University of Southampton

Faculty of Humanities

Department of English

'Fire From Olympus, Apples From Eden': Creativity and Dissent in the Work of Olive Moore

by

Sophie Cavey

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

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This thesis examines the correlation that Olive Moore draws between creation and dissent and how this is articulated through her formulation of the 'Creative Artist'. This thesis assesses how Moore's theorisation of the 'Creative Artist' enables her to distil an artistic methodology and develop a definitive account of the necessary conditions of creativity. By examining Moore's conception of dissent through analysis of the mythological foundations of her creative philosophy, this thesis identifies how Moore theorises dissent as a form of progressive resistance, intent on subverting pre-existing dominant social conditions and enacting a transformative re-conception of intellectual values. This methodology enables a critical interpretation of Moore's conception of the transformative potential of the 'Creative Artist', whose capacity for dissent confirms their ability to reinvigorate intellectual progressivism and formulate a redemptive transformation of social values through their art. The first chapter considers the philosophical, political, and scientific influences that inform Moore's prioritising of dissent as a means to social revolution. By tracing the impulse for dissent through Moore's libertarian, anarchist politics, her interest in Nietzschean philosophy, and her vitalist, physiological rendering of embodied potential, this thesis identifies the conceptual framework that informs her creative philosophy. The subsequent chapters then turn to Moore's novels, *Celestial Seraglio* (1929), *Spleen* (1930), and *Fugue* (1932) and her non-fiction publication *The Apple is Bitten Again* (1934). These chapters identify Moore's developing creative philosophy as it advances through the novels. As a whole, this thesis provides a critical reinterpretation of Moore's complete works and assesses the relationship that Moore identifies between dissent and creativity as a central component of her creative project, as demonstrated throughout each of her novels.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Sophie Cavey

declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

'Fire From Olympus, Apples From Eden': Creativity and Dissent in the Work of Olive Moore

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

7. None of this work has been published before submission

Signed:.....

Date: .....

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Introduction: New Perspectives: Re-Introducing Olive Moore

In 1922, twenty-one-year-old fledgling journalist Constance Vaughan wrote to Rebecca West asking for advice on improving her writing and advancing her career.[1] West replied sympathetically, confirming that 'This is good journalism', but 'I'm not sure if it isn't too good for the kind of thing you are trying to do. The people you have been trying to get to swallow this cannot (having no sense of taste) swallow anything with confidence unless there is a well-known name on the bottle. If I were you I should try to acquire a well-known name'. '*The* thing' she concludes, 'is to be memorable'.[2] Vaughan followed West's advice to the letter and acquired a new name that she hoped would be the one that would become 'well-known'. Within a decade of receiving West's letter, Constance Vaughan had transformed into a successful writer and novelist under the new pseudonym of Olive Moore.[3] The name Olive Moore had indeed become memorable to the point of notoriety, associated with writing that was 'piquant, witty, grim, satirical, and exquisite in turn' offering 'a succinct insight which sums up whole phases of modern life and character in a sentence, a phrase' and causing one reviewer to proclaim 'I despair at conveying the quality of Miss Moore's writing'.[4] Moore is included in the 1933 edition of *Authors Today and Yesterday*, a publication that collated biographical sketches from notable authors of the period. Moore's entry includes reviews by Richard Aldington and the *New York Times*, who praise Moore's novel *Fugue* (1932) for 'the freshness of its

[1] Olive Moore was born Miriam Constance Beaumont Vaughan on the 24 February 1901 in Hereford to parents Charles Beaumont Vaughan, an actor, and Leah Miriam Beaumont Vaughan (née Freedberg). On her marriage certificate from 1924, Moore is named as Constance Beaumont Vaughan, daughter of Charles Beaumont Vaughan. Olive Moore is not Constance Edith Vaughan born in Hereford in 1904 as has previously been asserted in other research.

[2] Rebecca West to Constance Vaughan, 4 December 1922, Rebecca West Collection, Beinecke Library, GEN MSS 105, Box 17, Folder 857.

[3] Moore's friend Alec Bristow states that she chose the name Olive because it signified an 'acquired taste, dry and sophisticated' and that Moore suggested that 'once the taste had been acquired her readers would want more' (Olive Moore, *Spleen* (Illinois: Dalkey Archive Press, 1996), pp. 131-132).

[4] 'Among the Books From Day to Day', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 9 March 1932, p. 2, Francis Bickley, 'Books to Read', *Graphic*, 9 April 1932, p. 546.

sense-awareness, its pleasant tang of humorous bitterness' and describe it as 'one of the most beautifully written novels of the decade' respectively.[5] Stanley Kunitz, poet and editor of *Authors Today and Yesterday*, wrote to Moore early in 1933 in an attempt to persuade her to submit an autobiographical sketch for inclusion in the publication. He insists that 'the "deep regret" that I mentioned at the prospect of your absence from MORE AUTHORS wasn't a polite hyperbole. I meant it'.[6] 'May I say something about your own work?' he continues,

> If your prose had only its brightness of surface, without its reflection of an implacable irony, I shouldn't like it so much as I do; nor should I esteem half so much the bundles of your thought, the neat and clever fascicles, if you hadn't drawn the strings round the essential ghost of literature, the Problem of Evil. You see, the only art I value is the art of the magician…the smiler with a knife in his cloak…the juggler of skulls and mysteries. I think you are with me there.[7]

By 1933, Moore had gained the respect of the literary world as a writer of noteworthy talent. Each of her three novels, *Celestial Seraglio* (1929), *Spleen* (1930) (published in the United States as *Repentance at Leisure),* and *Fugue* (1932), had been reviewed favourably and her future career as a successful and celebrated writer seemed increasingly secure. Moore was also being placed alongside some of the greatest writers of the period. A 1932 review of *Fugue* entitled 'Inspissating the Prevailing Gloom: Depression à la Mode', compared the novel to Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* which was published just a few weeks before Moore's novel.[8] 'There are points of resemblance

[5] *Authors Today and Yesterday: A Companion to Living Authors,* ed. by Stanley Kunitz, Howard Haycraft, and Wilbur Crane Hadden (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1933), p. 482.
[6] Stanley Kunitz to Olive Moore, 4 July 1933, The Carter Burden Collection, Literary and Historical Manuscripts Department, Pierpont Morgan Library, MA 5298.
[7] Stanley Kunitz to Olive Moore, July 4 1933, The Carter Burden Collection, MA 5298.
[8] *Brave New World* was published in February 1932 and was shortly followed by *Fugue,* published in March 1932. An extensive study of Moore and Huxley could be a highly productive endeavour. Moore once described Huxley as an example of 'La Petite Logique' ('I would call phantasy and imagination La Grande Logique. It belongs to the creative artist, to children, to the exalted. La Petite Logique belongs to metaphysicians and professors' (Olive Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again* (London: Wishart & Co, 1934), p. 29). There are clear thematic parallels between their works as both *Fugue,* and more strikingly *Spleen*, share *Brave New World*'s concerns with reproductive

between Miss Olive Moore and Mr. Huxley' it states, 'Like him, and for the same reason, she is unhappy'.[9] The review concludes:

> I feel that, in spite of the beauty of her work, she like him has not yet reached the fullness of her powers. In fact, she has quite definitely not yet written the book of which she is capable. She will write it, though; having read all her books I am convinced of that. She is not an easy or consoling writer, but she is a real one, and no reader who prides himself on reading the people who matter can afford to leave her out.[10]

But this level of optimism and anticipation surrounding Moore's future in the early 1930s was unfortunately misplaced as *Fugue* was to be her final published novel. Exactly a decade after its publication, the 1942 edition of *Twentieth Century Authors* (previously *Authors Today and Yesterday)* included an additional note from editor Stanley Kunitz alongside its reprint of Moore's 1932 autobiographical sketch:

> Her *Amazon and Hero: The Drama of the Greek War for Independence,* on which she has been at work since 1931, has not yet been published. There is no recent word of her, in an England that she can no longer describe as "secure, imitative, watery". She is unmarried, and though she does not give her birthdate, it was probably about 1905.[11]

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technologies, dystopic visions of mankind's future, and the potential of individual autonomy within a dominant hegemonic order.

