moment sufficed to tear off his coat, and as he swam like a water-dog, he had no difficulty in rescuing her. After this adventure, he had, of course to call and enquire (1885, p50).

He ignored the fact that he was himself quite capable of sharing Kate's fascination with this kind of exotic life, and of writing the fiction she liked to read. As well as this Moore stresses the irresponsible nature of Bohemian life. Thus the novel is basically a reversal of A Modern Lover in that the desire for art and wider horizons ultimately leads to disaster.

A Drama in Muslin reflects Moore's uncertain intentions. He continues to criticise the artist, but instead of the rather easy target of Kate Ede's sentimental dreams the main butt of his criticism is now the novelist Harding. Critics have often wished to see Harding as the conscious mouthpiece of Moore. This may be possible in A Modern Lover of 1883 where Harding is described as "the novelist whose books were vigorously denounced by the press as being both immoral and cynical"(i,p70), but it is less likely in Lewis Seymour and Some Women where his artistic integrity is vitiated by his easy submission to Lady Helen's conniving. It seems likely that Moore's self-portrait is not in the foreground portrait of Harding but in the less exposed and hence more easily idealised sketch of "a tall, thin young man with an excessively narrow face" among the young men who belong to the worlds of fashion and art.

He was

dressed in a long, dark green frock coat, and his flaxen hair fell on his shoulders; as he passed he spoke affably of art in general terms. Every now and then was heard the phrase: "Positivism of art" (iii, pl16).

In Mike Fletcher or Vain Fortune Harding's criticism of the music-hall and of Hubert Price has the same polished epigrammatic quality as Lord Dungory's precious sayings in A Drama in Muslin. Moreover in that novel Moore had openly criticised Harding who,

was not quite sincere. He spoke with a view to effect; he desired to astonish, and, if possible, to have the girl think of him when he was gone as something quite exceptional - something she would never see again (ADM(1886) pl97).

This seems finally to forbid any suggestion of conscious identification, but it does not remove a possible ambiguity in that Moore may still subconsciously identify with this dandy.

The paradox here of Moore's simultaneous use and criticism of Naturalism is partially resolved through the initial development of the character of Alice Barton. She turns to writing on the advice of Harding because it is a way of being independent of the Barton family world with which she has nothing in common. It is her mission as a writer which will save Alice from "this grey dream of idleness"(p98). An idleness inspired by a refusal to join in the "awful mummery in muslin"(p99) which causes her mother to see her as "fit for nothing"(pl32). In helping May Gould Alice contradicts her mother's judgement and also shows herself to be superior to the cynical indifference of Harding. But confusion remains, for her independence is most real in its spiritual and ideological rejection of the values of the convent and of Irish society. Yet Moore is at pains to stress the fact that the money Alice is paid for her magazine articles might in the end make her financially independent. At the end of the novel she seems to ignore the spiritual gain and the flight to Kensington is described entirely in terms of material comfort. Moore's desire is to create an artist who is not in the end isolated, who is not remarkable for the "peculiarity or the keenness of her vision", but for her "normal and sensible standpoint"(p233). But this results in a failure to question the life in London to which Alice flees. Similarly, despite Alice's humanity, there is a sense in her

character of "a probably unintended air of selfishness"(Ure(1968) pp265-6), caused by Moore's separation of Alice from the rest of the characters who become merely fodder for her feelings and thoughts. Once again Moore's work is flawed by his own naively interpolated dreams beneath the mask of Naturalistic objectivity. The character of Alice Barton is marred because she is at least in part only a product of Moore's own half-formed dreams.

Material reward and artistic success are again set side by side in Vain Fortune but Moore is more consciously critical of his characters, and luxury is not simply the due reward for the just labour of the artist. Hubert Price suffers the same tortures as Thompson in feeling that in pursuing art he has missed the conventional rewards of life,

To give one's life for a little scribbling on paper, for a little fictitious life of a few hours on the stage; to be praised by a few enthusiasts; to pass through life like a hungry fanatic, - such has been my past, and I have had enough of it. I want comfort, leisure, an English home, and an English wife... To have a woman like that, and an English home in one of the southern counties, I'd write all the detestable melodramas and farces that have been produced within the last ten years (VF(1891) p69).

Yet initially his character resembles that of Lewis Seymour. Both begin to paint as children encouraged by fond and uncritical parents and both show some promise of success - Moore speaks of Hubert Price's "simple, unaffected manners... full of suggestion, and in his writings there was always an indefinable rainbow-like promise of ultimate achievement"(VF(1891) p11). But each is drawn into a society and into relationships with which he is unable to cope. And each is ultimately unable to accept that his art is valueless.

In the character of Hubert Price Moore develops the defensive self-isolation which he had hinted at in Harding. The more positive side of this quality is found in the character of Rose Massey in Vain Fortune;

she lingered on the stairs, looking the most insignificant little thing you can well imagine; but the moment her cue came a strange light came into her eyes and a strange life was fused in her limbs; she was transformed, and went on the stage a very symbol of old-world passion and romance (p159).

The negative and defensive use of this quality is seen in Kate Ede's stage life;

she had a box in which she kept her souvenirs. They were a curious collection. A withered flower, a broken cigarette-holder, two or three old buttons that had fallen from his clothes and a lock of hair. But it was underneath these that lay the prize of prizes - a string of false pearls. Never did she see this precious relic without trembling, and to put it round her neck for a few minutes after her lonely dinner when she was waiting for him to come home, charmed and softened her as nothing else did. It was a necklace she had to wear in a comedietta they had both played in, The Lover's Knot. Well did she remember the day they had gone out to buy it together; it had been one of the happiest in her life (AMW(1885) pp387-8).

Price organises his life around the writing of his play, and his almost total refusal to finish it is symptomatic of his failure to face the facts of his life.

Two things depend upon the play, before he inherits Ashwood his own life, and at Ashwood his relations with the two women. After the failure of his play "Gypsy" the only way open to him seems to be suicide, the fate chosen by Haydon, Maréchal, and de Nerval. The intimacy between Moore and Arthur Symons at this time is evident from the closeness of the character of Hubert Price to that of de Nerval as described in The Symbolist Movement in Literature. Symons begins, "this is the problem of one who lost the whole world and gained his own soul". He goes on to quote de Nerval himself;

I like to arrange my life as if it were a novel... I do not ask of God... that he should change anything in events themselves, but that he should change me in regard to things, so that I might have the power to create my own universe about me, to govern my dreams, instead of enduring them (Symons(1899) p13).

The idea increasingly haunted Moore himself as he became more and more bound up with his writing; in a letter to Lady Cunard of 1910 he wrote of her "genius to make a work a work of art out

of life itself - to redeem life"(Cunard(1957) p77). In the second part of Vain Fortune more than Price's own self is involved however when he becomes entangled with Emily and Mrs Bentley. His "desire to realise his idea"(p23), initially concerning only the inanimate play, comes to mean his desire for marriage and the choice between Julia and Emily. In such a situation his ideal feeling that "the world seems centred in the I"(p154) means that he must ignore the human reality of Emily and treat her as if she were merely part of a novel; he thinks,

Girls do not do away with themselves; girls do not die of broken hearts. Nothing happens in these days. A few more tears will be shed, and she will soon become reconciled to what cannot be altered. A year or so after, we will marry her to a nice young man, and she will settle down a quiet mother of children (p252).

The tension is heightened by the fact that Emily has been brought up as an heiress to a belief in her own power. The sudden shock when the father-figure of Mr Burnett proposed marriage has isolated her from other people. In this disturbed state she is incapable of seeing other people apart from her own obsessions. There is irony here in that Hubert, who organises his own life as if it were part of one of his plays, is entirely unsympathetic to Emily's egocentric world. Moore is at pains to distinguish his own qualities as a writer from those of Price, and self-consciously ignores the task of establishing Naturalist cause and effect chains to concentrate on relentlessly exposing the contradictions in the motives and behaviour of the characters.

This emphasis on the analysis of character also leads to an absence of the preëminently Naturalistic stress on the sociological significance of the story. In Vain Fortune the relationship of Mr Burnett and Emily is only briefly stated, and Moore does not develop the notion that the relationship of uncle and child has become for Mr Burnett something based almost entirely on sex or the cash-nexus. Nor does Moore suggest in detail that this imbalance

in their relationship is responsible for Emily's anguish. Equally he fails to give expression in describing Hubert's isolated life at Ashwood to the idea that in the London slums artistic success has become equated with material success, and so the real value of art for those who refuse to judge it by commercial criteria has become diminished until it is only the re-arranging of parts into a more perfect whole. By concentrating so much on a rather abstract questioning of motives Moore ignores the fact that art, traditionally a means of renewing values, has become in Hubert Price's plays as sterile and worn-out as the way of life symbolised by Ashwood. The isolation of the character from its sociological basis in life is far removed from the way in which Alice Barton's loneliness is firmly related to the economic and social situation in Ireland, but it is less surprising if one remembers how Moore had treated the character of Kate Ede in the Naturalist novel A Mummer's Wife without reference to social or political events.

Vain Fortune is a very different kind of novel from the long Naturalist novels, for Moore was beginning to feel that his books, like Price's play, were

overgrown with a fungous growth of subordinate idea. He felt that all subordinate idea must be eliminated, and nothing left but just enough to explain the drama that was to follow. But how to secure the main theme, and preserve it like a thread of gold to the end? (p197).

The style of the book is less indulgent and thus more able to carry irony in the portrayals of Hubert and Emily. Moore's reasons for abandoning the Naturalist novel probably amount to a general loss of such faith as he had had in its principles - in the value of science as a new religion, and in the value of the extended use of Naturalist detail - and a feeling that Zola was no longer the right person to be his master. Later he was to write that in Naturalism he had been deceived,

as were all my generation, by a certain externality, an outer skin, a nearness, un rapprochement; in a word, by the substitution of Paris for the distant and exotic backgrounds so beloved of the romantic school (RIP(1906) p25).

The Naturalist style which had been a cleansing agent against romanticism becomes in A Mummer's Wife a sauce with which the story is flavoured and garnished. After the event Moore was usually an acute critic of his own style, if not of the attitudes embodied therein, and he must have realised that if his reputation as a serious writer were to grow he must clarify his sensational Naturalist style into something finer. In attempting this in a way he turned back to the aesthetic intentions of his youth. But the seriousness of the French novelists had left its mark and there was no return to the crudely fashionable. Instead Moore concentrated on a different kind of realism which no longer followed sociological principles. He now stressed the side of Naturalism which aimed at studying an individual temperament. Searching for the perfect analysis of a subject rather than trying to show the interaction of subject and environment his work still stayed close to Naturalism for many years - indeed his aim can be defined in Zola's phrase "studying the mechanism of... facts"(Zola(1893) p9). Moore also retains the superior stance of the author to his characters, and the stress on the use of real characters and emotions. But increasingly he turns away from the sociological causes of behaviour towards defining and describing the state of the characters' minds by means of aesthetic devices. He turns, like Proust, away from the Naturalist "offal of experience"(Beckett(1965) p79) towards the Platonic Real. His search comes to be for "that reality, remote from our daily preoccupations, from which we separate ourselves by an ever growing gulf as the conventional knowledge we substitute for it grows thicker and more impermeable"(Proust(1970) p262).

This change in the nature of his work brings Moore even closer to the character of Hubert Price. He wrote in a letter to

Edouard Dujardin in 1903,

the only end of life is life, and the only end of art is to help us to live, and so soon as we put our hope in another world life becomes ugly and art passes out of existence (Dujardin(1929) p47).

Art helped Moore, as it helped the Naturalist, by imposing an order upon the world, but he is closer to Flaubert in his concern for form than to Zola who sought to make himself "master of life in order to direct it"(Zola(1893) p25). The renewed belief in human values in Moore's work after 1890, which also contributed to his rejection of Zola's ideas, has also in part an aesthetic motivation and is a development of a trait to be found in both Flaubert and Zola. Both of them almost unwittingly at times ennoble their central characters by giving them a wider and deeper consciousness than the minor characters. In Vain Fortune Moore extends this rather specious charity to each of the characters in turn.

Moore's mentor in this search for a new form was Manet who he came to respect most of all the Nouvelle Athènes circle and to regard as the "most potent influence" upon his work (Av(1919) p279). He had revered Zola for his material success and fame, but he came to venerate Manet for his exclusiveness. John Richardson writes that,

in the face of the fiasco of his one-man show in 1867, repeated rejections by the Salon jury and vituperative attacks in the press, Manet, who had hitherto alternated between extremes of optimism and pessimism, lapsed into a state of self-doubt and gloom. He virtually abandoned the stylistic synthesis which he had recently perfected, painted less, destroyed an increasing quantity of works still unfinished... and no longer dared to ask anyone outside his family and intimate circle of friends to pose for him... Manet had only one consolation: a group of young admirers (Richardson(1967) pp25-6).

Among this group Moore counted himself, finding evidence no doubt in the two portraits Manet had done of him in 1879. The image of the more reserved Manet was clearly more congenial to the Irish landlord in Moore than the ebullient Zola. Robert Rey, describing

Manet, writes that he came from,

an order of bourgeois patricians with many excellent qualities. They were models of common sense and respectability, but hardly any ties were left to attach them to other classes of society. They had no respect for the titled aristocracy; they knew the hollowness of their pretensions and the wretchedness underlying them. They had a tolerant smile for the "naïveté" and the appalling errors of taste of the bourgeoisie... They appraised at their true value the instability and lack of culture of the proletarian worker or the peasant... Their aspirations were exhausted, only their principles were left... They made no concessions... Everyday they became more isolated; to every other class of society they remained aloof and reserved (Rey(1938) p7).

Manet, Moore, and Zola were all striving in their work to combine a revolutionary element with their desire for a stable and ordered society; the combination seemed more urgently necessary because of the impasse they sensed in the cultural and social life of contemporary society.

In The Experimental Novel Zola explained that the new novel was to demonstrate scientifically the causes and effects of the behaviour of individuals in society. Manet's aim was similar; Mr Richardson thinks his "greatest quality" was his skill as a "chronicler of life" who "retained to the end his dispassionate and naturalistic vision"(1967, p28). Generally however Manet's work shows an instant in time which is free of any suggestion of cause and effect or of anecdotal significance. The Impressionist "plein-air" painters took their canvas into the open in order to capture the appearance of nature immediately and directly. Manet followed this method in some of his pictures, such as the ones he painted on the Seine at Argenteuil, but in his more individual work the painting is much more a product finished in the studio. Objects are then material for painting before they are natural objects; for him "a white is a white before it is a white cloth. The joy of painting is stronger than the joy of imitating". The Impressionists, on the other hand, 'in their desire to hold their "impression" fast... were compelled to "imitate" it'(Kahnweiler(1957) p360). Manet's more typical paintings depict an instant frozen

out of time, and in them he attempts to transform nature into the canvas, whereas the Impressionists wanted to make the canvas exactly resemble the landscape. The quality is present even in the eventful "Execution of the Emperor Maximilian"(1867).

Professor Rey calls it

his taste... for the faces of sleep walkers who stare at you with open but unseeing eyes, pursuing who knows what dream behind the crystal clear and limpid but impenetrable black of their gaze (p11).

It is most prominent in the portraits and drawings of people, such as those of the artist's parents(1860), of the three people of "Le Balcon"(1868-9), of the bar-room portraits(1882), of the people of "Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe"(1862-3), of Zola(1868), and last but not least of the "Olympia"(1863). A similar desire to freeze an instant out of time is the over-riding aim in the short-stories Moore wrote between 1887 and 1903. The mood behind most of his later works is set here, for Moore seems to withdraw from the world into his writings, as Manet withdrew into his studio to paint. Instead of studying causes and effects in the experiment Moore is concerned to express as powerfully as possible only the resultant event, which is then made to seem inevitable. In Vain Fortune for example the action proceeds in such a way as to reveal hints of the true characters of the actors before in the final scenes, from the elopement of Julia and Hubert to the end, each is presented starkly and completely. The absence of any commitment to any of the individual characters in the story perhaps explains how Moore, without altering the general run of the story, can drastically change the endings of Vain Fortune and A Mere Accident when he revised them. The effect is similar to that Manet achieved in "Le Balcon" where each of the figures "stares fixedly out at something different"(Richardson(1967) p89), or the "Olympia", as the reader is brought up against these absolutely frank images of the characters who seem to stare out unashamed at the reader.

Moore was influenced by Manet here as a mediator of the Japanese

style. He may have taken over the oriental element unconsciously however, for,

Manet always makes such discreet use of japonnerie, blending it with elements from Spanish and Venetian art and even from images d'Epinal, that one seldom sees what an active role it plays (Richardson(1967) p17).

But this is unlikely, for Moore was at least acquainted with most of the leading figures who praised the Japanese style. In the 1870s and 1880s Zola, Manet, the de Goncourts, Degas, James Tissot, Theodore Duret, and Fantin-Latour were the leading collectors. Moore also knew the work of Whistler who was probably the first artist in England to show the Japanese influence in his painting and designs. One of Whistler's chief converts was also Rossetti who Moore had imitated in Flowers of Passion. Indeed so widespread was the vogue for the Japanese in England after the mid 1860s - Arthur Liberty had opened his shop in Regent Street in 1864 selling goods from the 1861 Paris Exhibition - that Moore almost certainly came into contact with the style before he went to Paris. Perhaps the neatest visual summing up of the influence is Manet's portrait of Zola of 1868, where the quasi-Japanese portrait of the writer is surrounded by a Japanese screen, a "hulking wrestler borrowed probably from Shunko"(Michener(1954) p237), and Manet's own "Olympia".

The legend of the discovery of Japanese colour prints as packing around porcelin in the 1850s has long been discredited as an account of fact - the prints were certainly arriving in Holland a century before this date - but it does mark the beginning of the period when Japanese art was to exert an unparalleled influence on European art. The works of Hokusai and Hiroshige most delighted the European eye and these date from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Their arrival in the middle of the century coincides with the main vogue for the prints. To European eyes the oriental style must have seemed peculiar, yet certain features of the ukiyo-é prints rendered the strangeness more acceptable. The first of these was that it seems the composition, subject, and technique of the

prints owed something to sixteenth century chiaroscuro Dutch genre engravings. Ukiyo-^é prints were also fundamentally a bourgeois art form reflecting the rising power of this class in Yedo during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; essentially they portrayed the life of this class and generated the same kind of isolated middle-class pride as I have mentioned in the characters of Zola and Manet. The prints were novel in 1850, avant-garde and fashionable in 1880 - for instance they are approved by the moderns in A Modern Lover - and by 1890, when the most important exhibition of them was held at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, they were entirely assimilated into Western Art.

Japanese prints further coincided with the taste of Western Europe in three main ways. They contained absolutely no moral comment and as such they appealed to the aesthetic frame of mind. But also their non-assertive decorative quality made them appeal to the materialist mind because they did not challenge the values of the society of the day. Ukiyo-^é could also appeal to the Pecksniffian middle-classes because it seemed to accept and exalt everyday bourgeois life. The genre scenes of Yedo were at once recognisably similar to middle-class Western life, and yet remote, strange and picturesque. The depiction of women in these prints also provided the European mind with a vision of grace and elegance far removed from the fussy and frilled Western beauty of the day. The "languid, supple-bodied figure with a slender neck and sinuous rhythms" moving "in the twilight of a dream world"(Blunt(1952) pp5,22) was certainly more the ideal of the aesthetic Brompton Road than the fleshy fullness of Etty's nudes. The quality of strangeness, "a sense of the power and vastness, and the mystery of nature" (Binyon(1923) p162) which fill the landscapes of Hokusai and Hiroshige also delighted the town-dwelling artists of the late nineteenth century because it seemed close to their own unreal and symbolic view of nature. Finally, as the spare elegance of Utamuro's women exposed the crude vulgarity of Victorian dress, so too the directness

of the prints revealed the clotted crudeness of much Victorian painting and writing. Both sentiment and gargantuan Naturalism were thrust into the shade by the Japanese "unerring seizure of the one significant line that gives feature or expression" (Binyon(1923) pl24). The masters of ukiyo-é give "a sense of grandeur and a hint of the infinity of life" by the decision "the more to concentrate on this seizure of the inherent life in what they draw", and in doing so "they will obliterate or deliberately ignore at will half or all of the surrounding objects"(Binyon(1934) pl3).

Because it lacks the now discarded paraphernalia of science and the degrading subjects of Naturalism - that is to say, because it was aesthetically rather than morally or sociologically uncompromising - and because it provided a new ideal to replace the outworn sentiment and sensation of earlier art and fiction, ukiyo-é was taken up by serious artists like manna towards the end of the nineteenth century. "Manet was struck by ukiyo-é prints and filled several pages of his notebooks with sketches so completely Japanese in character that he copied meaningless Japanese characters below them for titles"(Michener(1954) p237); the result was to reinforce his own vision of life. The prints,

presented an art which was as vital as it was unfamiliar, opening a window on a new sense of reality, a new freshness and boldness in the use of colour, and new principles of composition... Above all, the use of silhouette, the deliberate flattening of forms and the lack of deep perspective in the prints satisfied a new conception of painting (Honour(1961) pp211-2).

These effects on painting are directly parallel to the new forms Moore developed in his stories such as Vain Fortune, "Mildred Lawson", and "John Norton". The mechanistic paraphernalia of Naturalism which give the story a sociological perspective are cut out and instead the story presents a vivid representation of one event. Any anecdotal perspective on the characters is only briefly sketched in to give a clearer, brighter, more static vision of their moods.

In the story of Mildred Lawson in the Celibates volume we are left at the end with an intense vision of the present suffering of Mildred when, in a moment of "fully realised loneliness", "the brutal moment of self-knowledge... merciless and complete" crystallises all the diverse impressions received through the story (Kelly(1968) p146);

she had come back to Sutton to be married for her money; and to whom? an old discarded lover...

She crept back to her bed, cold and despondent. The passing passion she had felt for Morton was but a passing sensation of the summer night, as transient as the snatches of perfume which the night-wind carried into the room. Again she cared for nothing in the world. She did not know what was going to become of her; the burden of life seemed so unbearable; she felt so unhappy. She lay quite still, with eyes wide open, seeing the questions go around like the hands of a clock; the very words sounded as loud and distinct in her brain as the ticking of a clock. Her nerves were shattered, and life grew terribly distinct in the insomnia of the hot summer night... She threw herself over and over in her burning bed, until at last her soul cried out of its lucid misery: "Give me a passion for God or man, but give me a passion. I cannot live without one" (C(1895) pp307,312).

In the climactic scene between Hubert and Emily in Vain Fortune there is an even more direct confrontation in this Japanese style;

Hubert... would give her all things; but she was dying for him, and he could not save her. No longer was there any disguise between them. The words they uttered were as nothing, so clearly did the thought shine out of their eyes, "I am dying of love for you," and then the answer, "I know that is so, and I cannot help it"... They stood in a sort of mental nakedness. The woman no longer sought for words to cover herself with; the man did, but he could not find them (VF(1891) p242).

The whole novel builds up to such instants of time, as for example when Julia deceives Emily about her love for Hubert (pp226-7), or, even more dramatically, when Emily and Hubert drive back from the hunt;

although the chill night had drawn them close together in the dog-cart, they were as widely separated as if oceans were between them. So far as lay in his power he had hidden the annoyance that the intrusion of her society had caused him; and, to deceive her, very little concealment was necessary. So long as she saw him she seemed to live in a dream, unconscious of every other thought.

They rolled through a gradual effacement of things, seeing the light of the farmhouses in the long plain start into existence, and then remain fixed, like gold beetles on a blue curtain. The chill evening drew her to him, till they seemed one; and full of the intimate happiness of the senses which comes of a long day spent in the open air, she chattered of indifferent things. He thought how pleasant the drive would be were he with Mrs Bentley - or, for the matter of that, with anyone with whom he could talk about the novel that had interested him. They rolled along the smooth wide road, watching the streak of light grow narrower in a veil of light grey cloud drawn athwart the sky. Overpowered by her love, the girl hardly noticed his silence; and when they passed through the night of an overhanging wood her flesh thrilled, and a little faintness came over her; for the leaves that brushed her face had seemed like a kiss from her lover (pp176-7).

Here, as in the final incidents the scene is given impact not by its "perspective" - that is, not in relation to past events - but by its present intensity. The closing scenes of "John Norton" and Vain Fortune have a flat and inevitable reality as John and Hubert, sublimely unashamed but curiously vacant, stare out from the scene like a figure in a Japanese print, or Manet's "Olympia".

The Japanese style was particularly appropriate to Manet, Zola, and Moore in its blend of the new and the old, the radical and the conservative. To a Western European in the late nineteenth century the style and content had a novelty because of the lack of the anecdotal and its flat decorative quality. Indeed an anticipation of the last passage I have quoted from Vain Fortune can be found in A Modern Lover. Mrs Bentham has denied to Lady Helen that she and Seymour were ever lovers;

during the drive home Lady Helen, who was in a confidential humour, initiated Mrs Bentham into the secrets of her wedded life, dwelling particularly on all the delicacies of Lewis' character, and she was too much wrapped up in her own happiness to notice the pained expression on her friend's face (AML(1883) iii,pl42).

But the Eastern world also provided an image of stability and order which was irresistibly attractive to the Western mind which had been taught to believe it was caught in an age of transition. An instance of the longing for the stability of the East can be seen in Lowes Dickinson's Letters from John Chinaman published anonymously in 1901. The book is thick with passages which express a deep nostalgia for a bygone age when natural law was supreme and the discoveries of nineteenth century industry unknown;

here in this lovely valley live thousands of souls without any law save that of custom, without any rule save that of their own hearths... it is the industry of freemen working for their kith and kin on the lands they received from their fathers, to transmit, enriched by their labours, to their sons... Your triumphs in the mechanical arts are the obverse of your failure in all that calls for spiritual insight... Look at your streets! Row upon row of little boxes, one like another, lacking in all that is essential, loaded with all that is superfluous - this is what passes among you for architecture (Dickinson(1901) pp20,25).

This attitude must have seemed attractive to the Moore who had nourished idealistic dreams of mediaeval England, and have been made more so by being connected to a school of art to which he felt innately attracted. The clarity and boldness of the line and the everyday details both echo Moore's own realism and concern for accuracy of portrayal. The flatness of the work and its decorative quality correspond to the aestheticism which he had sought as a haven from what he saw as the catastrophes threatening the world. Furthermore the restraint and control of the decoration and the drawing were in contrast to the luxuriant aestheticism which he had indulged in as a young man and which he was now trying to purge from his work.

The general emphasis on an over-riding design in the Japanese

prints also means that the minor characters of a novel like Vain Fortune are more closely related to the central figure. The clergymen who go around the Pottery with Kate and Dick in A Mummer's Wife, and many of the people who attend the Dublin Balls in A Drama in Muslin, seem only to be incidental characters. In contrast the character of the pavement artist in the Cocoa Rooms in Vain Fortune is parallel to that of Hubert Price in his poignant feeling of impotence;

'They calls me "the genius", and they is right'. Then something seemed to go out like a flame, the face grew dim, and changed expression. 'It is 'ere all right', he said, no longer addressing Hubert, but speaking to himself, 'and since it is there, it must come out' (p44).

It is significant that in Esther Waters the characters in the set-piece Derby Day chapter are, with an odd exception, all prominent in the rest of the story.

From this concern for the portrait of the individual, and the almost Beardsley-esque concentration on the line of the portrait, the use of an implicit critical method such as irony rather than an open statement of the character's faults follows quite naturally. The concern to explain and the large masses of the Naturalist credo are forgotten, and are now replaced by a desire to present a particular mode of behaviour at a particular moment of time in relation to a particular moral question. The impact of the presentation is determined by aesthetic factors; by the way the question is posed, that is, rather than the sociological or scientific nature of the question. The scene could only therefore lose impact by the kind of discursive recapitulation of the history of the characters or their environment which is usual in the earlier novels. Aesthetic response to the image and moral response to the characters then become intermingled. The clarity and sureness of the narrative seems to make the moral question clearer while actually making a solution to the question, which might destroy the perfection of the image, more difficult. Searching for the perfect image

Moore does not put aside questions of morality, since the image is only perfect if it expresses, usually through irony, the faults of the character. But he lingers over the perfection of the image and seems fatalistically to be unable to go beyond this perfect diagnosis to any suggestion of a solution to the character's dilemma.

5. Studies of Religious Temperaments

Much of Moore's writing about those in religious orders or of a religious disposition was motivated by a personal rancour rooted in his experience of the Jesuit rule at school and in his early life in Ireland. He was perhaps an unwitting witness to the truth of the Jesuit maxim he cited in Salve, "Give me the boy until he is fourteen and I don't care who gets him afterwards" (1912, p264). To the end of his life when writing of the priest as a type-figure rather than as an individual he is harshly critical; at the end of Vale he and his brother visit a neighbouring house in Mayo which has been turned into a "monkery";

a young man of sleek speech and calves begged us to be seated; and choosing the most comfortable chair for himself, and tossing himself till he discovered its easiest corner, he told us that a large number of the last batch of missionaries sent out to West Africa had died, the climate being unhealthy, but another batch was going out shortly, and he hoped not to lose so many (1914, p351).

Almost thirty years earlier in the opening chapter of A Drama in Muslin Moore also described the convent as a haven of naïveté and rest from the world, rather than a way of giving the girls the capacity for moral questioning which he saw as vital in life. Mrs Scully takes pity on the girls who are soon to be plunged into the Irish marriage-market;

How happy they seem in this beautiful retreat!... How little they know of the troubles of the world! I am afraid it would be hard to persuade them to leave the convent if they knew the trials that await them (ADM(1886) p6).

In his own voice Moore further stresses the failure to prepare the girls to encounter the sordid "mummery in muslin" of life;

In a vision each girl saw herself selected out of the multitude, crowned with orange-blossoms and led by a noble husband through the dim church, from an altar where candles burnt like stars, to a life made of riches, adulation, amusement (p13).

Moore also gives expression to his own feelings of alienation

from the practice of religion in Ireland through the character and sensitivity of Alice Barton. In describing the Mass in an Irish Chapel in A Drama in Muslin and Parnell and His Island he stresses the gap she sees between the ideal and the reality. The naïve "sweet and conventional phrases" of the landlord's daughter who takes "advantage of this stupendous mystery to meet for the purposes of arranging the details of the ball", and the "coarse language of the cabin" used by the peasants who "take advantage of the occasion of this stupendous mystery to meet for the purposes of arranging a land meeting" seem as far from what religious worship ought to be as the words of the priest (ADM(1886) p71, PI(1887) pp129,130). The social life of the upper-classes seems inane, but the peasants seem subhuman - Moore describes them at one point as "breeding blindly like a newt in the wet and the slime"(PI(1887) p99). His portrait of the priest is equally critical. A good-hearted man like Father Turnan in "A Letter to Rome", or Father Gogarty in The Lake, is plainly inadequately trained by the Church; and Moore pictures him living in the best house in the village, ill-versed in the ways of the world and incapable of reacting with any assurance to either the material poverty of his parishioners or the vagaries of his own soul. A bad priest incurs only Moore's anger and contempt for the "ostentation in his walk", the "treachery in the long warm squeeze of his hands", and the "dissimulation in the unctuous words of welcome with which he greets you"(PI(1887) pp117-8). This kind of priest sees his religious duties only as chewing "the cud of vengeance"(p131) over the supposed immoralities of his parishioners. The accepted way in such cases is for the priest "to drive the woman out of the parish, it being better to sacrifice one affected sheep than that the whole flock should be contaminated"(TL(1905) p50). Moore's own standpoint on this matter is clearly set out in his reply to Father Madden; the

priest says,

"Young people should not loiter on the roads. I don't want bastards in my parish".

It seemed to me that perhaps bastards were better than no children at all, even from the religious point of view - one can't have religion without life, and bastards may be saints.

"In every country", I said, "boys and girls walk together, and the only idealism that comes into the lives of the peasants is between the ages of eighteen and twenty, when young people meet in the lanes and linger by the styles..." (TUF(1903) p210).

Moore's almost pathological contempt for the religious mind quite naturally seeks out the pathological in religion, and the force of his hatred can perhaps be measured by the vigour of his description of Cecilia Curren in A Drama in Muslin. Because of her deformity she has already at the convent experienced the disillusion and alienation from the world which the other girls still have to face; "often an ordinary look, or word, or gesture shocked her, and so deeply that she would remain for hours sitting apart, refusing all consolation"(1886, p3). This revulsion from the world causes Cecilia to turn inwards to exalted dreams of "the real, the abiding gladness of this life" which she feels is "approached in prayer, in yearning for an ideal that cannot be ours in this life, but which we may attain in the next". In her case she believes "life has been defeated... its temptations disdained"(p305). But the creations of the Naturalist cannot so easily vanquish the forces of fate. Portraying Cecilia's psychological breakdown, like Kate Ede's, in physiological terms Moore reveals the perverse link between ideal religion and real sensuality in Cecilia's extraordinary outburst of lesbian passion for Alice;

Yes, Alice, I have sinned, and deeply, for I have desired more than God had willed to give me and I have suffered accordingly. Yes, Alice, I have desired more than God had willed to give me, for I have desired you. I desired to possess you wholly and entirely. I was jealous of the flowers you wore in your bosom, of everything your eyes rested upon. I remember once, you were talking at the time to one of the officers from Gort, your hair got entangled in the carving of the chair: but before I could get up he had loosened it. I could have spat in his face; I could have killed him... But I have done penance for my sin, I have conquered my passion... in the arms of God I faint - my soul sickens, I falter, I yield myself... No, Alice, no; Alice thou art mine, mine in eternity, I am speaking wildly, madly (pp298-9).

Moore frequently connects religion with extreme or disturbed states of mind and emotion but he does not always maintain this lurid presentation. In A Mummer's Wife the novelettish dreams of Kate in Hanley are paralleled by the "vague but elevated sentiment of extraordinary joy" in the church(1885, pl08). Kate's inability to resolve the dilemma of life and dream is shown by the pendulum-like swing of her mind away from the real Bohemian world to this bourgeois dream in the final scene when she juxtaposes the Wesleyan hymn and the Operetta song. Religion is even more remorselessly connected with the abnormal in Mike Fletcher and in the story of John Norton. The master in whose footsteps Moore tried vainly to tread was now Huysmans, one of his closer acquaintances in Paris. To this abortive discipleship can be assigned the tedious sections of A Mere Accident, Mike Fletcher, and Spring Days, where religion becomes largely a literary exotic rather than a typical psychological state, and where Moore tried to create a character to rival Des Esseintes. He had reviewed A Rebours for the Pall Mall Gazette "with as much enthusiasm as the editor would allow"(Hone(1936) pl19), and his own attempts to emulate its sensationalism can be seen in Mike Fletcher's outlining of a scenario for three plays on the life of Christ and in John Norton's attempts to explain to a rather bewildered

and clearly demodé priest that Schopenhauer and Christianity are not irreconcilable (MF(1889) pp127-8,8ff.).

In A Mere Accident and the successful revision to "John Norton" in the Celibates volume of 1895 the character of Norton is clearly related to two of Moore's other characters, Cecilia Curren and Hubert Price. Moore again stresses the close relationship of religion and sensuality in Norton, at first implicitly when, in describing John's selfless drive towards a higher life, he speaks of his choice of "Christ, not Apollo", and yet notes how the "great cross in the bedroom of Staunton College overshadowed the beautiful slim body in which Divinity seemed to circulate like blood"(AMA(1887) pp134-5). Later in explaining the customs of the College to Mr Hare Norton confesses himself repelled by the "unspeakable feminality of those maid servants". He prefers the purity of the "handsome lads of sixteen... chosen for acolytes" and professes "half-playfully, half-seriously" a feeling that the maid servants would benefit from a "good whipping"(pp61-2). This kind of instinctive feeling seems to have infiltrated all of Norton's thoughts;

Recollections of Plato floated upon his weak brain, and he remembered that the great philosopher had said... that there were men... who were wholly men, and that these perforce could find neither pleasure nor interest away from their own sex. He had always felt himself to be wholly male, and this was why the present age, so essentially the age of women was repellent to him (C(1895) p369).

There can be no doubt that this homosexuality is the result of the perverting influence of religion. Like the girls at Hastings Norton's "sense of reality had always remained in a rudimentary state";

Ignorance of the material laws of existence had extended even into his sixteenth year, and when... the veil fell... he was filled with loathing of life and mad desire to wash himself free of its stain... this very hatred of natural flesh... precipitated a perilous worship of deified flesh (C(1895) pp366-7).

Except in A Mummer's Wife Moore seems to have identified with the heroes and heroines of all his early novels. It comes as no surprise then that in writing about John Norton, a creature torn by modern pessimism, he was, and probably must have been seen to be by his readers, self-consciously writing about himself, as he had been also in the character of Hubert Price. Both men share the alienation and isolation of Cecilia, and they have also in common the pessimism of the Naturalist and his inability to see other people as human beings. Norton, for example, professes to be "interested in things much more than in people" and to be "merely an onlooker"(C(1895) pp336,344). The stress on the point in the 1895 edition of the story is interesting. For Moore, in criticising the detached viewpoint of Norton, is criticising openly the stance he had himself adopted in his earlier Zola-esque novels. Strangely, although he cut most of the discursive irrelevance from "John Norton", Moore retains the passage from A Mere Accident introducing and describing John which is full of the rather crude Naturalist equation of the psychological with the physiological.