[9] Arnold Palmer, 'Books: Reviewed by Arnold Palmer', *Britannia and Eve*, 1 April 1932, p. 76.

[10] Arnold Palmer, 'Books: Reviewed by Arnold Palmer', *Britannia and Eve*, 1 April 1932, p. 76.

[11] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 130.

Amazon and Hero: The Drama of the Greek War for Independence was probably never completed and certainly never published. The publication is listed in the frontispiece of *Further Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine* (1933) and *The Apple is Bitten Again* (1934) as a projected piece commenced in 1931. Renee Dickinson suggests that the text was a 'theatrical endeavor' (Renee Dickinson, *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the Modernist Novel: the Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore* (London: Routledge, 2009), p.141). However, I would argue that the title's use of a definite rather than indefinite article in relation to the term 'drama' seems more suggestive of a non-theatrical text and I have found no evidence that would suggest otherwise. Moore's friend Alec Bristow describes the work simply as a 'projected book' and claims that she was 'finding the prospect of doing the necessary research rather daunting' (Moore, *Spleen*, p.132)

By 1942, in the eyes of the literary world, Olive Moore becomes a name associated with mystery. She becomes notorious not for her talent but for her absence, a fate that would persist even through to the republication of her novels at the end of the century. The biographical information on Moore in the Dalkey Archive Press's 1996 edition of *Spleen* simply concludes 'She mysteriously disappeared from the literary scene in 1934 after which nothing was heard of her. She is believed to have died around 1970'.[12] Beyond the publication of *Fugue* in 1934, biographical detail on Moore becomes characterised by uncertainty and tentative qualifiers. How and why does Olive Moore, whose career appeared to be on the cusp of excellence, become known solely as the writer who 'disappeared'?

Despite Kunitz's assertion that there had been 'no recent word of her', 1942 was in fact the year that saw Moore become a guiding force behind the launch of *Scope: Magazine for Industry*. Moore began writing for the magazine upon its foundation and remained as a central figure until its dissolution in 1959, an expansive, and previously completely undiscovered period of her writing career.[13] The magazine promoted

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whilst Moore herself simply refers to the text as her 'Greek book' (Olive Moore to Rex Fairburn, 30 June 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, Special Collections, University of Auckland, A-125). I believe the text was much more likely to have been a historical account or fictionalized narrative of the Greek War (1821-1832). The inspiration for this work no doubt came from her husband, Serbo-Greek sculptor Sava Botzaris who claimed to be a descendant of Marcos Botzaris, a Greek general and hero of the Greek war ('The Works of Sava Botzaris', *Tatler*, January 9 1929, p. 59).

[12] Moore, *Spleen*, cover blurb.

[13] *Scope* magazine would come to define the later years of Moore's life. Moore was romantically involved with editor John M. Ryan and despite the fact that they were never married, lived with him as 'Mrs Olive Ryan' until he ended their relationship. Around this time, Moore moved to Bolnore in Haywards Heath, where she lived with friend Janet Lobban (who had been the art editor at Scope) until Moore's death on the 24 November 1979 aged 78. Moore's will is signed 'Constance Ryan' and Janet Lobban was the sole inheritor of Moore's estate. Lobban's sister, Anne Ibbetson, provided me with this account of Moore which is worth quoting at length: 'She worked on the magazine *Scope* mainly as a journalist, arranging interviews with people in the news and was I believe very good at what she did, getting people to "open up". She had a little Italian greyhound named Sniff which she always took to work with her. She lived with Mike Ryan for quite a long time until he left her for his secretary. Ryan was a close friend of John Aspinall and they gambled at a London club very frequently. It was about this time that she and Janet Lobban moved to Bolnore in Haywards Heath, Sussex. It is correct that Janet was the art editor on *Scope* and thus met and worked for the Ryan's. I stayed with them both and was introduced to her as Mrs Olive Ryan. […] She was a chain smoker- Dunhill cigarettes, and a heavy whisky drinker- J. B. Scotch, and was inclined to be

commercial and scientific innovation within Great Britain's industries as the means to successful post-war recovery. Progress and the regeneration of British industry were its central tenets and there were articles on the economy, foreign markets, and mechanisation, a regular feature called 'Scope Notes' reporting on new technologies, and 'What the Chairman Said' which reported 'the trends of informed business opinion'. Moore provided a 'Man of the Month' column in every issue, profiling an eclectic mix of figures and their potential impact on British industry, invention, and politics including Le Corbusier, Rudolf Laban, Tom Driberg MP, Sir Allen Lane, and Sir William Beveridge. Moore was supposedly 'very good at what she did, getting people to "open up"', but her notoriously tenacious character also clearly disconcerted some subjects including Sir Raymond Streat, then the chairman of the British Cotton Board, who described his experience of being interviewed by Olive Moore for one of her 'Man of the Month' columns:

> The writer was a woman by name Olive Moore. Not my kind. No doubt a versatile writer, and apparently she actually writes almost the whole magazine, but I should find her a pest. She talks mainly about herself and her brilliant performances and will not hold her tongue while her visitor makes any serious observations.[14]

Moore was clearly a driving force behind *Scope*, controlling 'almost the whole magazine' and using it to promote a revolutionary manifesto of progress and regeneration. The magazine was undoubtedly a triumph of political, economic, and scientific journalism, greatly expanding its readership over its seventeen-year life span and achieving a globally recognised status as a leading voice in industrial innovation.[15] However, its

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rather rude and patronising' (Anne Ibbetson, personal correspondence with the author, April 2017).

[14] Ibbetson, personal correspondence, April 2017, Raymond Streat, *Lancashire and Whitehall: The Diary of Sir Raymond Streat, Volume Two 1939-57*, ed. by Marguerite Dupree (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), p. 154.

[15] 'What we like to claim, at the end of these 17 years, is that we have worked hard and with some success to promote a new, forward-looking view of British industry. In the earlier years this view was startlingly novel even inside British industry itself. But we gathered friends and supporters. As a new generation came to the fore in industry more and more readers came to appreciate *Scope*. At the same time the country woke up to the plain fact that it has got to make its way in the

success either allowed, or perhaps required Moore to largely turn her back on her fictional writing.[16] She would publish no further fictional works, despite the success that she had achieved as a novelist in the 1930s.[17]

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competitive world of our day without any natural raw material except grey matter. Gradually more and more men in British business put daring before tradition. *Scope*'s monthly sermon has become less startling, though not less useful. We do not regret having made enemies as well as friends. That, perhaps, is the best proof that our work was not in vain' ('Some Triumphs of the Past', *Scope: Magazine for Industry*, September 1959, p. 4).

[16] Only one article in *Scope*'s seventeen-year history reveals any reference to Moore's life in the 1930s. In a 'Man of the Month' column from November 1944, a profile of Major General L. H. Williams, a key figure in the organisation of the D-Day Landings earlier that year, Moore writes: 'While listening to the General, we found ourselves thinking, not altogether irrelevantly, of a delightful bookseller we knew before the war, famed for his Communist leanings and love of literature. He was up on the charge of selling indecent literature, and though he proved beyond dispute that the book in question was merely a translation of the poems of Rabelais, was sentenced to a term in Wormwood Scrubs' (Olive Moore, 'Man of the Month: Major General L.H. Williams, C.B., M.C., R.A.O.C., *Scope: Magazine for Industry*, November 1944, p. 34). This uncharacteristically nostalgic allusion to Charles Lahr marks the only time any of her articles for *Scope* make any form of personal reference. At times her prose echoes imagery from her novels, recollected and reused over a decade later. In her article on Major General Williams for example, she states: 'We just sat there feeling like he had just growed [sic], or like Pallas Athene sprung full grown from the brow of Zeus to sit behind a War Office desk winning wars anonymously. We hadn't expected the General to begin' (Moore, 'Man of the Month', *Scope*, November 1944, p. 33). The statement directly reflects a moment in *Spleen*, in which protagonist Ruth describes how 'The day on which she came to the story of Pallas-Athene springing from the forehead of Zeus her father, was one of extreme emotional content for her. She recognised it at once, this divine symbol of the unity existing between her father and herself' (Moore, *Spleen*, p. 38).

[17] The only evidence I have found of any additional creative work that Moore undertook in the 1940s is reference to two theatrical pieces, one successfully performed and one that remained only a provocative proposition. In 1942, Olive Moore is listed in the programme as having provided 'additional text' for a new performance of 'Offenbach's Tales of Hoffman', a 'fantastical opera-ballet' produced by George Kirsta at The Strand theatre in London. Moore wrote an additional 'Introduction' scene to precede Edward Agate's original prologue in his 1928 English translation. A reviewer warned that if 'you are a dyed-in-the-wool operatic conventionalist, then stay away from the Strand Theatre' for in this new introduction 'we find the Spirits of Wine and Beer dancing an alcoholic invocation to Laughter and Song before the prologue in Luther's tavern (with which the opera used to begin) and the Three Fates miming the tragic mood outside Giulietta's palace while she captures Hoffmann's mirrored reflection for the mysterious Dapertutto' (Sidney Charteris, 'The Theatre: "Tales of Hoffmann" at the Strand', *Tatler and Bystander*, 11 March 1942, p. 326). Curiously a decade prior, Jane Southron's review of *Fugue* commented that 'It begins, like the "Tales of Hoffmann," in a Weinstube, but it tells the story not of one pilgrimage along the road of life and love, but of many' (Jane Southron, 'Olive Moore's "Fugue" and Some Other Recent Work', *New York Times*, 25 September 1932). It seems pleasingly serendipitous that a predilection for the structurally unconventional and an appreciation for the narrative function of an inebriated crowd in a character led piece would provide a link between these two pieces set apart by ten years. Otherwise, a first hand account of Moore in the late 1940s from Anne Ibbetson, sister of Moore's friend Janet Lobban describes that: 'At that time she was writing a Revue which she insisted on reading aloud at every opportunity. It mainly consisted of using the

Rather fittingly for a figurehead of a publication based on reinvention and progress, the 1940s saw Moore relinquishing her past and achieving greater success by advancing in a new field. However, Moore's engagement at *Scope* marks a sudden and unpredicted shift in her trajectory that perhaps contributed to the fact that any trace of Moore's life or work beyond 1934 has remained hidden until its discovery during the research undertaken for this thesis. In addition, even Moore's life before 1934 has remained largely ambiguous due to a distinct lack of archival material. Renee Dickinson's *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the Modernist Novel: the Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore* (2009) confirmed Moore's involvement as a journalist at the *Daily Sketch* from 1923 to 1934 and references the Charles Lahr Archive at Senate House which contains a few pieces of correspondence from Moore and the manuscript of *Fugue*.[18] Beyond these two sources, all archival material used in this thesis has been newly discovered during my research and I hope goes some way to extending our understanding of Moore's life from the 1920s onwards. Prior to this project, contemporary academia has defined Moore as an obscure and experimental writer who wrote four books between 1929 and 1934 and then simply disappeared, a reputation that has probably contributed to the fact that very little academic attention has been paid to Moore's work.[19] The name Olive Moore has come to signify a mysterious and elusive absence, a lack of clarity, and a mistrusted degree of obscurity that has lead to her omission from literary history. Yet the name Olive Moore should signify a determined and ambitious creative force, whose experimental fiction was a small, early component of a prolific and resourceful career in which she would hone her craft as a writer and journalist.

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word "fucking" as often as possible yet she was convinced it was going to be performed in London and would be a great success. I think it was entitled "Fuck the Kitchen Sink"' (Ibbetson, personal correspondence, April 2017). It would appear that Ibbetson's apprehension was well founded and nothing would come of this endeavor.

[18] Dickinson has since extended her investigation into Moore's work at the *Daily Sketch* and her essay 'The (R)Evolution of Olive Moore: *Fugue* as Bridge to a New Feminist Awakening' (2018) is the only published piece to make extended reference to these early articles.

[19] Renee Dickinson's *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the Modernist Novel: The Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore* (2009) remains the only published monograph to include extensive analysis of Moore's work.

The vast majority of Moore's life and career has previously been unjustly forgotten or dismissed, an omission that I hope this thesis goes some way towards remedying.

Moore's fiction has also received an unjustifiably small amount of academic attention despite the republication of all of her novels in the early 1990s.[20] Both in the 1930s and also in contemporary analysis, readers of Moore's work have struggled with its unapologetic singularity which has predominantly led to the absence of any work attempting to place it within a canonised reading of the period. Reviews are littered with adjectives that evoke the striking individuality of Moore's prose, ranging from 'curious', 'very different' and 'original' to 'mutinous' and 'discordant'.[21] This reaction of course is not unusual for a writer whose work holds many of the hallmarks of a modernist style. Favourable reviews praise its fragmented and evocative prose whilst others condemn Moore's writing as 'typically modernish' and 'therefore not everyone's choice'.[22] But to define Moore solely as a modernist writer and further, to impose a direct affiliation with 'female modernism', would be inattentive and dismissive of her originality. A 1932 review of *Fugue* summarises the problem succinctly:

> She might be compared with Mrs Virginia Woolf or Miss Dorothy Richardson, were it not that she is quite unlike either of them, being entirely individual. But she has, like them, discovered a method of showing us reality in a glass which

[20] All three of Moore's novels and *The Apple is Bitten Again* are included in Dalkey Archive Press's *Olive Moore: Collected Writings* published in 1992. Serpents Tail published *Fugue* in 1993 and Dalkey Archive Press published *Spleen* in 1996.

[21] 'Sense and Satire: *Fugue* by Olive Moore', *Sheffield Daily Independent,* 7 March 1932, p. 8, 'Another Eve Bites at the Apple: Pungent Thoughts on Woman, the Family, and Potatoes', *Aberdeen Press and Journal,* 8 January 1935, p. 2, L.P. Hartley, 'The Literary Lounger', *Sketch*, 20 April 1932, p. 130.

[22] 'She employs a technique perfectly suited to her theme; in the course of her story, she constantly changes the angle of vision, she hops like a tame, wise bird from shoulder to shoulder. The resultant picture is thus peculiarly complete, unbiased, unheroic, lifelike' (Arnold Palmer, 'Arnold Palmer writes on The Humorous Novel and Other Books', *Sphere*, 14 September 1929, p. 503).'The rare gift of suggesting a life history in a few pointed phrases and of conveying plot, character, conversations, and, above all, an attitude to life by the capture and focussing of significant episodes, impressions, comments, images' ('Among the Books From Day to Day: Plunge Into Life, *Fugue* by Olive Moore', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 9 March 1932, p. 2), 'Sense and Satire: *Fugue* by Olive Moore', *Sheffield Independent*, 7 March 1932, p.8.