The basic idea of A Mere Accident, the love-affair of the young squire and the innocent daughter of the rector under the guiding eyes of his mother and her father, could easily be the subject of a conventional romantic Victorian novel. It forms a group in Moore's work with Vain Fortune, Spring Days, and Mike Fletcher which are characterised by an idealisation of the English countryside and the rural squire-archy of Sussex. John Norton resembles the conventional brilliant but slightly flawed hero of Victorian fiction, for example he is in a sense similar to Mrs Humphrey Ward's Robert Elsemere or Charlotte Yonge's Guy Morville in The Heir of Redclyffe. At the beginning of the story Moore describes Norton's,

clear, delightful intelligence, - a mind timid, fearing, and doubting, such a one as would seek support in mysticism and dogma, that would rise instantly to a certain point, but to drop as suddenly as if sickened by the too intense light of the cold pure heaven of reason to the gloom of the Sanctuary and the consolations of Faith (AMA(1887) pp49-50).

Against this imbalance is set the permanence and stability of Thornby Place; at the beginning Moore also addresses a paeon to this England,

see the long fields with the long team ploughing, see the parish church, see the embowered woods, see the squire's house, see everything and love it, for everything here is England (p6).

But combined with these conventional elements, as with Spring Days and Mike Fletcher, is the new exotic element of aestheticism - in this case John Norton's "religious aestheticism", and the extended descriptions of the literature of the Latin decadence.

The story falls within a traditional pattern of the nineteenth century novel, normally crowned by a marriage of the hero and heroine. Both John and Kitty are seen as in need of education; he from an immature misogyny to an acceptance of the fact that Kitty and he might be in love, she from an excessive innocence and purity to an acceptance of the fact that John might want to marry her. The naïveté of Kitty and John amid the idealised scenes when they seem about to be engaged fits in well with this sentimental Beidermeier pattern;

Both are like children, infinitely amused by the colour of the grass and sky, by the hurry of the startled rabbit, by the prospect of the long walk; and they taste already the wild charm of the downs, seeing and hearing in imagination its many sights and sounds, the wild heather, the yellow savage gorse, the solitary winding flock, the tinkling of the bell-wether, the cliff-like sides, the crowns of trees, the mighty distance spread out like a sea below them with its faint and constantly dissolving horizon of the Epsom Hills (1887, p199).

The novel ends in death rather than marriage but this does not indicate a departure from the pattern. Rather Moore cuts it

short concentrating on the suffering which the characters must normally endure to show themselves worthy of the final bliss. It is equivalent, that is, to the portion of The Heir of Redclyffe up to the death of Guy. The ending fits in with this for Norton does not, as in the revision, retreat into the monastery after Kitty's suicide but seems to accept the world. Although Moore does not dwell on the point, true to type he seems to gain from the suffering he has had to undergo, and if the story had been continued he might have reached happiness. The discordant elements in the 1887 version lie then only in the novelty of his faults, which are not those of the free-living villain or the immature innocent of the Victorian novel but those of the new realistic man of the late nineteenth century. He rebels against the complacent satisfaction with the "present ordering of things" in Sussex. He has only contempt for "fox-hunting, marriage, Robert Louis Stevenson's stories" and "Sir Frederick Leighton's pictures"(pp55,101). Defiantly he advocates the canons of the avant-garde, the aestheticism which is "emblematic of the yearning of man's soul for something higher than this mean and temporal life", and the "great current of psychological analysis which, with the development of the modern novel, grows daily greater in volume and more penetrating in essence"(pp54,86). Hence he rejects the "cold-blooded and self-satisfied" Tacitus for the "agitation" and "fever" of Prudentius(p72).

But if these are the aims of John Norton, Moore's actual illustrations of them are less than adequate and there is little in the story to challenge established values. Norton's aestheticism, far from seeing something "higher than this mean and temporal life", seems to be only the fashionable posturing of callow youth - for example in the juxtaposition in his rooms of imitation Durer chairs and a Parisian café table where champagne, brandy and soda, or, of course, absinthe can be served and a

Havana smoked. He advocates psychological analysis but is blind to the true characters of Kitty and his mother, and his plans for Thornby Priory, like his descriptions of the Jesuit ritual, seem essentially "cold-blooded and self-satisfied". In short, in attempting to portray the new man Moore only succeeded in producing a caricature who would not be out of place in the world of Patience and aesthetic "Nincompoopiana".

When it was first published the novel was a "dead failure", the mere accident by which John Norton escapes marriage... provoking almost unanimous reproaches from the reviewers and drawing from Pater, to whom Moore sent a copy of the novel, the comment that the object of violent acts was not very clear to him (Hone(1936) p130).

Moore seems to have realised that something was wrong. Yet in the revision of the novel he cut down the chapters on Latin authors which had won a certain amount of praise, and apparently increased the contrived nature of the accident. The result however is a story organised on the principles I have outlined in describing Vain Fortune where the concentration is upon the event rather than upon the mechanistic sociological or psychological causes behind it, upon the present seen only as the present rather than as a consequence of the past, and upon what happens rather than upon how it happens. The removal of most of the Naturalist basis of Norton's character may also have pushed Moore into the depiction of a more universal type. In the revision the grotesqueness in Norton's character becomes instead a successful pathological study of a mind entirely corrupted by the forces of religion and sensuality. The previously almost parallel role of Kitty is accordingly reduced to give an added intensity and concentration to the study.

The central part of A Mere Accident dealing with the rape of Kitty was thought the most incongruous and gratuitous by the reviewers but in the revision Moore did not reduce this but gave it an added weight stressing particularly its latent sinisteress

and menace. In the original story, however chaotic the intention and execution of parts of the story may be, the chain of events is clear to the reader, if not to the characters. The "accident" causes Kitty's madness, and her hypersensitivity and innocence, typical of the Victorian middle-class girl, leads to a sense of sexual shock and shame which distorts her view of the world. In the end it causes her suicide. In the revision, the skeleton of events stays the same but Moore deprives the reader of his certainty about the chain of events. He creates an intentional and partly unfathomable ambiguity which adds to and intensifies the sinister atmosphere of the story. The most tangible revision is the complete absence of any of the physical details of the attack on Kitty. Chapter Nine ends with John and Kitty having at last broached the question of marriage and Chapter Ten begins with Kitty rising after the attack. The tramp is transformed into the anonymous sexual image of a "tall, gaunt figure passing away like a shadow"(C(1895) p414). A reader who comes to "John Norton" without having read A Mere Accident has then no precise knowledge of who the attacker is, or even whether the attack is real or metaphoric. There is a strong sense in the revision that the attack may be an invention of Kitty's - an exaggeration by her innocent mind, John thinks, of his sudden and brief kiss into a rape. This is partly because of the addition of this single kiss. In A Mere Accident Moore lyrically describes how,

the lovers stood on the grassy plain; sheep were travelling over the great expanse of the valleys; rooks were flying about... to the lovers life was now an assortment of simple but beautiful flowers; and they passed the blossom to and fro and bound them into a bouquet (1887, p224).

This obviously prevents any sense of surprise in the declarations of love on the downs. Furthermore the reduction of the text and the stress upon Norton's consciousness thrusts into prominence the pathetic fallacy of the parting lovers which was also added in 1895,

There was no wind on the down. And still as a reflection in a glass the grey barren land rolled through the twilight. Beyond it the circling sea and the girl's figure distinct on a golden hour John watched a moment, and then hastened homeward. He was overpowered by fear of the future; he trembled with anticipation, and prayed that accident might lead him out of the difficulty into which a chance moment had betrayed him (1895, pp412-3; my italics).

Clearly Moore does not intend the reader to believe that the real rape did not take place but, through the pattern of metaphoric meaning beneath the surface of the story, there is a suggestion of a more profound and even symbolic meaning. The "accident" is then "mere" not only because it is a coincidence, as it was in the 1887 version, but also paradoxically because it is a "mere" catalyst of events which are inevitable.

In A Mere Accident the marriage between John and Kitty is settled before the accident, and after the death of Kitty he feels; "Yesterday I had all things - a sweet wife and happy youthful days to look forward to. To-day I have nothing; all my hopes are shattered"(1887, p273). He has a brief desire to withdraw from the world and the "too vivid realisation of self"(p274) he has experienced with Kitty, but he puts this aside realising the "impossibility of the preservation of the personal life, with all its sanctuary-like intensity, which was so dear to him" and exclaiming, "The world shall be my monastery"(p282). In "John Norton" these final words are dramatically displaced to the beginning of the story (p344) where they exemplify not a turning outwards in John but an adolescent lack of commitment, which has made him at Staunton College perpetually a probationer embracing neither the priesthood nor his duties as a squire. At the end of "John Norton" the description of Kitty's rape and her suicide is followed not by a description of John's sense of loss but by an account of the doubts about the marriage which had come to him after the parting on the downs. In A Mere Accident Moore explicitly tells us that "like Juggernaut's car, Catholicism

had passed over John's mind, crushing all individualism"(p216, my italics), but in "John Norton" the process does not seem to be so complete. After yielding to the sudden kiss John, agonising over the event, concludes that

a temptation of the flesh had come upon him; he had yielded to it instead of opposing it with the contrary habit of chastity... Chastity had brought him peace of mind, but the passion to which he had in a measure yielded had robbed him of his peace of mind, and had given him instead weakness, and agitation of spirit and flesh (1895, p441).

His visit to the Rectory which causes Kitty's suicide is then intended to break off the engagement. The happy descriptions of the central pages of A Mere Accident when John and Kitty seem destined for marriage are therefore drastically reduced in the revision. John's kiss is not a part of a love-affair but a yielding of his mind to the sensuality which to him is only evil, and which he has been sublimating into such things as the pseudo-religiosity of Parsifal. In the revision Moore adds many of the details referring to this music-drama, for example Norton's praise of the "lovely music in the cupola, written by Wagner for boys' voices"(1895, p335). Moore stresses the new interpretation by adding also John's thoughts about Kitty at the end,

what was the cause of her madness? Something had occurred. Once again, as he remembered the blithe innocence of her smiling eyes when they parted on the hill, and he recalled with terror the trembling forlorn, half-crazy girl that had sat opposite him in the drawing-room next day. He remembered the twitch of her lips, the averted eyes, and the look of mad fear that had crept over her face, her flight from him, her cries for help, and her desperate escape through the window. His thoughts paused, and then, like a bolt from the blue, a thought fell into his mind. "No", he cried, "not that". He tried to shake himself free from the thought; it was not to be shaken off. That was the explanation. It could only be that - ah! it was that, that, and nothing but that... he remembered that he had kissed her - he had kissed her by force! (1895, pp451-2).

This final explicit statement of the metaphoric strand which has been half present all through the latter half of the story serves

as the last piece of the jig-saw puzzle. As it drops into place it gives coherence to the suggestions left in the reader's mind by details such as John's hope, after Kitty has left him but before she is attacked, "that accident might lead him out of the difficulty into which a chance moment had betrayed him"(1895, p413).

Moore shows how John's naïve mind, corrupted by religious impulses, interprets the incidents to reinforce his feeling that the desires of the flesh are evil. His recollection of the kiss which to his mind was responsible for Kitty's death forces a further feeling of his own evil into his mind. There is then no sense of a widening of the horizons of John's life at the end of "John Norton", instead we are told that "Thornby Place should soon be Thornby Abbey, and in the divine consolation of religion John Norton hoped to find escape from the ignominy of life" (1895, p452).

When he rewrote the story Moore shifted the emphasis into Norton's perception of the incident. By doing so he seems to make an inevitable fact out of his instinctive condemnation of the deadening effect of religion on the life-enhancing sexual instincts. When he wrote the story first of all, and as usual simply allowed it to write itself, this aspect is only half of the total. The main structure consists of the parallel stories of Kitty and John. Kitty is incapable of facing the reality of sensuality as it is embodied in the rape any more than John is capable of facing the fundamentally impure quality of his nature as it is revealed by his blasphemies during the attack of pleurisy. The effect of religion upon the character's attitudes to sex is only implied, and in John the perverting effect of religion is confined to his character before he meets Kitty. After he has fallen in love it is a restricting force rather than a complete bar to his normal sexual impulses. In Celibates, the concentration upon Norton and the dangerous corruption of his mind by the Church

gives a new and emphatic meaning to the story which helps to pull it into shape. At Staunton College Norton clearly lacks a commitment either to his possible life as a landlord and squire or the life he seems to long for as a priest. He is in a real sense, despite his age, immature and still a pupil at the College. Moore then, in his own eyes, conclusively defines the real nature of the religious mind when he shows Norton emerging from this "school". His nature is opposed to life; moreover it can cause harm to others as well as moral and spiritual death to himself. He seems indeed only fitted for a life in the restricted - if not perverted - world of the bogus religion of Thornby Abbey. The violence of the rape, which in A Mere Accident was contrived and sensational, then became in "John Norton" an inevitable symbol of the inner nature of the religious mind.

Moore's work after 1895 generally has the same subdued language and incident as Esther Waters, and he attempted no more studies of this extreme kind of pathological state. In The Untilled Field of 1903, in the story "The Wild Goose", the character of Ellen Carmody reiterates the case of John Norton with a restraint that serves to make Moore's diagnosis of the nature of the religious mind more universal in application and more bleakly fatal. Ellen's subservience to the Church is given none of the sexual undertones of John Norton's. Her anguish begins only after her marriage, and this setting of the story within a normal family removes more of the Gothic quality of "John Norton". Ellen never questions the implications of her marriage and her attraction to Ned is simply an expansionist dream; listening to Ned's music, she heard again the sounds of the birds and insects, and she saw again the gloom of the trees, and she felt again and more intensely the overpowering ecstasy, and she yielded herself utterly and without knowing why (TUF(1903) p311). And like such dreams her love for Ned is a comparatively superficial result of a feeling of the need for independence.

That this feeling is slight is shown by her rapt, and in Moore's eyes immature, allegiance to the Church, even whilst she is ostensibly rebelling against her father by living her own life and marrying Ned. The circumstances surrounding the marriage are only lightly touched on and this lends it the air almost of an unconscious action. This gives a greater weight to the couple's awakening to reality and the anguish it brings. Moore uses the story to demonstrate how a religious consciousness is like a stone which men and women carry around their necks and which eventually destroys all life-giving human contacts.

In Ned Ellen thinks she has found a substitute for the strong figure of her father who, since his ambitions for Ireland seem similar to her own enthusiasms, will lack the obstructive will of her father. For Ellen Ned thus becomes something of a god upon whom her life depends. His withdrawal from her world then causes the intense anguish and loneliness which is so often the fate of Moore's characters. The pathos of the end of "The Wild Goose" gains effect from the initial exposition of the situation, for at the Cronins' dinner-party Ned tries to ingratiate himself with Mr Cronin with a sally at the priests, "There is nothing like faith for fattening. It is better than any oil-cake" (p309), even though he remembers that his landlady "had said that Miss Cronin was very religious"(p308). Moore uses the now familiar notions to present Ned's position by having him say, "I am content with reality"(p321), and at another point ascribe "the failure of the Irish in art and literature to the fact that they had always loved the next world"(p325). When Ned writes to forbid her to breast-feed their child Ellen contradicts her own independent spirit by feeling that she must consult a priest; when he has "ordered her conscience, she got well rapidly, and it was a pleasure to her to prepare herself for her husband's admiration"(p338). Her visit to the priest here is balanced

however against Ned's attempt to make her into a dream. He rejects the present because "only very rarely had he thought of her as a mother; the thought had never been entertained long, for it was never wholly sympathetic"(p334). The marriage is thus not made in a spirit of accord between their personal beliefs and consciences, and the scene is clearly set for a battle between their prejudices and the apparently free life which will impose an ultimately intolerable strain on both Ned and Ellen. The bond of feeling including the "sexual coil" seems to be the only hope for their relationship, and to some extent this bond does survive the crises. After they have quarrelled, he comes to her room, "she still kept her head turned away from him, but she could not keep back her happiness"(p355). Their child is also a bond;

"Differences of opinion arise", he said to himself, "for the mind changes and desire wanes, but the heart is always the same, and what an extraordinary bond the child is", he said, seeing Ellen leading the child across the sward. He forgot Ireland, forgot priests and politics, forgot everything. He lifted his little son in his arms and shook the boughs and saw the child run after the falling apples, stumbling and falling but never hurting himself...

The quarrels of the day died down; the evening grew more beautiful under the boughs, and this intimate life around their apple tree was strangely intense, and it grew more intense as the light died (p352).

But eventually even these ties are eroded. They retreat into themselves, and even the stress on Ned's belief in freedom and the "Gospel of life"(p353) cannot paper over the fact that he wounds Ellen whom he loved, and when she most needs him neglects her. He selfishly desires freedom and a new life and ignores the stark reality of the failure of their relationship when he demands, "so we have nothing to think of now but our past friendship. The memory of our past - is all that remains?"(p391).

Ellen is trapped within the dogma of her religion and she

cannot be reached by rational thoughts. The description of her feelings of loneliness at the end of the story is perhaps Moore's most calm and balanced passage about the alienating effect of the religious sensibility. It gains in reality and power from the insignificance of the causes of the disruption of her mind's normal processes which contrast with the violence of "John Norton". Ellen's outgoing will and her hopes for Ireland are revealed as skin-deep; her indoctrination with the need to obey the Church is the real self. Her childhood idealisation of Ireland has made her easy prey for the Church. Even in her marriage to Ned she is motivated by a subconscious desire to avoid making decisions and to put her personal conscience into the charge of another, much as she has put it into the power of the Church which has taught her that "there must be a code of morality, and these men devote their lives to thinking one out for us"(p340). Eventually the Church asserts its will and declares against Ned, and Ellen, like the frog half-swallowed by the snake (to use an image of Moore's own in this story, pp345-6), cannot in the end resist the enveloping harness of dogma. The result is her divorce from all human contact save the mute instinctive love of mother and child. The story is given a final ironic twist towards fatalism in that the freedom she ignores, symbolised by Ned, eventually turns out to be as restricted in human sympathy as she is herself.

6. Sympathetic Portraits: Evelyn Innes and Oliver Gogarty

One of Moore's major claims to importance is as the author of studies of the fin-de-siècle "agitation" and "fever" of late nineteenth century society. Arnold Bennett for example connected Moore with Ouida because they both inspired him "with that taste for liaisons under pink lamp-shades which I shall always have"(quoted, Elwin(1939) p337). Moore's feeling that the demise of the Irish Ascendancy was imminent made him particularly able to describe the general air of insecurity in English society at this time. The revisions of Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa certainly seem to demonstrate that he himself felt this insecurity which he portrayed in his characters. He worked on Evelyn Innes for several years before it was published in 1898, yet in the following years it was revised "six times in all"(Owens(1966) p3). After completing the last of these revisions which, in a moment of Byronic pride, he called "The Deformed Transformed", he wrote;

 Ten years ago I made rather a nasty mess of the two books; I tried to wipe them about the edges in different editions, but it was no use; the mess had to be cleared up. Well now it has been cleared up (Owens(1966) p226).

Sister Theresa too was revised after its first publication to match the succession of new Evelyn Inneses. Yet when the two novels were both published by Benn in 1928 Moore chose the original unrevised Evelyn Innes of 1898 to partner the revised Sister Theresa of 1909. This was notwithstanding the fact that Moore had stated in the preface to the 1909 Sister Theresa that "'Evelyn Innes' is not a prelude to 'Sister Theresa' and... 'Sister Theresa' is not a sequel to 'Evelyn Innes'"(px). To add to this confusion in the 1921 edition of The Lake he grudgingly allowed that "the publisher should be permitted to print 'Evelyn Innes' and 'Sister Theresa' from the original editions", but on condition that it was "clearly understood that they are

offered to the public only as apocrypha"(px).

The subject of the novels seems indeed to have been dear to Moore, but if he was seeking a more coherent expression of this in the revisions he can hardly be said to have succeeded. Nor was the idea refined in subtlety. Although incidents and characters were often drastically changed - in the 1905 edition of Evelyn Innes one Harold Leigh was substituted for Ulick Dean - the theme remained basically constant. Since I wish to discuss only the character of Evelyn Innes herself only undue confusion would result from the revisions of incident. I shall therefore refer only to the original editions of 1898 and 1901 in discussing Evelyn Innes and Sister Theresa. In the case of The Lake it is the presentation of the character of Oliver Gogarty which is changed in the revision, and the incidents of the story are basically the same. In discussing Gogarty then I shall refer to whichever of the texts - the first edition of 1905 or the 1921 revision - seems to describe his character more clearly at any given point. (The only difficulty is the unaccountable change of the name Rose Leicester into Nora Glynn in 1921; I shall use both names again depending upon the text to which I refer.)

The extent to which Moore saw himself as the chronicler of the avant-garde can be seen if Evelyn Innes is compared with Henry James' The Author of 'Beltraffio', where the aesthete is simply an example of James' general comments upon the blindness of man to the problems around him. In contrast Moore describes his characters with more factual details. He talked with Melba, then at the height of her fame, while he was writing Evelyn Innes - conversations which were as usual the source of scandal. But it seems more likely that the character of Evelyn is based on that of Jenny Lind who had retired from the stage to Wimbledon where she lived the life almost of a nun. Throughout

the novel Moore stresses the immense weariness of life which Evelyn feels because of the etiolated nature of her own life and of society around her. Her actions are motivated by a neurotic urge for security - a desire to turn away from the agonising pressure of the world - which drives her to-and-fro between the Opera House and the Convent. The first is the security of naïve innocence, the second that of quietism. In the revised Sister Theresa this latter takes the form of the sentimental idyll of her school, but in the original version it is the quietism of failure. When Evelyn is an opera-singer her consciousness is used to reveal the limitations of the nuns' vocations, but at the end the situation is reversed. Evelyn herself is now a nun and it is left to Louise, who is still a singer, to wonder if "it was this loss of voice that had decided" Evelyn "to remain in the convent"(ST(1901) p236).

In Dulwich the fact that Evelyn's mother has been a great singer whereas her father's life seems to be a retreat into a quasi-mediaeval dream makes Evelyn's going into the world seem a natural event. Her decision to go away with Sir Owen Asher is both an expansionist gesture of freedom and a realising of a predestined force latent within her character. She feels she must yield to this because "in the renunciation of her art she was denying a great gift that had been given to her by Nature"(EI(1898) p91). Moore described "the dramatic profession" as one which "always must be... for those to whom social restraints are irksome, and who would lead the life their instinct dictates" (IO(1891) p177). Evelyn's character, the flight to Paris, and the luxury and success which follow, certainly fit in with this. But whilst the horizons of her life are dramatically extended, at the same time Moore introduces qualifications. Her attraction to Sir Owen, like Kate Ede's to Eick, is obviously sexual. As she thinks of him her "meditation" grows "voluptuous"(EI p90)

but subconsciously her desire is for the kind of security which her obedience to her father had given her. Thus she dreams of her life with Sir Owen as "a sort of delicious death, a swooning ecstasy, an absorption of her own individuality into his"(p80). This same desire for security later causes her to flirt with her confessor Monsignor Mostyn;

the thought of this obedience to him refreshed her as the first draught of spring water refreshes the wanderer who for weeks has hesitated between the tortures of thirst and the foul waters of brackish desert pools (p401).

There is irony here in the use of the image of "spring water" which is more appropriate in Moore's opinion to Rose Leicester than the dead world of the Church (see p110-lbelow). The anxiety in her life makes art attractive to Evelyn, but once again in her search for security she is disillusioned. She hopes to find in opera the spiritual security she had enjoyed in Dulwich and which is lacking from her life with Sir Owen Asher.

The parts of Elizabeth, Brunnhilde, and Isolde give her a sureness of her role in the world which she otherwise lacks. Acting also removes the need for any conscious moral choice;

her acting... was all so natural to her. She simply went on the stage, and once she was on the stage she simply could not do otherwise. She could not tell why she did things. Her acting was so much part of herself that she could not think of it as an art at all; it was merely a medium through which she was able to re-live past phases of her life, or to exhibit her present life in more intense and concentrated form...

she always acted out one side of her character. Her pious girlhood found expression in the Elizabeth, and what she termed the other side of her character she was going to put on the stage in the character of Isolde (EI pp160,149).

She plays Elizabeth in Tannhauser and Eva in Lohengrin out of memories of her past. Ulick Dean asks how she can play Elizabeth who is "so different from what you are" now, and paraphrases her answer, "You mean your dead life now lives in Elizabeth"(p196). Her greatest successes are as Brunnhilde and Isolde, perhaps

because she can relate these characters to her own life most easily. She clearly lives the part of Isolde in her life with Sir Owen Asher;

When the emotion had reached breaking point, Tristan rushes into Isolde's arms, and the frantic happiness of the lovers is depicted in short, hurried phrases. The score slipped from her hands and her thoughts ran in reminiscence of a similar scene which she had endured in Venice nearly four years ago (EI pl56).

When she returns to Dulwich to beg forgiveness of her father, in all sincerity she acts out her feeling through the role of Brünnhilde in the last scene of Die Walküre;

The scene in the third act, when she throws herself at Wotan's feet and begs her forgiveness... was the scene that now awaited her. She had at last come to this long-anticipated scene; and the fictitious scene she had acted as she was now going to act the real scene... The wonder of the scene she was now acting - she never admitted she acted; she lived through scenes, whether fictitious or real - quickened in her... She was carried down like a drowning one into a dim world of subconscious being... She was conscious of the purification of self; she seemed to herself white and bowed and penitent... she knew she was expressing all that was most deep in her nature, and yet she had acted all that she now believed to be reality on the stage many times. It seemed as true then as it did now, - more true; for she was less self-conscious in the fictitious than in the real scene (pp201,209-10).

Moore's use of this scene is by no means simple. He presents Evelyn's emotion as genuine, as he had done that of Mildred Lawson at the end of her story, for both women live quite sincerely on this apparently insincere level. But he also uses the Wagnerian roles for irony. Evelyn is never fully aware of the real importance the parts have for her and only occasionally does any sense of this impinge upon her mind. The true significance of the situation even escapes her when she and Ulick, speaking of the part of Elizabeth, "asked each other whether any part of one's nature is really dead"(pl97). She is oblivious of the fact that she lives still in a state of

naïve irresponsibility more characteristic of Elizabeth than Brünnhilde. The roles of Isolde and Brünnhilde give a secure form to her life and they also express something of her indomitable will and pride. By living the roles she can then ignore her own naïveté and the contradictions which must follow from her failure to consider anything beyond her own Self. She fails to see that even the charitable work among the poor is based upon her egocentricity. The most important irony is then her ultimate inability to play the part of Kundry in Parsifal. She possesses the necessary sensuality but lacks entirely the capacity of renouncing her will for the love of either man or God.

Her desire for security is also the reason why she seeks release in the Convent; when she is within the walls she begins, to understand the importance a church is to a community... she felt she was no longer a solitary soul fighting a lonely battle; now she was a member of a spiritual community, and her wandering thoughts would be drawn into the streams of petitions going up to God (ST p83).

But she cannot restrain her individuality or her criticism of the triviality of the dream world of some of the nuns. Her will in the end always refuses to allow her to become part of the community;

even in singing the 'Ave Maria' she had not been able to subdue her vanity. Her pleasure in singing it had in a measure sprung out of the somewhat mean desire to proclaim her superiority over those who had attained the highest plane by renouncing all personal pride (EI p452).

Evelyn also proclaims her superiority to the nuns by her criticism of their vocations. She sees a difference between the beliefs of the nuns and a real belief in God which would make them "give up everything and go about in rags, and pray, and lose themselves in thoughts of God"(ST pl24). She also wonders if Sister Mary John "had... renounced the world, or had... refused the world"(EI p447). She questions why one "of such intense

personal will, had chosen a life the very raison d'être of which was the merging of the individual will in the will of the community"(p447). Yet at the same time she can feel that it is true that "the external life... always must be trivial" when she criticises " the continual childishness of the nuns and the triviality of their interests"(ST pp109,108). The criticisms Evelyn makes of the nuns must rebound upon her own motives, but Moore balances this irony by identifying her with the values by which the other nuns are judged. The result is a character calling for a blend of judgement and sympathy in the reader. On the one hand Evelyn's blindness to the faults in herself which she sees in others redoubles the irony against her. But on the other hand because the reader identifies with her in the descriptions of the other nuns any criticism of her faults is tinged with a sadness which mitigates the irony.

Constantly searching for security Evelyn tragically can find only a further crude subservience to a dogmatic force against which her will inevitably rebels. Once again forced back into the spiritual isolation she dreads she cries, "Does another quest lie before me?" She tried to stifle the thought, but it cried across her life, like a curlew across waste lands'(ST pl92). Underlying Moore's description of Evelyn's character is a notion of time and events which first appeared in the circular pattern of Esther Waters (see p55 above). In 1905, before the publication of The Lake, he wrote to Lady Cunard "Life is but an eternal recurrence"(Cunard(1957) p54), and the story of Oliver Gogarty and Rose Leicester is bounded by this notion. It depends upon the inexorable return of the seasons of the year, for Rose is repeatedly identified with the spring (see pl10 below). The meaning and value in this concept lies not in the time pattern of recurring events but in the fruitfulness of spring. The idea Moore is consciously

or unconsciously using here is Nietzsche's. The basic concept of "The Eternal Recurrence of All Things" implies only the endless recapitulation of events. It is "Nietzsche's mythic formula of a meaningless world, the universe of nihilism". Hope is given to this world by the "Superman" who "stands for the miraculous resurrection of meaning from its total negation"(Heller(1967) pp191-2). Esther Waters and Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa lack the meaningful stress on nature as an ultimate value which is to be found in The Lake, and hence the responsibility for creating value in the world can only rest with the characters. They then unconsciously aspire to the condition of Nietzsche's Superman, "the creature strong enough to live forever a cursed existence and even to transmute it into the Dionysian rapture of tragic acceptance". In her heroic struggle to save the life of her child Esther lives out this role. But Moore is unable to describe any kind of "rapture of tragic acceptance" in his characters. Ultimately then Evelyn Innes' life seems more akin to that of the mouse in the nursery rhyme Moore quotes in the "Colloquy" prefacing the 1932 edition of Esther Waters, "Dickory dickory dock". It is a "perfect expression of the nothingness of life"(EW(1932) pviii), rather than an affirmation of the possibility of any "miraculous resurrection of meaning". The portrait of her anguish has the most force in the novel, and it too calls for a complex response in the reader consisting in part of criticism of her faults and in part of sympathy for her hopeless plight.

Nevertheless Evelyn does manage at times to invest this meaningless existence with some value through her own actions. I have stressed already that Evelyn fails to see the contradiction between her own intense personal will and the various roles she plays on the stage. But this part of her character has a more positive side. Part of the reason for the inadequate

expression of this lies in Moore's failure to make Sir Owen Asher anything more than a fabulously rich and fashionable ornament. For to him are given the crucial words, "To discover our best gift from Nature, and to cultivate that gift, is the first law of life"(EI p81). Although this has no imaginative presence in his character it is the key to how Moore thought Evelyn could avoid the sufferings of her life. He comments in his own person;

It is true that man is a moral animal, but it is not true that there is but one morality; there are a thousand, the morality of each race is different, the morality of every individual differs (EI p326).

In short, the individual needs to cultivate the personal will and moral response - as Esther Waters does in deciding eventually to marry William Larch.

To end this discussion of the character of Evelyn Innes then I shall try to sum up the principles upon which Moore's final judgement of the character is based. Two quotations provide the key. Firstly Moore said that "Destiny is the only answer and how much happier we are when we pursue in quietness the inevitable path"(Gerber(1968) p136). Secondly in the preface to the American edition of Memoirs of My Dead Life(1907) he quoted Kant's

celebrated passage "Two things fill the soul with undying and ever-increasing admiration, the night with its heaven of stars above us and in our hearts the moral law". The only fault I find with this passage is that I read the word "law" where I expected to read the word "idea", for the word "law" seems to imply a standard and Kant knew there is none (MDL(1907) pxiii).

In the second of these two quotations there is a stress on the beauty and truth of nature together with a stress on the need for each man to find an individual "morality" for himself. But there is also an equivocation for, at the same time as Moore has Kant deny the existence of a "standard", he himself in the other quotation I have given endowed the concept of

"Destiny" with a determinist significance. At the end of Esther Waters and in the final words of Evelyn Innea Moore seems to show an inability to overcome this equivocation and a tendency to try to paper over the cracks by appealing to a rather facile pastoral sentiment. At the end of Sister Theresa he gives the following picture of Evelyn;

To walk by herself in the sun, in the evening light, thinking of the dead Prioress, or of the nun who had gone away because she could not endure her love, seemed like happiness, and she felt that she could be happy in the convent if her friends could be given back to her. When they were with her the convent was a pure inspiration, meagre and a little grey, perhaps, but still pure and true. And while thinking of the grey pieties of the cloister her eyes turned to the sun setting. The sunset seemed to steal into her heart, and to become a source of secret joy to her. She wondered what was the influence of the sun; it made the woods grow green and the flowers blossom, it drew all things into itself, the rays darted from the horizon to the light, breathless and delighted. She saw the beautiful earth quiescent like a nun watching before the sacrament. The plants lifted their leaves to the light. Everything knew it, even the stones in the centre of the earth; she watched the distant woods submerged in the light of the sun; her soul dilated and knew its light; the shell broke which till now had darkened it for her; her flesh and spirit seemed to ascend into the immortal light; her eyes seemed to see into the depths of the sea, and her ears were soothed by the murmur of the waves (ST pp232-3).

The first part of this passage does not seem to gel with the ecstasy of the second half. The whole is given a tragic irony when Evelyn adds shortly afterwards that,

the important thing to do is to live, and we do not begin to know life, taste life, until we put it aside... Life is the will of God, and to enter into the will of God we must forget ourselves, we must try to live outside ourselves in the general life... so long as we live in the will of God, it does not seem to matter much where we live (ST p235).

This inability to give imaginative expression to this world where meaning rests in individual moral actions also characterises The Lake. Both Evelyn and Gogarty are plainly autobiographical characters. I have referred already in detail to Moore's dream

of a feudal England which seems to have inspired the vision of a sentimental bourgeois pastoral nature in the passage I have just quoted. His own response to the problems of Ireland was like Gogarty's an escape to another country. In Ireland Moore saw no solution to Irish problems; he could only empathise with his grandfather the historian who he pictured sitting "staring at the lake, associating it in some dim way with his own loneliness"(CES(1924) p72). Moore does succeed in giving some substance to Gogarty's final life-enhancing stance by opposing the attractive and very animate Rose Leicester to the dead world of religion. But his final decision that his "quest is life"(TL(1905) p328) does seem a little vague. Furthermore the only idea that he does have, the flight to America, seems potentially not much different from Alice Barton's escape to Kensington.

In the shop at Tinnick both Oliver and his sister Eliza are dissatisfied with the mundane world in which they seem to be trapped, and both seek a release from this in the religious life. Eliza's vocation is however scarcely very religious. When Oliver asked,

if she intended to found a new order, or to go out to Patagonia to teach the Indians, she laughed, saying that she was much more interested in a laundry than in the Indians...

"The officers in Tinnick have to send their washing to Dublin".

"A fine reason for entering a convent", he answered (1905 p17).

Mary Gogarty is persuaded by her sister to enter the convent too because her life up to that point had been "little else than a series of failures"(1921, p76) - as Lord Dungory quipped in A Drama in Muslin, "C'est le genie du Catholicisme de nous débarrasser des filles laides"(1886, p309). Given that it was Eliza who first turned his mind towards the religious life one might not expect much of Gogarty's own vocation. Like

Evelyn Innes he seeks in religion something diametrically opposed to what it has to offer. He makes it answer his demand for "the excitement of speculation"(TL(1905) p10), but the life it offers is in fact hardly more exciting than that of the shop from which he has escaped. But, unlike Ellen Carmody, his will is not crushed by the Church and he persists in his search for "opportunities of realising" himself (p278). In the novel these take the form of an attraction first to the independent mind of Rose Leicester, and then to her stories of the world beyond Ireland and the confines of the Church. Nevertheless the perverting influence of the Church has tainted his mind, causing his feelings of guilt because he did not protect Rose more from the anger of Father Peter to be transformed into rather curious thoughts about his own responsibility in the affair; he writes to her,

have I not begged of you to remember that since God will hold me responsible for your soul, it would be well that you should live a life of virtue and renunciation, so that I shall be saved from the humiliation of looking down from above upon you in hell (1921, p140).

In this mood he sees Rose not as a person cruelly driven out of the parish but in terms of the "loss of a soul to God, and of God's love of chastity"(1905, p39).

Father Gogarty is raised above the level of the run-of-the-mill priest by the quality of his instincts rather than by any intellectual recognition of his plight. As Moore pares down the circumstantial detail in these stories, so what remains takes on an added relevance. In particular natural surroundings are employed not simply as scene but to illuminate the moods of the characters. Thus Gogarty is separated from the smaller consciousnesses of the villagers and the nuns by his feeling response to the lake and the woods that surround it. Through this he is specifically connected with Nora Glynn who is "always associated with the lake" in his thoughts, and who is important because she has "escaped the lake"(1921, p54).