> makes it dreamlike. We see Lavinia Reade, her lovers and friends as it were at one remove. And the scenery of her adventure is evoked rather than described. That is as near as I can get to the heart of *Fugue*.[23]

Such is the difficulty of Moore's writing. Those truly engaged with its inherent qualities find it largely impossible to even describe, let alone define and place within broader categorical frameworks. Another review of *Fugue* states that Moore 'is not an easy or consoling writer, but she is a real one' before admitting that 'I have not described her novel. To be honest, I don't know how to. I can only bear testimony to its acrid, restless, and unmistakeably genuine quality'.[24]

The problem Moore's reviewers seemed to have had was twofold. Firstly, the fragmentary, impressionistic style of her prose encompasses an ephemerality that resists definition and analytical representation. Secondly, her work defies comparison to the 'female modernists' of the era. An attempt to align her work with Virginia Woolf and Dorothy Richardson fails simply because she is 'quite unlike either of them'. Both of these obstacles have persisted in recent academic attempts to 'rediscover' Moore's work. Jane Garrity has led the bid to rescue Olive Moore from obscurity and 're-introduced' her to academia as a 'scandalously under-read experimentalist' in her 2003 work *Step Daughters of England: British Women Modernists and the National Imaginary*.[25] Garrity makes comparison between Moore and several British female modernists including Virginia Woolf, Jean Rhys, and Mina Loy and includes a short analysis of *Spleen*'s depiction of British imperialism and the 'depreciation of racial motherhood'.[26] *Spleen* is also mentioned in the introduction to Jane Garrity and Laura Doan's *Sapphic Modernities: Sexuality, Women, and National Culture* (2006) as an example of 'sapphism's engagement with the discourse of inversion'.[27] Doan and Garrity

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[23] Francis Bickley, 'Books to Read', *Graphic*, 9 April 1932, p. 546.
[24] Arnold Palmer, 'Books: Reviewed by Arnold Palmer', *Britannia and Eve*, 1 April 1932, p. 76.
[25] Jane Garrity, *Step Daughters of England: British Women Modernists and the National Imaginary* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 18.
[26] Garrity, *Step Daughters*, pp. 68-69.
[27] Laura Doan and Jane Garrity, 'Introduction', in *Sapphic Modernities: Sexuality, Women, and National Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 1-17, p. 3.

demonstrate how Moore's description of Joan Agnew, an androgynous 'new young woman' who 'wanted no children' and her description of Ruth as being 'lonely as an invert' uses the language of sexological discourse.[28] Garrity's interest in *Spleen* culminates in her essay 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman' (2013) in which she gives an exhaustive account of the novel's key thematic concerns.[29] The essay asserts that 'reproduction can both formally and thematically function as a metaphor and foundation for a completely new model of creative practise' and that Richard's disability 'embodies this interpretive multiplicity as both a figure for Ruth's failed aesthetic potential and also the inspirational source for Moore's literary experimentalism' and 'deformation of narrative'.[30] Garrity's assessment of Richard's disability as a symbol of modern artistic experimentation and female creative potential remains the basis for much subsequent analysis of *Spleen*. Matt Frank's essay 'Mental Inversion, Modernist Aesthetics, and Disability Exceptionalism in Olive Moore's *Spleen*' (2014) argues that Moore 'demonstrates how feminist and emerging queer politics in the inter-war period borrowed disabled aesthetic tropes in order to recast understandings of gender and sexuality through exceptionalism', whilst Maren Tova Linett's *Bodies of Modernism: Physical Disability in Transatlantic Modernist Literature* (2017) makes reference to *Spleen* as part of a comparative study of Moore, Virginia Woolf, and James Joyce and their shared use of deformity 'as a means to reflect on modernist formal innovations from the vantage of the 1930s'.[31] Beyond these projects, which use disability studies to confront the novel's formal innovations, the predominant area of focus is *Spleen*'s concerns with maternity. Both Erin M. Kingsley's '"In the Centre of a Circle": Olive Moore's *Spleen* and Gestational Immigration' and Joanna M. Wagner's 'Unwomanly Intellect: Melancholy, Maternity, and Lesbianism in Olive Moore's *Spleen*' focus upon Ruth's transgression from heteronormative gendered identities and maternal obligations. Both essays identify the relationship between Ruth's rejection of maternity and her intellectual progressivism but Wagner's assertion that Moore demonstrates a 'ferocious feminism' and that Ruth

[28] Doan and Garrity, *Sapphic Modernities*, p. 3.
[29] Jane Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', in *Modern Fiction Studies*, 59 (2013), 288-316.
[30] Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', p. 289, p. 291, p. 291.
[31] Maren Tova Linett, *Bodies of Modernism: Physical Disability in Transatlantic Modernist Literature* (Michigan: Michigan University Press, 2017), p. 149.

displays 'lesbian leanings' indicative of her rejection of heteronormativity, largely ignores Moore's categorically non-feminist and frequently homophobic stance.[32] Benjamin D. Hagen's 'Intimations of Cosmic Indifference in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* and Olive Moore's *Spleen*' provides a comparison between Woolf's and Moore's existential philosophies, insisting that they share a 'cosmic indifference to the plight of human and nonhuman alike'.[33] Hagen adopts the approach of Renee Dickinson's comparative monograph *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the Modernist Novel: the Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore* (2009) by comparing Moore to Virginia Woolf. Productive lines of enquiry can undoubtedly be drawn between Moore and Woolf as experimental British modernist authors but equally, care must be taken not to flatten Moore's peculiarities by forcing her into Woolf's shadow. The risk of reintegrating Moore into academic discussion by producing comparative analysis, organised either by author or thematics, is the inevitable erasure of her idiosyncrasies. Moore's highly individual and often unconventional work is largely incomparable. Each of her novels are the product of an extensive, complex creative philosophy and have such dynamic and capricious objectives that it is incredibly difficult and reductive to pinpoint one, distinct thematic intention. I hope that by addressing Moore individually, this thesis will be able to establish a definitive and undiluted identity for Moore and her creative project. It will also go some way towards rebalancing the minimal amount of attention that has been paid to *Fugue*, and the complete absence of attention given to *Celestial Seraglio*.[34] I also

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[32] '*Lesbos*. Seventy per cent. of lesbianism is woman's attempt to assert herself; a borrowing of attributes; a manifestation that a woman in her strength and power borrows man's attributes, as a man in his decadence and weakness takes on woman's attributes. The mediocre woman remains a woman. The strong woman becomes a light-weight man.
From personal and unbiased observation, all lesbians one has met have been hyper-feminine, more especially the masculine ones. The artistic or literary have been (at their best) efficient and imitative. At their worst, abysmally woman.
Again from personal and unbiased observation, the only impressively strong willed women one has met or who exist have been married women with children, who joyfully have done the thinking, earning, acting, and scheming, of a half-dozen men.
The drawback of lesbianism is its extreme femininity'.
(Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, pp. 74-75).

[33] Benjamin D. Hagen, 'Intimations of Cosmic Indifference in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* and Olive Moore's *Spleen*', in *Virginia Woolf and Her Female Contemporaries,* ed. by Julie Vandivere and Megan Hicks (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press: 2017), pp. 183-188, p. 183.

[34] Only Renee Dickinson has published analysis of *Fugue* in her chapter 'Flight of the Feminine and Textual Orientation in Olive Moore's *Fugue*' in *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the*

position *The Apple is Bitten Again*, which has been referenced very little, if at all in previous academic discussion, as vital to our understanding of Moore's creative intentions and use this to formulate a definitive creative philosophy through which to read Moore's novels. I intend this thesis to provide an extensive analysis of Moore's complete works and artistic philosophy, a task that has never before been undertaken.

It would be at best difficult and at worst insincere to attempt to align Moore with other female modernists in a project of 'recovery'. Take for example, Bonnie Kime Scott's *Refiguring Modernism: The Women of 1928* (1995). This ground-breaking text pinpoints 1928 as a significant moment in female modernism. Scott identifies the work of Virginia Woolf, Rebecca West, Djuna Barnes, and Radclyffe Hall as noteworthy indicators of this moment in literary history. It is instinctively tempting to attempt to place Olive Moore amongst these contemporaries, but her relationship would be one of antagonism rather than affinity. Like Scott, Moore herself noted the significance of women's writing in 1928, but her conclusion was not one of admiration. She singles out Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (given as a lecture in 1928) as a manifesto for 'passive aesthetically-sterile women of all ages', whilst Rebecca West's *This Strange Necessity* (1928) 'justifies one's contention that women should be allowed no where near the Arts'.[35] Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) as 'rambling, apologetic, and emotional outpouring, is proof of the subject's misuse', and *The Letters of Katherine Mansfield* (1928) are simply 'twittering, twittering, female twittering'.[36] Moore's acerbic dismissal of these other women highlights the difficulty of placing her amongst them as an ally in a collective movement. Feminist works of recovery like Scott's (which is a single example from a flurry of works from the 1980s and early 1990s which focused solely on female modernists) aim to re-assert women's rightful place within male-dominated narratives of modernism. There is no doubt that Olive Moore is a writer who has indeed been overlooked and omitted from literary history, but she has not yet been repositioned as a key figure in any

Modernist Novel: the Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore (2009), and 'The (R)Evolution of Olive Moore: *Fugue* as Bridge to a New Feminist Awakening' (2018).