His rejection of the doctrines of the Church is also a matter of natural instinct;

once at the edge of the lake, he stood waiting for nothing seemingly but to hear the tiresome clanking call of the stone chat, and he compared its reiterated call with the words "atonement", "forgiveness", "death", "calamity", words always clanking in his heart (1921, p36).

The bare world of the village and the spiritual poverty of the lives of the villagers admirably represents the barren world which the teachings of the Church produce. Father Gogarty's ability to stand up under the pressure of the Church, like his willingness to help Father Moran, foretell his eventual ability to swim the lake. Indeed the sections dealing with his ministry are more successful than Moore's final description of him, as he is about to plunge into the lake, standing

as on a pedestal, tall and grey in the moonlight - buttocks hard as a faun's, and dimpled like a faun's when he draws himself up before plunging after a nymph (1905, p331).

The image of the faun is technically appropriate however, for Rose becomes a sexually as well as a spiritually attractive person to him. The sympathy which she evidently feels for Father Gogarty is part cause of the sympathy which the reader feels for him in the early part of the story. When he realises that he is in love with her and tells her so she draws back, but her withdrawal from his life does not lessen the reader's sympathy for him. Rather the reverse is true, for he has now shown himself worthy of sympathy by his desire to escape, and his perception of the false course of his past life. The removal of Rose from the story then allows Gogarty to receive all instead of only part of the sympathy. The 1921 edition of the novel emphasises this further by putting the stress on Gogarty's mind. This makes the reader also more aware of his loneliness.

Rose Leicester is important to Father Gogarty because she gives him the first hint that contact with human beings is superior

to the isolated role of the priest who must always judge his fellow-men. But the priesthood gives Gogarty security, and when he loses this, like Evelyn Innes, he feels only despair;

Loneliness begets sleeplessness, and sleeplessness begets a sort of madness. I suffer from nightmare, and I cannot find words to tell you how terrible are the visions one sees at dawn. It is not so much that one sees unpleasant and ugly things - life is not always pretty or agreeable, that we know - but when one lies between sleeping and waking, life itself is shown in mean aspect, and it is whispered that one has been duped till now; that now, and for the first time, one knows the truth. You remember how the wind wails about the hilltop on which I live. The wailing of the wind has something to do with the condition of my mind; one cannot sit from eight o'clock in the evening till twelve at night staring at the lamp, hearing the wind, and remain perfectly sane (1921, pp140-1).

This continued demand for security is coupled with a naïveté of mind which causes him still to acquiesce in the Church's way of thinking - for example he writes to Rose about the "unpleasantness it must be to a Catholic to live in a Protestant country"(1921, p92). The constantly reiterated memory of Rose however absorbs him and makes him see that he is still immature and hence unfitted for the role he should play in the village as its priest. He realises that in thinking that in the Church he could find a life of adventure he had made a mistake.

The revision of The Lake cuts out many of Rose Leicester's letters, thus forcing the story into Gogarty's mind. But this also removes much of the purely intellectual and artistic reasoning apparently responsible for Gogarty's change of heart. The stress is now on the fact that man reaches maturity not through the intellect but by means of the truer guide of the heart and "what was natural, spontaneous, instinctive"(1921, p260). At this time Moore came to stress the need for a moral consciousness and an acute moral perception less and to emphasise more the innate yearning of man towards a natural wholeness and security. Gogarty in a moment of illumination writes to Nora Glynn that

his thought has been "impoverished" because "my mind and my body were separated"(1921, pp218-9). In 1907 Moore wrote, "to think well the whole man must think, and it seems to me that Father Gogarty thought in this complete way"(MDL(1907) pxxvi). In other words, a true judgement can be achieved only when the logic of the mind is harnessed to the instinct of the body. Hence the fact that Gogarty has the capacity to respond instinctively to Nature makes his story inherently hopeful. This conclusion, which is basically that of Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa, carries more conviction in The Lake because the setting of the story in Ireland lends itself more to such a conclusion than the fashionable world of London. Moreover while he was writing The Lake Moore talked with AE in Ireland and this too probably made him feel the importance of Nature more than while he was in England. Despite a certain gaucheness and romanticism in some of the descriptions of Oliver's response to Nature Moore did not subscribe wholly to a primitivist nature worship as he had done at the end of Sister Theresa.

In "The Wild Goose" Moore stated concisely and neatly the attitudes which developed from his notion of the need to continually respond to moral questions. He wrote,

To believe in fate and predestination is an easy way out of life's labyrinth, and if one does not believe something of the kind, the figures will not come right (TUF(1903) p313).

Moore saw "to believe in fate and predestination" as wrong because it destroyed notions of personal conscience and responsibility. Yet he plainly saw this as to some extent inevitable and necessary in order that the world should seem a secure place and the "figures" come right. In Evelyn Innes he wrote, "it is true that man is a moral animal, but it is not true that there is but one morality... the morality of every individual differs"(1898, p326). He is not criticising Evelyn Innes, Ellen Carmody, or Oliver Gogarty for finding a meaning in life

through an idea, since this seems to him inevitable. Rather he attacks them insofar as they live in this idea to the detriment of their "natural" lives. The fact that a belief in "something" is necessary for the "figures" to come right implies that it is the "figures" that matter. And by this he means the notion that life is naturally meaningful without recourse to transcendental concepts. The "figures" are wrong when anyone puts their belief in something beyond this life, such as a religious dogma. The answer to the sum is then not in accord with the notion that life has a natural meaning, and the calculation - the "something" which we construct and in which we believe - must be changed. Therefore the whole question comes to depend not upon the logic of the calculation but upon an instinctive perception by the individual consciousness of what makes life meaningful. Thus Moore comes to some sort of solution to the question which confronted him at the end of Sister Theresa where he seems at once to accept and deny the notions of determinism and a "standard". For in The Lake man is granted a freewill which he must use to accept or deny his own ultimate destiny. This freewill must be used to direct his general life-giving instinct into some particularly appropriate form of daily activity.

In The Lake Oliver Gogarty says, "Volumes have been written on the subject of predestination and freewill, and the truth is that it is as impossible to believe in one as in the other" (1921, p241). This thought comes at the nadir of his despair. But his realisation that it is nature, the spring, and instinct which are the important factors does not at once free him from error. He has managed to extricate himself from his subservience to religion and dogma to seek a truer god in Nature, but for him spring is at first symbolic not of the great natural world, but of his love for Nora Glynn. He refers to her as "a fountain",

or the "spring" which "releases the world from winter rust", "the sun", and the "spring-tide"(1921, pp204,221,218). The Church offers man a way of life and Gogarty has accepted this without question. He has turned a way of life into an end itself, and so too his pursuit of Nora becomes an end in itself rather than a means of reaching a larger freedom. When he first thinks of her his personal attraction towards her is re-awakened and he really wants, in offering her the job at his sister's convent, to have her near again;

ever since writing to her he had indulged in dreams of her return to Ireland, thinking how pleasant it would be to go down to the lake in the mornings, and stand at the end of the sandy spit looking across the lake at Tinnick, full of the thought that she was there with his sisters earning her living. She wouldn't be in his parish, but he'd have accepted the loss of his organist as his punishment (1921, p96).

His letters to her culminate in a realisation of the fact that has been plain throughout to the reader, namely that these are love-letters. To the very end he has to convince himself that "he was not following her"(1921, p264), and the first hint that she wants only to help him and not to offer him a new way of life comes as a hammer-blow to him. The faith in dogma which had propped him up but which had crumbled with his instinctive attraction to Nora is now removed completely.

Gogarty must realise, Moore says, that life is not found for most people in the great over-riding purpose for which Evelyn Innes and Mildred Lawson pray, but in belonging to a wider community;

there are always good reasons for following the rut. We believe that the rutted way leads us somewhere; it leads us nowhere, the rutted way is only a seeming... It seemed to you and it seemed to me that there is no pattern; we think there is none because Nature's pattern is indistinguishable to our eyes, her looms are so vast, but sometimes even our little sight can follow a design here and there (1921, p221).

The moral of the novel is then twofold, that "life is full of possibilities", and that "body and mind"... are not two things, but one thing'(1921, p222,223). That man must use his whole heart and mind, instinct and logic, in order to choose among the possibilities offered to him. And that if one possible way of life brought about by one decision fails, either by not giving a meaning to life or by concealing life behind a screen of "conventions and prejudices"(p201), then the alternative is not a shiftless loneliness but a further chance of seeking out another possible destiny. Nora tells Gogarty, "My notion is that the wisest plan is to follow the mood of the moment, with an object more or less definitely in view"(p200). This is the message she brings him, not a promise of a new life for him with her but news that if he leaves Ireland, although "all this present reality would fade", if he puts "his confidence in Nature" he will find hope (pp206-7). Unfortunately Moore's own lack of security and sense of isolation meant that he could not entirely remove the literary pastoral convention from his descriptions of Nature in the story.

7. Mock-heroic Irony: 'Hail and Farewell'

The work Moore published during the first half of the 1890s finally showed the public that he was capable of writing in a manner which was, if somewhat avant-garde, not wholly immoral or damned. The Gladstonian seal of approval conferred on Esther Waters, which helped give him at last the long coveted reputation of serious novelist to add to his established status as a critic, came in the same years as witnessed his translation from the risqué world of The Hawk, the Strand "mashers" and the "cockloft" in the Temple to the aristocratic country house society of Lady Cunard, Sir William Eden, Mrs Hunter, Lord Grimthorpe, and Lord Howard de Walden. At the same time, although he had little success with his plays on the stage, he came because of his criticism to be regarded as something of an authority on the theatre. Clearly Moore had at last arrived; moreover word had even spread back to uncivilised Ireland that the Moore who had left his homeland scarcely able to spell his own name to squander his patrimony in Paris was now not only a well-known but an almost respectable part of English cultural life.

Moore was never entirely honest about his original reasons for leaving England for Ireland in 1899, considering it beneath his dignity no doubt ever to admit that it was Yeats who "imported" him not out of admiration for the creative artist but because he thought that the journalistic effectiveness which Moore had so often shown in public controversy could be usefully employed against his enemies' (TLS(1952) p150). In the descriptions of his character in Hail and Farewell Moore describes someone essentially naïve who develops to awareness - an innocent summoned to Ireland by the mysterious voices he hears in Victoria Street - but his real reasons for leaving his beloved England

were a good deal more concrete and political. Chief among them was his implacable hatred of the Boer War and the values of those sections of English society which supported it;

His hatred of the Boer War was even greater than his love of Irish. It was painful to witness and he would pass whole days without looking at the newspapers. "I live in a sort of nightmare", he wrote in one of his letters, "when I think of the war. If I were to allow my mind to ponder on it as others do, I should go off my head...". At other moments he was exalted by the thought of the spiritual change which his pro-Boer opinions signified (Hone(1936) p223).

The war came to represent a degeneration of all those secure values which he had sought in his earlier flights from Ireland and Paris to England, so that he who had left an Ireland in decline was now faced with the self-same decline in England. But paradoxically whilst Ireland seemed in decline because of the primaeval force of the peasants, England was being dragged down by the very same middle-class whom Moore had praised in A Drama in Muslin but who were increasingly now to be condemned as the Brixton Public. In a conversation with William Archer, Moore, full of the natural pantheism of the Irish Revival, execrated "this empire of vulgarity and greed, and materialism and hypocrisy, that is crawling round the whole world, throttling other races and nationalities"(Archer(1904) p86).

Moore was stung into action by the war when he collaborated with W.T.Stead in the publication in the Pall Mall Gazette of a letter from his brother Maurice, then serving with the British Army in South Africa, which revealed the brutal conduct of the British in the war. Most remarkably this whole affair was carried out in secret so that for once Moore gained no publicity by his actions. His attitude in these years is such as to suggest that he was appalled by British materialism and attracted by what he had described as "the nostalgia of the tent"(VF(1891) pp13-4), but also that since his action required a partial severing of his links with England he must have felt that new opportunity

lay before him. Perhaps already he had begun to rewrite his autobiography, now denying his own achievement in Esther Waters and claiming that "I didn't know how to write until I went over to Ireland - it was you fellows that taught me"(Eglinton(1942) p23). All of Moore's accounts of his part in the Irish Revival were written after his disillusion with Ireland. Thus he played down the political activities of the Revival and concentrated on his own efforts as a writer. But even so, at the time, given a tendency towards art-for-art's-sake in his work before 1898, it seems probable that he would cast his behaviour into an aesthetic rather than a political mould. Interpreting history almost entirely as the history of art, he spoke afterwards of going to Ireland summoned by voices, a leaving of the land of "Mudie and Smith" for one that had "an old language that too frequent child-bearing had not over-worn"(ASM(1922) p536). The result of this feeling was the Irish stories of The Untilled Field and The Lake.

However the move to a land where people "live according to a tradition of life that existed before commercialism, and the vulgarity founded upon it"(Yeats(1901) p105) was not without equivocations. Moore's new confidence did not obviate the substantial revision after publication of both The Untilled Field and The Lake, and the years 1900 to 1909 when he was living in Ireland were those of the repeated revision of the Evelyn Innes story. Moreover, despite the presence of Ulick Dean, Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa belong to England rather than Ireland - an England, it should also be noted, of Sir Owen Asher and Berkeley Square rather than Southwick or Kensington. But the revisions of these two novels in themselves seem to suggest that Moore now had confidence not only that he could improve his stories, but also that the public would continue to be interested in his work.

As John Eglinton suggests, and the evidence of the character of Ulick Dean supports, Moore's original reaction "to this last call of the old language" was to respond "with a sincerity which argued a real strain of the Celt at the roots of his nature" (Dujardin(1929) p13). He was closely involved in the Irish Literary Theatre at its inception but as the years passed this involvement grew less and less, and it seems he did little whilst resident in Dublin which he could not have done by visiting Ireland from London. Joseph Hone's chapter headings, "Great Expectations" and "Disenchantment", aptly sum up Moore's moods in Ireland as it became more difficult to ignore the differences between himself and the other members of the Revival, especially the Gaelic Leaguers. By June 1903, three years after he had arrived in Dublin, Moore wrote that he had "absolutely renounced" all his "Celtic hopes"(Dujardin(1929) p47). Although the literary movement was ostensibly cosmopolitan through its allegiance to the ideas of Wagner and the French Symbolists, only Yeats and Synge had any actual experience of the Parisian culture which was to Moore the touchstone of artistic value. Furthermore those who felt that the Irish National Revival must be centred upon a revival of Gaelic were necessarily at odds with Moore who thought the language only "a torrent of muddied stuff". Finally and most importantly, those who felt that, either for reasons of belief or expediency, the support of the Catholic Church was necessary and inevitable met with implacable opposition from Moore, and in their turn became increasingly hostile to him after 1903 when he proclaimed his conversion to Protestantism.

Hence the irony that all of the work inspired by the Irish Revival - The Untilled Field, The Lake, and Hail and Farewell - was published after he had become apostate from the movement, and hence also the decline from his initial optimism to the

cynical pessimism which he expressed in 1913; "we live regretting that we were unlucky enough to be born, and we die regretting that our ill-luck has come to an end"(Eglinton(1942) p20). The three works inspired by the Revival mirror this shift, away from the criticism of those uninitiated in Irish ideas in the short stories to the unremitting satire of the Revival in Hail and Farewell.

The trilogy purports to be an account of Moore's life in Ireland and the incidents described are - given a certain amount of editing - real, but the interpretative irony is almost wholly drawn from Wagnerian music-drama. Moore first came into intensive contact with Wagner's work through the tireless exegesis of Edouard Dujardin. Although he had undoubtedly heard the music of Wagner before, and come into vague contact with his ideas through the French Symbolists in the 1870s, Moore himself later liked to say that he had first really heard Wagner when he had attended a performance of Rheingold with Edward Martyn;

there were no thoughts in me: I could only feel; I could not speak; words seemed trivial, almost futile; and the god, standing on the rainbow, listening to the lament of the maidens for the stolen gold, seemed to bring the story of art to a divine end (NO(1919) p65).

With this as with most of Moore's other enthusiasms the initial results were certain; William Blissett comments of an early Tristanesque passage in the original Spring Days of 1888 that "the rudderless skiff of Moore's prose enters the Wagnerian whirlpool"(Blissett(1961) p60). But in the 1898 Evelyn Innes such passages as that in Chapter Twenty-Two referring to Tristan and the scene between Evelyn and her father in Chapter Sixteen echoing Walkyre are remarkably well handled. Discussion of Wagnerian aesthetics plays a large part in the original The Lake of 1905, but none of these equals the degree of imaginative assimilation and control shown by Moore in his use of Wagnerian parallels in Hail and Farewell.

The decision to set Ireland against the world of the Wagnerian music-drama cannot be said to have required in itself any great stroke of perception on Moore's part, for as well as being generally fashionable at this time Wagnerian ideas were all pervasive in the ideology of the cultured élite which formed the Irish Literary Theatre. Both Miss Horniman and Edward Martyn, the two principal financial backers of the scheme were passionate devotees of Bayreuth and even Yeats dreamed of an Irish Theatre growing up in imitation of the Master's Festivalspielhaus. Furthermore, as Herbert Howarth has pointed out in his study of the movement,

the minds that made the Irish literary movement... were shaped at the earliest age by the tradition of the rebellion and the hopes of a Messiah, and interpenetrated with images like these. When they grew older, they consciously acquired cognate material and grafted it onto the original stem (Howarth(1958) p10).

The movement then was full of the desire to find a Messiah who would reform the present wreck of Ireland into something approximating to its old national greatness; as Wagner had restored German culture with his heroic music-dramas. The Messianic image that these writers came to recognise was that of Charles Stewart Parnell;

Irish writers slowly recognised Parnell's death as the source of the creation of the Irish Republic. Out of the public passions and the ignominy that caused his death a myth flared up that produced the rising of 1916 and the quick subsequent events... The Irish committed the crucial act of killing their prophet, and the guilt, the desire to purify the guilt, the belief that the sacrifice sanctified, the belief that sacrifice assures rebirth, gave them irresistible vigour in the next generation (Howarth(1958) pp4-5).

Such is the basis of Moore's descriptions of the Irish Literary Movement - "the comedy... which had for the last three weeks unrolled itself, scene after scene, exceeding any imagination of mine" in which Moore was to play the part of the "returned native"(A(1911) pp111,114). The trilogy shows a variety

of prophets all vying for the role of the Anointed One who shall restore Ireland, each projecting himself into his own kind of messiahship, and the whole is transposed by Moore into a framework of Wagnerian irony.

From the first Moore makes one essential distinction among his characters for only he himself, Yeats, Martyn, and AE are considered for the role of the chosen one, and of these Martyn is doomed to failure because of his allegiance to the Church. Moore's selection of these figures, reflecting his own circle of friends, indicates his detachment from the body of the Irish Nationalist movement, for he ignores all of the leaders who were not involved in the purely cultural life of Ireland and England. In the trilogy Moore makes plain the new land he would prefer which is far from the dreams of Douglas Hyde or James Connolly. Moore's vision is cast solely in terms of the subjects which obsessed him - the Church and art - and he ignores the reality of contemporary Irish social life, for example the General Strike in support of the Nationalist Movement led by James Larkin in 1912, as he has ignored the reality of English social life in A Drama in Muslin and Esther Waters (see p216ff. below);

The kingdom of Earth had been swallowed up in theology for some eight or nine centuries, and it was the genius of the sixteenth century to disinter it, and to make merry in it without giving a thought to the superman - the silly vanity of a Christian gone wrong. In this re-arisen kingdom were all the arts, sculpture, painting, literature, and music (S(1912) p189)

- the critical use of the word "superman" here suggests that Moore in the mood of Hail and Farewell rejected the heroic stance of a character such as Esther Waters (see p102 above). The nature of this new society is amplified earlier in his description of the Irish language as,

a torrent of dark muddied stuff... much like the porter which used to come up from Carnacun to be drunk by the peasants on midsummer nights when a bonfire was lighted. It seemed to me a language suitable for the celebration of an antique Celtic rite, but too remote for modern use. It had never been spoken by ladies in silken gowns with fans in their hands or by gentlemen going out to kill each other with engraved rapiers and pistols. Men had merely cudgelled each other, yelling strange oaths the while in Irish, and I remembered it in the mouths of the old fellows dressed in breeches and worsted stockings, swallow-tail coats and tall hats full of dirty bank notes which they used to give to my father (A(1911) p155).

Only, that is, those who have been subject to French tradition and culture could possibly produce anything resembling the kingdom Moore desired. In the perhaps not entirely serious prefatory letter to his Reminiscences of the Impressionist Painters he shows how such a conclusion is based upon his own personal experiences;

I told the Royal Commission which came over here to discover if it could do anything to assist art in Ireland, that it could assist art much more by founding a café than by doing anything else.

Martyn, ignorant of secular painting and innocent of the bondage in which the Church holds him, is thus automatically disqualified, but it is typical of Hail and Farewell that Moore can at once indict Martyn for his foolishness and by the charm of his portrayal absolve him of blame. This dual quality of the portrait seems to reflect life, for John Eglinton, AE, and Yeats, whilst bitterly resenting Moore's caricatures in his account of his days in Ireland, all at some time testify to his capacity for friendship. (Yeats was indeed to say of Moore and Martyn that they were "inseparable friends bound one to the other by mutual contempt", 1936, p19). The combination of blamelessness and foolishness in Martyn clearly relates to the Wagnerian image of Parsifal. The tolerance which he shows in the interest of Irish literature is extraordinary;

These refreshments [for Yeats] were brought up by Gantley, Edward's octogenarian butler, and every time I heard his foot upon the stairs I offered up a little prayer that Edward was away in his tower, for, of course, I realised that the tray would bring home to him in a very real and cruel way the fact that his play was being changed and re-written under his very roof, and that he was providing sherry and biscuits in order to enable Yeats to strike out, or worse still, rewrite his favourite passages. It was very pathetic; and while pitying and admiring Edward for his altruism I could not help thinking of two children threading a blue-bottle. True that blue-bottle's plight is worse than Edward's, for the insect does not know why it is being experimented upon. Edward, at all events, had the consolation that he was sacrificing himself for his country. It is well known that the idea of sacrifice produces a great exaltation of mind, and is, in fact, a sort of anaesthetic (A pp285-6).

In the last sentence of this extract Martyn becomes a sacrificial Christ-like figure, but if he is thus further established in the image of Parsifal, the man also differs from the Wagnerian archetype. Whereas in the music-drama Parsifal is awakened to consciousness and to his own superhuman power to bring about the new world through the sensual love of Kundry, Martyn is a misogynist who will never fulfil his mother's wish that the family be continued. Martyn's extreme subservience to the Church also contrasts with Parsifal's assumption of control over the Grail community. Moreover Parsifal overcomes the magician Klingsor whereas Martyn must "have a magician always at" his "elbow", as Moore describes his dependence on the priests (A p205).

In this mock-heroic parallel Ireland by implication fills the role of Amfortas doomed to bleed for ever from wounds inflicted as a result of an encounter with sensuality. The country is also presented as a dying land in the irony which encircles Yeats, who with his long cloak, large hat, and mysterious mien is Wotan the Wanderer of Siegfried (with Lady Gregory thus perhaps mischievously identified with Fricka, his troublesome but honest consort). That Yeats is the wanderer Wotan who has already lost

his wordly power rather than the conniving world-ruler of Rheingold is significant, for Moore consistently alleges in Hail and Farewell that Yeats is missing his true way in life.

"Moore was jealous of his standing with Lady Gregory... an egoist himself, he was acutely aware of the condescension of the self-centred Yeats"(Taylor(1954) p92); hence he describes him so lulled by her into a feeling of his own importance that he fails to see the faults in his own life and work, as Wotan in Walkyrie at first fails to recognise the fact that he has put off his power;

Yeats's great height and hierarchic appearance authorise the literary dogmas that he pronounces every season. He is the type of the literary fop and the most complete that has ever appeared in literature (V pp243-4).

In his loss of power Yeats is thus parallel with the Wanderer but he is further criticised by contrast in that Wotan's abrogation of power has a specific and conscious purpose which is at length achieved. Moreover by taking note of Fricka's warnings Wotan sets destiny on a right course whereas Yeats is only pampered by Lady Gregory.

The Wagnerian identification of AE is twofold. He is seen at first as one who can see a world beyond this life; in his writings Moore sees,

a young world which I recognised at once as the fabled Arcady that had flourished before man discovered gold, and forged the gold into a ring which gave him power to enslave. White mist curled along the edge of the woods, and the trees were all in blossom. There were tall flowers in the grass, and the gossamer threads glittered in the rays of the rising sun. Under the trees every youth and maiden were engaged in some effusive moment of personal love, or in groups they weaved garlands for the pleasure of the children, or for the honour of some god or goddess. Suddenly the songs of the birds were silenced by the sound of a lyre; Apollo and his muses appeared on the hillside; for in these stories the gods and mortals mixed in delightful comradeship, the mortals not having lost all trace of their divine origin, and the gods themselves being the kind beneficent gods that live in Arcady (A p157).

But John Eglinton in his Irish Literary Portraits says of him that "beauty in his sombre twilight world is rather an object of belief than of delighted apprehension"(Eglinton(1935) p49). Moore himself says of AE that he "does not silhouette as Yeats does or dear Edward"(V p244) indicating perhaps that his function is to show the way for others in a way parallel in the Biblical analogy to John the Baptist and in the Wagnerian to the Woodbird in Siegfried. As such he cycles through Ireland searching out the dwelling places of the ancient heroes in company with the incredulous Moore. Howarth writes that "of all the prophets of the Messiah AE was the most persistent" and hence Yeats was "apprehensive that AE might outstrip him"(Howarth(1958) ppl9,20), for knowledge is a kind of power and in this aspect of his character AE is parallel to Siegmund. The closeness of AE to Yeats is clear, as when Moore speaks of his "definition of ideas as formless spiritual essences"(V p241) and in his call for "an aristocracy of lordly and chivalrous heroes" who would "create a great democracy by the reflection of their character in the mass" (AE(1901) p15). Yet he has a greater appreciation of nature than the Yeats who walks through the countryside with Moore oblivious of its beauty - to Moore "it seemed a pity to trouble about a poem when Nature provided one so beautiful for our entertainment"(A p247) - as Siegmund is both heroic enough to be a follower of Wotan, and more alive to spring and the beauty of humanity, preferring to stay with Sieglinde rather than to follow Brünnhilde to Valhalla. By the direct reference to AE as Siegmund, Yeats as Wotan is thus further devalued as a leader, whilst by his connection with the vigorously attacked world of Plunkett and Gill AE himself is shown to be failing to live up to his mythical image. By a final sleight of hand Moore's own presence at AE's side during the tour of ancient Ireland serves even to devalue the mythical ideal.

Moore reserves for himself the analogy with Siegfried, son of Siegmund, destroyer of Wotan and potential saviour of the world. As Siegfried is the son of Siegmund, so in Hail and Farewell Moore is attentive to AE's advice; at the end of Salve he says, "it is essential to consult AE on every matter of importance"(p377). AE as the Woodbird also helps Siegfried in his search for the truth, for Moore says of him that when he "left me a certain mental sweetness seemed to have gone out of the air... it seemed to me clear that he was one who could restore to me my confidence in life"(S p29).

However although Hail and Farewell is a mock-heroic account of the Irish Revival the books also tell of the personal growth of Moore himself as a writer, and as a Siegfried and Messiah for Ireland. This Irish Siegfried does not serve his apprenticeship in the rude labour of Mime's smithy but in the intellectual and artistic tasks of Oscott and Paris. At the beginning of Ave Moore describes himself as still an innocent, "a novice, publishing his first book, wondering if it is the worst ever written... as timid in life as in literature". Yet he is from the beginning not wholly without self-confidence, for he goes on to say that his feeling that "I am never quite sure that I am not a bore" is often pleasantly contradicted (A p83). He also seems to possess a capacity for self-criticism; he speaks of revising Esther Waters, then later, with a retrospective glance, articulates the theory which lies behind the themes of his earlier novels. Significantly he never mentions the possibility of a revision of Hail and Farewell itself.

Although many of the Gaelic League members of the Irish nationalist movement wanted an alliance with the Catholic Church, most of the literary movement sought to replace and revitalise religion by art and hence each was filled with a desire to write a sacred book which would redeem Ireland. Moore assimilated

the desire and in a letter of 1908 called Hail and Farewell his "messianic book", but the interpretation he gave the idea was perhaps not the same as the rest of Dublin for in the preface to the American edition of Memoirs of my Dead Life of 1907 he wrote not only of Mademoiselle de Maupin as a "sacred book" but finds even in the Flaubertian Esther Waters "a messianic aspect"(ppxviii,xx). Both of these books did have a liberating effect in his opinion but the chief importance in Moore's writings of Gautier and Flaubert lies in their independence of convention and moral restraint. This twofold significance is reflected in Moore's self-portrait in Hail and Farewell.

The first realisation that he is "God's instrument... summoned to Ireland"(A pp365,367) comes at the end of the first volume of the trilogy, but it is not until the beginning of Salve that Moore begins to seek out and define his role, here appropriately imaged as the finding of a home in Dublin. Helped by AE he seeks "something a little more personal"(S p7), an Ascendancy house of the eighteenth century rather than the anonymous large house typical of Ireland in the reign of Victoria. In his native Ireland he is more aware of the conflicting pressures of his writing, especially his self-imposed isolation, and he asks himself

again and again if I were capable of sacrificing brother,
sister, mother, fortune, friend for a work of art. One
is near madness when nothing really matters but one's work (S p20).

This early and confident expression of values is expanded a few pages later when he writes that "art... should be sought, for... its help... but we must never forget that to live as fully as possible, is, after all, our main concern"(S p30). The expression of the idea is a retrospective view of a change of ideas which in its original form lacks the carefully weighed air of its expression here; for example Moore wrote to Lady Cunard in 1907 that on his way to Ireland he had "met a man I knew, one of the partners of the firm of Agnew, and he complained that I had not

been writing, I answered, I have been living"(Cunard(1957) p55). This gaucheness of expression has been removed in Salve and the trials which he, like Siegfried, undergoes involve only other members of the Revival. In an account which seems to show a realisation that he had been "imported", Moore tells how he had been seduced by Yeats when he had come to work for the Literary Theatre, as Siegfried is brought up by Mime who like Alberich forswears love for the power of the ring. This is analogous to Yeats' and Moore's revision of Edward Martyn's play when, like "two children threading a blue-bottle" they put art and ideals before friendship.

From the naïve observer of Ave Moore is transformed not only into a helper and potential messiah within the movement but paradoxically also into the agent of the mock-heroic irony aimed at the deflation of the other messiahs. Having been excluded from the movement in the fact he is, in his own story, able to force himself into its company bringing with him the characteristics which the others had rejected and by which they are now judged. In a Socratean moment of conscious insight Moore wrote in 1905, "Very likely I am less foolish than many others; for I am wise enough to delight in my folly and take pride in it"(Cunard(1957) p44) and this in a sense sums up the mood of Hail and Farewell. But for much of the time the first clause must be supplied by the reader and the narrative itself simply shows Moore acting the part of the "absurd troubador"(Eglinton(1942) p79). Edward Martyn asks, "So your great discovery is that the Irish Renaissance is nothing but a bubble. What about your mission?", and Moore replies "... my life has been sacrificed for a bubble"(S p214). Within this concern to recreate in a light favourable to himself the Irish Revival there are also nuggets of genuine meaning in a way which corresponds to the existence of the moral searchings within the stylistic elegance of Esther Waters. Significantly

however the most important of these does not occur in arguments with Yeats or any other prominent member of the nationalist movement but in talking about English Literature with Maurice Moore, a member of his own family and a man innocent of any pretensions to be a messiah. In the argument with his brother Moore is eventually victorious; the position he comes to is that of the experimentalist and he states succinctly the principles of this doctrine, which had been his own in his early writings (see p42 above);

Why judge anybody? Analyse, state the case; that is interesting, but pass no judgements, for all judgements are superficial and transitory.

In contrast to this essentially French dogma, "the Gael", he says, "loves to follow an idea rather than a thing, and the more shadowy and elusive the idea the greater enchantment it lends". Then suddenly, Frenchman and Irishman that he is, he realises that by his own words he is condemned,

"But how little feeling there is in me!" I cried, starting up from my chair. "My brother all this while walking the streets, his heart rent, and I sitting, meditating, dissecting him, arguing with myself" (S pp275-6).

This is the essential break-through in moral perception, comparable to the moment when Siegfried drinks the blood of Fafner. The Irish moment and the analogy are alike not only in the humanism which Moore professes and Siegfried demonstrates, but also in the religious overtones of sacrifice and communion in the Wagnerian archetype which fit in with the Irish casting of the Literary Revival into quasi-religious terms. A period of self-criticism follows, distinguished from the earlier youthful naïve self-doubt, as Moore sees that in the past "it was in my mind that I found reality - Oscott and its masters were a detestable dream"(S p292). Finally forsaking the Naturalist worship of facts alone in favour of a stress upon the individual's ability to interpret, select and even create the facts in his mind

(a notion that no doubt owes something to Nietzsche), Moore now makes anew his character by repeating his life story, sure that the real training ground for his moral perceptions was the secular world of Paris rather than the Catholic Church and Oscott. He sees also that if he is to be a messiah he must paradoxically be the lamp which illuminates the idiocy of the others rather than a messiah in their idealistic sense. This process also has a Wagnerian equivalent for, as William Blissett writes, Hail and Farewell,

indicates perhaps that Moore (like Symons) has surmounted one of the first obstacles to the comprehension of Wagner and has seen that the extended passages of reminiscence in the Ring are not excrescences or longeurs but essential reinterpretations of experience (Blissett(1961) p67).

Moore is subject to the same irony as the other characters but since the quality of his insight now fully establishes him as the touchstone of value, any deflation of his character can only further increase the reader's sense of the folly of the other false prophets.

Vale then begins with a long and by no means uncritical account of how Moore has educated himself, "developing from the mere sponge to the vertebrae and upwards"(V p81). He restates his own artistic principles;

There is no returning, in literature any more than in painting; we must write and paint in the idiom of our time; however bad it may be, we shall do better in it than in any other idiom...

Art is but praise of life, and it is only through the arts that we can praise life. Life is but a rose that withers in the iron fist of dogma, and it was France that forced open the deadly fingers of the Ecclesiastic and allowed the rose to bloom again... What use had the world for art when the creed current among men was that life is a mean and miserable thing? (V ppl43-3,159).

Confident in his new role Moore can now exploit his own ironic identification with Siegfried to the full;

I walked across the greensward afraid to leave the garden, and to heighten my inspiration I looked towards the apple-tree, remembering that many had striven to draw forth the sword that Wotan had stuck into the tree about which Hunding had built his hut. Parnell, like Sigmund, had drawn it forth, but Wotan had allowed Hunding to strike him with his spear. And the allegory becoming clearer I asked myself if I were Siegfried, son of Sigmund slain by Hunding, and if it were my fate to reforge the sword that lay broken in halves in Mime's cave.

It seemed to me that the garden filled with tremendous music, out of which came a phrase glittering like a sword suddenly drawn from its sheath and raised defiantly to the sun (V p290-1).

If then Moore is not the heroic Siegfried of the Wagnerian myth yet he is the Siegfried of the Literary Revival in his own sense in that he does reforge the sword of art and life (although the former is perhaps more dominant than he might have wished).

With it he smashes Wotan's spear, which embodies the sterile principles of idealism, religious dogma, and death. He mocks the priests, Plunkett and Gill, and Yeats and Martyn because they

go on vainly sacrificing all personal achievement, humiliating themselves before Ireland as if the country were a god. A race inveterately religious I suppose it must be! And these sacrifices continue generation after generation (A p287).

Hence also Moore's sense that in Hail and Farewell he was writing "a work of liberation... a turning point in Ireland's destiny" (V pp360-1). For him the work was a success - and therefore needed no revision - because in fact was brought together with fiction; the story of Moore's part in the Revival came, that is, to coincide with his own personal aims for himself. Despite his rejection by the Nationalists then, the identification with the Wagnerian saviour stuck in his mind and in the Prelude to the 1921 edition of Memoirs of my Dead Life he saw himself as Parsifal;

one who should resist school education, be a perplexity to his father at home, indulge himself in the pleasures of opera bouffe from seventeen to twenty one, and go to Paris to forget English. A virgin mind... faring... forth into French literature while holding him forbidden to acquire any deep knowledge of the French language, providing in this way against the danger of the boy becoming a French writer (pxvii).

This kind of Wagnerian wish-fulfilment enabled Moore to mock those who had failed to appreciate his genius and make extravagant claims for himself which, because of the intricacy of his presentation, are virtually irrefutable - except, that is, by similar frontal attacks such as that later made on Moore by Yeats in Dramatis Personae and AE in The Avatars (both of which were published after his death). Given this as one of the prime aims of the work it would clearly be wrong to attempt to fit all the details of Hail and Farewell into a rigid schema of references to Wagnerian music-drama, for it seems that most of the parallels were spontaneous recognitions and associations. When Ave was published Moore said of it that "I took a certain amount of experience and tried to mould it"(Hone(1936) p300), and the result is a process at root less the product of any extensive planning and more akin to that described by Susan Mitchell, who imagined Moore watching "Mr Gill with half-closed eyes as a cat watches a saucer of cream"(Mitchell(1916) p84). In contrast to this fairly haphazard method the irony of The Brook Kerith is almost entirely worked out in Moore's imagination with even less reference to contemporary events. Partly in consequence of this, both The Brook Kerith and Héloïse and Abélard have implicit in them constructive ways of action and moral choice of which Moore approves, whereas the irony of Hail and Farewell is almost entirely destructive and the overall purpose of the book more related to personal needs in Moore, than a more impartial consideration of questions of

beliefs and ethics. Hence the major omission in Hail and Farewell in comparison with the Wagnerian parallel is a character equivalent to Brunnhilde so that at the end of the trilogy the only value seems to be that of the absurd which must devalue Moore's own moment of humanist perception. In Götterdämmerung Brunnhilde eventually overcomes the forces of the dead world by the power of her love; in contrast Moore believed that "only the celibate thrives in Ireland: the priest, the nun and the ox"(Eglinton(1942) p58). This comment, reflecting his criticism of Edward Martyn (see p121 above), was probably inspired by the sexual attitudes of the Irish revealed at the time of the fall of Parnell. Elizabeth Bowen writes of this time that the event was "more than a disintegration, there was demoralisation - the country had suffered a sexual shock". To Bishop O'Donnel of Raphoe the news of Parnell's divorce only seemed to cap "the climax of brazened horrors"(Bowen(1942) pp291-2). The sexual levity which Moore displays in his accounts of the Irish is clearly designed to be a reaction against the mood described by Miss Bowen and to shock the ultra-Puritan Irish. The rejection of Moore by the Irish because of his mockery of their values is again in keeping with the archetypal images, for, as Howarth writes, "it is the mark of the Messiah that he is rejected"(Howarth(1958) p69) - a mark again common to both Siegfried and Christ.

In the narrative Moore ironically draws himself in the manner Yeats was later to describe as that of the Fool (although Yeats himself had reason to be under no illusion as to Moore's intellectual powers); the Fool,

having no active intelligence... owns nothing of the exterior world but his mind and body. He is but a straw blown by the wind, with no mind but the wind and no act but a nameless drifting and turning... The physical world suggests to his mind pictures and events that have no relation to his needs or even his desires; his thoughts are an aimless reverie; his acts are aimless like his thoughts; and it is in this aimlessness that he finds his joy (Yeats(1962) p182).

But despite this sense of his own aimlessness and absurdity Moore, as the trilogy proceeds, speaks more of his criticisms in his own person. This technique makes those he criticises seem more absurd but it is also in keeping with his final point that the Messiah is rejected. In Vale he declares that, although in the past the dogmatic hand of the Church has banished all light, yet still "day follows night as surely as night follows day and the light that began in Italy in the fifteenth century has been widening ever since". But "the beams will reach this lonely Western valley... not in our time", for not until "a hundred years hence" will "the sun... be again overhead"(V pp159-60).

The only way open to Moore at the end of Vale then seems to be exile, seen as a sad departure from friends in Ireland in contrast to Oliver Gogarty's hopeful departure for "life" in America. But again this mock-heroic interpretation is a retrospective view of the facts. Moore's actions are more truly described in aesthetic terms;

so strong... was Moore's sense of form by this time that one suspects he left Ireland not to avoid meeting his characters in the street, as he said, but to give his tale the perfect denouement (Shumacher(1954) p209).

The subordination of life to art is in the end triumphant and Moore is overcome by the forces of dogma. The confident advocacy of humanism as the supreme value in life, hinted at in Hail and Farewell, seems to have been possible for Moore only when the subject was separated from him by time, as in The Brook Kerith or Héloïse and Abélard, or by imaginative distance, as in The Lake. For Oliver Gogarty rather resembles the idealised Ulick Dean of the Evelyn Innes stories than the reality of the rural Ireland from which Moore fled and from which, intent always upon preserving his artistic purity and isolation, he forever remained aloof.

8. Humanistic Irony: Values

However much the Nationalists may have resented Moore there is no doubt that, during the years he lived in Dublin, he was a leading member of Dublin society. Susan Mitchell said of him;

he had champagne shoulders and a somewhat thick, ungainly figure, but he moved about a room with a grace which is not of Dublin drawing-rooms. Afterwards, seeing George Moore in the street, I found he was the only man in Dublin who walked fashionably. The strange word suits him; perhaps he was the last man of fashion in these islands. He wore an opera hat. Nobody in Dublin wears an opera hat, and, when Moore put it like a crown upon his yellow head or crushed it fashionably under his arm, it acted upon Dublin like an incantation.

I remember my own instantaneous homage (Mitchell(1916) ppl3-14).

This prominence, together with his remoulding of failure into success in Hail and Farewell led Moore, after his disillusion with Ireland - in which mood he described the country as "a sort of modern Tibet"(Gerber(1968) p247) - to a further shift of mood. In 1921, ten years after his departure from Ireland, he wrote of his arrival there in 1899 as "the return of a man to his native land, to its people, to memories hidden for years, forgotten but which rose suddenly out of the darkness, like waters out of the earth when a spring is tapped"(TL(1921) pvii). For the third time in his life Moore rewrote history and lived in the new world he had created; ignoring the true reality of his involvement in the Irish Revival as he had ignored the fact of his position as an amiable hanger-on of the French painters, and as he had ignored the debt Esther Waters owed to the bourgeois values of previous English fiction. Again his notion that "the only end of art is to help us to live"(see p67 above) seems relevant since it is the interpretative licence and detachment of Moore which allow the self-confidence and hence the optimism, however qualified, of the later works.

Hail and Farewell shows Moore using a fictional schema -

Wagnerian music-drama - to criticise individuals - the members of the Irish Revival. In his other two major prose-narratives this process is reversed so that, for example, in The Brook Kerith Moore considers the conventionally accepted religious tradition and criticises it by means of individual human characters. The nearest one can find to this kind of individual who is the touchstone of values in Hail and Farewell is the persona Moore created for himself, but in the end the author Moore reduces Moore as a character to an absurdity foreign to the world of The Brook Kerith. Instead of damning all, as in Hail and Farewell, Moore then comes in these later writings to share the opinion of an earlier and more famous Irish writer, Swift, who hated and detested "that animal called man, although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so forth".

Yet despite this shift to the use of individual human beings as the frame of reference instead of a logically worked out mock-heroic schema The Brook Kerith is Moore's most intellectualist work. I use the word "intellectualist" here, as I use the word "humanistic" elsewhere, in token of the fact that I think Moore was never a thorough going intellectual or humanist, but only - with the detachment of the aesthete - tended towards these positions. Hence, neither in life nor in the story is the moment of humanistic insight which I have described in Hail and Farewell sustained. The intellectualist quality of The Brook Kerith on the other hand can be shown by describing the relation of the narrative to the Biblical story upon which it is ostensibly based. The first seventeen chapters, almost half the book, are devoted to the story of Joseph of Arimathea. Moore is at pains to show Joseph in the midst of carefully elaborated circumstantial detail, and the recognition that this Joseph is Joseph of Arimathea seems peripheral to the narrative serving only to emphasise his reality as a character by association with the conventionally true Bible story. The emphasis

begins then to shift to the story of Jesus and the unfolding sequence of the Biblical story, leading inexorably to Calvary, then adds to the reader's feeling of the inevitability of Moore's story of Jesus and Joseph. However, when he actually comes to the Crucifixion Moore changes tack, using nineteenth century Biblical criticism to undercut the conventional Bible story and thus separating the Biblical story from his own narrative. The focusing of the story of the Crucifixion upon Joseph, whose identity has been established by association with the Bible, lends credibility to the whole, but paradoxically this in turn serves to devalue the actions of Jesus as a figure from the Bible and Moore's gospel now begins openly to contradict that of the Apostles, preferring rather to follow the scientific conjecture that Jesus did not die on the cross. But if Jesus thus loses his conventional attributes of grandeur, by association he more and more assumes the human characteristics which Moore has been at pains to attribute to Joseph in the earlier part of the story. As such they both become living proof of the error and absurdity of the behaviour of the disciples after the Crucifixion, and as he comes to the centre of the stage Jesus himself becomes the living contradiction of his earlier teachings. Basing his structure then upon what come to seem not only normal human realities but also true values, Moore is able to prove his criticisms of the religious ideas of the Bible and to astonish the jury by calling upon Jesus as his chief witness.

Clearly within such a shifting framework none of the main characters of The Brook Kerith, Joseph, Jesus, or Paul, can themselves be exempt from irony, but together they embody the values by which the other characters and the religious tradition is to be found wanting. The four most prominent characteristics in these characters are a perceptive naïveté, wisdom, a responsiveness to natural beauty, and a willingness to search for their personal

true role in life; Joseph is particularly associated with naïveté, Jesus with wisdom, and both of them with an ability to respond to nature, Paul on the other hand is distinguished by the degree of his commitment to his chosen role. In the opening chapters of the story Joseph's naïveté and his responsiveness to nature - qualities associated with Moore himself in Hail and Farewell - are seen in contrast to the weight of the Jewish religious tradition embodied in Azariah. At first the grace with which Azariah is introduced suggests that here might be a detached norm with which the reader might identify;

Rachel laid her finger on her lips; the door opened and Azariah advanced into the room with a long grave Jewish stride, apologising as he came for his sudden intrusion into their midst, and mentioning the heavy rain in a graceful phrase (BK(1916) pl3).

Setting out on the journey to Arimathea Azariah is sober and judicious, Joseph exuberant, proud, and wasteful of energy (for example in his behaviour to the messenger, pl8), and at this point the tutor's behaviour seems the most prudent. But after they have arrived at Arimathea Joseph's actions become more exciting and rewarding. When Joseph and Azariah, setting out to visit the sacred fountains, end by wandering carelessly on the hills and in the woods around the city Azariah can only point out afterwards that they have sinned because "it was arranged that we should spend the day reading the Scriptures, and we've spent it talking to shepherds"(p30). But the obvious symbolic significance of the shepherd, together with the idyllic charm and vigour of the descriptions of Joseph during the wanderings, can only convert this to irony, and Azariah's response to this natural beauty accordingly contains a clear commentary upon his inadequacies. Joseph is intent on feeling "a remote and mysterious life" which was "certainly breathing about him, and he regretted that he was without a sense to apprehend this life"(p26). Seeing this and

other things Azariah comments that his pupil,

desires so many things that he knows not what he desires, only that he desires. Whereas I can but remember that once I was as he is to-day. So the spring is sad for the young as well as the old (p24).

But he fails to note that Joseph's sadness is of frustration because he cannot yet possess the riches he perceives, whereas Azariah can only feel loss - in short, Joseph's consciousness is expanding, whilst that of Azariah is contracting.

In other respects Joseph's naïveté is more the subject of equivocation, as when what one might better term his innocence or ignorance of sexual matters allows him to pass by the temptations which beset him on his way to his lessons with Azariah, and later to escape from the company of the cockers at Tiberias. As the story progresses the equivocation put upon the account of Joseph's capacity for friendship also grows more obvious. He becomes capable of cutting across the artificial boundaries of race which divide the other characters; leaving Jerusalem, Pilate bids farewell to him, "we have been friends, such friends as may rarely consist with Roman and Hebrew, he said, and the words stirred up a great grief in Joseph's heart"(p283). But this tie has sprung up from his trading, and in his relations with his father and in his denial of relations with women Joseph seems less able to establish any intimate human or sexual relations.

The less qualified growth in his wisdom and humanity, in contrast to this innocence, comes about through his relations with Jesus after the Crucifixion. The human quality is to the fore when he is about to carry Jesus from the tomb; he thinks,

by closing up the sepulchre and leaving Jesus to die in it he would be serving him better than by carrying him to his house and bringing him back to life. To what life was he bringing him? (p240).

The intellectual advance in his character, the realisation that "before Jesus passes out of my keeping I shall have learnt to

speaking even as he did in double meanings"(pp254-5), is also apparent at this time as he realises that,

he had done well to refrain from closing the sepulchre with the stone, for the story of the resurrection would rise out of the empty tomb, and though there were many among the Jews who would not believe the story, few would have the courage to enquire into the truth of a miracle (p252).

Central to Moore's thought in The Brook Kerith is the extreme re-orientation of mind necessary for Jesus after his Crucifixion. In 1914 Moore described Jesus before the Crucifixion as "one of the most terrifying fanatics that ever lived" continuing however,

How splendid his repentance, if I could only write it, not only for saying that he was God but for all his blasphemy against life, human duty and human love (Eglinton(1942) pp23-4).

It is, I think, one of Moore's conclusions that the re-orientation was too radical to be possible and that Jesus never fully achieves a wholeness of mind after the Crucifixion. Hence it is not surprising that the wisdom he shows after his return to the Essenes is primarily to be found in his instinctive response to nature rather than in his thoughts. Heroically attempting to confront his past Jesus is, like Esther Waters and Evelyn Innes and with a similar degree of equivocation, cast in the role of the Superman. His silent dissociation from the trivialities of the Essenes parallels Evelyn Innes' recoil from her fellow nuns, and Moore's descriptions of Jesus in the desert correspond to the rather less meaningful picture of Evelyn Innes' pantheistic dream (see p104 above). The pastoral dream which is present in all Moore's work seems to have gained strength after his return to Ireland when it ceases to be mere picture painting and becomes allied to the notion of instinct as the supreme value; in Avowals(1919) Moore wrote, "our instincts are deeper than our reason, and it is pleasant to remember that art rises out of our primal nature, and that the art that never seems trivial is instinctive"(p16). Moore's approval of this primitivist notion in The Brook Kerith is shown by the

way Jesus' convalescence in Joseph's garden is overlaid with echoes of the Paradise Garden in token of the return of Jesus from the false road of dogma to a truer way of life. Prepared within the safety of the garden to respond instinctively to both the beauty and cruelty of nature (as when he defends the puppies against the cat), Jesus then passes later unafraid and unharmed through the desert as a shepherd. At the moment when Moore is praising Jesus' instinctive goodness it seems appropriate that he should perhaps unconsciously make the intellectual irony which is usually predominant give way to mythical overtones, for Jesus' life in the garden is as much a process of purification, such as Tamino undergoes in Die Zauberflöte, as of intellectual recognition. The conventional analogy of Jesus and Adam which implies that the Crucifixion is not a matter of death but a felix culpa can only reinforce the reader's sense of Jesus as a touchstone of truth and reality at this point. Yet in the end the chapters set in the garden again seem to contain an element of equivocation, for in the garden Joseph and Jesus recognise each other as fellow human beings who must love each other. Joseph does die for Jesus yet at the end of the story Jesus turns away from all human society.

After his escape from the Crucifixion Jesus' words are, as I shall show in more detail in the following chapters, still subject to irony, but he does have a key perception of what his life has been;

sin it is for a man to desire that which God has not given, and I should have remained an Essene shepherd following my flocks in the hills, whereas John did well to come out of his desert and preach that the end of the world was approaching and that men must repent, for God willed him to preach these things. His teaching was true when he was the teacher, but when I became his disciple his teaching became false; it turned me from my natural self and into such great harshness of mind that in Nazareth when my mother came with my brothers and sisters to the synagogue I said, woman, I have no need of thee, and when Joseph of Arimathea returned to me after a long attendance by his father's bedside... I told him that he must learn to hate his father and his mother if he would become worthy to follow me (p434).

Parallel to this denial of his personal actions is his abrogation of his earlier religious ideas;

It may be that the priests will some day come into the knowledge that all things are equal in God's sight, and that he is not to be won by sacrifices, observances or prayers, that he has no need of these things, not even of our love, or it may be that they will remain priests. But though God desires neither sacrifices, observances, nor even love, it cannot be that we are wholly divorced from God. It may be that we are united to him by the daily tasks which he has set us to perform (p343).

The placing of this stress on practical actions in the narrative seems to require the reader to take it absolutely sincerely, especially since it is a feature of the lives of the three leading characters; Jesus teaches here what Joseph in his trading seems to live out, and "daily tasks" figure largely in Paul's evangelical mission,

we set up our looms together in one house and sold the cloths as we weaved them, getting our living thereby and never costing the faithful anything, which was just pride, and mine always, for I have travelled the world over gaining a living with my own hands, never taking money from anybody... thinking it better to be under no obligation, for such destroys independence (p405).

Since it requires a more total response to human life than either the response to natural beauty or the intellectual search for truth by themselves, it is appropriate that it should be this self-sufficient evangelical mission which is, at the end of the story, set against the passive Buddhism of Jesus.

In The Brook Kerith characters and opinions that are attacked tend to be mere cardboard figures criticised by richly developed central characters. However in Héloïse and Abélard the number of these minor characters, who are important for the role they play in life rather than their human complexity, is reduced in a way perhaps parallel to The Lake of 1921 where the story is confined almost entirely within the soul of Father Gogarty. Taken together these two facts seem once again to suggest the growing isolation

of Moore and his withdrawal from the wider society of which he had written in Hail and Farewell. But if the kind of satire which in The Brook Kerith is directed at the Biblical story and the Essene community is in Héloïse and Abélard reduced, it remains concentrated upon those in religious orders - the particular bête noir which obsessed Moore all his life. All of the values I have described hitherto are present in Héloïse and Abélard. The naïve vision of Joseph is paralleled by the innocent vision of Héloïse in opening chapters that, in form at least, resemble those of The Brook Kerith; that is, they use an innocent childish perception to explore the behaviour and values of the adults. The active life as superior to the contemplative is stressed, as for example when Moore shows Abélard and Héloïse making several momentous journeys whilst Canon Fulbert stays firmly rooted in one place. (This equating of physical with mental and moral activity also appears in Hail and Farewell when Moore couches his developing protestantism in terms of searching for a house, see p125 above.) Abélard's teaching is constantly stressed as an active process also; Héloïse sees it as the proclamation that "new worlds shall be discovered in the age to come, the imprisoning ocean shall be thrown open till there shall be no land alone, no Ultima Thule"(HA(1925) p102). Finally her ambition for him is that he should be an active and powerful teacher rather than a monk immured in a monastery.

But in one respect there is a shift in emphasis from The Brook Kerith in Héloïse and Abélard. Given the intellectual complexity of Moore's treatment of the Bible story it is obvious that this was only possible because the reader could be counted upon to be aware of the details of the original story, and thus to be able to pick up the references which exalt or deflate characters. In contrast, although Moore was proud of his achievement in dramatising in incidents the realist-nominalist controversy which revolves around

Abélard, he could not count on his public being conversant with the details of this story. Abélard and Héloïse were generally known almost entirely only as great lovers, and the facts of Abélard's life as a theologian were buried under an accumulated mass of largely sentimental legend. The Abélard Moore wished to describe was not this figure but rather was more like the Paul whom he described as a man of "energy, courage, and attachment to an idea"(TA(1911) p21). The difference was that Paul was a Jew and a Roman citizen whereas Abélard, born over a thousand years later, was a Frenchman and a precursor of the Renaissance. There is then again an element of self-identification between author and character, for Moore's pronouncement in Hail and Farewell that "not in our time" but in "a hundred years hence the sun will again be overhead"(see p132 above) puts him exactly in the same relationship to the future Irish Renaissance as Abélard was to the Italian one of the fifteenth century. Although Abélard is a cleric and theologian the Renaissance he foreshadows is a "pagan movement"(SB(1914) p87), and hence the importance Moore attaches to Abélard as a love-poet, and also the stress on emotion and individual mood in this narrative as opposed to questions of belief and truth. Moore probably owed this notion of Abélard to Pater. In the opening pages of The Renaissance he could have found the name of Abélard - "the great clerk and the great lover" - connected with "earthly passion", "the liberty of the heart", and "the free play of human intelligence". To Pater Abélard,

prefigures the character of the Renaissance, that movement in which, in various ways, the human mind wins for itself a new kingdom of feeling and sensation and thought, not opposed to, but only beyond and independent of, the spiritual system then actually realised (Pater(1888) pp4,7).

In the austere world of The Brook Kerith Moore does not dwell on the emotional ties between the characters. The relationship of Dan and Joseph and the affection of Joseph and Jesus cannot

divert attention from the predominantly intellectual nature of the narrative. In contrast the passion and intensity of Abélard and Héloïse lift them above the other characters. At times, as on the journey from Paris to Orleans, the grandeur of their ecstasy whirls them out from the mediaeval world of twelfth century France into eternity in a way which proves the lovers to be prophets of the Renaissance;

I would cast the learned girl out of myself and I would cast the philosopher out of thee, leaving naught but the woman and the man for each to love the other through eternity. We meet in this vale at night for love, but methinks we must have met long, long ago in the ages back, perhaps before the beginning of time. This moment is but a moment in a love story without beginning and without end. It may seem that I am talking to you only as the mad talk. But I am not talking, Abélard, I am thinking; I am not thinking, Abélard, I am dreaming; I am not dreaming, Abélard, I am feeling; and in this moment I am consonant with the tree above me and the stars above the tree; I am amid the roots of the hills. It may be, Abélard, that I am a little mad at this moment, but we are all too sane, and whosoever has not passed from sanity to insanity has perhaps never tasted the final essence, the residuum of things. I would, too, that thou wert a little mad here in this vale, the dark trees above us, the stars shining through the tree-tops... We are not divided, Héloïse; we shall never be divided. We have existed always, united in the end as we were in the beginning, and it cannot be said that we shall be parted come what may (ppl76-7).

Critics of the nineteenth century saw the fifteenth century Italian Renaissance as a movement in art which could express their own protest against the values of contemporary society. The stress upon humanity, freedom from conventional values, and romantic action which they found in the movement gave further sanction to their desire for an art pursued for its own sake amidst the alien and mechanical bourgeois world. The Renaissance they dreamed of was an aristocratic, individualist equivalent of the collectivist utopia described by William Morris in News from Nowhere. Morris wrote of "what used to be called art, but which has no name amongst

us now, because it has become a necessary part of the labour of every man who produces"; in this utopian world men "no longer driven desperately to painful and terrible overwork" wanted only "to do the best they could with the work in hand - to make it excellent of its kind". The point is that, according to Morris, this desire springs up "spontaneously... from a kind of instinct among people"(Morris(1970) p114). In contrast Moore finds this kind of instinctive quality to be inevitably the property of an élite group of heroes - a notion which, as will be clear from the previous chapter, was predominant among the leaders of the Irish literary movement. In this context it is important to recognise that Moore saw Abélard as a precursor of the Renaissance and hence more akin to a late nineteenth century artist who "in periods of decadence like the present... must be eccentric, stand aloof and disdainfully". Even if Moore had wished to see him as a figure of the true Renaissance and hence as living in one of "the great periods" when the artist was "concentric" and "took strength from his environment"(Cunard(1956) p137), his own ultimate pessimism would have prevented such a portrayal. In Héloïse and Abélard therefore the ability to respond to music and poetry shown by Abélard and the gleemen is not only good but also separates them off from the vast body of bourgeois society, and the self-imposed barrenness of the Church. Thus, for example, in Paris the shop-keepers are set against the students, who seem like so many gay amalgams of Casanova and Benvenuto Cellini, and Abélard is a master of the lute whilst Fulbert, trying to string the instrument, succeeds only in almost breaking its fragile body. The fact that Fulbert must be drunk before he even attempts this much suggests that the barrenness is for him a self-imposed restraint, whilst the rapt attendance of the nuns at Argenteuil to the Comte de Rodeboeuf suggests that this austerity can only in its turn produce naïveté and ignorance. Again the fact that Abélard is the author of

one of these songs makes him seem the quintessential representative of the forthcoming Renaissance.

The character of Madelon is also designed to reveal the inadequacy of the barren intellectualism of the Church. She symbolises, like the shepherds in The Brook Kerith, the need to attend to immediate mundane reality. Her presence at various points in the story, for example on the journey to Orleans, emphasises the possibility of characters forming a family unit similar to that of Alain and Denise in Brittany which contrasts with the unreal dreams of Courtly Love. But Moore is never in doubt as to the ultimate worth of this kind of world. Although the existence of value in such a world is symbolised in the character of Astrolabe, and despite the fact that it is his disappearance which awakens a feeling of her own deprivation in Héloïse, the world of Madelon, Alain, and Denise falls short as a means of judging Héloïse and Abélard in the end because its materialism lacks the element of glorious freedom which is to be found in the realism and humanism of the Renaissance. Once again perhaps the detachment of old age is capable of seeing the faults in youthful enthusiasms, for the world of Alain and Denise is essentially that of Alice Barton in Kensington and Esther Waters in Soho.

The values of the two long prose-narratives can be found in their most concise form, untrammelled by large schemes of irony and undisturbed by equivocation, in The Lake, published first in 1905 when Moore was beginning Hail and Farewell, and revised in 1921, the year of the first publication of Héloïse and Abélard. Moore wrote in 1905 of The Lake that "the story is no more than a sun myth. The earth is frozen in dogma and the spring comes and warms it to life"(Hone(1936) p262). The later stories, despite their irony, all elaborate this basic theme for they are all variations on the coming of a new life, a renaissance in a world shrouded by dogma. The narratives and The Lake are linked however in their

avoidance of any reference to the contingent world outside the carefully structured world of fiction, for there were after 1903 no new battles against dogma for Moore. Instead, secure in Ebury Street, he refought and improved the style of the old ones against Irish ignorance and the Church. His reaction to the Boer War had been one of outrage, but a reader of The Brook Kerith would find nothing to even suggest that it was published during the Great War in 1916, the crucial year of the Battle of the Somme. In Moore's letters there is no passion but only the occasional cynically flippant epigram such as the following written on the 22nd September 1917; "Our Kaiser which art in Germany give us this day our daily raid"(Eglinton(1942) p38). It seems that whilst freely attacking sterility of thought in his fiction Moore himself began to take on something of the character of Harding and Lord Dungory in A Drama in Muslin.

In writing of Biblical Palestine and mediaeval France Moore might seem to be retreating entirely into word-painting and historical romance, but in fact he was simply reworking in new and complex forms the ideas which had crystallised in his mind during his years in Ireland. In describing Hail and Farewell I have shown how the members of the Irish Literary Theatre saw themselves in a situation akin to that of the Jews at the time of the birth of Christ, and in a reverse way Moore described Jesus as a superman who "out-Nietzsched Nietzsche". Although Moore liked to say that "it was not till I had ridden through the hills and spent a night with the monks at Kerith that the story began to unfold"(BK(1921) px), in The Brook Kerith the character of Joseph is the main addition to the story which seems to have gripped his attention, and this character is firmly rooted in the nineteenth century Ireland of Moore's childhood. Moreover it is remarkably similar to that of Oliver Gogarty. The young man driven on by a "certain spirit of adventure, a dislike of the commonplace,

of the prosaic", searching for "opportunities of realising himself"(TL(1905) p278), is a description which could as easily apply to Joseph as to Father Gogarty (or indeed Moore himself as a young man), and the notion of expansion as a good in itself is equally relevant to these characters. Joseph is filled with a "marvellous longing... to see the world", but he is later overtaken by the same depression as seizes Father Gogarty,

he was always painfully conscious that nothing mattered: that the great void would never be filled up again: and that time could not restore to him a single desire or hope. Nothing matters, he often said to himself, as he sat drawing patterns in the gravel with his stick (BK(1916) pp98-9).

However in both cases these moments of depression are outweighed by their resilience and willingness to persist in the search for a meaning in life, and this gives their characters an overall heroic cast. The ambition in Father Gogarty and Joseph is in each case set against a threefold background of the family, religion, and what may be called trade. Gogarty is a rebel against what he sees as the restricted world of his family and their shop, preferring to seek scope for his ambition in the Church. Joseph rebels against his father's wishes by going to Jerusalem and Alexandria, becoming a scribe disputing the letter of the law rather than following his father. But both see the error of their ways and in the end turn like Jesus to the "daily tasks" of non-religious life; Gogarty in going to some kind of work in America, Joseph by establishing the trading links between Jerusalem and Jericho.

In The Lake the optimistic values of these stories are crystallised in the person of Rose Leicester (later Nora Glynn), and in the response she inspires in Gogarty. The attraction of the "happy original mind"(TL(1921) p29) of Rose Leicester and the freshness of her perception, coupled with the more physical attraction which Father Gogarty comes to feel towards her, all parallel aspects of the development of Joseph, Jesus, Héloïse,

and Abélard. And in all of these characters this blend of a sense of freedom and a capacity to love another human being is linked to a feeling of oneness with the beauty of nature; for example Gogarty remembers,

that the great fir had grown out of a single seed, it seemed to him not at all wonderful that people had once worshipped trees, so mysterious is their life, and so remote from ours. He stood a long time looking up, hardly able to resist the temptation to climb the tree - not to rob the nest like a boy, but to admire the two gray eggs which he would find lying on some bare twigs (TL(1905) p2).

The overall source for this revitalisation of Moore's originally rather bourgeois pastoral dream is again to be found in his years in Ireland and the influence of the people he met there. As Yeats influenced his portraits of the Superman so it was AE who introduced him to the mystic quality of nature. In The Avatars AE himself described a moment very much in the same mood as much of The Lake; he tells how his character,

rowed out leisurely into the haze of sunny mist which lay on the lake, half-rowing, half-drifting, to a wooded island from which great branches stretched far out, sheltering lustrous shallows and inlets. It was a place in which he had often sought solitude, and the mood of the Earth became life for him as he rested there (AE(1933) pp43-4).

In the 1921 revision of The Lake the original presence of Rose Leicester was cut down, and her letters assimilated into those of Gogarty so as to keep the "drama... within the priest's soul"(TL(1921) pviii). Graham Owens has suggested one extraordinary reason for the revision of the letters; it may, he says,

be due to the fact that her letters were not written by Moore but by his friend, Mrs (Nia) Crawford. A letter from Moore to Mrs Crawford... establishes beyond doubt that she originally wrote Rose's letters. Whether Moore altered them, "put style on them", or even used them at all, it is impossible to say with certainty, though, from the remarks in this letter it seems that he did (Owens(1966) p399).

If this is so, and Moore did use the letters, it would be typical

of his method of drawing upon his friends - AE "says in a letter to Yeats that there is about a page of an essay of his in Moore's Evelyn Innes"(Taylor(1954) p132) - and of his uncritical enthusiastic manner. Dr Owens compares the actual Rose Leicester of the 1905 text with Moore's notion of her as "the spring" and finds only a "brittle, garrulous young flirt, quite unworthy of the priest's love". He adds that it is "doubtful... if Moore realised in 1905 how naïve he had made Rose"(pp399,400). Whether Mrs Crawford did write the letters or not, it is impossible to disagree with Dr Owens assessment of Rose Leicester (who herself admits that she "could go on chattering page after page", 1905,p233) and Nora Glynn, and with his contention that despite her reduced presence in the story the impact of Nora Glynn as an independent mature human being is infinitely greater than that of Rose Leicester. And this element is the final residue of value in these stories, for a thinness of character, indicating a shallowness and superficiality of thought and feeling, is the final impression of the minor characters who are criticised by the ironic schemes and values.

Finally it is entirely in keeping with the close relation of Moore's fictional characters and his own ambitions that he should describe himself in much the same way as he describes those of his characters who he creates as embodiments of praiseworthy values. He wrote to John Eglinton, apropos of The Brook Kerith, that "my first business was to represent a human being, a unity, and not a dispenser of wisdom"(1942, p34), a statement which suggests many of the implications of his characters' preoccupations - that the human being is the supreme value, that man and the world are naturally a unity, and that conventional wisdom is to be abandoned and ignored. Similarly he summed up "the first business of the writer" as "to find a human instinct"(Av(1919) p184). In more particular terms Moore felt within himself the Buddhism he assigns to Jesus and which

is for much of The Brook Kerith equated with right seeing. Again, seeing himself akin to Nora Glynn, he described himself as "a sapling under the parent tree"(MDL(1921) pxvi), and his inspiration during the composition of The Brook Kerith as like a stream, "flowing, here a trickle, there a pool, with suddenly a cascade from the face of the high rock"(ASM(1922) p538). Having in Hail and Farewell established the authority of his own world, in the following years he fitted it out with a value structure which, however much it had in common with the humanitarian and natural values of the outside world, referred only to the obsessive life of the private domain from the protection of which Moore seldom ventured.

9. Humanistic Irony: The Ironic Schemes

In the preface to the 1921 edition of The Brook Kerith Moore, searching for the source of the narrative, tells how the story had been suggested by John Eglinton whilst he and Moore talked in the National Library in Dublin;

he must have related one of the many versions of Jesus' possible escape from death on the cross, for the idea, asleep in my mind for more than half a century, awoke, and interrupting his account of the French doctor's diagnosis, I cried: What a wonderful subject - Jesus hanging on the cross in the belief that his father would send down angels to rescue him, and awaking in Joseph of Arimathea's house; afterwards returning to the Essenes and to his flock, where he would remain till Paul on one of his journeys... (BK(1921) px).

But this seems a later editing of events, for Moore omits to mention that one of the reasons for the hasty publication in 1911 of the scenario of The Apostle, with its strange mixture of summary and dialogue, was that Frank Harris, his "old friend... was on the trail of the same subject - a post-Crucifixion meeting between Jesus and St Paul"(Hone(1936) p293). Harris published his version, "The Miracle of the Stigmata", in the Unpath'd Waters collection of 1913, and, as in The Apostle, he has Jesus of Nazareth refuting the Jesus of Paul's Gospel. Later he was to plan a Gospel of St Thomas as an anti-mystical affirmation of the truth of the Gospel story, and to strongly criticise The Brook Kerith because he thought it deliberately degraded Jesus. But it was not just Harris and Moore who were interested in this story, for in The Trembling of the Veil Yeats describes how Oscar Wilde had once told him;

"I have been inventing a Christian heresy", and he told a detailed story, in the style of some early father, of how Christ recovered after the Crucifixion, and escaping from the tomb, lived on for many years, the one man upon earth who knew the falsehood of Christianity. Once St Paul visited his town and he alone in the carpenters' quarters did not go to hear him preach. The other carpenters noticed that henceforth... he kept his hands covered (Yeats(1922) pp25-6).

This meeting between Jesus and Paul seems to have been the crystallising incident for Moore. He was perhaps attracted by the potential of a situation which would allow Jesus, the founder of Christianity, to say to Paul, the founder of Western religious orthodoxy, "Jesus of Nazareth has been raised from the dead to withstand thee". By ending with a new death of Jesus such a drama might fulfil Moore's obsessive aim by shocking the priests and the Church even more;

Paul... blasphemy! Jesus of Nazareth, the great mediator between God and man, sitteth at the right hand of his father, and it is in his name that I strike thee down. (Jesus falls...) It is well that he died, though the blow was not of my motion, but came from God even as the lightning... If that man has spoken a lie he is worthy of death, and Christianity is saved by his dying; but if he spake the truth?... The truth is in the hands of God, and I go to Rome to meet my death, and through death to meet my Christ, my gain, the fruit of all my labour. (Paul hurries away. The Prior returns with some monks, and finding Jesus dead attributes his death to some sudden mental shock, without a thought of Paul; for who could strike one so truly good as Jesus of Nazareth?...) (TA(1911) pp99-100).

Clearly in 1911 Moore was seizing upon a strong situation with the prime intention of shocking the philistines, but after this first essay in print Moore's attitude changed. The cause of this seems twofold; firstly the publication of the story in The Apostle may have taken the edge off his urge to rush into print, and secondly the aesthete in Moore had been transformed from a callow youth into a craftsman striving for perfection. In 1911 he confessed that to "press all the subtleties with which the subject" of The Apostle "is replete into dialogue seems a little beyond my talent"(Eglinton(1942) pl8), nevertheless in the following years Moore set himself to tease out the complexities and embody them in the new and sophisticated kind of work of art which would combine dialogue, narrative, and description into a homogeneous unity.

Moore's idea of the character of Jesus changed substantially

during the composition of The Brook Kerith but his attitude to the minor characters in the Biblical story - those whom he saw simply as representatives of certain types and ideologies rather than as complex human beings - remained from first to last critical. Indeed the last major addition to the narrative, made only a few months before it was published, was the quarrel among the Essenes about whether they should take wives or not (Owens(1966) p26). This straight-forward attack has its origins in Moore's taking over the opinions of Edouard Dujardin, to whom he wrote;

after a pretty close study of the Gospels I have come over to your belief that Jesus never existed on this earth. I am by no means sure that I shall get anywhere with him. Stripped of his miracles, the Lord is a sorry wight (Dujardin(1929) p104).

In The Brook Kerith the kind of satire this attitude prompts is most prominent in the descriptions of the disciples after the Crucifixion. Their stupidity seems greater at this time than earlier because Joseph, who is here the focus of the narrative for the reader, has been elevated to knowledge by the Crucifixion, and can now not only see something of the truth which lies behind the events, but also manipulate the old mythical world of miracles. The reader cannot help sharing the "faint smile" which gathers on Joseph's lips as he watches the disciples scurrying too and fro (p252) From this point on Moore's attacks on the disciples become less ambiguous as he describes James and Peter in their teaching denying the words of Jesus. Moore accepts in one form or another much of the Bible story (for example, Paul's narrative of his actions in Chapters Thirty-Four to Thirty-Six follows the New Testament quite closely), but his only reference to the descent of the Holy Ghost to the disciples and the gift of tongues is one of categorical denial. He mentions the incident, but only to assert that the result was "a dispute about the imposition of hands"(p258), and later has Paul say that Peter is living at Antioch "though why

he should choose to live there has always seemed strange to me, for he does not speak Greek"(p454).