[35] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 128, p. 144.

[36] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 139, p. 130.

contemporary comparative study of women's modernism.[37] Her unrelenting essentialism and undeniably sexist view of female artists makes it near impossible to place her amongst the peers that she repeatedly and systematically dismisses. In *The Apple is Bitten Again*, Moore includes a chapter entitled 'Woman as Uncreative Artist' in which she outlines her contention that quite simply 'Art is a masculine prerogative' and 'women are not born with creative souls. They are born with virtues and emotions'.[38] The inevitable difficulty in attempting to reconcile an unapologetically non-feminist author into feminist projects of recovery has meant that Moore has been omitted from contemporary accounts of women's modernism.

In her essay 'Modernist Women's Writing: Beyond the Threshold of Obsolescence' (2013), Jane Garrity acknowledges the difficulties that must be faced in contemporary scholarship on Moore.[39] Garrity states that despite a 'consistent interest in the study of women writers […] there has been a simultaneous and persistent marginalization of non-canonical writing by female modernists since the institutionalization of feminist criticism in the 1980s' and claims that Moore has been an undeserving casualty of this process.[40] The trouble, Garrity claims, is that Moore does not fit neatly into contemporary frameworks of modernism: 'how do we cultivate canonical interest in Moore as a radically experimental *female* modernist, given her own culturally and historically informed engagement with gender in a post-identarian age?'.[41] Garrity concludes by proposing four possible ways in which Moore may be 'recovered'. Firstly, Garrity suggests focusing on the possible fecundity of subversion, proposing analysis of

[37] Moore is briefly mentioned in *Step Daughters of England: British Women Modernists and the National Imaginary* (2003) by Jane Garrity and *Sapphic Modernities: Sexuality, Women, and National Culture* (2006) by Laura Doan and Jane Garrity.
[38] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p.128.
[39] Jane Garrity is one of the biggest champions of Moore's work in contemporary scholarship. She mentions Moore in two comparative studies of modernism, *Sapphic Modernities: Sexuality, Women and National Culture* (2006) and *Step Daughters of England: British Women Modernists and the National Imaginary* (2003), has published an essay on *Spleen* entitled 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman' (2013), and supervised Renee Dickinson's thesis published as *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the Modernist Novel: The Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore* (2009).
[40] Jane Garrity, 'Modernist Women's Writing: Beyond the Threshold of Obsolescence', *Literature Compass*, 10 (2013), 15-29, p. 16.
[41] Garrity, 'Modernist Women's Writing', p. 19.

whether there are 'any benefits to eschewing the category of canonical prestige?'.[42] On a similar note, Garrity's second proposal is that analysis should 'rely more on her status as marginalized object of study than as a formal innovator', a technique which 'would be to foreground how her idiosyncratic work either fits within an identifiable canon of modernist writing or confounds the critical frameworks that might secure her literary reputation'.[43] Both of these proposals seek to utilise the potential of Moore's individuality to formulate an identity that prompts increasingly diverse academic discussion. This technique would enable us to broaden critical perceptions of Moore by forging new alliances with more relevant critical fields, a task that first requires the identification of how she is specifically incompatible with the predominant canons that have so far excluded her. This task seems logical and appropriate, and I believe that this thesis will go some way to achieving it. Thirdly, Garrity suggests that work should perhaps instead 'situate her within the context of modern periodical studies because of the fact that in the 1930s she worked as a journalist for the London Daily Sketch'.[44] Whilst this would be a valuable endeavour, especially considering the new discovery of her later journalistic endeavours throughout the 1940s and 1950s, it would seem to also be conceding that there is no place to be made for her novels within modernist history. Lastly, Garrity suggests that new editions of her currently out of print novels would be her 'best chance for widespread recognition and commercial success' and suggests publisher Persephone Books who specialise in out-of-print female authors.[45] But Garrity concedes that ultimately 'Moore stands little chance for incorporation on such terms because her experimental style and biting prose—the family is a "monstrous fetish", and maternity "a form of adhesive plaster by which mankind is held together, and is decaying"—does not fit snugly into Persephone's middlebrow realist aesthetic and the press's appeal to

[42] Garrity, 'Modernist Women's Writing', p. 26.
[43] Garrity, 'Modernist Women's Writing', p. 27.
[44] Garrity, 'Modernist Women's Writing', p. 27.
[45] Garrity, 'Modernist Women's Writing', p. 28.
Garrity does not make the connection, but Persephone Books is based at 59 Lambs Conduit Street, London, which serendipitously, is the same street that Charles Lahr's Red Lion Street bookshop would have stood in the 1930s although it has since been replaced with a modern office building.

genteel, accessible, and non-threatening femininity'.[46] As was the case in the 1930s, Moore's unwillingness to adhere to predominant conceptions of femininity and the stubborn refusal of her work to be 'accessible' and undemanding means that she may be fated to remain unrecognized even now. It is the erudite yet disagreeable integrity of her work that has provoked her lack of recognition, both amongst her contemporaries, and in modern academia, a fate that Moore herself predicted:

> *Bitterness.* To be saying now truths which one day they must come to. To know that it is a matter of days multiplied through intolerant years. To know that what they blame you for now they will not thank you for then.
> That is despair.[47]

The task of this thesis is to address these fundamental gaps in our understanding of Moore and her writing and attempt to identify and articulate a suitable place for her within our contemporary frameworks of analysis. My methodology focuses upon the correlation that Moore draws between creation and dissent and seeks to identify how this is articulated through her formulation of the 'creative artist'. I propose that Moore formulates and employs the ideological identity of the 'creative artist' as a means to resolving the tension that she perceives between herself as individual and herself as artist. Her adoption of the pseudonym 'Olive Moore' coincides with her theorisation of the 'creative artist' and becomes a symbolic identity under which she undertakes her 'artistic' work, whilst her journalism was solely written under her birth name, Constance Vaughan. Moore's theorisation of the creative artist enables her to distil her artistic methodology and develop a definitive account of the necessary conditions of creativity. Establishing a clear vision of the artistic role was a necessary preliminary for her writing, helping her to crystallise a consistent formal and philosophical aesthetic. Moore defines the task of the creative artist in *The Apple is Bitten Again*: 'Devil worshipper. Steal fire from Olympus, apples from Eden, answer why with why not, and bring fiery reason to

[46] Garrity, 'Modernist Women's Writing', p. 28.
[47] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 28.

man'.[48] Moore's mythological allusions demonstrate that crucially, the creative artist is inextricably associated with the impulse of dissent. Prometheus stole fire of from the gods and gifted it to mankind, whilst Eve took the forbidden fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. Moore perceives that both myths suggest that dissent is progressive and provokes greater intellectual insight for mankind. Moore positions disobedience as resistance, intent on undermining or subverting the pre-existing, dominant conditions and enacting a potentially productive re-conception of knowledge and values. The creative artist is thus capable of an epistemological transformation by way of defiance and the transgression of boundaries. The transformative potential of the creative artist is vital, for Moore perceives that humanity has deteriorated into a state of futility and unproductiveness. Moore argues that dynamic and productive thought has faltered throughout society and as a consequence, creativity has become stagnant and repressed. The creative artist is thus charged with the task of reinvigorating intellectual progressivism and formulating a redemptive transformation of social values. Dissent is therefore a central aspect of artistic salvation.