In the description of the Crucifixion Moore follows - though not in any systematic way - the accepted ideas of the nineteenth century Higher Criticism. Strauss in his Life of Jesus wrote that, the short time that Jesus hung on the cross, together with the otherwise ascertained tardiness of death by crucifixion, and the uncertain nature and effects of the wound from the spear, appeared to render the reality of the death doubtful (Strauss(1892) p737).

Moreover the evidence "of individuals whose life has lasted for several days on the cross, and who have only at length expired from hunger and similar causes" suggested the

possibility that what appealed to the Evangelist, the subvention of death itself, was only a swoon produced by the stoppage of the circulation, and that the wound with the spear in the side first consummated the death of Jesus (pp697-8).

On this question Strauss also quoted St Mark, "And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead"(v,44). He commented that "this suggests the idea" that Mark

lent to Pilate an astonishment which he must have heard expressed by many of his cotemporaries concerning the rapidity with which the death of Jesus had ensued; and when he proceeds to state that the procurator obtained from the centurion certain information that Jesus had been some time dead... it appears as if he wished, in silencing the doubt of Pilate, to silence that of his cotemporaries also (p700).

Furthermore Strauss shows that the usual method of hastening the death of a criminal who had been crucified was to break his legs. Hence the spear-thrust in Jesus' side seemed to him to have been brought in at least in part to make the Gospel story fulfil the prophecies of the Old Testament. Moore seems to base his account of the Crucifixion on these ideas to such an extent that one might conjecture that he read Strauss' book when he was working on The Brook Kerith. This seems particularly likely since the Life of Jesus, which had appeared in George Eliot's translation in 1846, appeared in new editions in 1892 and 1898. Moore reinterprets

the spear-thrust as an invention by the centurion to make his story more convincing to Pilate and his bribe from Joseph larger - a materialist elaboration of Strauss' ideas. It seems equally likely that Moore derived his account of Jesus' re-awakening from another suggestion of Strauss, who thought that the "revivification" in the tomb was susceptible to the "natural explanation" that a "vital force... remained in his still young and vigorous body, even after the cessation of consciousness" and that the "partly oleaginous substances applied to the body" in the tomb must have aided "in promoting the healing of his wounds, and united with the air in the cave, impregnated with the perfumes of the spices, in reawakening feeling and consciousness in Jesus"(p738).

However there is little in the works of the nineteenth century scholars about the character of Joseph of Arimathea. The basic details of his being a secret disciple who was a friend of Nicodemus, and of his being a friend of Pilate as well as Jesus, are drawn from what Moore regarded as late Apocryphal books of the New Testament and the generally non-Biblical nature of the resultant figure tends to render Moore's reinterpretation of the Crucifixion not at all surprising to the reader. More arresting than this positivist reconstruction of the events of the Crucifixion are two later references to the Bible story. Jesus, almost recovered from his wounds and able to think of the past for the first time, tells Joseph that he was carried to the garden "by an angel... for I felt the feathers of his wings brush across my face" (BK(1916) p272). The words stress the confusion of the real and subjective interpretations of the story, for the "feathers" were merely the folds of Joseph's garments; but they also stress the vast re-orientation of mind which Jesus must make to break out of the false image of himself in which he has lived, for they show him still bound within the myth of the Messiah. Moreover the words also exalt Joseph, for an angel is an agent of God's will,

a being higher than man, and during the Crucifixion Joseph has indeed moved away from the restricted imaginations of the disciples towards a more profound intellectual understanding and sympathy. Hence, whereas in the account of the Crucifixion itself Moore simply attacks the Bible through the reinterpretation of the events, at this point in a more sophisticated way he manages at once to criticise the Bible story and at the same time to share in some of its judgements.

The Gospel narrative is echoed again when Moore has Jesus come across the bandits crucified by Festus. By certain details the similarity of the fate of these men to that of Jesus is emphasised, for example in the thrusting of the lance into the side, the calling for wine, and most remarkable of all, the robber's cry "Yon shepherd is no better than I. Why am I on the cross and not he?"(p340). Yet Jesus can only sit,

wondering how it was he could think so quietly of things that he had put out of his mind instinctively, till he seemed to himself to be a man detached as much from hope as regret (p342).

His thoughts at this time that it is "through... strict rule that I managed to live through the years behind me" together with his obvious feelings of panic indicate that he has not yet become able to face his past self. Once again a trivial and scarcely noticeable point turns out, on inspection, to be more complex, for in using the detail of the lance-thrust in the side as a connecting link with the Crucifixion of Jesus Moore slides over the fact that previously he had discredited this detail. This may be a testimonial to the power of the Bible story to remain in Moore's mind even after he has disproved it, but it seems more likely that, in this carefully written narrative, he was conscious of the contradiction and ignored it, either to stress the similarity of the incidents - sure that the method of the narrative will prevent the reader noticing the contradiction - or to stress that

Jesus is facing a myth which he himself has created. Perhaps Moore may even be following here Dujardin's mythical and ritual notion of Christianity, seeing Jesus and the robber as parallel real persons from whom a single mythical figure would eventually result; as Dujardin said, "the apostolic legend could ultimately transform the myth into a historical story, and so transform innumerable acts into a single event"(Dujardin(1938) p98).

Moore also uses irony based upon the Bible in describing character through the descriptions of miracles and prophecies. Before the Crucifixion Joseph is among the disciples when Jesus preaches from the Book of Daniel;

Joseph understood forthwith that Jesus' purpose was still the same, to make it plain to the disciples that Daniel was protected and guided by God, and, that being so, Jesus could go to Jerusalem fearing nothing, he being greater than Daniel (p154).

Joseph and Jesus share here the discoveries of Biblical scholars, for although the Book of Daniel describes the sufferings of the Jews in Babylon in 605 BC, it was actually written around 165 BC;

the author's purpose in compiling the book was to encourage his compatriots in their terrible sufferings under the tyranny of Antiochus, so that they should remain faithful to that religion... to persuade those who were suffering with him of the certainty that everything which they had had to bear was not the result of blind chance, but had been predetermined by God long ago (Eissfeldt(1966) p528).

But despite his realisation that Jesus is casting himself into the same role as the author of the Book of Daniel and using the vision to reassure his disciples of his own safety, and despite his own commitment to the Roman interest which must be damaged by militant beliefs, Joseph is spontaneously carried along by the incantatory voice of Jesus into the belief that Jesus is "the promised Messiah... among us"(p156). The figurative sense of the Book of Daniel used by Jesus is lost, and the result is a process described by Dujardin in The Source of the Christian Tradition as follows;

In the apocalypses which followed that of Daniel the Messiah is the angel who will deliver Israel, reduce or exterminate the pagan world, found the Jewish Empire, and fulfil the ancient promises; and they began to expect his coming amid clouds and thunder in the opened heavens. Messianism had reached its definitive formula. We must understand that it was the forlorn hope, the last card, of the Jewish people, as they clung to the most chimerical folly in order to hope once more (Dujardin(1911) pp247-8).

The belief in a prophet and a Messiah here is common to both Jesus and Joseph, but in Chapter Fifteen when Joseph tells Dan of the miracles Jesus has performed the irony is restricted to Joseph. Moore is at pains to show the reader the telling of the miracles rather than the miracles themselves and hence, for example, the story of the self-castration of the rapist is less important for itself than for what the other characters make of it. Jesus' reported words are overlaid with the ruthless messianic spirit, yet still there is a difference between his comment, "happier than these is the man that cuts out the part that offends him setting the spirit free as this man has done"(p172), and Joseph's interpretation of it as the injunction "that man should mutilate his body till it conform perforce to his piety"(p173). All mention of "setting the spirit free" has gone, and in place of the general figurative cast of the miracle there is the specific "mutilate his body". As such the incident seems designed not to be a measure of Jesus' stature as a worker of miracles but a way of showing Joseph's capacity to misinterpret events because of his fear and distrust of sexuality, and is in accordance with Feuerbach's dictum that "accordance with subjective inclination is the essential characteristic of miracle"(Feuerbach(1893) p131).

The Crucifixion itself and the false values it embodies are shown for their true worth in retrospect by Jesus' behaviour after the "Resurrection". Again Moore loosely draws upon the Higher Criticism in portraying Jesus' shift from the teaching of a personal religion towards the prophesying of something like a national

apocalypse. Renan in his Life of Jesus describes Jesus' coming from the wilderness as,

no longer merely a delightful moralist striving to express sublime lessons in short and vivid aphorisms; he is the transcendent revolutionary who seeks to regenerate the world from its very foundations, and to establish upon earth the ideal which he has conceived (Renan(1897) p74).

Strauss expresses a similar idea in describing "the prevalent conception of the messianic reign" as having "a strong political bias; hence, when Jesus spoke of the Messiah's kingdom without a definition, the Jews could only think of an earthly kingdom" (Strauss(1892) p293). In The Brook Kerith this tendency of thought is represented by Nicodemus who complains of the "sloth and indolence" of the Jews of his day, contrasting them with the "heroic spirit brought out of Arabia with their language". He tells Joseph that "we should do well... to engage others to look to our flocks and herds, so that we may have leisure to ponder the texts of the Talmud"(p199). This endeavour to revive the national and racial spirit of the Jews in which Jesus too comes to believe is ironically paralleled later by his efforts to regenerate the flock of sheep belonging to the declining world of the Essene monks. Here Jesus' instinctive life-giving carrying of the lamb, like his helping Paul across the desert in the last chapter of the story, contrasts with his carrying of the cross to Calvary. When Jesus is bringing the lamb to the cenoby by the Brook Kerith his supply of fresh milk runs out and it seems that the lamb must die; "Jesus let him run, hoping that a wild beast would seize and carry him away and with his fangs end the lamb's sufferings quicker than hunger could"(p313). The incident parallels Jesus' agony of despair in the garden when he begs that the cup may be taken from him (Mark xiv,36). The ultimately almost self-willed abrogation of self in the ritual sacrifice of the Crucifixion then contrasts with the new providential hope for life brought

by the wandering shepherd who gives Jesus milk to feed the lamb.

Interwoven with this schema of Biblical irony is a further pattern equally based upon what had become conventional late nineteenth century cultural belief, namely the opposition between the Hellenic and the Hebraic cast of mind. Although he is a Jew by religion Matthias has been brought up amongst the Platonism of Alexandria, and therefore his thought tends towards a Greek exaltation of the image and the intellect rather than everyday reality or the moral conscience. Thus he is unable to fully comprehend Paul's concept of faith and salvation - although this in a way combines Hebraic and Hellenic - and can see in it only a version of the Hellenic Logos, which elsewhere is shown to be a product of the intelligence alone. The debilitating effect of this attempt to live in the mind without regard for the body is brought out most strikingly in the play The Passing of the Essenes which Moore adapted from The Brook Kerith in 1930. In this play Matthias speaks at greater length of his youth and of how, distracted by the demands of his body from his intellectual labours, he had sought to free his mind by castrating himself. Bearing in mind Moore's pronouncements in The Lake of the need for the "whole man" to think, it comes as no surprise that Matthias' attempt is futile;

my thought dissolved into images and I wrote on, believing I had accomplished something, but when I returned to what I had written there were on the page only words, nothing of what I would have written... The spirit will never again awaken in me... Only eloquence remains, mists of words seemingly beautiful in themselves but which have no substance (PE(1930) p76, my italics).

The Hebraic body contrasts with this intellect in two ways. Firstly in its stress on the moral conscience of man, and secondly in the force of the passion which lies behind the intellect. Moore described this quality which both Jesus and Paul at times possess when he wrote about the prophet Job in the preface to

The Apostle; the "Hebrew rhetorician" he said was,

a man of disordered genius who screams out everything that comes in to his head, caring not at all for composition, or even for sequence in his phrases; his intention is to coerce and to frighten (TA(1911) p10).

In the previous chapter, discussing the general values upon which the irony of the narratives is based, I described the limitations Moore found in the Hebrew sage Azariah, but he also pointed to a specific inadequacy in Azariah as a teacher. He is commissioned to give Joseph a grounding in Hebrew so that he might have sufficient knowledge to become an orthodox Jew, yet paradoxically the direct result of this education is to take Joseph out of the secure confines of Magdala, first to Arimathea and then to the prohibited city of Tiberias. Moore here probably intends another ironic echo of the Genesis myth of the Fall through knowledge (see p139 above), and therefore Joseph's visit to the cock-fight not only sums up the faults which follow from his education but also indicates something of the strength of his character. The truancy and the contact it brings with the Romans echoes the compromise by which Joseph, ostensibly being trained as an orthodox Jew, receives lessons in Greek which must perforce be based not upon actual experience of living with the language but upon literature, that is, upon the letter rather than the substance. Hence Azariah, although associated with orthodox Judaism, is concentrating upon the image rather than what to Jewish eyes must be the reality of education. Joseph is in a sense educated, but the abstract nature of the teaching means that he lacks any real understanding of life - he is, in short, in Moore's opinion as half-educated as the pupils of the schools set up under the 1870 Education Act.

Equally inadequate is the wisdom of the Essene Prior Hazael who also seems at first, like Azariah, to be a potential standard of value. Growing older Hazael has abandoned the joy of his evangelical activity and lost any sense of its significance;

for him now it represents only "pleasant memories"(p365). Eventually he becomes positively suspicious of expansionist activity. He pleads with Jesus, "Go not forth again, for it is by going forth, as thou knowest, that we fall into sin"(p439) - words later echoed by Jesus when he says, "it came to me to understand that all striving was vain, and worse than vain"(p465) - and yet without this going forth the community must perish. Moore's irony at Hazael's expense is scarcely concealed in the words he has him say, "all religions, except ours, are founded on lies, and there have been thousands, and there will be thousands more"(p439).

Hazael also says to Jesus,

Hast thou not said to me that God has implanted a sense of good and evil in our hearts and that it is by this sense that we know him rather than through scrolls and miracles? (p439)

- yet by living cut off from the world in an idea it is this very capacity for moral decision which he neglects. Only ironically does Hazael remain a standard of value, for his clinging to Jesus, as a father clings to a son, implicitly shows the inadequacy of his own personal life and of the Essene way of life.

The failure of the apparently noble and religious in Hazael is paralleled by the failure of the apparently real family life of Joseph's father Dan. In going to Tiberias Joseph sins but without intending to do so, in other words in the letter rather than the substance. It is typical of Dan's legalistic beliefs that he notices his son's sin but is oblivious of his own greater failure to give Joseph an adequate education. In the light of the close family world Dan seems to desire, his arrangements for his son's education are subject to irony, for his entrusting of Joseph to a teacher marks a willing abrogation of his duties as a parent, yet he is jealous because he feels that "Azariah was... robbing him of all that he valued in this world, his son"(p49). Dan seems to represent a quasi-feudal kind of family society centred upon Magdala and virtually independent of the larger unity of the

state, yet this world which ought to draw strength from its hereditary succession of power is in decline. Dan has lost his wife and he is now haunted by fears that he might lose his son; only dreams of Joseph's success allow him to forget "the great gulf into which precarious health would soon pitch him out of the sight of Joseph for ever"(p58). The contradiction is that while Dan ostensibly desires to maintain the family unit, his own capacity to create such a bond is restricted. He calls in a tutor to educate Joseph, feeling that he is himself only "a weak man, except in the counting-house"(p49), and the suggestion here is perhaps that what in general terms takes the form of an inward-looking family relationship, in practical matters becomes a possessive pride and ambition for his son which must in turn divorce his son from him. The static family relationship which Dan desires is thus broken down by the dynamic ambition he himself fosters in his son, and the tension between these two conflicting desires is reflected in Joseph's oscillation between his love for Dan and his desire to follow Jesus.

As Dan is blind to the conflicting realities of his family situation so too he ignores the contemporary reality of the Jewish state. He disapproves of the militant revolutionary Jews who are trying to revive the ancient traditions of the race, yet at the same time he fails to acknowledge that his race has been conquered by the Romans who are hostile to the traditions he holds most dear. In believing that life can be lived beyond the power structure in Jerusalem he seems to be attempting to prove that his family can exist in isolation, as Hazael tries to maintain the Essene community outside the world. His own actions prove his error, for in trading with Jerusalem and the Romans he is tacitly accepting that the Jews are a subject race - a fact brought out by the dependence of Dan's and Joseph's trade on Roman protection. As such his position is not so different from that

of the Jewish establishment in Jerusalem who have thrown in their lot with the secular power of the Romans; they think that although "Jahveh... was their God and had upheld the Jewish race... for all practical purposes it was better to put their faith henceforth in the Romans, who would defend Jerusalem against all barbarians"(p61).

The behaviour of the Essenes reveals further the contradictions which must dog any attempt to withdraw entirely from daily life. The validity of the contemplative life is undermined from the start by the suggestion that without the active help of such men as Jesus the shepherd and Joseph the merchant its existence would be impossible. Moreover the superficiality of the supposedly purer contemplative life of the monastery is shown by the speed with which the monks renounce their life to build fortifications against the bandits, and by their panic-stricken unwillingness to admit Paul. But it is on the question of whether the monks should take wives that Moore's irony is sharpest and most subtle. The initial desire to take wives springs from the wish that the community might continue, even though its evangelical mission has been lost, so that "holiness may not pass out of the world for ever"(p324). The monks seem to desire that the community be more isolated than ever but they are blind to the absurdity of their replacing their evangelical mission with resident mothers of "holy" children, and to the way that this contradicts the contemplative religious impulse which they wish to maintain. Given this fact it is scarcely surprising that in the debate on the subject they are blind to a crucial ambiguity. It is Matthias' opinion that holiness can only be "of the mind", but if this is so they should indeed ask themselves why they need to "live on this ledge of rock". If on the contrary, as Manahem seems to imply, holiness is "dependent upon... acts"(p324), then equally they should ask themselves why they live apart from the world. Moore implies that holiness, albeit perhaps "of the mind",

cannot be separated from acts - as the mind cannot be separated from the body - and that therefore the contemplative world of the cenoby cannot be conducive to either goodness or fullness of life. Hence the taking of wives by "young men who... give up their lives to the love of God"(p363) must always be a contradiction, for the monastic rule ultimately precludes any full relationship with another person, not only because of the devotion of these celibates to their God, but also because, through their denial of the body, their lives lack an essential dimension.

Moore continues his attack on those in closed religious communities in much the same vein in Héloïse and Abélard and the criticism of the convent life not only parallels that of the Essenes in The Brook Kerith but also recapitulates parts of Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa. Again Moore stresses the utter inefficacy of the isolated world of the convent as either an educational or a religious force. Thus Héloïse discovers the beauty of the natural world, and the glories of literature, only when she goes to Paris, and thus also men and eventually children are called to their death in the Crusades without any real intrusion upon the dead calm of the convent. The futility of everything is summed up in the image of the convent garden at Argenteuil;

an abundance of fruit you have; the trees are loaded. They are indeed, Héloïse. But the waste of the fruit breaks my heart, for we cannot eat it all nor sell as much of it as we wish; we store the apples along numberless shelves. I know them, Héloïse answered. We have put up many more during thine absence, dear child, and in this way we keep our apples sound till Christmas; but after Christmas decay begins (pp317-8).

At two crucial points in Héloïse's life other characters think of her in a way that shows that as the trees produce fruit to no purpose so the ritual of the convent is entirely divorced from any sense of vocation. When Fulbert entrusts his niece to the nuns at the beginning of the story his concern to have her out of the way dominates any desire he may have for her spiritual

welfare; he cynically remarks, "she will discover a vocation if left undisturbed"(HA(1925) p7). In a similar fashion after Héloïse has parted from Abélard the Prioress tries to reassure her with the words, "the habit is a great help"(p317); a help, that is, in forgetting the joys of love and marriage. Evelyn Innes' question of the celibate Sister Mary John, "had she renounced the world, or had she refused the world"(EI(1898) p447), is in Héloïse and Abélard asked even of the women who have had a family in the outside world. The Prioress, Mother Hilda, and Abélard's own parents have, after living an active life in the world, committed themselves to the convent, but Sister Paula seems neither to have consciously accepted or renounced the world. Héloïse is more conscious of her situation but she is unable to avoid the tragic consequences of her action for, although she enters the convent for the most selfish motives, she is absorbed by the sense of futility which results from a world in which loss, rather than religious vocation, is the common factor. Her plight is summed up, like that of so many of Moore's characters, in an ironic phrase when, looking for Astrolabe among the children who are to be taken to the Holy Land, she is told by the crowd that "no true Benedictine nun would ask for her child back"(p423). The irony is directed at Héloïse for she is clearly not by nature a "true Benedictine nun", but also at the order to which she ostensibly belongs which demands a denial of the instinctive love of a mother for her child.

The Hellenic aspect to which the Hebraic moral world is opposed in The Brook Kerith is expressed only ironically in Matthias' thoughts, but the French mediaeval setting of Héloïse and Abélard allows Moore to stress the emotional and sensual in the Hellenic in contrast to the austere religious Hebraic world. But if the world of Courtly Love symbolises the Hellenic world of colour, light, and beauty which is set in opposition to the barren, black,

and deadly world of the Church, the descriptions of this ostensibly more lively and free world are not without irony. Moore carefully separates the humble gleemen and maidens from the Comte Mathieu de Rodeboeuf, Jean Guiscard, and Gaucelm d'Arambert, and the aristocratic world is made to seem more like the world of Matthias than the carefree society of the gleemen. Abélard himself, though noble in birth and bearing, is always kept apart from the elaborately beautiful tapestries of the noblemen's stories, each of which shows a failure even to approach a real relationship with the Beloved. Yet the disasters which befall these men who squander their lives in vain pursuit of an unattainable ideal must have a clear relevance to Abélard and Héloïse.

The story of Rodeboeuf is the most extended and openly sad, and that of Guiscard the most romantically flamboyant. But the most pungently ironic is that of Gaucelm d'Arambert and the Lady Malberge - an odd fact, for Moore wrote to Lady Cunard three months before he died that he had described himself "masquerading under the name of Gaucelm d'Arambert, and yourself under the name of Lady Malberge"(Cunard(1957) p194). In order that his lady may grow "clearer to me and dearer to me" d'Arambert has transformed his love of the Lady Malberge into a religion - a parallel to Héloïse's parting from Abélard to enter the convent - and he believes that the separation which the religion inexorably brings has shown him the "essential life". Now he lives only to hold the vision in his mind;

If we have a fair image in our minds always, the world passes away from us and a great part of ourselves; only what is most real in us remains... But I do not live apart; she is always with me, and that she should never be far from me is my reason for having withdrawn myself from her... Without her I should not have been myself, and were she taken from me I should be nothing (pp267-8).

Yet his utter indifference to Abélard, his refusal to offer advice, or even to listen to his story, indicates clearly that what to

him is "most real" is an image world of dream in which his lady cannot be taken from him simply because the image depends for its existence upon his mind rather than her presence. His is not the romantic world of freedom and aspiring individuality of the Renaissance, but the pseudo-romantic frozen world of pre-Raphaelite painting which seeks by a display of crude photographic realism to give a sense of authority to its vision of a world where desire is never thwarted, disguising the fact that the desire is equally never fulfilled. Both paintings and narrative reveal men trapped in inadequate and restricted worlds; beings caught in a crude world of image unable to explore or even recognise the rich and complex world of human reality.

10. Irony and Ambiguity

I

I shall return to Ebury Street to compose more books; in other words, to continue the usual dribble of ink. Unfortunately there is nothing else for me, no other stream to drink from (Eglinton(1942) p46).

Moore wrote this in 1918; that is, after writing The Brook Kerith but before completing Héloïse and Abélard or revising The Lake. The mood of pessimism is that of Hail and Farewell and the result in his work is the irony I have described in the previous chapter in which he condemns the characters for the thinness of their sensibilities. Yet this irony shows Moore's own sensibility to be restricted, for the criticism is frequently motivated by a rancour and disdain which lacks any attempt at understanding. Against the evidence of this final residue of Naturalism must be set the fact that Moore also in the last part of his life shows a profound emotional sympathy with some of his characters. This is in part due paradoxically to his isolation from the world, and the sympathy is in this sense false. Equally unreal in its origins was the sense of his own importance which Moore came to feel in these years which resulted from a combination of self-deception and the sycophantic flattery of his friends and the cultured world. But from this falseness came a truth, for the self-confidence Moore felt as a writer at this time allowed feelings to come to the surface which previously his ruthless pursuit of success and fear of failure had caused him to suppress. Charles Morgan who saw him frequently at this time has written that Moore was "lonely, but reconciled to loneliness by long use and a fanatical desire for independence"(Morgan(1935) p56), and with his close friends even this last mask was dropped to reveal an "inner nature... a gentle wistfulness which came over him at times, when one seemed to look into the real man, imprisoned

rather than entrenched behind his chosen pose"(Eglinton(1942) p10).

When Moore wrote with this mood uppermost in his mind the results are different from the vigorous criticism of Hail and Farewell, and a different kind of irony is then evolved. In the irony I have described hitherto the main impression is of the application of irony with a consistency only broken when the underlying ridicule breaks into the narrative. Hence in Hail and Farewell Moore holds parallel the heroic values of the Wagnerian music-dramas and the absurdity of the Irish Revival, and the parallelism is broken only by the occasional side-swipes at Yeats, or Plunkett and Gill, and these do not clash with the values of the mock-heroic irony. All irony depends in some way upon ambiguity - upon the double reference of certain terms - and in this kind of simple irony the ambiguity is constant, but in the more complex irony with which Moore describes the main characters of The Brook Kerith and Héloïse and Abélard ridicule is replaced by a sympathy which must to a degree contradict the intention and values of the irony. Again all irony involves some sense that there are values beyond those which are criticised, but whereas often in mock-heroic irony these ultimate values are only implicit in the treatment of the subject in these two later narratives Moore is more open, going even so far as to embody fragments of the approved values without criticism in his characters. Critics who see Moore in his later work as only intent on perfecting a pure style, which they describe as fossilised or like toothpaste, entirely ignore the presence of both the energetic intellectual nature of the stories and Moore's intense concern in them with the human and the real.

For most of his life Moore lived either in a city or in the unreal rural world of the Big House, and as a result lacked any real sense of what living in the country really meant. Instead, particularly in Esther Waters and Sister Theresa, he substitutes

a conventional pastoralism. Even in The Lake, set in the world of his own childhood, he describes a Nature rich with mystic and symbolic overtones rather than the real world which he perhaps most nearly approaches in the disdainful vision of Parnell and his Island. Moore similarly substitutes a rather conventional ideal which fills the needs of his own life for actuality in his descriptions of marriage. Again reality did not intrude, for few of his friends were married, perhaps because his own demands made any allegiance among them to anyone else intolerable to him. In A Mummer's Wife Kate Ede's child is merely a convenient means of bringing more sensational events into the story, but in A Drama in Muslin the child comes to play a part in the value-judgements of the story. But it is in the final pages of the story amid the bourgeois idyll of South Kensington - the only way of life Moore can find to contrast with the chaos of Irish society - that Alice Barton's child appears, and hence, since the image is a mass of Tory materialist cliché, the picture of the child is merely sentimental; Alice,

has just finished her housekeeping, she puts down her basket of keys, and with all the beautiful movement of the young mother she takes up the crawling mass of white frock, kisses her son and settles his blue sash (ADM(1886) p327).

Esther Waters was written in praise of similar virtues, but in this story Moore weighs his prose with more sensitivity and the result is that the scenes describing the meeting between Esther, William, and Jackie at Peckham are among the most telling parts of the novel. This standard is unfortunately not maintained throughout however, and the moving scenes in which Esther realises that Jackie is as much William's child as her own contrast with those in "The King's Head", and at Woodview, when Jackie and the relationship of mother and child are described with crude clichés. The idea of the child as a bond which can transcend the egoisms of the husband and wife is also brought out in the marriage of

Ned and Ellen Carmody in "The Wild Goose";

"Differences of opinion arise," he said to himself, "for the mind changes and desires wane, but the child is always the same, and what an extra-ordinary bond the child is," he said, seeing Ellen leading the child across the sward. He forgot Ireland, forgot priests and forgot politics, forgot everything. He lifted his little son in his arms and shook the boughs and saw the child run after the falling apples, stumbling and falling but never hurting himself.

The quarrels of the day died down; the evening grew more beautiful under the boughs, and this intimate life around their apple tree was strangely intense, and it grew more intense as the light died (TUF(1903) p352)

- here the final pastoral sentiment is not out of keeping with the dream-like quality of the marriage, and the ominous air that hangs over the story.

A similar moment to this occurs in Héloïse and Abélard;

Abélard dropped on his knees so that he might hear his son's breathing, and after listening a little he took Héloïse in his arms, this second embrace by the cradle telling a man's gratitude to the woman who has borne him a son; and when their embrace relaxed Abélard's arm lay still about Héloïse's shoulders, their gesture telling better than words their appreciation of the mystery of birth (HA(1925) p292).

Again although the sentimental tinge of the picture must devalue both the relationship and the characters, it is not inappropriate for it is an omen of how the lovers will fall from their idyll to the harsh reality of separation. The ironic significance of the child is important throughout the story. When they decide that Abélard must become a priest and therefore make love for the last time, he asks Héloïse,

But if thou shouldst find thyself in child? If that should be my fortune, she answered, I will bear it without complaint, for he will be thy child, and the suffering he will bring me of the flesh, and the shame, will help me to endure the sorrow of our separation (pl47).

The romantic cast of her reply obscures the fact that their separation is not unavoidable, and that Héloïse can only see events in terms of her own self, ignoring the real existence of her child

and her husband. Later, at their final reunion in the story Héloïse says to Abélard, "thy life and my life are but one life now, as they should have been, without hope or joy except what each may bring to the other". He replies,

Our lives are twain as before, Héloïse. Then it is not for me that thou hast come, but for thy son? For my son, whom I saw but once; where is he? Did Rodeboeuf not tell thee what befell him? Another misfortune then has befallen us both, Héloïse? Is our son dead? We know not if he be dead or living, Abélard, but he has gone from us (pp464-5)

- the child ought not to be, any more than should the real relationship of Héloïse and Abélard, a thing which can be put down or taken up at will, but something which is an integral part of their lives.

In the mediaeval world of the narrative Abélard can only pursue his expansionist ambition within the Church and outside of marriage, but for Héloïse both these courses can only mean restriction,

in one intense moment of vision she saw into life as it is offered to women, the obliteration of themselves in marriage or the obliteration of themselves in convent rules, and understood that she must marry or return to Argenteuil (p72).

The possibilities are previously expressed in terms of a choice between "the pleasure grounds of a great castle" or "a black habit, and a rosary hitched to thy girdle"(p49). Filled with a desire for romantic assertion, to Héloïse the family is thus equated with the Church as a prison, and she therefore refuses to consider herself and Abélard in terms of the family as an everyday situation. This potentiality is symbolised in the character of Madelon, and in Paris it is she who performs the office of mother to Héloïse for Fulbert. Her presence with the Canon and his niece suggests that here is a possible quasi-family bond to which neither Fulbert nor Héloïse can fully respond, and hence it is appropriate that it is Madelon's departure with

Héloïse and Abélard which reduces the Canon to despair. Her presence on the journey to Brittany points to the fact that the relationship of the lovers has now shifted from being a clandestine affair which derives part of its momentum from its secrecy to a materially real thing which must depend for its existence upon Héloïse and Abélard themselves. Their weary turning from her chatter to speak in Latin, and the way she sits apart telling her beads whilst they make love shows perhaps that this material world has its own limitations. This double point is continued when Madelon stays in Brittany in the snug world of Alain and Denise far from the romantic and passionate life of Abélard and Héloïse, but also showing by her absence with the child the lack of any mundane de facto, as opposed to an idealistic de jure, marriage between Héloïse and Abélard. Madelon's presence in the convent (where her arrival is accomplished with the sleight of hand only possible in the smooth style of the late narratives) continues to provide an ironic commentary on Héloïse and Abélard even after the disappearance of Astrolabe, for it is she who has provided the material family life for Astrolabe which Héloïse, like the rest of the nuns, has ignored.

All the details of Héloïse's own upbringing - the grandmother estranged from the mother, the early death of the mother, and the departure of the father for the Holy Land, together with the absence of any family around the uncle into whose care she is put - bode ill for the child. Equally the farming out of the child to the convent at Argenteuil, where the mundane family world again has no place, is unsatisfactory as a means of either intellectually or emotionally educating the child. Even in Paris, where the horizons of Héloïse's mind begin to expand, the liberating force is more the freedom of the city than the sterile wisdom of Notre Dame, for Fulbert's only virtue, his ability to respond to the imaginary world of books, is severely qualified by his

aesthetic concern for his bindings and his unwillingness to allow Héloïse to use them. Abélard comes into this world like a breath of spring, and his elopement with Héloïse might seem a prelude to the building of a new instinctive life to replace the barren family of the Church. But their joy in Nature in the forest is as limited as their unwillingness to listen to Madelon's "jargon" which ironically Abélard had previously praised as "the language of music, and poetry and music and the arts", themselves "as powerful as dialectics"(p101). Their adherence to an idea rather than the fact, symbolised in their reversion to the educated deadness of Latin, shows an unwillingness to pay heed to the everyday reality and an ability to ignore the more brutal truths about life (for example, that "the lamb the yoe nourishes was given us to eat", p165), which is at once a strength and a weakness. At this point in the story Moore is concerned to stress the ominous contradictions between the ideal and the real in incidents. The otherwise platonic ecstasy of the lovers in the forest cannot wholly draw attention from the egocentric and hedonistic motives behind the elopement, and the presence of Madelon telling her rosary, with its echoes of Keats' "The Eve of St Agnes", can only add to the sense of foreboding.

The values of both the Church and Courtly Love are devalued by the presence of the wider and freer sensibilities of Héloïse and Abélard, but the irony is also made to rebound on them by Abélard's involvement with the troubadours and the escape of the lovers disguised as a nun and a priest. This aspect of the story can be summed up in the contrast of Denise, Abélard, and Héloïse. Abélard's "being engaged exclusively by ideas" contrasts with Denise's "being interested in practical things"(p230), and Denise's words to him, "Thou hast written books, and I've had children"(p233) in the terms of the values in which the relationships are here set can only reinforce Moore's exaltation of the bourgeois and

the ordinary. Denise has "never heard before of a girl who was willing to sacrifice herself to her lover's ambition"(p232), and this plain statement of Héloïse's detachment from thoughts of ordinary marriage criticises her character in a way only slightly softened by the reader's sense of the restricted horizons of Denise herself.

The true quality of Héloïse's love - the fact that she loves Abélard not simply in a sensual way for himself, nor even in an idealistic and self-abnegating way for himself, but because his glory can feed her own vanity - is given an ironic expression in the scenes in the convent. Her isolation at Argenteuil not only forces her to distinguish the Abélard who exists in her mind from the physical Abélard, but also brings home to her the inadequacy of a life based wholly upon subjective feelings; "In her mind's eye she saw her life winding like a road breaking out in different places, leading to what mysterious bourne - to Abélard's victory"(p329), but from her seclusion she cannot control or even effect his destiny, since this is an external fact not dependent upon her will. Indeed Abélard is side-tracked from the way he has planned with Héloïse, for as he later tells,

on leaving thee my thoughts were set upon discovering for myself a close and humble life, obedient to the Church in wrong as well as in right, vowing that not until the mitre was placed upon my head would I teach that faith and reason should walk together, hand in hand, each dependent on the other, twin sisters, always with their eyes set upon the ultimate goal which is man's knowledge of God. But my renown closed the way to me. That was the way we chose together, but everywhere was I claimed the true teacher, and when I opened a school, my school emptied, as before, all other schools. I fled from renown, but it followed me (p454).

If Héloïse's subjective feelings are inadequate as a substitute for reality here, equally the life of the convent cannot provide any kind of equivalent for the family. The Prioress and Mother Hilda can find a consolation for the loss of their husbands in the

convent but Sister Paula's being there, although she too has no husband, is a little illogical, for the demands of the Church and her child cannot be fully met at the same time. The presence of Astrolabe and Madelon in the convent is also a living contradiction of the sterile principles of the Church, for they represent the instinctive life of the body which the convent life denies. The fact then that Héloïse sees herself with the Prioress rather than with either Madelon or the child suggests that she denies the instincts to which she had given heed in her love for Abélard in Paris. Through Madelon this instinctive life is made to seem something more than an individual personal passion, for "everybody has babies, and that is the fault of nobody, for it is in the nature of things for little lambs to skip"(p153, my italics). It is necessary to remember that this comment is made within the context of what Moore ultimately sees as Madelon's restricted sensibility, but for much of the time he is describing Héloïse in the convent, perhaps to stress her plight, he writes under the assumption that the everyday values Madelon represents are true. Given this Héloïse's life in the convent can only seem a tragedy which leaves her with nothing. She lives "for nearly nine years with a lie in my heart always and often upon my lips"(p431), thus denying herself either a spiritual marriage as a Bride of Christ, or a physical one as the wife of Abélard. Lacking a vocation as a nun, inexorably forced to give up the world and her husband, her mind for the time blinkered by the world of the convent, she can only think that she has "nobody, neither husband, nor son, not even this black Benedictine robe"(p430), and that her life is wasted.

But if, by these standards of a hypothetical "natural" life, Héloïse is to be criticised, she is yet exalted above the other nuns and Courtly Lovers by her awareness, if not of the solution to her plight, at least of the absurd "mockery" of her existence.

In The Brook Kerith Joseph is set above the other disciples by a similar self-consciousness;

he was always painfully conscious that nothing mattered; that the great void would never be filled up again; and that time would not restore to him a single desire or hope. Nothing matters, he often said to himself, as he sat drawing patterns in the gravel with his stick. Yet he had no will to die, only to believe he was the victim of some powerful malign influence (BK(1916) pp98-9).

Joseph and Héloïse are further alike in that he too denies the real value of a family relationship for a substitute religious emotion, but the issue is in his case simpler in that Moore presents the real bond between Joseph and his father without the equivocation which prevents Héloïse being ultimately judged by the standard of Madelon. The situation is also clearer in that Joseph mistakenly seeks a false relationship not in the abstract concept of the convent but in the real person of Jesus, and also perhaps because the Bible story was more familiar to his readers than that of Héloïse and Abélard so that Moore can use more frequently single plainly ambiguous sentences to point the irony. For example, towards the end of the story Jesus tells the Essenes, "feeling myself about to die I called out to my Father, who answered my call at once, bringing Joseph of Arimathea"(p436), pinpointing exactly the false father-son relationship which both men seek. I have already shown why it seems to me Dan is less than satisfactory as a father for Joseph, but the blame does not lie only on this side for, if he is an ineffectual father, so too is Joseph an ineffectual son. Joseph is apt to neglect Dan for what he sees as a more important mission, yet in following Jesus he seeks a person whom he might take as an example and who might help him to find his way in life, precisely, that is, a kind of father-figure. Nevertheless this idealistic error on Joseph's part is offset by an instinctive and unself-conscious love of his father, and his feeling of identity with his family never diminishes. His dashes

across the desert to Magdala to see his father and the care which he lavishes upon him cannot then but lend an irony to Joseph's pursuit of a religious meaning in life. This is again stressed through clear verbal irony for, when Joseph eventually finds Jesus in Galilee after searching for him in Alexandria, Jesus says, "A man travels the world over in search of what he needs and returns home to find it"(p122). This is in one sense true, in that Joseph has returned to Magdala to find Jesus there too, but in another sense it is profoundly untrue, for Joseph has actually come home to see his father and then, hearing that Jesus is near, he has left Dan to pursue his search for a prophet and a crude apocalyptic destiny thus rejecting what Moore sees as an instinctive family bond. In yielding to this desire to be a follower of the Messiah he neglects his family, failing to recognise that in doing so he is ignoring a personal apocalypse, for if the militants believe that the Jewish race can only be saved by a Messiah, then equally Dan's world can only be renewed through Joseph. Before the Crucifixion Joseph follows Jesus still hoping to witness the raising of the dead, to him the greatest miracle of all, but he ignores the fact that he himself has already nursed his father back to life after a series of strokes. Moore again makes the point concisely after Joseph has been refused admission to the company of disciples. Jesus has criticised him for putting his father before the Messiah, Joseph thinks in return;

of course if the old world were going out and the new coming in, it mattered very little what happened in the next twenty-four hours. But was the new world as near as that? (pp186-7).

Given the choice between nursing a dying father and serving a messiah Moore seems to suggest that one might still be unable to ignore the father. His casting of doubt upon the truth of the messiah can only make Joseph's ignoring of his father more reprehensible.

In his criticism of the Essenes and of the religious community in general Moore usually opposes the dead intellectualism of their

world to the instinctive natural life of the body, but in the case of Joseph and Héloïse this simple opposition does not apply. Joseph does not consciously feel the instinctive bond with his father anymore than does Héloïse allow herself to respond to the natural state of marriage with Abélard, but both possess a reserve of energy and instinctive resilience not found in the monks and nuns. For both of them are searching for an Absolute, an Ultima Thule. The irony rests in the fact that although both are exalted by this, their failure to think with the body as well as the mind results in a futile dissipation of their energy. In seeking an Absolute in religion they pursue only the Superman, and show themselves ignorant of what Feuerbach considered the "essential task" in religion;

We have reduced the supermundane, supernatural, and superhuman nature of God to the elements of human nature as its fundamental elements. Our process of analysis has brought us again to the position with which we set out. The beginning, middle and end of religion is MAN (Feuerbach(1893) p184).

Moore's irony points out remorselessly how Joseph and Héloïse are blind to the complex misconceptions they pursue, yet the very strength of the irony paradoxically cannot but elevate them. For the more they are capable of ignoring the contradiction implied by the irony the greater is the energy of their minds, the greater the eventual shock when realisation is forced upon them, and the more sublime their energy which can in the last resort ignore the perception of conventional truth and maintain a belief guaranteed by their own passions - Joseph in Jesus as Messiah, Héloïse in Abélard as her God. The problems they face here are those of nineteenth century man, and Moore's consideration of these problems seems again to owe much to Nietzsche. For Nietzsche was convinced that "God is dead"; he saw then "that if God ceased to exist as a reality for mankind life as such was deprived of significance and mankind might ultimately collapse under the

weight of its own senselessness"(Hollingdale(1965) p40). All notions of Good and Progress towards a higher state are thus destroyed, and with them the chiliastic notions of Evil which are their inversion. The world-picture becomes overall static and all movement relative to this. Hence the notion of the Eternal Recurrence, "the mythical formula of a meaningless world", comes into existence. The mind is then devoted not to the endlessly futile "exploration" of "Progress", but to the peeling away of the mythical skins by means of which man has protected himself from the absurdity of the truth. The philosopher, like Nietzsche himself, who does this is then suitably described by his images of himself as a "hammer" or "dynamite"(Heller(1967) p197). But Nietzsche also held "the hypothesis that creation is a product of contest, and that the creative force is controlled and redirected passion"(Hollingdale(1965) p101), and this passionate urge to create - to Nietzsche essentially meaning the artistic urge - can have in this too human world a fruitful use. In a late notebook he wrote; "he who no longer finds what is great in God, will find it nowhere. He must either deny it or create it" (quoted, Heller(1967) p189). Thus simultaneously in their lives Joseph and Héloïse come to deny the existence of their gods, and yet recreate their images through the force of their own personalities.

II

The persona Moore created for himself in Hail and Farewell seems in accord, as I have suggested (p131 above), with the description Yeats gave in A Vision of the Fool, but Yeats himself placed Moore in the twenty-first phase. In the character of the man of this phase, "the will has driven intellectual complexity into its final entanglement"(Yeats(1962) p155). As this suggests Moore's intellectualism was not simply logical and analytical, but rather was in the nature of a creative meditation. In 1914 he wrote to John Eglinton;

Are you aware that Jesus was one of the most terrifying fanatics that ever lived in the world, that he out-Nietzsched Nietzsche in the awful things he says in the Gospel of Luke? (Eglinton(1942) p23).

This reflects the sceptical attitude to the Superman expressed in Hail and Farewell (see p119 above), but it contrasts in several ways with the final portrait in The Brook Kerith, for by 1916 this almost childish sense of discovery had been replaced by a more detached and considered exploration of the character.

In 1927, Moore again wrote to Eglinton of the character he had created;

My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? Words that seemed to me to forbid the continuation of the Jesus that left the Brook Kerith to reform the world, that necessitated a new Jesus, a disillusioned Jesus... The Brook Kerith would have lost a good deal if there had been but one Jesus; my story needed two (1942, p77).

Moore was at first carried enthusiastically to the extreme of the argument which absolutely denied the objective truth of the Gospel story, but further thought led him to a maturer appreciation of the possibilities of the narrative and the final portrayal of Jesus has more in common with the fine interplay of moral truth and sympathy of Browning's "Mr Sludge the Medium" than with the greenary-yellary aesthete of The Apostle scenario.

In his initial conception of Jesus Moore had recourse once again to a facile pastoralism, like that shown by Havelock Ellis in his description of a Jesus who resembles St Francis in a belief that;

There are few things sweeter or more profitable than to lie on the velvety floor of a little pine wood on a forgotten southern height in May, where the tall clumps of full-flowered rhododendra blend with the fragrant gorse which spreads down to the sparkling sea (Ellis(1898) p243).

In The Apostle Jesus enters with the line, "How beautiful is the evening light as it dies revealing every crest", and almost immediately goes out again to "feed my birds". When he returns,

he is persuaded to speak again, and he tells how in the morning, as he was washing clothes in the Jordan, all consciousness of his work faded from him, and by merely looking at the glory of the sky behind the mountains he seemed to understand all the secrets of the earth and the heavens (TA(1911) pp44-9).

By contrast in The Brook Kerith Joseph remembers the Jesus he had met in the Essene cenoby as,

a young man of somewhat stern countenance and cold and thin, with the neck erect, walking with a measured gait, whose eyes were cold and distant, though they could descend from their starry heights and rest for a moment almost affectionately on the face of a mortal (p183).

Again the need to discriminate between different kinds of instinct seems relevant, for Jesus in his pursuit of an absolute destiny is a figure of energy, akin to Joseph and Helofse. He has rejected the following of a natural instinct when his eyes seemed "soft and luminous" and he had taught that "whoever admires the stars and flowers finds God in his heart and sees him in his neighbour's face"(p124). The opposition of the two kinds of instinct is echoed in Joseph's mind when, at the same time as he feels that Jesus is the Messiah, he can still respond to the natural beauty of the summer night;

The stars are God's eyes; we live under his eyes and he has given us a beautiful garden to live in. Are we worthy of it? he asked; and Jew though he was he forgot God for a moment in the sweetness of the breathing of the earth, for there is no more lovely place in the spring of the year than the Plain of Gennesaret (p124).

The pastoralism here is again appropriate for it corresponds to the state of innocence in both Jesus and Joseph from which they fall in their search for a Messiah.

Moore frequently follows Edouard Dujardin in his creation of the character of Jesus. Dujardin believed that scholarship could show that "most of the traits of the entire life of Jesus are nothing but a reduction to action of the prophecies which the evangelists desired that Jesus should fulfil", and that the "apostolic legend" which predated the life of Jesus "could ultimately transform the myth into a historical story, and so transform innumerable acts into a single event"(Dujardin(1938) pp92,98). Thus Moore is at pains when he introduces Jesus to place him amongst a class of beings rather than making him a unique figure. Joseph says on being told that Jesus turned water into wine at Cana that "a miracle is a special act performed by someone whom God has chosen as an instrument", and Philip adds that "after the first few months" Jesus "had the luck to cast out one or two devils"(pp128,130, my italics). Jesus on the other hand progressively identifies himself with the Messiah, that is, with the "stone that hand had not cut out of the mountain"(p151). Moore no doubt read Renan's Life of Christ where he might have learnt that the "legends" about Jesus were "the fruits of a great and entirely spontaneous conspiracy, and grew up around him while he was still alive". Renan even goes so far as to assert, "that Jesus ever dreamed of making himself pass for an incarnation of God is a matter about which no doubt can exist. Such an idea was entirely foreign to the Jewish mind"(Renan(1897) pp152,154). Moore writes that at first "Jesus forbade his disciples... to tell anybody

that he was the Messiah"(p160) - the crucial word being "tell", for Moore's Jesus does not flatly deny that he is the Messiah.

Once Jesus has identified himself with the Messiah his character was fixed for Moore by nineteenth century criticism. Strauss wrote that "the prevalent conception of the messianic reign had a strong political bias; hence, when Jesus spoke of the Messiah's kingdom without definition the Jews could only think of an earthly dominion"(1892, p293). Renan too came to a similar conclusion, seeing Jesus coming out from the desert inspired by the prophecies of Daniel; "a transcendent revolutionary who seeks to regenerate the world from its very foundations"(1897, p74). Moore pushed this idea still further; in a letter of 11th July 1914 he wrote that "Jesus only believed at times in his godhead" and a few weeks later added that he "gave way to spiritual pride to such an extent that he called himself God"(Eglinton(1942) pp23,24). The pastoral figure is hence increasingly replaced by the figure of savage energy whom Joseph scarcely recognises when he sees him in Jerusalem;

the Jesus he was looking at now was a new Jesus, one whom he had seen never before; the cheeks were fallen in and the eyes that he remembered soft and luminous were now concentrated; a sort of malignant hate glowered in them: he seemed to hate all he looked upon; and his features seemed to have enlarged, the nose and chin were more prominent, and the body was shrunken (p183).

Joseph's comment that Jesus is like "a sword that is wearing out its scabbard" seems very appropriate, firstly because of Jesus' new mood of militancy, secondly because in this mood his character takes on an almost pathological aspect, and lastly because he has lost the conceptual control which keeps the scabbard of the metaphors of Godhead and Fatherhood separate from the sword of reality which can only lead to violence. Moore's contemptuous references to the eucharist as the turning of God "into a biscuit" (M(1915) p319) prepare the reader for the increasingly pathological

intensity of Jesus' character when he asserts that "all men must drink of his blood if they would live for ever. He who licked up one drop would have everlasting life"(p185). Later this same notion acquires overtones of the arrogance with which Jesus approaches his "death";

it is for this end I offer myself, a victim to appease our Father in heaven, I'm the sacrifice and the communion, for it is no longer the fat of rams that my Father desires, but my blood, only that; only my blood will appease his wrath. As I have said, I am the communion, and thou shalt eat my flesh and drink my blood, else perish utterly, and go into eternal damnation. But I love thee and - After a pause he said; those that love God are loved by me, and willingly and gladly will I yield myself up as the last sacrifice (p222).

This egocentric contempt for others makes him deny his relationship not only with Joseph but also with his mother;

God chose thee as a vehicle to give to man a redeemer to lead him out of this kingdom of clay. Thou hast done it and so there is no further need of thee. Out of this corruptible body I shall rise in Jerusalem, my mission accomplished, into the incorruptible spirit (p185).

Long after his recovery from the Crucifixion Jesus, now more aware of these errors, contradicts his past life. He admits that his "sin was not to have loved men enough", and that he had "strayed beyond myself and lost myself in the love of God, a thing a man may do if he love not his fellows". In other words, "led away" by his "reason" he has allowed his idealistic thoughts to take precedence over the everyday virtue of love of his fellow men. He has, as Feuerbach suggests, perverted "the elements of human nature" which are the "beginning, middle, and end of religion" into the "superhuman nature of God", and now that his error is apparent to him his previous thoughts seem "lighter than the bloom of the dandelion floating on the hills". They are superficial because, apart from perverting the notion of instinct, they have also caused him to ignore the need for a conscious moral response to life, thereby preventing him from seeing "God's thoughts,

which are deep in us and clear in us"(p439-40).

Joseph comes to see the falseness of the messianic values and is able to manipulate the irony by which he had formerly been criticised. His behaviour is still however interpreted in terms of the myth of the Messiah but, after the Crucifixion, this ceases to be a critical force and instead becomes a way of exalting Joseph (see p155 above). In carrying Jesus from the tomb and helping him to escape to the Brook Kerith Joseph at once contradicts the conventional Bible story and, in his own way, makes it come true. He tells Esora (who like Madelon is an embodiment of sound everyday commonsense),

Heaven without Jesus would not be heaven for me. But if he be not the Messiah after all? Esora asked. Should I love him less? he answered her. None is as perfect as he. I have known him long, Esora, and say truly that none is worthy to be the carpet under his feet (p268).

When Jesus must leave for the Brook Kerith he assures Joseph of his continuing friendship;

there'll be no parting, Jesus interposed. Thou'lt ride thy ass out to meet me, and we shall learn to know each other, for thou knowest nothing of me yet, Joseph. Thou'lt bring a loaf of bread and a flagon of wine in thy wallet, and we shall share it together. I shall wait for thy coming on the hillside. Even so, Jesus, I am sad that our life here among the trees in this garden should have come to an end. We were frightened many times, but what we have suffered is now forgotten (p287).

Even though Moore gives a natural weight to the details of the mythical account, the passage reinforces the idea that either one or both of the men is a messiah by its echoes of the Biblical story - for example, the riding out on a donkey, the sharing of bread and wine, the waiting "for thy coming on the hillside", the ending of life in the garden (which is in keeping with the idea of Jesus as a second Adam), and the passing through suffering to an exalted state. But there remains an equivocation in Joseph's mind which prevents him reaching the ultimate pinnacle of

knowledge and understanding, so that like Abélard he remains only a prophet of the renaissance. When Joseph and Jesus have returned to the Essene cenoby Joseph tells Hazael that Jesus has "suffered cruelly for teaching that the Kingdom of God is in our hearts", which to Hazael can only mean that he has "set himself against the Temple". Joseph too is bound within this restricted frame of reference and is unable to comprehend the notion which Jesus is grasping at when he says, "my sin was to have preached John as well as myself"(p440), namely that man may and must choose the way he is to live his own destiny. Thus Joseph is unable to resolve the dilemma and make the choice between the dynamic new world of created value and the static old world of accepted ideas. His notion of Jesus' teaching - "that religion is no more than a personal aspiration is to attack the law, which... existed before-times in heaven, always observed by the angels, and to be observed by them for time everlasting"(pp298-9) - seems to show him finally still confined to the old world.

All three of the main characters, Joseph, Jesus, and Paul, are confronted by a contradiction between their subjective conceptualisations of the world and its reality, and are given the opportunity to reform and reorientate their consciousnesses so that their views of the world and actuality coincide. Jesus' attempts at reorientation are the most intellectually involved and complete, for Joseph's realisation of the truth is instinctive and partial, whilst Paul equally instinctively prefers the truth of his conceptualisation to what Moore offers as reality. Watching over Jesus Joseph is at first hopeful that he can readjust, although he sees that "he'll be a different man if he comes up from his sickness... with a different mind"(p264). But soon afterwards he sees that in fact Jesus is only living now in a "double nakedness", and that it might have been better if he had "left him to die on the cross"(p271). Jesus' actions after the Crucifixion

cast a retrospective irony upon his past behaviour, but he is not admitted to a knowledge of this irony, for the absence of a complete recognition of his error is shown by his ability to pass by the crucified robbers and by the calm mood in which he can think of his past. It is only on an instinctive level, in the life of action which contrasts with his previous living out of a myth and the contemplative life of the monks that he can be said to have achieved any superior vision.

The only new formulation of belief that Jesus does come to in fact contradicts his active life as a shepherd almost as much as it does his vigorous pursuit of the apocalyptic destiny of the Messiah;

it came to me to understand that all striving was vain and worse than vain. The pursuit of an incorruptible crown as much as the pursuit of a corruptible crown leads us to sin. If we would reach the sinless state we must relinquish pursuit. What I mean is this, that he who seeks the incorruptible crown starts out with words of love on his lips to persuade men to love God, and finding that men do not heed him he begins to hate them, and hate leads on to persecution. Such is the end of all worship. There is but one thing, Paul, to learn to live for ourselves, and to suffer our fellows to do likewise; all learning comes out of ourselves, and no one may communicate his thought: for all his thought was given to him for himself alone (p465).

This springs from his thoughts about his false messianic life in that it coincides with his idea that it was wrong to stray "beyond myself", and to pay too much heed to the reason, but it omits the further conclusion that "my sin was not to have loved men enough"(p440). Moreover the ideas are equivalent to a pastoral dream of the life of the shepherd rather than the active life of the Jesus who has built up the Essenes' flocks, for although it is true that when Jesus is bringing his new ram to the Essenes he seems to be assisted by Providence yet it is the active assistance of the other shepherd which allows Caesar to live. In ascribing

these sentiments to Jesus Moore is at one with Renan who wrote,

Jesus was ignorant of the name of Buddha, of Zoroaster, of Plato; he had read no Greek book, no Buddhist Sudra, yet notwithstanding there was in him more than one element, which, without his suspecting it, emanated from Buddhism, Parseeism, or the Greek wisdom (Renan(1897) pp285-6).

In a letter written immediately prior to the publication of

The Brook Kerith Moore wrote,

We go out to convert others with words of love on our lips, but we end by cursing. Jesus knows that this is true from experience; therefore, we must not only get rid of religion because it is a hindrance, but we must get rid of God, or rather we must give up all attempts to arrive at any explicit comprehension of God. This I believe to be independent thinking, so far as any thinking can be said to be independent. I suspect it inclines towards Buddhism, and that suspicion led me to change the end of my story (Eglinton(1942) p30).

That this belief ascribed to Jesus seems close to Moore's own is obvious. Indeed, from around 1890 when he had first started to write in the quasi-Japanese style with its overtones of Taoism his thoughts increasingly seemed to focus upon the loneliness of individuals, the hopelessness of existence, and the necessity simply to endure life. Hence the irony against the words of Jesus here is hardly stressed at all and Moore seems instead to allow him a measure of exaltation as he says to Paul, "thou can'st not understand me and be thyself; but, Paul, I can comprehend thee, for once I was thou"(p465).

Taken together with the obvious untruth of Paul's words about the Gospel this seems to suggest that for Moore Jesus is still in a sense a Messiah here, and it is appropriate that after he has heard Paul he should want to recapitulate his earlier life and "go to Jerusalem... to tell people that I was not raised from the dead by God to open the doors of Heaven to Jews and infidels alike"(p438). Jesus, in suffering "death" upon the cross and surviving, has experienced more than any other man, and is thus the Messiah in a more real sense than any of the

other revolutionary prophets, but the paradox is that the news the Anointed One brings is not of a new kingdom but that "we are all at tether"(p465) so that the ultimate insight renders the visionary incapable of action. Evelyn Innes writes after the death of her father, "we do not believe in anything not even that we are going to die; for if we did we should live for death and not for life"(ST(1901) pl24), and Jesus having thus seen that "all striving is vain" turns not hopefully to the West like Paul, or even to Jerusalem, but away to the East and the doctrine of the Indian monks that "they must not believe that they have souls, and that they are saved"(p466). The paradox in the words of Jesus is most concisely summed up when he says to Paul,

The word of God is a weak thing, Paul...if it cannot withstand and overcome the delusions of a madman, and God himself a derision, for he will have sent his son to die on the cross in vain (p463).

For in terms of Jesus' new ideas the "word of God" can have no meaning; it is equally unclear whether it is Jesus or Paul who is referred to as the "madman", or whether, and in what sense, God did send his son to die on the cross; or whether this death was "in vain".

Eastern quietism became more and more attractive to Moore. Even his conception of Paul, who personified thrusting, aspiring, Western man to him, could be affected. In the preface to the 1921 edition of The Brook Kerith he describes Paul's death in Spain. The idea of "a glorious martyrdom" is assigned to the Christians of the second and third centuries and Moore prefers to see Paul living and preaching "without let or hindrance" in Spain and his death as unspectacular; he is out with the sheep when, feeling death to be near, he prays to Jesus and then,

falls back... seeing him dead the shepherd seeks for a cavity among the rocks, finding one, he throws the body into it, heaping stones upon it to save it from wolves and jackals, which done, he follows his flock, understanding nothing, but conscious that something great and noble has passed out of the world (BK(1921) ppxii,xiv).

However if Moore later denies Paul a martyr's death he does not deprive him of the life of a prophet. The description of the death of Paul, alone and unknown, is evidence above all else of Moore's pessimism, for at the beginning of the preface he tells how his father first planted the idea for the story in his mind with the words, "If it hadn't been for Paul the whole thing would have been a failure"(pix). Moreover in The Brook Kerith itself he tells Paul's adventures as they are set out in the Bible. At the end of the story then the reader is left with a dual impression, corresponding to the teachings of Jesus and Paul, for Moore appears to say that Jesus, the man who knows the truth, is incapable of action, whilst Paul, who can act, is incapable of knowledge. The way is then open for different judgements depending upon whether the criterion of truth, or of the ability to act, is applied. The only way Moore seems to tip the balance in either direction is by the mood of the characters. The main impression of Jesus in the last chapters is one of withdrawal and sadness, for example,

he fell asleep trying to remember that he had nothing more explicit to rely upon than his own declaration... that he was Jesus of Nazareth whom Pilate condemned to the cross, only his own words to convince the priests and the people that he was not a shepherd whom the loneliness of the hills had robbed of his senses. He could not bring the Essenes as testimony, nor could they if they came vouch for the whole truth of his story (p456).

In contrast Paul has "laboured... fiercely and meditated... little" during his "strenuous and restless life"(pp459-60); the stress upon his egocentric but expanding character at the end of the story seems to indicate a mood in which, even if only

temporarily, Moore puts aside the oriental quietism of Jesus.

The contrast between a withdrawing and an expanding consciousness is apparent also at the end of Héloïse and Abélard, for Héloïse continues to seek out new ways of affirming her devotion to Abélard and her sense of the exaltation of the individual and personal mood and opinion, despite the fact that her opportunities are restricted in the mediaeval world. Abélard on the other hand, who as a man has the freedom to act and speak, turns away from Héloïse and seeks the security of the orthodox religious life of dogma. The perhaps not too conscious similarity between the endings of the two narratives leads to an interesting ambiguity, for in Héloïse and Abélard at one point Héloïse says,

We do not know what we could have done... until the task is set before us. Jesus Christ was deeply troubled in the garden of Gethsemane; he asked that the chalice should pass from him. But, Sister Héloïse, you are not Jesus Christ. The simplicity of Paula's reply took Héloïse aback, and it was some little while before she could collect herself sufficiently to murmur: we must try to follow in his footsteps, however slowly (HA(1925) pp357-8).

However she is unaware that the Jesus she desires to imitate is not, according to The Brook Kerith, Jesus of Nazareth but the Jesus Christ of Paul's teachings. And whilst she thus unconsciously emulates the open will to action of Paul, Abélard seems to follow the example of Jesus in turning away from music and poetry to seek now only the Church's heaven, thus losing his sense of the ultimate importance of the real and the present. For him the felix culpa of the knowledge of the power of the individual leads only back to a search for an other-worldly God, but for her the quasi-Renaissance knowledge of her own power to create her daily life and its values forbids such a reversion to a mediaeval acceptance of dogma. Both of them go into orders; Abélard would have it that "it is not in castles hung with silk, overlooking parks graced with noble trees and terraces, that

the soul turns to God, but in solitude 'mid rocks and sands where there is nothing pleasing"(p474). But such a choice is inadequate as a view of the world. Héloïse rejects the conventional notion that the world can contain only the alternatives of the life of the castle or the abbey much earlier in the story (see p173 above), and instead she clings firmly to her conceptual view of the world, ignoring thereby the now obvious unworthiness of Abélard to be the object of her love,

The banks of the Arduzon will be welcomed by me, for to my ears the echo of thy voice will linger among the rocks of the hillside, and my eyes shall find the footsteps that the earth has allowed to pass into nothingness. For man hath a memory and an imagination, and to our ears and eyes thou wilt be present always; we shall say to one another: All this is not wilderness, for here he worked and lived. All about us is his handiwork; before he came this country was known only to robbers and wild beasts (p474).

Her joy is chastened because the human love is remembered in the past rather than lived in the present, but its source is her own assertion of meaning rather than the service of some dogmatically proclaimed value, and as such Héloïse is more of a prophet of the Renaissance than Abélard. The final paradox of both these narratives lies in the fact that in holding to their conceptual views of the world Héloïse and Paul would seem to be following an idea - a course of action which is normally anathema to Moore. Yet at the same time their behaviour is seen by him as opposed to the sterile influence of the Church, and both Héloïse and Paul are exalted to a sublime if necessarily tragic joy. As in Hail and Farewell Moore is portraying an anticipation of the Renaissance rather than the Renaissance itself, and the insistence with which he does this must suggest that for all his protestations and need to believe Moore could never fully believe in the possibility of this new world coming to be.

11. Naïve Romanticism

Moore received his education in the Café Nouvelle Athènes, and his memory of these few years in Paris determined in some way or other all his subsequent thoughts and actions. He particularly remembered to the end of his life the artists who had taken him in hand. In later years, describing his friendship with these men, Moore was liable, I think, to exaggerate the notice they took of him and to play down the extent to which he simply listened to them. The ideas he picked up there were more original than his own, as no doubt some of the artists were more profound or eccentric than any of his acquaintances in London; hence when he came back to London, by aping the manners and parroting the opinions of his Parisian friends, he in turn became more of an extraordinary figure in English society. The English cultural establishment was almost entirely unappreciative or ignorant of what was in fact received opinion among the French avant-garde and so to English critics his early fiction and criticism seemed alien and strange.

During his first stay in Paris Moore seems to have been introduced to Villiers de l'Isle Adam, Verlaine, Manet, Degas, Monet, Pissarro, and Zola and his Naturalist disciples. Later he met Edouard Dujardin and through him got to know Mallarmé. By repute Moore can hardly have escaped hearing more of Verlaine and Rimbaud, as well as some stories of Baudelaire. Signs of the influence of these men and Moore's enthusiasm for their work recur throughout the novels and critical articles he wrote after his return to London in 1880. Zola's fascination with the modern industrial and scientific world, and the new city of Paris, fill Moore's first novels and stories. But in A Drama in Muslin, plainly intended to be a Naturalist novel, Moore also attempts to imitate the "correspondence" theories of Baudelaire and Rimbaud in his

"orchestration" of the scene in the dress-shop (1886, pl62). The work of Rimbaud - as opposed to the scandal which gathered around his life - was unknown except to a tiny few until the publication in 1883 and 1884 of Verlaine's articles, and the appearance in 1886 of Les Illuminations. Moore was ever a leader of fashion and his impressionist article on the poet, published as one of a series of "Notes and Sensations" in The Hawk of the 23rd September 1890 (collected in the following year as "Two Unknown Poets" in Impressions and Opinions) was the first in English. The turbulent life of Rimbaud stimulated his imagination in the Evelyn Innes stories. The already passionate atmosphere of the novels was made more exotic by the addition in the revised Sister Theresa of 1909 of Sir Owen Asher's frenzied flight to North Africa in search of solace for his troubled soul. The details and dates of Rimbaud's life seem almost to have been designed to impress themselves on Moore. There was a gap between the first unnoticed publication in 1872 and 1873 of Rimbaud's earliest poems and the discovery in 1883 of the mature work of the poet - now presumed dead. But the extravagance of his life must have been a frequent topic of conversation between 1871, when his affair with Verlaine first began to scandalise Paris, and 1873 when Verlaine was imprisoned in Brussels for his attack on his one-time lover (rumour had it that he had been given a heavier sentence because of the affair with Rimbaud). Such scandal and gossip must have been particularly appealing as representative of Bohemian life to Moore when he first arrived in Paris in March 1873. Moreover in his early days - before he dared aspire to the elevated air of the Nouvelle Athènes - he used to frequent the Café du Rat Mort which had been the scene of Rimbaud's slashing of Verlaine's hands in February 1872.

A similar air of scandal lingered around the reputation of Baudelaire. He died six years before Moore's arrival in Paris

but his name was still a byword for the incomprehensibility of modern literature, and the depraved debauched character of the artist; Mario Praz writes that,

the Baudelaire of his own age was the satanic Baudelaire, who gathered into a choice bouquet the strangest orchids, the most monstrous aroids from the wild tropical flora of French Romanticism... He sent a wave of electricity through the shapeless putridero which had been gathering into a mass since 1820 (Praz(1951) p143).

Moore found the image of this "cynical libertine", the author of Les Fleurs du Mal, fascinating. In 1878 he published his own volume of poetry Flowers of Passion (see p24 above). He was once again in the vanguard of fashion for "shortly before 1880 the hidden but persistent influence of Baudelaire began to show itself openly" in French literature (Cornell(1951) p24), and he clearly intended to keep this lead. In A Modern Lover he has Lady Helen write a book of verses with the title "Flowers of Love and Sadness"(1883, iii,p210), and in Confessions of a Young Man he describes himself in Paris writing a book of poems with the title "Roses of Midnight";

daylight was banished from its pages. In the sensual lamplight of yellow boudoirs, or the wild moonlight of centenarian forests, my fantastic loves lived out their lives, died with the dawn which was supposed to be an awakening to consciousness of reality (1888, p99).

Moreover Flowers of Passion contained a poem called "Annie", the title of a poem by Poe who Baudelaire had discovered and claimed for the Symbolists. In Pagan Poems(1881) Moore borrowed another title - "Spleen" - this time from Baudelaire himself.

The artists of the French avant-garde ignored the dry academics of traditional French poetry in favour of German idealism; a concept usually synonymous with the new high-serious romantic art of Wagner. To the Symbolists Wagner represented the ideal of a suggestive, instinctive, and vague art isolated from the mass - but many of them were without any real conception of the

music-dramas. Paris in 1876 was still a place where it was possible for a claque to boo "the overture to Der Freischütz, thinking it was the Funeral March from Die Götterdämmerung" (Zuckermann(1964) p106). Edouard Dujardin, who taught Moore most of what he knew about Wagner's ideas and how they could be applied to literature, first heard the full Ring cycle, like Moore himself, in London in the early 1880s. Moore refers to Wagner in his novels from 1888 onwards (see p117 above), but Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa is the first work in which the references are essential to the story rather than mere decoration. The idea that Wagnerian music-drama could be used in this way may have been the fruit of Dujardin and Mrs Crawford's introducing Moore to the work of D'Annunzio around 1895. All these writers were figures of notoriety at this time but Mallarmé, who was among the first to try to draw music into poetry, was still largely unknown. However when his reputation did begin to grow Moore was quick to remember his acquaintance. In Avowals he describes a "Tuesday" he had attended at "the little salle-à-manger" in the Rue de Rome that "became the centre of Parisian culture" (Av(1919) p274), and in Lewis Seymour and Some Women he rather gratuitously has Seymour and Mrs Bentham invade the poet's country retreat.

The writers and painters who helped Moore along had in common a desire to seek some deeper reality beyond what they considered to be the superficial phenomenal world of everyday appearance. Zola rejected the conventional romanticism of literature for a new type of "Experimental Novel", based on the scientific determinism of Claude Bernard, in a bold attempt "to be the master of good and evil, to regulate life, to regulate society, to solve in time all the problems of socialism"(Zola(1893) p26). Side by side with the Naturalists use of a mechanistic view of life as a defence mechanism (see p46 above) then is "the passion for

understanding, the desire for rational appropriation" which is "the driving force towards the expropriation of the mystery... the zeal for the absolute rational possession of the thing described"(Heller(1967) p95). Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and the other Symbolists shared this basic ambition but they thought the ultimate basis of existence could only be discovered if men would come to see the shortcomings of the positivist method and the real value of the forces of magic and myth which science had discredited. Zola saw the great new city of Paris as a marvellous new world where life obeyed absolute secular laws which were complex yet ultimately controllable by man through science. Baudelaire and Rimbaud on the other hand saw the great houses of the city as representative of bourgeois hypocrisy, and the slums as symbols of the irrationality of the universe and the dark underworld of man's mind. The Symbolists were prey to suspicions about the new materialistic middle-class world which science seemed to have brought into being and which seemed to deny the poet any function in society, but this reactionary rejection of the potential of science in society is coupled with a revolutionary desire to go beyond the logical limits of science. For the Symbolists, convinced of the reality and validity of their insight, the rationalism and determinism of the scientists only seemed to divorce man from an understanding of ultimate truths by separating the mind from the body and the imagination. In their attempt to heal what they saw as a split in the unity of man's being and the restriction of his powers, Baudelaire and Rimbaud were both deeply influenced by the mystic, neo-Platonic ideas of Swedenborg, Vico, and Novalis. But although the means by which they sought to achieve their goal are so different from the Naturalists', their aims are almost the same in essence; for the rationalists thought to destroy the same duality of spirit and matter by the universal application of scientific laws.

For Baudelaire poetry was a quest "to the depths of the unknown to find the new"(quoted, Raymond(1957) p12). The poet becomes "not so much an inventor" of fanciful images as "a man discovering combinations which by their miraculous force compel the view that they are evidence of the overriding order and unity of all created things"(Lehmann(1968) pp260-1). To Rimbaud, writing in a way later to influence Surrealism, "everything is good that breaks down the control of reason; everything is precious that can succeed in freeing the faculties from their normal inhibitions" (Starkie(1961) pp122-3). His prose-poems take the irrational for their subject and seek to describe it in language almost free of rational convention; as if in some Victorian heroic age language and event are thus united in sensuous and direct expression,

one enters a world which contradicts the laws of equilibrium but which emanates from a thought endowed with extraordinary plasticity, which seems freed from the logic and the "categories" of the sensual world...

Rimbaud intends to give notice that everything that exists is absolutely arbitrary and depends on an initial fact which might not have been, on an error that was committed on the day when we consented to be only what we are, not gods (Raymond(1957) p36).

Perhaps most of all the Symbolists sought to escape from the rigid framework of Parnassian verse - "a clever and ingenious arrangement of bric-à-brac" as Dr Starkie once called it (1961, p153) - and to have the freedom to take the whole of human existence as subject matter for poetry. They took for example here again the Wagnerian music-drama. A.G.Lehmann suggests that Villiers "partly" planned Axel, which he may have finished just before Moore arrived in Paris, "on the model of the Niebelung cycle";

he assumed Wagner to have intended and himself to have repeated, a work of art of epic dimensions in which the entire experience of Man is set out, ordered and subordinated to a general interpretation of life (Lehmann(1968) p229).