The introductory chapter that follows further examines the correlation that Moore draws between creation and dissent and how this impacts her formulation of the creative artist. I identify the methodological influences that inspired Moore's conception of the creative artist and outline the philosophical, political, and artistic frameworks that shaped Moore's creative ambitions. I consider how the libertarian, socialist, anarchist circles in which Moore was moving helped to inform her prioritising of dissent as a means to social revolution. Of greatest significance is how these political forces adopted the philosophy of Nietzsche as inspiration for their manifestos of transformation and how this in turn came to be reflected in Moore's figuration of the creative artist. I demonstrate how Nietzsche's conception of the 'free spirit' and their necessary 'will to power' directly influenced Moore's formulation of the 'vital spirit' of the creative artist. I also introduce how Moore reintegrates the body into her creative project through a vitalist, physiological rendering of embodied potential. Moore's adoption of scientific theory enables her to realise her project of innovation within the physical matter of the body, a

[48] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 55.

concept that is vital to her depiction of the body and its transformative capacity. I also demonstrate how Moore's theorising of the body reinforces her essentialist understanding of gender. Moore relentlessly denigrates the intellectual and artistic potential of women, insisting that art is a 'masculine prerogative'.[49] I analyse Moore's justification of this assessment and outline the complexities of her gender theory and the extent to which she makes any concession towards the possibility for women to subvert their gendered limitation and reintegrate themselves within the artistic sphere.

The remaining chapters then turn to Moore's novels, *Celestial Seraglio* (1929), *Spleen* (1930), and *Fugue* (1932). I use a chronological approach with the intention of identifying Moore's developing creative methodology as it advances through the novels. This structure is inevitably less comparative than a thematic approach but I aim to demonstrate the intrinsic value of each novel as a distinct project whilst also using Moore's creative philosophy as outlined in Chapter 1 to identify and trace moments of correspondence between each of the novels. I explore how Moore articulates the relationship that she identifies between dissent and creativity throughout each of her novels and how this informs the creative potential of each female protagonist. Chapter 2 focuses upon Moore's novel *Celestial Seraglio* (1929). I propose that this text acts as Moore's 'Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman', drawing from the template of Joyce's seminal novel of artistic development and reformulating it as an exploration of the complicated dynamic (in Moore's eyes) between womanhood and artistry. Moore uses the novel to examine the oppressive social forces that limit female artistic potential. *Celestial Seraglio* explores the extent to which dissent may enable the individual to transgress these socially constructed limitations and achieve creative ascendency. Chapter 3 identifies how Moore's novel *Spleen* (1930) demonstrates her theory that the body can be reintegrated into her creative project. As metaphor, protagonist Ruth's pregnancy provides a clear symbol of female creativity. Her determination to gestate 'Something New. Something Different' reflects Moore's manifesto of dissent.[50] *Spleen* explores the female capacity to realise an innovative and progressive creative project and

[49] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 128.
[50] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 28.

the extent to which this may be supported by the human body. The ambiguity of Ruth's success provides a vital indication of Moore's developing conception of female artistic potential. Chapter 4 focuses upon Moore's novel *Fugue* (1932). I argue that the novel provides Moore's most optimistic depiction of female creative potential by figuring protagonist Lavinia as the epitome of the vital, creative spirit. The novel explores whether Lavinia is able to maintain this function and ascend to a position of transgressive and transformative creative potential. *Fugue* sees Moore reiterate her assertion that dissent is the key to female progressiveness and artistic redemption and confirm the conditions of her creative project.

Chapter 1: Creativity and Dissent: Re-Interpreting Olive Moore

1.1. The Apple is Bitten Again

Despite her aspirations, *The Apple is Bitten Again (*1934) would be Moore's last published book. This non-fiction publication included Moore's essay on D.H. Lawrence, 'Further Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine' (1933), republished alongside a selection of Moore's personal notebooks, numbered one to sixteen and variously entitled amongst others 'Woman as Uncreative Artist', 'Personal and Empiric Theory of Local Brain', and 'Eternal Death: Credo for Adults Only'. Moore insists in a short foreword that she includes this broad and hugely varied assortment of work 'for no reason but that I am sick and tired of being quoted and plagiarised without acknowledgement'.[1] The notebooks contain an eclectic series of aphoristic 'prophecies' and hypotheses, often introduced with a single word of introduction such as 'Art', 'Man', 'Anger', 'Genius', 'Memory' and 'Virtue'. A chapter framework based upon each of the original numbered notebooks provides the only structure. There are however, no temporal indictors within the work which results in a lack of linearity between any of the entries. Nothing is dated and it is impossible to confirm that the notebooks were written in the order they are published in the book. However, in 'Notebook Number Seven', Moore notes '*To an unknown correspondent who (falsely) accuses "Fugue" of indecency and licentiousness.* Dung? Maybe. But from the Augean stables!' confirming some of the work to have been written post-*Fugue* which was published in 1932 (p. 65). Moore also includes in 'Notebook Number Ten' her 'First Poem' (p. 90) which she sent to publisher Charles Lahr in 1932 to be contained in his annual set of Blue Moon Press Christmas cards. The assumption can therefore be made that the majority of the work in *The Apple is Bitten Again* was written between 1932 and its publication in 1934 but there is no way of

[1] Olive Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again* (London: Wishart, 1934), p. VI. Subsequent references are to this edition and are given in parentheses.

confirming the exact dates of each of the notebooks. The text itself is predominantly written in a fragmentary, aphoristic style and each section reflects upon different aspects of art, creativity, and modernity. The brevity of the aphorism creates a concise and authoritative text which can be read as a sort of artistic manifesto for the modern age.

As implied by the title, *The Apple is Bitten Again* is broadly concerned with the relationship between dissent and creative potential, defining the text as a replication of Eve's original transgression. Moore repeatedly distinguishes between the 'common man' and the 'creative artist', dismissing the mindless stagnation of the former in favour of the fecund individuality of the latter. The true 'creative artist' is defined as an individual who removes themself from the limitations of humanity and forges their own creative and unique path. Significantly, the full title of the text is *The Apple is Bitten Again (Self Portrait).* Whilst the work provides a clear depiction of Moore's vision of the 'creative artist', the closed structure of its aphoristic style offers little scope for biographical speculation about Moore herself. With regards to interpreting the text as a 'self-portrait', Moore is clearly attempting a very different style of self-representation in comparison to *Celestial Seraglio* which she also described as 'very much a self-portrait'.[2] The differences of style and content in these two pieces offer an intriguing opportunity to compare Moore's developing approach to self-representation in her art. *Celestial Seraglio* is a more traditional literary self-portrait, providing moments of biographical detail within a fictionalised linear narrative framework. It can be assumed that the plot is at least someway influenced by Moore's own personal experiences at a Belgian convent school like the one in which the novel is set.[3] It remains important to assert however, that the novel must be considered as a work of fiction despite its parallels with Moore's own life.

[2] Olive Moore, *Spleen* (Illinois: Dalkey Archive Press, 1996), p. 131.

[3] 'I was born in Hereford, on the borders of Wales, which in my childhood used to upset me greatly as I felt London, or Rome, or Ancient Greece, or something really grandiose was the only place to be born in. I was sent abroad to a Convent at the age of five; I suppose I learned to read and write; a great war broke out, which meant next to nothing to me, except that now I realize how fortunate I was to escape mob educational methods by which the brains and digestive organs of millions of small children are still being ruined daily. Since growing up, and of my own free will, I have studied art in Italy, and subjects which interested me, such as literature and language at the Sorbonne' (*Authors Today and Yesterday: A Companion to Living Authors,* ed. by Stanley Kunitz, Howard Haycraft, and Wilbur Crane Hadden (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1933), p. 481).