In Wagner too the French poets found authority for the notion that, since art was concerned with a single essential Reality,

the different forms of art were only varying symbolic manifestations of the one Real. The natural trend therefore was then towards a breakdown of the barriers dividing the various forms of art set up by sterile neo-classical criticism. In his music-dramas Wagner strove to combine the dramatic and the musical - the discursive Apollonian power of words, that is, and the emotive Dionysian power of music - and again the Symbolists took this as authority for their expressionist experiments in which they tried to combine music and poetry. It need hardly be added that their efforts were as biased in favour of words as Wagner's were towards music.

The Ring had also a more direct influence on French poetry because it succeeded in reconciling the virtue of the Parnassians, compression, with the more passionate, intense, and more realistic world of the Symbolists. The story of the feuds among the gods and heroes in the cycle has a clear reference to the nineteenth century world, and particularly to the attempt to overcome the apparently intractable opposition between the spiritual and the material. Rheingold hinges upon the validity of a contract, and the climactic scene concerns the relative value and incompatibility of the tainted gold and the life-giving youth of Freia. In Walkyre Wotan's unwillingness to fully abdicate his power is relevant to the constant nineteenth century preoccupation with whether man could endure the removal of a superhuman sanction from the world, and with the efficacy of human love as a compensating force. In Siegfried and Götterdämmerung Wagner explores the question of whether love can overcome evil, and whether love must inevitably be destroyed by worldly power. All these questions are cast into a framework of myth which transcends the particularity of German society, and the whole is then finally resolved in a way that finally affirms the value of art and myth. For at the end of the cycle, as the music

overwhelms the words, man is promised a return to the innocent world of the opening bars of Rheingold before gods and men, soul and body, love and power, were divorced by the love of the gold. At this moment, Wilfrid Mellers writes,

man relinquishes his attempt to be totally responsible for his destiny; Valhalla perishes in the purgatorial fire and - like the Wagnerian sequence itself - returns to its source, being renewed in the waters of the unconscious (Mellers(1968) p39).

The search for a Unity and Reality in experience can also be seen in the work of Manet and the Impressionist painters. Above all they strove, like Mallarmé and Rimbaud, to destroy the false distinction between the subject and its artistic expression (although, as I have already shown, the methods of these painters differed greatly, see p68 above). In their obsession with painting a particular scene at a particular time the Impressionists showed an awareness that light and the perceiving eye of the artist can have a crucial effect on the appearance of the object, but they sometimes - as in Monet's paintings of Rouen Cathedral or Haystacks - seem to have gone beyond this and almost disregarded the significance of the subject as an everyday object in favour of a purer painting of the "atmosphere" or "light" of a scene. C.H.Hamilton describes Monet's aim as "not to fix what remains but to seize what passes"(1967, p18), a description which seems an exaltation of the transient and the phenomenal. In the context of the paintings of Rouen Cathedral clearly what "passes" is the play of atmosphere and light, and "what remains" is the Cathedral itself; the crucial word is "seize", for through capturing the particular light at the particular moment of time the momentary impression becomes somehow permanent in the painting. Manet too ultimately sought for something permanent and Real, and this explains why Japanese art fascinated him so much (see p72 above). In his desire to freeze the contingency of life into the hard brilliance of art he was striving to capture the fundamental

essence of the moment of time and hence through art to elevate the particular moment to some kind of mythical or transcendental significance.

There is a clear shift from the explicit belief of Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Wagner in some form of Real existence or unconscious irrational realm akin to the world of neo-Platonic Ideas to which art is the key, to the painters' equivocal affirmation that the work of art is somehow equivalent to the neo-Platonic world. Mallarmé seems to have felt a doubt about this too. Dr Lehmann discusses the question of whether he believed in the Real existence of neo-Platonic ideas at length and concludes that he probably did not, yet he still feels able to say that Mallarmé "gives an account of poetry in which the poet is permanently sited in a non-phenomenal world"(1968, p60). This reduction of neo-Platonic Reality to the aesthetic object or myth is even more pronounced, according to Dr Lehmann, in Maeterlinck. Moore's friend Mrs Crawford wrote that Maeterlinck thought that "the hidden influences that surround us constitute the real facts of our existence"(Crawford(1899) pl43). Dr Lehmann on the other hand sees his work as the prime example of what he calls the "pseudo-myth";

we feel there... must be a "meaning" of some sort, which, when we have found it, will illuminate the plot and relieve our anxiety. There is none... The only general statement that emanates from these plays is something such as "Life is a very mysterious thing"; and that not as a proposition but as an attitude (p297).

Moore, like Yeats, seems largely never to have doubted that through his poetry Mallarmé glimpsed the infinite - in Lewis Seymour and Some Women he has him say that he may not "lift the veil" to explain the Real meaning of one of his poems (LS(1916) pl38). Of Maeterlinck on the other hand Moore says flatly that he misses "the essential", and that he is only a "very skilful and elaborate writer who knows how to burnish

his prose, so that it should seem like poetry to the ignorant"(TA(1911) p15).

Of the works Moore wrote whilst prey to enthusiasms for these writers and painters only those inspired by Zola or Manet, for example, A Drama in Muslin or Celibates, are at all successful. In the novels before 1900 his attempts to emulate the technique of Baudelaire, Rimbaud, or Wagner, or to draw characters in their images, vary from the near success to the crude vulgarisation and the absurd. Obviously it would be too much to expect to find in Moore's work any explicit statement of his understanding of these ideas - with hindsight we can see that scarcely any of the French Symbolists truly understood the ideas of Wagner they quoted and praised so highly - yet one might still look for some intuition or striving for some even remotely similar effect in Moore's work. In fact the only success Moore has is in describing the typically nineteenth century feeling of ennui in Mildred Lawson, Evelyn Innes, and Oliver Gogarty (see pp73,101,147 above). The degree of control Moore has acquired in these books can be gauged by comparing these passages with the description of the same mood in A Modern Lover when Lewis Seymour stares "into the past and future which lay around him, sullen and lead-coloured, like the long reaches of a stagnating mere"(ii, p188). It is tempting to add that Moore also succeeds in presenting one of the possible consequences of this mood - the element of Bohemian extravagance and amorality in, for example, Lewis Seymour in A Modern Lover, or the Lords in Mike Fletcher. But it is probably truer to say that by chance Moore's own lack of control over his words is appropriate to the frenzied mood he is describing. There is little either to redeem the other characters Moore created in the general image of Baudelaire and Rimbaud, or to distinguish them from the travesty common in the English and French press of his day.

John Norton is full of the new religious mysticism of the late nineteenth century. The contents of his library, including the works of Gautier, Flaubert, and the mediaeval Latin authors who fascinated Des Esseintes, suggests that Moore intended to make the character in the French image of which the "satanic Baudelaire" was the type, but all he achieves is a representative of the "aesthetic Brompton" which patronised the Oratory. Norton lacks the strong moral sense of beauty and goodness of Cardinal Newman, and although he feels his own sinfulness this causes nothing more than a masochistic self-flagellation. His petty blasphemies during his illness are at once so vaguely alluded to by Moore and so laboured that the reader gets no sense of anything approaching Baudelaire's ultimately christian notion that through sin man may come to a greater awareness of God. Moore's concern for an aesthetic purity in the story makes Norton's behaviour seem the only possible course of action for him to the reader, but the restriction in the story and the search for the inevitable word causes Moore to neglect the psychological causes of his retreat to Staunton College which seem only vague and trivial. Baudelaire often felt a sense of his own poetic impotence, a mood of spiritual deprivation and despair which he called "spleen", when nothing could "equal the dreariness of the long and empty days, falling fast round him like leaden snowflakes, with each moment the weight of eternity"(Starkie(1957) p147). Moore describes a similar mood in the character of Hubert Price, but there it is depased by being only the result of material deprivation. The solution for Price is not an accession of a new Faith, but a vulgar bourgeois rural dream (see p62 above).

Set beside Rimbaud's determined search for the underside of reality and his desire to fix "frenzies in their flight" (Blackmur(1956) p27), Mike Fletcher's pursuit of Lizzie and Lady Helen, like his continuous demand for new sensation, seems

merely an adolescent peccadillo. The character is only the equivalent of the gossip Moore might have heard in the 1870s or read in Félicien Champsauer's novel Dinah Samuel of 1882, where Rimbaud was caricatured as "a disreputable poet with a taste for alcohol and petty larceny"(Starkie(1954) p6).

Mike Fletcher dates from 1889 when much of Rimbaud's life and aims was known, yet Fletcher is simply a tritely romantic Byronic figure. Suicide was as much a commonplace in the elevated and etiolated world of the nineties aesthete as consumption was in the puritan moral world of the three volume novel. Moore even went so far as to try to drag his father into this world by claiming in the preface to his brother's biography of G.H.Moore, to Maurice Moore's dismay, that their father had killed himself in a fit of despair at the ingratitude of his tenants. In 1845 Baudelaire had tried to commit suicide because, as he wrote at the time, "the fatigue of going to sleep and of waking up again is unbearable to me... I'm useless to others - and dangerous to myself. I'm killing myself because I'm immortal and because I hope"(Starkie(1957) p151). But only in the death of Emily Watson in Vain Fortune does Moore achieve anything comparable to the resonance of this last sentence. Lady Helen Seymour kills herself rather as she might call a cab, and Mike Fletcher's death is so self-consciously described and at such length by Moore that it lacks both credibility and significance. Mike,

stood for a moment like one in combat, and then like one overwhelmed retreated through the folding doors, seeking his pistol. "Another day begun! Twelve more hours of consciousness and horror! I must go!" (MF(1889) p322).

Dr Starkie praises Moore's article on Rimbaud for its recognition of his "spiritual nature"(1954, p8), but I think she endows Moore with more perspicacity than he deserves, for to Moore "spiritual nature" meant simply the inverted asceticism - the pursuit of experience directed towards a pure aesthetic end - to be found

in the characters of John Norton and Evelyn Innes. In 1897 a biography of Rimbaud appeared in France which collected together, with a reasonable degree of accuracy, the details of his life as they were then known. In 1899 Arthur Symons published The Symbolist Movement in Literature where, in the chapter on Rimbaud, he wrote that "it is for the absolute that he seeks always; the absolute which the great artist, with his careful wisdom, has renounced seeking"(1899, p73). Yet still for Moore the rejection of Europe and the flight to a more primitive world, exemplified by Rimbaud and copied in the 1909 Sister Theresa, is only part of a mood of fashionable boredom and ennui. Sir Owen Asher in fact seems to owe more to Ouida's Bertie Cecil in Under Two Flags than to the French avant-garde.

I have described already Moore's equivocal attitude to the Naturalist novel, particularly in his descriptions of Harding. The new genre gave Moore himself a reputation for high-seriousness with the avant-garde, but he himself describes Harding as cynical and indifferent (see p60 above). The accusation was commonly and rightly urged by critics against this kind of novel; for example Mrs Crawford wrote of a novelist as "infected with the pessimism so prevalent in French intellectual circles of the present day"(1899, p184). Moore himself was eventually to say that "Zola looked upon habits and customs as humanity"(Av(1919) p175), but during his enthusiasm for Zola he called him "the Homer of modern life" and applauded an art in keeping with the scientific temper of the nineteenth century (see p41 above). Yet nowhere in the early novels does he show any sign of fellow-feeling with the Naturalists' dream of a complete rational description of the world. Moreover, in A Drama in Muslin, the most successful of his "Naturalist" novels, the solution seems to lie not in "socialism" but in an isolated individual bourgeois dream. Even in this novel the scientific glosses lie in unintegrated

chunks on the surface of the narrative which, as Moore was to find when he revised the novel to Muslin, can be easily eliminated without altering the story. Once again in his estimate of French art and artists then, despite his years in France and his championing of the painters and novelists, Moore seems to accept the conventional image of sensational decadence propagated by the English press and the establishment against which he ostensibly rebelled.

In the quasi-Japanese style stories I think Moore was influenced by Manet, but the precision and compression of these studies might also be evidence of his allegiance to the ideas of Mallarmé. That they are not is plain from the lack of reference to Mallarmé in Moore's writings before 1916, and because Moore like most of the early disciples of Mallarmé first became aware of his existence when Huysmans claimed the "Hérodiade" for the Decadence in A Rebours. As one might expect Moore ignored any suggestion of the quasi-Platonic Ideas behind Mallarmé's work and stressed only the aesthete - the poet whose "L'Après-midi d'un Faun" had been issued on vellum tied with cords in the Japanese fashion, and who is described in Lewis Seymour and Some Women as a dandy (1916, p135ff.). However after 1890 he does share Mallarmé's notion that at the moment of perception the eye and the perceived object cannot be separated, and tended to produce work which showed a Mallarméan conciseness. But Moore continues to describe the particular and pathological condition which the calm style heightens rather than giving a tranquil image of a universal Idea. Moore shows the same degree of comprehension of Wagner as of Mallarmé. The two names were linked for him because Mallarmé (acting on a suggestion of Edouard Dujardin) had explored the use of Wagnerian ideas in his poetry. In the later narratives Moore's own style does parallel the continuous melody of Wagner's music but to find this, as some critics do in the earlier novels seems

to me merely wish-fulfilment. Nevertheless Moore does use quite appropriate references to Wagner in the stories of John Norton and Evelyn Innes to create characters who inhabit the new Wagnerian aesthetic world. In his book, The First Hundred Years of Wagner's 'Tristan', Elliott Zuckermann distinguishes between the "Wagnerite" - a writer, like Mallarmé using words with the suggestiveness of music, who follows Wagner's ideas rather than listening to the music - and the "Tristanite", who feels a "personal infatuation" and a "direct response to the music"(1964, p30). In the early part of his career Moore was a "Wagnerite" only to a very limited extent, for instance in the impressionist evocation of character and scene in Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa. Even here the passages which make direct references to Tannhauser, Tristan and Isolde, and Walkyre seem at least a little simply bravura "Tristanite" display by Moore. Significantly also the way of life given most meaning and weight in the story is concerned with intellectual and moral questioning. The pantheistic nature worship, linked to a renunciation of the power of the will, which is closer to Wagner's ideas is less effectively portrayed (see p104 above). If these notions of the renunciation of the will and the yearning towards some greater unity are inspired by the music-dramas, as expressed by Moore they lack entirely the overwhelming force of Wagner's music.

Clearly in these novels Moore lacks any deep understanding of, or interest in, the ideas of the artists who he said had been responsible for his education. In his enthusiasm he produced something which can only be described as a vulgar and incoherent pastiche. However perhaps he would have had no objection to this charge, since it would still allow him to be described, as Mrs Crawford described D'Annunzio, as "the most brilliant flower of decadence, a beautiful poisonous growth; the product of a

great nation fallen upon evil days"(1899, p216). The most conscious and thorough-going instance of Moore's attempt to win this kind of reputation for himself is in Confessions of a Young Man.

All the misconceptions I have outlined above are present in this book but for once they are under the control of irony: a welcome relief after the confusion of the contemporary Spring Days and Mike Fletcher. The result, if scarcely full of understanding, does at least seem to show that Moore was a little aware of his own youthful folly.

Moore said that his idea in Confessions was to fix "the ephemeral and sometimes almost involuntary passing of emotions"(Gerber(1968) p56). Time has passed between the events described and the writing of the book, and so it can be basically an impressionist work even though it describes how the narrator in the past has mocked the first Impressionist paintings. At the end Moore apparently explains his purpose further when he writes, "Hypocritical reader... in telling you of my vices I am only telling you of your own"(1888, p352). However the book is not a satire on English values from the French point of view, but a description of the folly of the aesthete and the absurdity of the young Englishman in France. The ironic relationship between the author's "vices" and those of the "hypocritical reader" is then by no means clear, and Moore seems strangely to have produced a work which exalts the young man of the nineties by its overall tone and yet professes to criticise him. The flicking over of the subject to the reader seems only to be an attempt to distance the story from himself as its author and to escape its implications, and this would be consistent with Moore's original use of the pseudonym Dayne in the book. The fundamental basis of the book is not in fact the sentence I have just quoted but a passage such as the following from the beginning;

I loved to spend as much on scent and toilette knick-knacks as would keep a poor man's family in affluence for ten months. I loved to shock my friends by bowing to those whom I should not bow to... My mother suffered and expected ruin, for I took no trouble to conceal anything; I boasted of dissipations. But there was no need for fear, I was naturally well endowed with a very clear sense indeed of self-preservation (1888, pp14-15).

The stress is twofold; firstly on "spend", "shock", and "boasted", but also on "no need for fear" and "a clear sense indeed of self-preservation". Moore describes himself doing all the things convention forbids, so that Paris becomes a negative image of polite society, but he also shows that he was never in danger of forsaking the material values of this polite society. The connecting link between the two states of mind is his indifference, firstly perhaps feigned in the reference to the amount of money he spent on "knick-knacks", and secondly real in his refusal to ease his mother's cares. The absolute stress upon his own self makes it plain that the benefit Moore gained from living in Paris is not ultimately to be calculated in terms of the ideas he heard about there but in terms of his own psychological need.

The technique and ideas of the French were a gloss by which he thought he could separate his work even more from that of his English contemporaries, in order among other things to prevent any unwelcome comparisons between their work and his, and Moore on the whole made no permanent or thinking response to anything except the painting of Manet and the Japanese prints. The French artists he copied served only to provide ways of expressing his feeling of isolation and depression. Raymond Williams has written of the general movements in society I have been discussing hitherto that in Naturalism,

the alienation of reason from all other activities of man, changed reason from an activity to a mechanism, and society from a human process into a machine. The protest against this was inevitable, but to stay with society as a human process involved commitments to social action which were indeed difficult to make. Under the pressure of difficulty and the disillusion of failure, the Romantic vision of man became in its turn alienated. The alienation of the rational into a system of mechanical materialism was matched by an alienation of the irrational (Williams(1966) p72).

The situation of his family in Ireland, his upbringing, and his character all seem to have combined to render Moore particularly liable to the sense of utter futility which filled much of the educated middle-class at this time. He certainly failed to realise that he was faced with the choice between seeing society as a "machine" or as amenable to "social action"; in his enthusiastic allegiance first to rationalism and then to irrationalism all he really learnt was the value and importance of art. And since the value of art meant the value of the artist, which in turn meant the value of himself, perhaps this was all he wanted and needed to know.

12. Intellectualism and Classicism

After his father's death Moore's break with his family home in Mayo and with Irish society was complete. He soon got to know a remarkable number of artists in Paris yet he seems to have felt little love for French society. The frenetic bustle of the demmi-monde probably seemed to him only another premonition of the decline of an era he had sensed in Ireland. In contrast when he returned from Paris to London and began writing there is a constant idealisation of England in his novels, for example in the descriptions of the world of Mrs Bentham and Lady Helen in A Modern Lover (see p29 above). The attempt at sophistication in this novel is succeeded in A Mummer's Wife by an attempt to show Kate Ede's innocence amidst the bourgeois life of Hanley and her discovery of the outside world. The train journeys with the Opera Company are a new and exhilarating experience for her, as they probably were for Moore himself when he was collecting the notes for his novel. There is an element of idealisation in this and in the description of Kate's walk with Montgomery by the sea at Blackpool where Moore tries to capture the innocent joy of the townee's first visit to the sea-side. The idealised aristocratic world of A Modern Lover has no place amongst the predominant Zolaesque stress on industrial and town life in A Mummer's Wife, but Hanley and the surrounding countryside are described with the same exaggeration. The picture of the golden age shown in Mrs Bentham's house in Sussex and the tennis-party held there is reversed to reveal an equally intense but now black and appalled vision which makes the landscape through which Dick walks from Rochdale to Manchester seem like that of "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came". Moore probably remembered that Baudelaire thought Poe had been killed by the evil effect of the great American city.

Any account of the new life Moore was seeking for himself at this time must be centred upon the character of Alice Barton. The world of A Mummer's Wife was new to Moore but it was only a temporary enthusiasm exhausted by the writing of the novel. The story of the Bartons was equally a convenient peg upon which to hang a Naturalist novel but with the crucial advantage that the closeness of the setting to Moore's own early life removed the need for quite so much dreary note-taking. In telling the story of Alice Barton then Moore reworked his own revulsion from Ireland. It is impossible to say how much this retelling of his life in fictional terms to justify his past actions which is so common in Moore's later work was done with conscious intent at this stage of his career, but Alice's new bourgeois life in South Kensington is plainly an idyll of domestic bliss close to Moore's own heart. (His own family lived in the Cromwell Road when his father held his seat in the Westminster Parliament.) A dream of England dominates all the novels and short-stories which follow A Drama in Muslin and it only begins to lose impact when Moore began to work the vein of a romantic idealisation of Ireland in the character of Ulick Dean in Evelyn Innes. Even then the Innes' home in Dulwich, the convent in Wimbledon, and Sir Owen Asher, seem to suggest that the dream lingers at the back of his mind. Moreover in the ensuing years when, under the influence of the Irish Revival, Moore increasingly condemned the "Brixton Empire" - "the universal suburb, in which a lean man with glasses on his nose and a black bag in his hand is always running after his bus" (LII(1901) p51) - the frequent recourse to a pantheistic vision of nature is not too distant from these early dreams.

The facile intensity of Mike Fletcher and Sir Owen Asher allowed Moore to revel in the avant-garde notoriety I have described in Chapter Two (see pp25,33 above). Through

A Mere Accident, Spring Days, and Vain Fortune however he also was able to indulge a different dream, that of an ordered and stable society far removed from the disturbed world of his native Ireland. The fulfilment in fiction of both these dreams is often simplistic in the extreme. In Spring Days the comedy of manners which Moore tried to write after the manner of Jane Austen has no imaginatively real criteria upon which the criticism of the pretensions of Berkins or the ineffectuality of Mr Brookes can be based. This lack pushes the description of the Horrockses and of Willy Brookes' cosy secret life in Brighton which I take Moore to be presenting for the reader's approval dangerously close to parody. In A Mere Accident Mrs Norton and Mr Hare are more adequate as images of an ideal rural order but there is still an absence of any element of tension. The reader is left with no real sense that Moore is capable of discriminating between what he presents as the false order of Staunton College and the true order of Sussex. Instead the opposition is obliterated by the trite idealisation of Norton, who is shown as equally competent to run the estate and to judge the triviality of the Jesuit life.

Vain Fortune involves the same kind of unquestioned acceptance of English rural society as A Modern Lover. Moore avoids the potentially important contrast between the world of Emily Watson and that of Hubert Price; hers the established, hereditary order in decline which lacks any material foundation for its easy and confident assumption of superiority, his that of the nouveau riche whose one desire in life is stability. Instead Price, like Lewis Seymour, is born of a social status above that to which he has fallen at the beginning of the story and takes naturally to the world of Ashwood. Moore seems to ignore any social question that might arise and to see Price purely as a writer within the context of the artistic problems of his work,

even though for Price, as for Moore, success as a writer is frequently associated with material success. The feeling that Moore dealt only with a dream of England is confirmed by a consideration of the social reality of the years in which he wrote these stories, for London after 1870 was, like Paris, rife with the social unrest and economic disruption he had tried to leave behind in Ireland.

Stories of the Commune of 1871 must have horrified Moore when he arrived in Paris a bare eighteen months after its suppression, and in turn made the esoteric isolation of the Nouvelle Athènes more attractive to him. The colony of exiled Communards, anarchists, and socialists which filled much of Soho when he came back to London in 1880 must then have seemed yet another foretaste of catastrophe. Furthermore even the serene isolation of the artist was tainted by the presence at the head of the socialist agitators of William Morris, who as the author of The Earthly Paradise epitomised aestheticism and a safe, respectable, modern art for the establishment. Moore's lodgings during these years were in Wych Street off the Strand. Although this was nearer to Fleet Street it was perhaps still a little too close for comfort to Trafalgar Square where the organised demonstrations of these years frequently ended with speeches. There was often vicious police over-reaction during the meetings in the Square, culminating on the 13th November 1886⁷ in the most violent of these riots - known afterwards as "Bloody Sunday". Moore seems to have spent the spring of this year in France and the summer in Sussex, but it is still possible that he was in London in November. Some years later he became briefly a member of Boodles, the aristocratic Tory club, and there is no reason to doubt that in 1886, when the Radicals⁷ seemed also to threaten his property in Ireland by opposing the government's Coercion Bill, Moore's opinion of the demonstrators

would have been other than that of the Times leader of the day; the active part of yesterday's mob was composed of all that is weakest, most worthless, and most vicious in the slums of a great city... no honest purpose... animated these howling roughs. It was simply love of disorder, hope of plunder, and the revolt of dull brutality against the rule of law.

The leader drew attention to the lower-classes' "greed of gain", their "horrid... ignorant... debased... ranting... pernicious incitements", their "nauseous hypocrisy", and called their leaders "criminals". E.P.Thompson, from whose book on William Morris

I take this quotation, comments;

In 1883 the middle-classes had ignored the Socialists: in 1884 they had looked upon them with detached interest or with "dry grins". But in 1885 they seemed suddenly to realise that these Socialists were in earnest: and moreover that the thing the Socialists were after was THEIR PROPERTY! By 1886, when the "Trafalgar Square Riots" took place there was scarcely a grin left among them (Thompson(1955) pp577,422).

In 1887 Moore "still kept his rooms at Dane's Inn, but he was oftener in Sussex" staying at Southwick with the Bridgers "than in London". He began to develop "a liking for the world of fashion and for country-houses" which his growing circle of aristocratic friends, among them Sir Willian Eden, Mrs Craigie, Mrs Hunter, Lord Grimthorpe, Mrs Crawford and Lady Cunard, enabled him to indulge freely (Hone(1936) ppl34,191). The accidents of his upbringing served him well, for the air of scandal which still hung over his reputation as a writer made him attractive as a guest to "artistic" hostesses, whilst his "county" status in Ireland made him acceptable to their husbands. The image of the artist in an ivory tower, isolated and above society, and the exclusive country house life combined to make an otherwise hopeless world tolerable to Moore. His claim to originality in Esther Waters, the most "English" of all his novels, lies in his use of a time scheme based upon a few incidents and events rather than upon a cradle-to-grave life

story, and in the way conventionally immoral actions are described in conventionally heroic terms (see pp43,56 above). These ideas probably owe much to the work of Wagner and the Symbolist poets which he first heard about in Paris, but Moore tried to give the concept of the circular movement of time and events, which is in itself meaningless, significance and value through his dream of England (see p104 above). He deliberately chose to set the novel among humble people, and this is in accord with "one of the assumptions of the pastoral, that you can say everything about complex people by a complete consideration of simple people"(Empson(1935) p137). Moore's model here was, he thought, not Flaubert - whose "stiff, paralysed narrative, the short sentence trussed like a fowl with the inevitable adjective" he condemned (Av(1919) p261) - but the Russian novel where "vulgar foreshadowing is unnecessary, and we watch the unfolding of the story as we watch the unfolding of rose leaves" (PF(1894) pxiii). William Empson writes that in the true pastoral there is an attempt to "reconcile some conflict between the parts of society"; the artist must "take a limited life and pretend it is the full and normal one"(1935, pp19,114). Unfortunately Esther Waters cannot in the end stand as a generalisation about all human life. The "limited life" Moore seizes upon is twofold, the rural life of Woodview, close to nature, and the contented bourgeois family life of "The King's Head", and in both cases this is too crude and simple to compensate for the misfortunes which threaten to crush Esther and Mrs Barfield.

The whole of Esther Waters is dominated by Moore's longing for a stable sense of order in society, seen alike in the Victorian fictional conventions of morality which govern much of the action (see p52 above), and the pastoral element I have been describing. Woodview and Peckham seem for much of the story like what Edmund Wilson called in Maeterlinck "vague, pale, and suave

images"(Wilson(1931) p42). Towards the beginning of the story Moore describes the downs around Woodview to prove the continuity and flow of things;

The plantations of Woodview reached half way up the first hill. On the left the land sloped into a shallow valley sown with various crops, and long tongues of crimson crept through the grey sky. The valley deepened; the shaws above Elliott's farm were the last. Beyond them the great downland rolled northward, treeless, irreclaimable, scooped into patriarchal solitudes, thrown into wild crests overlooking a long chain of coast towns and the vague sea.

There was a smell of sheep in the air, and they saw the flock trotting towards them, followed by the shepherd with his huge hat and crook, his two shaggy dogs at his heels. A brace of partridges rose out of the sainfoin, and flew whirling over the hills (EW(1894) p40).

This generalised description reminiscent of the idyll of A Mere Accident (see p84 above) can, I think, be distinguished from moments of more obvious pathetic fallacy when Esther and William figure more prominently in the scene, for example when Moore tells how "Esther suddenly became aware, as she had never done before, of the exceeding beauty of the world"(p42). When Esther and William first visit Peckham together a similar distinction can be made between the pathetic fallacy of the contrast of the young child and the "cinder-heaps and tin canisters"(p208), symbolising the contrast of the future and the past, and Moore's attempt at a more general and more rural image of value;

The cottage-door was open and they could see their child swinging on the gate. The evening was very still, and the passers-by came and went like shadows. The eyes of both father and mother were fixed on the swinging figure. Neither knew exactly what to say, and both were burdened with the responsibility with which they felt the moment was pregnant (p211).

Esther Waters seems at times something of a detached achievement in Moore's early work, but it can thus be seen to be related to the contemporary Vain Fortune or Celibates which depict, to use Edmund Wilson's words again, a "world in which the characters

are less often dramatic personalities than disembodied broodings and longings"(1931, p42). Like Pelléas et Mélisande Esther Waters does contain conflict but overall this is dissolved into a general air of sadness. This use of the pastoral as a pseudo-myth (see p203 above) to resolve moral problems is also prominent in the more exotic world of Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa. The search for new values, and for a new basis for morality, becomes transformed into the vague non-discursive presentation of states of mind, particularly in the descriptions of Evelyn's singing whose importance seems to lie as much in their aesthetic success as pieces of writing as in their psychological acuteness.

Moore's refusal ultimately to commit himself to any judgement is in accord with what was defined by Pater, following Kant and Winckelmann, as Classical Beauty. Winckelmann's chief value, according to Pater, lay in his emphasis on "the clear ring, the eternal outline of the genuine antique"(Pater(1888) p190).

Greek art, Pater wrote, purged

from the individual all that belongs only to him, all the accidents, the feelings and actions of the special moment... In this way their works come to be like some subtle extract or essence, or almost like pure thoughts or ideas (p68).

Moore's comments on art are scattered with opinions - for example that Debussy was "as perfect as antiquity or Mr Pater"(Cunard(1957) p94) - which show that he took over Pater's ideas lock, stock, and barrel. Pater wrote in The Renaissance that in Greek art "genius confesses... an element of permanence, a standard of taste"(1888, p210), and Moore followed him in Avowals by writing that he too believed an absolute system of values existed "in antiquity"(1919, p34). Yet despite his belief that the "perfection" of Pater's book was "flawless", in paraphrasing the words of the master Moore occasionally shifts the emphasis. He writes that the "moral" of The Renaissance is that,

though the inspiration be not always by us, it is our business to write beautiful pages, so that we may be prepared to receive the sacred flame when it shall choose to descend into our lantern; our care should be that the lantern be worthy of the flame when it comes (Av(1919) p200).

This is a good deal more passive than Pater's urging of the seizing of the liberating moment; "while all melts under our feet, we may well catch at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment"(Pater(1888) p250). Pater himself suppressed this Conclusion of the original edition of The Renaissance published in 1873 when the second edition appeared in 1877. It was not restored until 1888, three years after the publication of Marius the Epicurean which he wrote to defuse the original injunction "to burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy"(1888, p250). Moore's words resemble the discreet tone of Marius the Epicurean which was for him the first revelation of Pater and which he always preferred to the sensationalist Conclusion of The Renaissance.

However both Moore's and Pater's notions of the Classical were deformations of reality. Moore's ideal "Greek absence of accent"(Av(1919) p94) is exemplified in his description of one of Landor's Imaginary Conversations through which "we are lifted beyond ourselves listening to these two great figures that stand on the very ridge of the world and talk of simple things and great things with the same ease"(CMF(1933) p55). To Pater art strove towards the condition of music, "to be independent of the mere intelligence, to become a matter of pure perception, to get rid of its responsibilities to its subject". For him perfection was the Panathenaic frieze;

this colourless, unclassified purity of life, with its blending and interpenetration of intellectual, spiritual and physical elements, still folded together, pregnant with the potentialities of the whole world closed within it, is the highest expression of that indifference which lies beyond all that is relative or partial (1888, pp144,233).

Gilbert Highet suggests that this late nineteenth century allegiance to Kant's concept of the Beautiful is simply a "revolt against the Victorian attitude that literature must be edifying". In fact the "Greeks and Romans did not believe that art was divorced from morality", and Hölderlin and the early romantics were closer to the truth in seeing Classical art as neither static nor passive but full of a tension between "intense feeling and deliberate objectivity"(Highet(1967) pp445,378). Such a notion is paradoxically close to a definition of the work of the artists of the Renaissance Moore admired, but in his writings he saw the classically beautiful work of art as something quite different, a "chiselled intaglio" (the phrase might be used to describe a Horatian Ode or a poem by Keats) which by definition is not susceptible to either analysis or improvement. Instead the work of art, like the Grecian urn in Keats' Ode, exists as an object, complete in itself, and entirely divorced from the moral perceptions of the observer. Moore endeavours to give this autonomy and self-containedness to the stories of John Norton, Hubert Price and Emily Watson, Mildred Lawson, Esther Waters, and Evelyn Innes.

The stories of The Untilled Field perhaps best sum up this striving towards an art free from the moral concerns of the nineteenth century novel, and the early Symbolists' search for the Absolute. "The Exile", "The Wedding Gown", and "Alms-Giving" all have the air of suggesting a meaning below the surface; "The Wild Goose" and "So On He Fares" are the best examples of Moore's feeling that any "effect" in art is better achieved by "understatement rather than overstatement"(CES(1924) p92), that the delicate business of describing the soul of man is always marred by discursive explanation. In the latter the disproportion between the boy's crime of stealing the gooseberries and his punishment, the mother's hatred of her son, her catching

the bee and the witch-like thrusting of it down his neck seem to convert an already unreasonable act into a nightmare symbol of the cruel senselessness of existence. This fairy-tale quality is sustained by the escape in the barge down the great river to the sea, the kind widow "longing for someone to look after" (TUF(1903) p292), and the boy's wild sailor life. Ulick is at sea so long that he can only remember his escape from home "like a tale heard in infancy"(p292). The sense of the distance from the past and the crime and punishment here then only adds to the shock when he comes home to find a boy standing on the very same bank from which he had jumped into the river to escape, dressed in the "same little boots and socks" as he had worn (p293). Moore writes that "the sea-farer began to lose his reckoning... coming back he had found his own self"(p295), but events have not recurred exactly to pattern for Ulick's mother loves her younger child but her "dislike" of Ulick "had survived ten years of absence"(p296). The briefness of the story and the small number of characters means that Moore can almost manage without names for the characters, thus allowing touches of discreet irony;

He had gone away and had met with a mother who loved him, and had done ten years' hard sea-faring. He had forgotten his real mother - forgotten everything except the bee and the hatred that gathered in her eyes when she put it down his back; and that same ugly look he could now see gathering in her eyes, and it grew deeper every hour he remained in the cottage (pp296-7).

The vision of the inevitable cruelty of the world is then almost transformed on Ulick's return into a malignant personal hate, but the detached style makes it emotionally distant from the characters - as Moore says "in this second experience there was neither terror nor mystery - only bitterness"(p297). Moreover the lack of details about the mother or the father of either child makes the persons of the story inhabitants of a strange world where sin is inexorably incapable of repentance, forgiveness,

or even explanation. The overtones of catastrophe, hate, and despair are only muted by the final ironic calm as Ulick, like the Flying Dutchman, once more sets off to sea;

The evening sky opened calm and benedictive, and the green country flowed on, the boat passed by ruins, castles and churches, and every day was alike until they reached the Shannon (p298).

Tennyson wrote in the "Morte d'Arthur" that, as the time approached when Arthur's body must be carried away in the mysterious boat, "The old order changeth, yielding place to the new". For Moore there is to be no change, and even the simple little title "So On He Fares" acquires a grim irony.

The moral crises there are in the stories of Esther Waters and Evelyn Innes eventually contribute to the sense that Moore came to find an ultimate value in the aesthetic object. What Esther and Evelyn have to learn is the necessity, in Moore's own words, of reconciling their "words" and their "deeds" (see pp45,62-3 above). But only in Vain Fortune in the character of Rose Massey among the early novels is this unity of morality and action accomplished by bringing "deeds" into line with "words" when, as Lady Macbeth, she allows her actions to be entirely dictated by the play (in a way analogous to the christian's obedience to divine law). In contrast Evelyn Innes and Esther Waters, Moore suggests, should rationalise and reorientate morality to suit their character and actions. In doing so in his opinion they reject a mindless subservience to the Church or the conventions of society to follow a "natural" course. Yet Moore's aestheticism and classicism can provide no real basis in the story for the discovery of the "natural" norm which instead sinks into an aesthetically fine but morally crude pastoralism. The romantic artist "creative by processes which are vital and spontaneous like the self-effecting growth of a tree"(Abrams(1960) p200) is replaced by a poet who is a creator of rigid fictions that

appease man's sense of insecurity rather than discover new and more Real life. The poet, in Shelley's words "one of the unacknowledged legislators of the world", becomes at best only a seeker after "an irregular metaphysic for the control of man's irrational powers"(Blackmur(1956) pl2, my italics).