Moore emphasises in the frontispiece that 'it is necessary, perhaps, to emphasise that all characters in this book are entirely fictitious'.[4] But whilst the novel cannot be read as a work of factual biography, Moore clearly felt some degree of affinity with protagonist Mavis. In contrast, *The Apple is Bitten Again* is hard to interpret as a piece of self-portraiture, revealing next to nothing in the way of personal or biographical detail.

There are however, a few moments in the text where Moore's personal presence is more strongly felt. Some of the aphorisms are preceded by a description in the present tense which contextualises the note within its moment of occurrence, for example: 'Watching a bee, instead of working' (p. 8), 'Sipping wine in a Sicilian Inn' (p. 30), or 'Walking through Hyde Park towards the British Museum Reading Room' (p. 30). In these occasional introductory moments of active authorial voice we become aware of Moore's subjective presence within the text and indeed her interaction with the outside world as she writes. Yet in addition to these moments, the authorial voice of the text also frequently slips between first and third person. Moore sometimes clearly uses the first person: 'I am against all gods…' (p. 196) or 'I have read and enjoyed…' (p. 141). But also, Moore frequently refers to herself in the third person as 'The Poet consoles…' (p. 57) or 'The writer ponders…' (p. 76).[5] These last examples are the opening words of introductory statements that Moore uses to precede first-person passages of aphorism, acting as indictors of the nature of the content to follow. The use of third person creates a sense of an authorial voice distinct from that of the author who writes in the first person. This commentator figure introduces each section for the reader but does not hold the creative authority of 'the poet'. In *The Apple is Bitten Again* of course both of these textual voices are Moore's, but the fluid focalisation suggests a division: Olive Moore as artist is a distinct, additional persona. This divided authorial voice is important

[4] Olive Moore, *Celestial Seraglio* (London: Jarrolds, 1929), p. II.

[5] Moore frequently changes the gender of the subject in these moments of third person perspective even though she is referring to herself: 'The poet consoles his Loneliness' (pg. 57), 'The writer consoles Herself on not getting a Thought' (p. 9). This fluid gender assignment offers an indication of Moore's conflicted relationship with the possibility of women as creative artists (See Notebook Number 13 of *The Apple is Bitten Again*, 'Woman as Uncreative Artist', pp. 127-145). That Olive Moore in her role of 'the artist' is frequently described as male further demonstrates this belief. Moore's complex and arguably misogynistic attitude towards artistry and gender is explored further throughout this thesis.

with regards to reading *The Apple is Bitten Again* as a self-portrait as Moore intended. The unstable subjectivity of the text as it switches between an authoritative first person account, to a third person work of observation and reflection, implies a conflict within Moore's perception of herself as an artist. Again we perceive a depiction of the 'artist' as distinct from the 'self', it is a persona that must be reflected upon, edited, and introduced as something separate. This distinctive dissonance between self and artist is at the heart of understanding *The Apple is Bitten Again* as an intimate and revealing self-portrait of Olive Moore.

The unstable authorial subjectivity, unpredictable structure, and ambiguous relation to reality, means that the focus of the text shifts to its only secure and definite element: its presented system of ideas. *The Apple is Bitten Again* builds to a coherent and comprehensive argument on the nature of art, humanity, and morality. Moore repeatedly takes steps to ensure that the reader of the text is directed towards its artistic manifesto rather than its artistic creator, despite calling it a 'self-portrait'. Again, the insistent implication is that the piece is specifically a portrait of the self as artist rather than biographical subject. With regards to this, the inclusion in *The Apple is Bitten Again* of Moore's essay on D.H. Lawrence becomes increasingly significant. The essay, 'Further Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine (Final Word on D.H. Lawrence)' (1933), insists that Lawrence's work must be read with no regard for the personality of its author. Moore claims that reviews of Lawrence's writing since his death in 1930 have been too focused on his life instead of his work. She berates the reviews as a 'bickering of apostles' in which 'the creative artist is submerged in the Message' and 'the life work is reduced to the man'. The only critic whom she admires for being the 'one writer [who] has approached him solely and seriously as creative artist' (p. 150) is Richard Aldington. When publisher Charles Lahr initially approached Moore to write the piece on D.H. Lawrence, she finally agreed to the job after much indecision because she decided she had the rare 'advantage' that 'I know so little about him'.[6] In 'Further Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine', Moore refocuses the values of criticism in her analysis of

[6] Olive Moore to Charles Lahr, 16 April 1932, Charles Lahr Papers, Senate House Library, University of London, SLV/36/9.

Lawrence. Her essay remarks upon the integral qualities of his writing and purposefully refuses to engage with any commentary concerned with his personality. In so doing, the essay perfectly demonstrates the objective of *The Apple is Bitten Again* as a whole, which as demonstrated, continually works to ensure that the focus remains on the artwork itself rather than its evasive creator.

As a self-portrait, *The Apple is Bitten Again* depicts an emblematic identity. It is a precisely controlled depiction of Moore as 'Artist', defined by principles rather than personality. Its aphoristic form also deftly demonstrates how aesthetic style can directly support artistic philosophy. Susan Sontag writes of the aphorism:

> Aphorism is aristocratic thinking: this is all the aristocrat is willing to tell you; he thinks you should get it fast, without spelling out all the details. Aphoristic thinking constructs thinking as an obstacle race: the reader is expected to get it fast, and move on. An aphorism is not an argument; it is too well-bred for that. To write aphorisms is to assume a mask — a mask of scorn, of superiority.[7]

Moore claims this type of 'aristocratic thinking' for the artist, writing her artistic manifesto in a style that as Sontag points out, is demanding and unforgiving. The artist exists within a realm of intellectual aristocracy that enables them to extricate themselves from the unthinking masses of humanity. 'Approach us on your mental knees' Moore demands, for 'we are the last of the aristocrats' (p. 17). For the artist, this ruthless intellectual ascendency is an act of resistance, indeed it is a 'mask of scorn' that is emblematic of their desired eminence. It becomes a metaphorical emblem of the untouchable, unknowable qualities of the artist, who becomes defined solely by their ascendant aristocracy and the demanding quality of their work. But equally, as Sontag's metaphor intimates, it directs attention away from the human qualities of the artist, the normality behind the mask. To be an aristocrat, one must maintain a sense of distinction that cannot betray any hint of conventionalism or ordinariness. For Olive Moore, *The Apple is*

[7] Susan Sontag, *As Consciousness is Harnessed to Flesh: Diaries 1964-1980*, ed. by David Reiff (London: Penguin Books, 2012), p. 512.

Bitten Again acts as this protective and emblematic 'mask of scorn'. *The Apple is Bitten Again* ensures Moore's aristocratic identity as an artist by insisting upon its exclusivity and carefully controlling its image. Just like the aphorisms of which it is constructed, it is self-contained, impenetrable, and demanding, offering no hint of Moore's private identity. As a self-portrait its intentions are clear, it is a portrait of an artist rather than of a woman. It demands reverence for the transformative power of its thought, whilst insisting that nothing more can be demanded of its author.