There was clearly a risk that Moore's work might ultimately become morally vacuous. I have already described how the too easy recourse to a wish-fulfilling pastoral degrades the characters of Esther Waters and Evelyn Innes. On the other hand if the intellectual exploration of the character's conduct becomes too intricate it will inevitably become introverted and lose its relation even to the tenuous value of the pastoral. This danger seems particularly acute as Moore in the Evelyn Innes stories begins to use more and more complex irony. Irony must somehow state a code of values by which the action and values under discussion can be judged, but this statement of value may be only implicit and secondary to the purely intellectual business of the comparison. The criticism of Hail and Farewell is almost entirely destructive. Although I have called the trilogy mock-heroic this is ultimately an inaccurate label, for in eighteenth century mock-heroic irony there is a consistent adherence to what poets saw as classical values, whereas the analogies between the Wagnerian music-dramas and the Irish Revival are at times only nominal and lack any deep understanding of Wagner's intentions.

However in The Brook Kerith and Héloïse and Abélard, as I have tried to suggest in Chapter Ten, a few basic concepts (for example in The Brook Kerith fatherhood and prophecy) come to dominate the whole story, and irony then becomes a kind of intellectual game. The object is to elaborate the subject-matter under scrutiny until all its variants are exhausted, and to discover a system of irony to match these variants which will allow the scoring of the highest number of points off the subject.

So engrossing is the result that it draws attention from the often superficial values upon which the irony is based and, as R.P.Blackmur says of Proust, maintains "intelligence at the pitch where it refuses action"(1956, p17). The systematic application of a dense web of irony then gives the book the same air of self-confident finality, independent of the reader or his values, as the Japanese print.

"The very heart of the classical message... is that one should aim first of all not to be original, but to be human, and to be human one needs to look up to a sound model and imitate it" (Babbitt(1919) p64). The demand that the artist imitate the real - together with the assumption that this reality was immediately apparent to the majority of men - became in the romantic writers a belief that true reality was a secret thing which required the special qualities of the artist to reveal it fully. To Coleridge then the power of the poet "reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities". In Browning this faith in the power of the poet has lost its philosophical backing but it retains its optimism in Andrea del Sarto's exclamation, "a man's reach must exceed his grasp or what's a heaven for?". But Moore and his contemporaries could, it seemed to them, be sure of nothing. Science had declined into mechanism, true mysticism into vapid spiritualism, objectivity into crude Naturalism, and subjectivity into the pathological; there seemed no system of values which they could whole-heartedly accept. In Hail and Farewell, The Brook Kerith, and Héloïse and Abélard Moore responds to this by pretending a stable system of values really exists, and by the complexity of his argument, the polished perfection of his narrative, and the immediate appeal of the glimpses of the characters who seem to embody value, slurring over the fact that it is in the long run mere assumption. In the earlier studies of Hubert Price, John Norton, and Mildred Lawson,

the stress upon the clear observation of the character by the author and the blindness of the characters to their own faults allows the reader to ignore the absence of any solution to their dilemmas. In Hail and Farewell Moore resorts to audacious comparisons to gain the reader's support for what is entirely destructive irony. Moore treats Yeats as Pope had done Cibber and Shadwell in The Dunciad, refusing his views a fair hearing and deflecting the reader's attention from this by unrelated and ridiculous images, for example those of Yeats as a rook or an umbrella stuck in the ground and left behind after a picnic. Moore's image of Yeats was at the time of his writing Hail and Farewell quite unjust, for by this time he had left "the garden-close of Morris' imagination... a censored existence somewhere in that part of Chiswick called Bedford Park"(Ure(1946) p31). Moore sought to destroy his rival not in the Dionysian mood of frenzy and creation - a course Yeats might have approved - but in a pseudo-classical Apollonian one of "caustic insight and salutary disillusionment"(Eglinton(1935) p86).

The smooth style of the late narratives plays a large part in the diverting of the reader's attention from the absence of any meaningful values. It acts as a narcotic by means of which some credence can be granted and the reader's sense of doubt dulled. In this sense the smooth style paradoxically goes against the nineteenth century notions of the supremacy of the responsibility of the individual, in which Moore often professed enthusiastic belief, by destroying the reader's sense of the separateness of the characters; in The Brook Kerith for example then the style seems of necessity to contradict much of the narrative (see p188 above). Moore's later narratives are thus a little like Art Nouveau designs in which,

material becomes an obedient mass in the thrall of linear rhythm. The ornamentation is always alive, restless, and at the same time balanced... it is always at one and the same time moving and in a state of equilibrium (Madsen(1967) p16).

At its best this whiplash movement within the frozen stasis of the design can give life to a work, at worst it can lead to a sterile playing with words divorced from their real implications. This latter state is what Moore sees in The Brook Kerith as the restricted Greek sensibility of Matthias (see p160 above), but unfortunately the idea also seems to describe much of Moore's later work, such as Peronnick the Fool, A Story-Teller's Holiday, or Aphrodite in Aulis.

But in his best work Moore can still achieve tension. At the end of The Brook Kerith two alternatives seem open, on the one hand an acquiescence with Paul in a Faith palpably at variance with knowledge, or an acquiescence with Jesus in a knowledge which is the product of accident and a disturbed mind. However, although Moore does seem to come down on one side (see p192 above), the disentangling of this seems too complicated a process to be part of the immediate reaction of the reader who is more inclined to stop at the end of the story admiring the way Moore has built up the tension between Jesus and Paul rather than the way it is resolved. The reconciliation through the imagination which Coleridge had urged as the duty of the artist is thus side-stepped. The self-contained quality of Moore's treatment of Joseph, Jesus, and Paul makes any resolution of the conflict of Faith and Knowledge redundant until the hypnotic effect of the smooth style wears off. The reader then realises that Moore has given neither solution nor values which could produce a clear conclusion. It is a tribute to Moore's skill - all the more remarkable in the light of the incoherent chaos of the early stories - that he can hold the reader fascinated, and that the characters around which the glittering web forms, like mother-of-pearl around a speck of sand, can hold moral and emotional interest. But it is a tribute in the end to Moore's ability to make a frozen aesthetic substitute for the random contingency and tension of life.

13. Romanticism

The classical ideal which Moore imitated differs both from the genuine classical art of Greece and the neo-classicism of eighteenth century Europe which Raymond Williams describes as "an aristocratic version of Greek theory and practice, rather than a revival of either"(1966, p28). What had been in Greece a general virtue in society was translated into an ideal for a privileged part of society; control and stability were emphasised and the importance of life and vigour diminished. As the power of money began to replace excellence of breeding in determining the position of a man in society in the nineteenth century the discrepancy between this stable ideal and the cut and thrust of commercial life became more obvious, and the art of the privileged class degenerated from intellectual and classical wit to emotion and sentiment. In the mid-nineteenth century artists, alienated from bourgeois material reality, quite naturally then took over classical art as a proclamation of their exclusive and superior status in the world. As art became divorced from society the belief in classicism as a balance of objectivity and life soon degenerated into the "pure", "objective" art which I have described in the previous chapter. Artists retained some elements of romanticism but these soon lost their original status and meaning. "Sensation" which had long meant "an operation of any of the senses" (the date of the first use of the word in this sense given in the Oxford English Dictionary is 1615), began soon after 1800 to acquire the now dominant meaning of "an excited or violent feeling" or "a strong impression (e.g. of horror, admiration, surprise, etc.)".

In his article "Some Characteristics of English Fiction" of 1900 Moore wrote that,

the mission of painting and poetry and music has always had for its object the raising of our souls out of the lethargies of real life into a supersensuous heaven where the horizons are thrown back, and the soul is conscious of nothing but itself (EM(1900) p507).

The romantic phrases, "raising of our souls" and "horizons are thrown back", contrast with the disillusion of the "lethargies of real life" and the introversion of "the soul is conscious of nothing but itself". Optimistic romanticism is to be found in Moore's novels even whilst his work is most compressed and enigmatic and his mood most despairing; indeed in Evelyn Innes romanticism almost prevails. The presentation of the convent fails to balance the impact of the story of the opera-singer, and the overall lack of balance and prolixity of the story is more characteristic of early nineteenth century writing than the aesthetic nineties. The stories of The Untilled Field are in general the best example of classicism in Moore's work. In the preface to the 1921 edition of The Lake Moore wrote that the original version of this story had only been omitted from The Untilled Field for want of space since the stories had all been written out of "the same happy inspiration... which rose suddenly out of the darkness, like waters out of the earth when a spring is tapped"(TL(1921) pvii). However in The Untilled Field Moore intended to show how Ireland was "a sort of modern Tibet... every story tells of how this country is going to pieces" (Gerber(1968) pp247,252). The fatalism of this seems incompatible with the pantheism and optimism of Father Gogarty and Moore's own inspiration in The Lake.

In the 1890s the Russian novel attracted Moore because, particularly in the work of Turgenev, he found the classical preciseness and disillusioned yearning for which he himself aimed in his work. He wrote of the "sensations of inextinguishable grief, the calm of resignation, the mute

yearning for what life has given" in the Russian novel (PF(1894) pxvi). Many years later in Avowals he wrote of "the beauty, the mystery, and the pathos of the life we live in this world"(1919, p78), but in the intervening time he had received and to a degree exhausted a fresh injection of romanticism through his contact with Ireland. He had also gained virtually complete freedom from the financial worries of the family estates (Moore Hall remained in his possession although he never lived in it, but the Congested Districts Board bought most of the land around it). Moore was therefore relieved of any relation to the reality of rural Ireland, and became even more free not only to live where he chose but to lose himself in his romantic dreams. The search for classical perfection was thrust slightly to one side in these years and the influence of the Irish Revival gave a new lease of life to the exaltation of the Renaissance and the primitivism which had always been present in his writing. Herbert Howarth has written of the Revival that,

while the French neo-classicists were developing the thesis, later to be taken up by T.S.Eliot, that the tradition which had grown from Attica through Rome into Western Europe was the world's highest achievement and that its continuation was the world's best hope, the Irish were claiming that that tradition was limited and barren, and could only be fertilised by the uncontaminated Irish fancy (1958, p23).

Yeats, the chief theoretician of the Revival, came to find inspiration and poetry inextricably linked with Ireland, but his ideas about art like Moore's mostly originated in Paris. Both he and Moore were close friends of Arthur Symons, the ablest critic of contemporary literature of the day. Symons and Moore first met in Paris and Moore invited Symons to visit him in his rooms in the Temple. Symons was so taken with the idea of living there that he immediately set about getting rooms for himself. In 1894 Yeats moved in to share Symons' rooms for

a few months and it was then probably that he first met Moore who was then flush with the success of Esther Waters. During the summer of 1896 Moore was in Ireland with Yeats, Symons, and Edward Martyn, and the four of them went on a trip to the Arran Islands. The importance of Symons to both Moore and Yeats can be seen from Moore's story in: Hail and Farewell of calling on Symons when they both lived in the Temple and finding Yeats at home instead. Moore says that Symons at this time had "written Symbolism in Literature" and "was now investigating the problem of symbolism in gesture"(A(1911) p51). Moore stresses the connection of Symons and symbolism through mention of the book, yet this was not published until 1899, three years after Yeats and Moore moved from the Temple, Yeats to Woburn Buildings and Moore to Victoria Street.

Moore dedicated Evelyn Innes(1898) to Symons and Yeats - "two contemporary writers with whom I am much in sympathy". The three agreed that the artist must necessarily be an isolated figure, and that contemporary art should have a transcendental purpose. Symons wrote that symbolism is "an establishing of the links which hold the world together, the affirmation of an eternal, minute, intricate, almost invisible life, which runs through the whole universe"(1899, p146), and for Yeats a symbol was "a revelation... the only possible expression of some invisible essence"(quoted, Lehmann(1968) p283). Moore seems to have agreed, for in 1900 he wrote to Lady Cunard about the bicycling tour with AE which figures in Salve;

sitting on the hill-top seeing the sunlight like a vast spiritual presence, I thought of the strange pagan spirituality which accepted as fundamental truth that man and nature are one, moved by the same impulses (Cunard(1957) p30).

But he was less successful than Yeats in holding together this romantic mysticism and the reality of Ireland. In "The Nineness

in the Oneness" he praised the ability to have a love of "the idyllic grace of a high birch overhanging a still lake, or an appreciation of the melancholy, almost hostile, aspect of a rough wood in which the woodmen are felling trees on each side of a ravine"(1919, p66); the picture is clearly based on Ireland, yet Moore hardly ever left Dublin on the few occasions when he did visit Ireland after 1914. Perhaps for him it was the absence of financial cares rather than "the mist of evening" which "transforms the wretched hovels into a fairy tale" (Dujardin(1929) p101).

Two contrasting views of the world emerge from Moore's work after 1900; the one best seen in The Brook Kerith based upon what Moore assumes is "truth", the other seen in Héloïse and Abélard, based upon romanticism and humanism. The two versions of the world are linked by a lack of relation to the outside world, despite the wealth of analogy between the historical stories and the early twentieth century and Ireland. In Esther Waters and Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa Moore offers his characters hope in the guise of either the simple religious life, the idealised family world, a pastoral dream of nature, or an intellectual adjustment of their moral values to bring them into line with "reality". In The Lake he describes these same values, generally with greater weight of meaning, but with one major difference, for Oliver Gogarty learns during the story how his actions have failed to be in keeping with his own aims in life, that is, how his "deeds" have failed to follow his "words". The story is not one of adjustment to "reality", but like that of Joseph of Arimathea, of discovery and realisation of the "true" way to act. Moore backs up this personal "truth" with images of goodness and human love, but these are not always successful. The end of The Lake, when Father Gogarty goes off to America in quest of "life", seems for example a little glib

after the descriptions of the complex workings of his mind - particularly his discovery that, to ease his loneliness, he has made Rose Leicester into the same kind of image as the Church has been. Moore's writing Joseph out of The Brook Kerith also seems a little glib in the light of the amount of attention that is devoted to his character. The zealot attack seems to replace any attempt at a psychological tying off of this strand of the story. The difficulty in both cases, I think, arises because the onus is upon the final triumphant discovery of some certain simple "truth" by the character which the reader is required to accept, despite the fact that Moore successfully devotes most of the rest of the narrative to showing the uncertain and ambiguous nature of this kind of truth.

The endings of the stories of these men, like that of Jesus, seem indecisive and if one accepts, as I think one must, that Moore is interested in criticising or recommending various courses of action, this must be a source of weakness. But in the middle parts he is often successful in depicting the search for the ideal unity of emotion and thought which would make right decision and action possible. Father Gogarty realises that,

when the brain alone thinks, the thinking is very thin and impoverished. It seems to me that the best thinking is done when the whole man thinks, the flesh and the blood together, and for the whole man to think the whole man must live; and the life I have lived hitherto has been a thin life, for my body lived only. And not even all my body. My mind and body were separated: neither of any use to me
(TL(1905) p276).

In The Brook Kerith too Moore concentrates on how Joseph and Jesus achieve something approaching the ideal in the scenes set in Joseph's garden, but in the narrative as a whole he seems to be seduced away from the struggle of the characters towards this ideal by the ironic potential of the retelling of the Gospel story. In Héloïse and Abélard, however, this demand that men and women

should act and react with the whole of their beings dominates the characters; the irony is wholly subservient to this, and the Realist-Nominalist controversy becomes peripheral to this main theme. Discovery, for Gogarty, Joseph, and Jesus a search for a truth or an idea, is in Abélard and Héloïse primarily the search for another person. Héloïse urges Abélard in his teaching to go beyond the Ultima Thule, and together the lovers attempt to create new moral sanctions. Moore shows that what might have been an opportunity to create an expanding, infinitely dynamic, human relationship is only the pursuit of an idea of success through the years Héloïse spends trapped in the convent at Argenteuil and Abélard's vain search for preferment. Nevertheless in the end Héloïse accepts Abélard as a master whose command she must obey. Her continued faith in him is similar to that of Paul in his own Jesus of Nazareth, but Héloïse is driven wholly by love of the all too human Abélard rather than a dead religious idea.

Moore achieves in this work, which he said was "detached from things of the day"(Cunard(1957) pl07), his most weighty human ending and his most romantic statement about the world. Even though there is no explicit reference to the fact in his writings the narrative is in spirit the most truly Wagnerian of all his works; a remarkably accurate reworking of the story of Tristan and Isolde. The two stories coincide on almost every point. Abélard and Héloïse do not meet before the story begins but Abélard is brought in as a teacher for Héloïse by Fulbert rather as Tristan is unwittingly sent by Mark to bring Isolde to Cornwall. The love of Héloïse and Abélard contradicts the established order of Fulbert and the Church rather as that of Isolde and Tristan does that of Mark, and both pairs of lovers meet secretly. Abélard's teaching and his music have the same liberating effect on Héloïse as the love-potion does on Isolde,

and in the flight to Brittany disguised as a priest and a nun Abélard and Héloïse contradict reality (as they do again when they both decide to enter the Church) as Tristan and Isolde create their own world in the second act of Wagner's music-drama. Moreover for Héloïse and Abélard as for Tristan and Isolde love annihilates reality and transcends their separate existences (see pl43 above). Moreover again reality inevitably intrudes in both stories. Moore swaps the roles here for whereas Wagner has Tristan wounded by Melot Moore plays down Abélard's castration. Here Héloïse is more obviously parallel to Tristan, for not only does she wait desolate in the convent for her lover as Tristan does for Isolde, but Moore makes her do this willingly as Tristan drops his sword and allows himself to be wounded. Isolde comes to Tristan in the last act but too late to save him, and Abélard too comes to Héloïse only when his humble obedience to the Church must make a mockery of her dream. This shifting of the roles gives Héloïse more of the sad character of Tristan at this point than the power of Isolde, but in the end she retains her faith in Abélard and by the force of her will makes her dream come true as Isolde is united with Tristan beyond the reach of the world in her liebestod.

The romantic assertion of man is set against the Courtly Love scenes, and this opposition pushes the intellectual and philosophical discussions further into the background. Describing men and women in Héloïse and Abélard Moore seems self-consciously to mimic the work of the Pre-Raphaelite painters. His picture of the troubadours and their ladies seems like the work of the worst of these artists "whose versions of Keats or the Bible or Malory were (like the worst of Tennyson's Idylls)", in the words of E.P.Thompson, "little more than the projection of the impoverished sensibility of the Victorians into a mediaeval setting, with conventional Victorian gentlemen and ladies dressed up in fancy costume".

The descriptions of Héloïse and Abélard on the other hand seem like the work of these painters at their best when their work was remote and ethereal, saturated with a yearning for values lost to the world, and whose impossibility of realisation was accentuated rather than relieved by the naturalistic detail of the painting (Thompson(1955) p84).

Moore's criticism of Rodeboeuf and Gaucelm d'Arambert (see pl67-8 above) is based on a broad realistic humanism which can see at once both the limitations of the calm rural life in Brittany and of the apparently sophisticated life of Paris. He seems also, if only temporarily, to have cut himself free from the passive sensitivity he discovered in Pater. One of the fullest descriptions of Courtly Love which Moore might have read is an essay in Vernon Lee's Euphorion, published in 1885. The essay is a curious mixture; Miss Paget stresses the economic origins of the doctrine in feudal society, and defines the Renaissance which the troubadours presaged as,

that phase in mediaeval history in which the double influence, feudal and ecclesiastic, which had gradually crushed the spontaneous life of the early mediaeval revival, and reduced all to a dead sterile mass, was neutralised by the existence of democratic and secular communities (Lee(1885) p30).

But at other times her prose takes on a more aesthetic, Paterian air, as when she describes the rise of Courtly Love,

out of the baseness of habitual adultery, arises incense-like, in the early mediaeval poetry, a new kind of love -subtler, more imaginative, more passionate, a love of the fancy and the heart, a love stimulating to the perfection of the individual as is any religion (p376).

Moore accepted most of these opinions but severely qualified his estimate of the quality of Courtly Love when he wrote Héloïse and Abélard. In 1924, perhaps in an attempt to draw attention from the fact that he had used her essay as a source at all, Moore called Miss Paget a little unjustly "a she-Pater of inferior taste and greatly reduced mentality"(Chew(1924) p42). There is a hint of this partial rejection of Pater in Avowals,

published in 1919, for while he still praised The Renaissance he also criticised the description of the Gioconda smile as a purple-patch added to sweeten the rest. Moore wrote that the picture is of "a lady who never ceases to smile, as somebody has said, at the nonsense she hears talked about her everyday at the Louvre"(p196).

The greater emphasis on humanism in Héloïse and Abélard also effects the way Moore used irony and reduces the risk that it might encapsulate the story which is present in The Brook Kerith. Moore's smooth style is ideal as a vehicle for irony because it insidiously prevents any rejection of Moore's description of the character by a complex interweaving of questionable and acceptable comments (see ppl34-5 above). It also draws together separate characters, such as Joseph, Jesus, and Paul, in The Brook Kerith. One character can then be used to point the irony of another's behaviour, or else they can both be shown to have the same faults. The smooth style can in this sense be said to have an aesthetic value in that it helps Moore to present his view of his characters with maximum effect, but the style also implies something about his overall view of the world. The criticism and the irony is generally aimed at exploding established concepts and worlds and yet the continuous flow of the narratives must contradict this by welding the different worlds together - for example The Brook Kerith seems to reintegrate the religious world Moore is ostensibly disintegrating (see pl90 above). Hence the smooth style perhaps serves the same purpose in Moore's writings as the twelve-tone row in Schoenberg's music. Both Moore and Schoenberg wanted to destroy the outmoded conventions of art and to invent new techniques, and both systems furthermore attempt to disguise the fact that they are the product of a human mind by their air of non-human inevitability, based in Schoenberg on an inevitable "natural" sequence of notes

and in Moore on a "natural" series of words. But both of these ostensibly technical innovations are also aimed at compensating for a loss of faith in accepted values. By these "natural" and "inevitable" systems both men attempted to create a substitute for values it was apparently no longer possible to hold, creating thereby from a basically aesthetic innovation an equivalent of the dispossessed moral and religious sanction of the word of God.

In Hail and Farewell, The Brook Kerith, and Héloïse and Abélard, by casting different characters into a similar interlocking pattern of irony Moore seems inevitably to use irony to make more than the particular point he makes about John Norton, Evelyn Innes, or Father Gogarty. For if different characters can be analysed by the same system of values then it follows not only that there is one permanent system of values but also that man, who as a whole can be judged by this one system, is at root an essentially singular creature. A principle of permanence is thus induced, art is demonstrated to be a search for something beyond a code of manners, and the psychological unity of being in individual man becomes symptomatic of an almost Platonic unity in the world. An aesthetic principle then comes to replace the vague pantheism of his earlier work as a means of resolving Moore's equivocation as to whether there is an absolute "standard" or a "Destiny" in life (see p103-4 above). It was "Yeats' view that Christianity broke up a historical pattern of order and knowledge within whose framework men had been able to achieve Unity of Being"(Ure(1946) p44). Moore shared this view but was incapable either of Yeats' imaginative leap into the world of spirit or his sublime self-confidence in creating in "the mythology of A Vision... what he desired - a sense of power, a sense of order, the revelation of a secret knowledge and metaphors for his poetry"(p61). Moore tried to reach a similar state of certainty about the unity of the world

by creating an essential and mythical character of which all men were variants. The fruits of such a discovery for him are obvious;

the breakdown of the mythology... causes the search for a mythology... By using a myth - provided the myth really does hold a central position in the culture of his age, and is not merely a series of broken ornaments or a phalanx of ecclesiastical buildings which no-one must live in - the poet is making contact with the inherited tradition that is alive and around him, and is thus drawing strength from it (Ure(1946) p12).

The rewards were so great as to allow Moore to ignore the deeper implications of the extraordinary resemblance this essential character bore to his own.

Another important device by which the smooth style is made to seem to provide some guarantee of stability is through its appearance of being the work of a narrator telling a story. Moore's later prose can look bizarre and seem awkward to anyone who reads without consideration for sound, but in general it is perfectly suited to being read aloud. As an example of this I cite the opening sentence of Chapter Thirty-Three of Héloïse and Abélard;

The theological chatter roused by the burning of Abélard's book at Soissons came to an end slowly in the convent of Argenteuil during the summer of 1121, and his name was not spoken once during the winter, not until the spring of the next year, in April, when Stephen returned from Paris one day with the news that everybody was asking what had become of Abélard, some saying that he had left France for England, to which Héloïse answered coldly that nothing was more likely than that he had gone to England to meditate on the Trinity, like Roscelin (1925, p353).

At first this seems to contradict the whole notion of a smooth style, for there seem slight dislocations after "1121... winter... year... England... Trinity". However these disappear if the sentence is read aloud with proper emphasis, for the voice inflexions reveal it to be a subtle blend of certain statement and less

definite speech. The self-contained quality of the first two statements suggests the narrator's attempt to give a degree of emphasis to these two facts. The interpolated particularity of "in April" then gives a stronger initial emphasis to the renewed speculation about Abélard, but this confident tone is dissipated by the neutral clause, "some saying that he had left France for England". The general picture causes an even more emphatic jolt when the camera shifts to the foreground as Héloïse breaks in "coldly". Again her last phrase, "like Roscelin", suggests an uncertainty however, a feeling that she must back up her statement with an authority (the choice of Roscelin as this authority is scarcely designed to lift the sense of foreboding). Throughout the sense is carried along not so much by grammar as by the sound. If the sentence is read aloud the reader does not notice the omission of a connecting phrase such as "it was" before "not till the spring" to link "not spoken once during the winter" and "that everybody was asking". The whole sentence subtly shifts with ease from the narrator's omniscient statement "The theological chatter... came to an end" to Héloïse's less certain "he had gone to England... like Roscelin".

The idea of the importance of the spoken word may have originated with Mallarmé's reading of his poems to a hushed audience at one of his "Tuesdays", but it was transformed for Moore through Yeats' theories about Ireland. In 1901 Yeats asserted the need for a primitive base for art in an article later incorporated into The Celtic Twilight;

There is no song nor story handed down among the cottages that has not words and thoughts to carry one... under the wall of Paradise to the roots of the trees of knowledge and of life... Folk art is... the oldest of the aristocracies of thought, and because it refuses what is passing and trivial, the merely clever and pretty, as certainly as the vulgar and insincere, and because it has gathered into itself the simplest and most unforgettable thoughts of the generation, it is the soil where all great art is rooted (Yeats(1902) pp232-3).

In Moore's mind the ability to tell a natural story came to have a paramount place, even thrusting to one side his urge towards technical perfection. For example, in the preface to Lewis Seymour and Some Women he wrote,

style and presentation of character and a fine taste in the selection of words are secondary gifts; and secondary gifts may be acquired, may be developed at least, but the story-teller comes into the world fully equipped from the first (LS(1916) pvi).

It became a ruling precept for Moore that "as literature arises out of speech it must always retain the accent of speech; even in description of landscapes or the human mind speech should never be lost sight of"(Owens(1966) p308). For his purposes the notion of the ancient story-teller was particularly valuable because ordinary speech had, he thought, the same quality of "naturalness" as he had tried to catch in the pantheistic endings of Esther Waters and Evelyn Innes-Sister Theresa, and because speech was a pre-scientific idiom which could be used to cleanse literature of pseudo-scientific Naturalism, as Naturalism had swept away empty romanticism.

Moore, the rediscoverer of the epic and the story, probably preferred to think of himself as following Wagner rather than Yeats. One of Wagner's most important structural innovations was the use of the leitmotiv as a structural base for his music. Moore was not entirely convinced by this and on occasion, for instance in the first two acts of Siegfried, the "practice of uttering the motive whenever the person or thing with which the motive was associated is mentioned" seemed to him to "become a trick"(Cunard(1957) p65). William Blissett who has most thoroughly explored the relationship of Moore's work to Wagner thinks that in his later work "Moore has no real interest in imitating the process of thought" - a fact which would certainly set him far from Yeats - and hence the

experience of his characters may be disconnected... so long as the melody of his narrative is unbroken... All his later works of fiction are exercises in this one effect, which he believed to be the effect of Wagnerian music-drama (Blissett(1961) p69).

Moore's own use of the leitmotiv is restricted and the results - I think for example of the repeated use of song in connection with Abélard - certainly contain nothing inherently Wagnerian. The influence of the continuous melody of Wagner's music is in contrast easily observed, especially in the way Moore manages the endings and beginnings of chapters. The ending is usually fairly definite and conclusive but there is often a hint that the subject may be taken up again somewhere else; the final sentence of Héloïse and Abélard is a good example of this, "But it would be vain indeed to record their lives and their talk further, for the rest of their lives and speech are on record". On the other hand Moore usually begins a chapter with what seems a new beginning; the opening sentence I have quoted from Chapter Thirty-Three of Héloïse and Abélard illustrates this well. But, usually after no more than a paragraph, the general comments are put aside and the subject of the previous chapter is taken up again. The end of Chapter Twenty-Nine and the beginning of Chapter Thirty in The Brook Kerith demonstrates the technique. Twenty-Nine closes on a note of finality as Jesus decides to give up the flock he has nurtured; he chooses as his successor Jacob. This is a personal decision and a little surprising for Jacob by his "misfortunes" is "the mocking-stock of all these fields"(1916, p351), and hence since the decision ultimately rests with the leaders of the cenoby the issue is a little open. The Chapter then ends on a question - Jesus says "it may be that Hazael... at my advice, will entrust my flock to thy charge". But the opening words of Chapter Thirty, "So thou thinkest, Eliab, that the autumn rains will make an end of him", in no way resolves

this. Different people are talking, and their conversation in the first paragraph only stresses the nearness of the end of Jesus' life as a shepherd more bluntly. The subject shifts back to Jacob in the second paragraph only with a jolt, cutting off one of the speakers in mid-sentence. The effect is to sustain the continuity of the subject and indirectly to resolve the open end of the previous Chapter, for the equivocal "it may be" now becomes the blunt comment "the flock will go to Jacob"(p352). The shift to the other shepherds then not only refreshes the reader's interest but also shifts the focus of the discussion beyond those directly involved and still manages to avoid a hiatus between the chapters.

If Yeats was the main source of Moore's story-teller style then this is another example of how Moore diverged from his source. For he is always intent on a smoothness and continuity which give his narratives the overall impression of a fairy-tale world where the reader expects simple and unequivocal moral decisions. It follows that if the acute and equivocal moral dilemmas of Héloïse and Joseph are set within this style their intensity must be blunted. It also follows that Moore must seem to accept the apparent insolubility of these dilemmas by setting them within a style whose more normal function in a fairy-tale would be to reinforce accepted values. In contrast Yeats' energetic open-ended style describes a new and expanding reality where man lives with man but in close touch with the heroic and spirit world, and where tension is creative and the rule rather than the exception.

The difference between Moore's and Yeats' styles and views of the world, and the contrast of the humanism of Héloïse and Abélard and the encapsulated irony of The Brook Kerith or Hail and Farewell, can I think be helpfully illuminated by Joseph Frank's discussion in The Widening Gyre of the definitions of realism and formalism

given by Worringer. Realism, according to Worringer "always has been created by cultures that have achieved an equilibrium between man and the cosmos". It is one of the signs of such a world that man "is convinced of his ability to dominate and control natural forces" and has "a relationship of confidence and intimacy with a world in which he feels at home".

Accordingly he creates a realistic art that "delights in reproducing the forms and appearances of the organic world". On the other hand, at a time such as the end of the nineteenth century "when the relationship of man and the cosmos is one of disharmony and disequilibrium, we find that non-organic, linear-geometric styles are always produced". For artists "living as they do in a universe of fear, the representation of its features would merely intensify their sense of anguish"(Frank(1963) pp53-4).

These notions illuminate why the Japanese prints, characterised by a lack of representational perspective, should be so attractive to artists of the latter half of the nineteenth century and also the comparison I have drawn between Moore's later narratives and the designs of art nouveau (see p227 above);

Depth, the projection of three dimensional space, gives objects a time-value because it places them in the real world in which events occur. Now time is the very condition of that flux and change from which... man wishes to escape when he is in a relation of disequilibrium with the cosmos; hence... [non-realistic] styles shun the dimension of depth and prefer the plane (p56).

Yeats accepted the world (if occasionally on his own terms) but in his last years Moore could write in a humanist and realist manner only when the isolation he engineered for himself allowed him to ignore even how far he was divorced from the world.

However, art gave Moore more than just a capacity to control the world by forcing it into a rigid and safe pattern. There is a further paradox in his work, for he was an aesthete, isolated and alienated from the everyday world, and yet also a romantic

with a belief in the human and the real. Any critic must then stress not only the aesthetic alienation and despair of the later works but also his attempts within the limits of this frozen world to discover some great and essential unity in life. In the end Moore often resorted to imposing a unity of his own on the world through his work. Paradoxically this means that he returns to something of the status assigned to the artist by Shelley and Coleridge. In the previous chapter I suggested that the alternative to the romantic definition of the artist was for the poet to become an appeaser of the uncertainties of life (see p225 above), but his ability to read a pattern into life can have a more constructive result. In despair Mildred Lawson cries out, "Give me a passion for God or man, but give me a passion. I cannot live without one"(C(1895) p312), but Héloïse, like Moore himself, in the end makes a pattern and hence a passion for herself. She bends the world to her will and by her sublime intensity overcomes the fastidious disdain of action of John Norton and Mildred Lawson. The combination of this ability to give meaning to life and the basic strong human character of Héloïse then results in a new triumphant revaluation of man.

However this Nietzschean questioning of "how far the opinion is life-furthering, life-preserving, species-preserving" (Kermode(1967) p37) is more evident in Moore's fiction and his autobiography than in his life. In Confessions of a Young Man(1888) he wrote, "contact with the world is in me the generating force; without it what invention I have is thin and sterile, and it grows thinner rapidly, until it dies away utterly"(p132). Yet in the following years he pushed the world further and further to one side, first by introducing into his criticism of character and moral conduct the ironic comparisons with some mythical ideal world, and then by concentrating on this irony to the exclusion of almost everything else. In 1922 Moore told how

he had been asked, "I venture to think you would like to increase the number of your readers", to which he had replied, "On the contrary... I try to limit them"(ASM(1922) p541). Hence the irony that he always vowed the object of his life had been to break the economic and moral censorship of novels imposed by the circulating libraries by publishing his own at six shillings, and yet after 1916 he issued his works, privately printed and in fine bindings, at the aristocratic price of two guineas - a price the libraries could not afford to pay. In the book he left unfinished at the time of his death,

A Communication to My Friends, Moore was again telling the story of his life and of "how it came to pass that he retired from the ordinary amusements of life to writing about life"(1933, p7); the hint of melancholy in these words is the same as that which comes to dominate the romanticism of Héloïse and Abélard. His last narrative Aphrodite in Aulis lacks the affirmation of Héloïse and Abélard and the intellectual brilliance of The Brook Kerith, seeming only to show a final lapse into a combination of the romantic quasi-classicism and the pseudo-pastoralism of the earlier works. It resembles what Marcel Raymond defines as the "fantaisiste" French poetry of this same period in which the poet tries to escape a sense of the bitterness of life by revelling in nostalgia, humour, and gaiety (Raymond(1957) p134). Moore is scarcely able to keep the bitterness from the book of one who knew and resented the fact that he was soon to die. The reader remembers not its heavy-handed humour but Biote's words, "I only know that I am unhappy and that no-one can help me"(AA(1930) p298).

As a young man Moore repeatedly proclaimed "the intensity of my passion for Art", and his "moral revolt against any action that I thought could or would definitely compromise me in that direction"(CYM(1888) p23). His vocation for art drove him inexorably into isolation, as Héloïse's repudiation of Abélard

forces her more and more into the sterile religious life. In 1928, when he was seventy-six, he wrote to Lady Cunard, "Between my love of art and you my life has gone by, and I often regret that I did not take more hours from art to give to you. But perhaps you saw enough of me"(Cunard(1957) pl67).

Héloïse and Abélard and The Lake show that while he was writing an image of what he had tried for and missed constantly recurred to him; the tragedy was that the only way he could appease this sense of loss was through his writing, and this could only renew the image and in the end redouble the pain.

On the 22nd December 1932, a month before he died, he wrote to John Eglinton;

I was too unhappy, and am still too unhappy, or distressed, if distressed expresses more accurately the mournful state that a man lives in who has been robbed of his single gift. I don't seem to be able to accomplish the little book I had sketched out entitled A Communication to My Friends, telling the story of how writing was forced upon me and of the persecution I had undergone for forty years and which is only just ended, leaving me a wreck (1942, p88).

RMG
1942

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I George Moore

The following is a complete list of the works of George Moore from which I have quoted in the text. The aim of the Bibliography is only to identify the quotations and I have made no attempt at a complete list of Moore's works. Because of this I have arranged the titles in alphabetical rather than chronological order. In order to make the references as precise as possible in each case I have given the name of the publisher of the edition. After each title I have also given the abbreviation for it which I have used in the text.

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