For Olive Moore, to be the creative artist is to affect this 'mask of scorn' in order to succeed. Consequently, Moore was enormously conscious of her public image as Olive Moore, artist, during this period. She was also working as a journalist for the London publication the *Daily Sketch* under her real name Constance Vaughan, a fact that she was keen to keep hidden. In 1932 she writes to Charles Lahr instructing him to 'amuse yourself by getting today's *Sketch* and turning to page 5'. She instructs

> 'You may tell a few people about it (O you'd burst if you couldn't do that!!!)—the people who know me—they don't matter—but NOT any of my enthusiasts—such as the latest young man to read Fugue in Lyons—who love Olive Moore. I trust your discretion in this. Just amuse yourself by telling one or two people—no more'.[8]

She also wrote to friend Rex Fairburn around this time, complaining about Lahr's plans for the publication of *Further Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*. 'He wants to do it unlimited and cheap' she states, 'but I want it limited and expensive'. Her justification is simply that 'It is too good. I don't want a lot of little gasps and titters from gaspers and titterers. […] Lahr will be stubborn, bless him; but I too must think of the wretched Olive Moore sometimes and be firm. She needs to consider her good name, poor girl'.[9] Moore is fiercely protective over the public perception of 'Olive Moore' as a serious artist and

[8] Olive Moore to Charles Lahr, undated, Charles Lahr Papers, Senate House Library, University of London, MS985/1/18.
[9] Olive Moore to Rex Fairburn, 17 August 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, Special Collections, University of Auckland, A-125.

attempts to retain the integrity of her artistic pseudonym. Her work is 'too good' to be made available to the general reader and she 'needs to consider her good name'. Even amongst friends, Moore remained largely enigmatic. Friend and poet Alec Bristow claimed that she 'hardly ever referred to her background and upbringing, which she clearly wanted to forget' and that their conversations were 'almost entirely about books and writing'.[10] He also states that he 'believe[d] she had had an affair with Sava Botzaris', but in fact Moore and Botzaris were married in 1924.[11] Moore clearly fought to maintain the inscrutable aristocracy of the artist by ensuring that her 'real' life as Constance Vaughan was not revealed. The 'mask of scorn' must not slip if she was to maintain her unquestionable artistic ascendency.

Rather appropriately, an immediate pitfall in any project of recovery on Olive Moore is her unyielding elusiveness, exemplified by the fact that prior to this thesis only two visual portraits of her had been uncovered: a single photograph published in *Authors Today and Yesterday* and a photograph of a sculpture of Moore created by her husband Sava Botzaris prior to his London exhibition of 1929.[12] During my research, I have

[10] Moore, *Spleen*, pg. 132.

[11] Olive Moore and Sava Botzaris were married in Kensington on the 24 December 1924. Botzaris's profession is listed as 'Sculptor', whilst Moore's is listed as 'Dance Instructor'. Writing from Jamaica in 1940, Botzaris includes an anecdote about their marriage in an article for the 'The West Indian Review': 'Meeting the late Lord Tweedsmuir was a turning point in my life. I first got to know him as John Buchan at his publishing house in the City of London. Being an affable Scotsman and a novelist, he always had a great deal to say about everything. One day, among other things, I told him: "If I had five pounds I would marry to-morrow." "Make a quick sketch of me," he said, producing a pencil and paper. "I will give you the £5." I made the sketch there and then. He produced the cheque and said: "Right, to-morrow I will come and be your witness." So there I was. The same day I paid £2 10/- for a special license and £1 4/- for a dinner for two. £1 went in tips, charities, bribes and donations, a sixpenny ring and a bunch of violets. The two remaining shillings were spent for a taxi. And that is how it happened. Fifteen years ago. The girl who was English became Yugoslav, the "promoter" became Lord Tweedsmuir' (Sava Botzaris, 'Beneath the Mask', *The West Indian Review: the Magazine of the Caribbean*, 6 (May 1940), 21-25).

[12] Sava Botzaris was born in Belgrade in 1894. His father, Cavaliere Anastas Botzaritch was court painter to King Peter of Serbia. Upon his father's encouragement, Botzaris studied Fine Arts in Rome and Naples, excelling in painting, sculpture, and sketching. During World War 1, Botzaris served as an interpreter for several of the Allied Armies before settling in London in 1920 where he pursued a career as a caricaturist and sculptor. Between 1923 and 1924, he worked for London newspaper the *Sketch*, illustrating the weekly culture article 'Literary Lounger' by Keble Howard. It is probably in his capacity as a newspaper caricaturist that Botzaris first met Olive Moore who was

uncovered an additional two photographs of Moore, helping to expand our perception of the young woman behind the name.[13] Prior to this, the dominant depiction of Moore was the sculpture created by Botzaris. The sculpture is abstract, fierce, and angular, the shadows of the black and white photograph only serving to emphasise the sharp lines of

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working as a journalist in London throughout the early 1920s. His 1924 publication *Twenty-Five Caricatures by Sava* is dedicated to Constance Vaughan and they were married in the December of that year. Botzaris's first one-man exhibition of sculptures and caricatures was held in 1926 at the Fine Art Society Galleries. His second exhibition was held in 1929 at the French Galleries in Pall Mall. According to reviewers of the show, its most notable item was Botzaris's soon to be notorious sculpture of George Bernard Shaw. The 'Totem Pole' sculpture shocked reviewers with its abstract depiction of Shaw, as one describes: 'Exhibit Number 17, between A Wrestler and A Laughing Man, is George Bernard Shaw. The author of "Man and Superman" at first sight closely resembles Lot's Wife. He is a pillar, about two feet high. At its foot a tiny man pushed a wheelbarrow. Parallel lines approximating where a beard might be are a clue. There is a suggestion of parted and surging hair over the forehead' ('G. B. S. as Totem Pole: "The Only Way of Putting Him Into Stone"', *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 15 January 1929, p. 3). Botzaris's expressionist experiment differed greatly from his usual cartoonish caricatures and caused quite a stir amongst the London art scene. Botzaris himself asserted '"A totem pole is the only possible way to put him into stone"' because '"Shaw in plus-fours, or sitting astride a charger, is unthinkable. A symbol should stand for Shaw. I have made him into a totem-pole"' ('As a Totem Pole: Why G.B.S. Thinks Novel Idea a Good One', *Sheffield Independent*, 15 January 1929, p. 9), whilst Shaw himself remained largely open-minded: '"I had better suspend my judgment until I have seen it" he told a reporter yesterday. "But I think a Totem Pole is quite a good idea, because to a great many people, I appear to be as a totem. I think there is some justification for it—but I only hope that Mr Botzaris has made me a tolerably good one"' ('As a Totem Pole: Why G.B.S. Thinks Novel Idea a Good One', *Sheffield Independent*, 15 January 1929, p. 9). The 'Totem Pole' incident was not the only interaction between Shaw and Botzaris and they remained in contact throughout Botzaris's career in London meaning that it is likely that Olive Moore met George Bernard Shaw. An article from 1929 reported Botzaris's first meeting with Shaw: 'Mr Shaw granted his pleas for an opportunity to sketch him. When the drawing was completed, Botzaris showed it to the playwright and requested his signature. Smilingly Shaw autographed the portrait and then signed his name on five blank sheets of the sketching pad. "Copy the portrait on those sheets I have autographed" advised Mr Shaw, laughing, "and sell them to the Americans. They will pay more for my portraits if I autograph them". Botzaris followed Shaw's advice and the signed portraits were taken to New York when Botzaris and Moore travelled in November 1929. Unfortunately, a hotel fire claimed both the Shaw portraits and Moore's first manuscript of *Spleen*. Moore was forced to re-write the entire novel, an event she described as an 'unhappy and deadly experience' (*Authors Today and Yesterday: A Companion to Living Authors,* ed. by Stanley Kunitz, Howard Haycraft, and Wilbur Crane Hadden (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1933), p. 482). Shaw financially supported Botzaris throughout his career, and the second sculpture of Shaw (this time a more traditional, realist bust) was one of the standout pieces of Botzaris's final exhibition in London in 1938. This third exhibition was held at London's Leicester Galleries in the opening months of 1938 and was without doubt Botzaris's most successful one-man show. The exhibition featured sketches of the likes of Mussolini and H.G. Wells and sculptures depicting a broad range of cultural and political figures including Aldous Huxley, James Joyce, and Haile Selassie. By 1938, Botzaris was a well-known society figure and a well-regarded artist. But in April 1940 he left London for Jamaica before emigrating to Venezuela. He eventually died in Caracas in 1965.

[13] See Appendix A.

the figure which stands proudly, arms folded and with piercing eyes staring off beyond the frame. The sculpture appears in the frontispiece of both *The Apple is Bitten Again* and *Further Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*, and consequently also on the front covers of the modern re-printed editions of *Spleen* (1996) and *Collected Writings: Olive Moore* (1992). The image dominates the published work of Olive Moore both in the 1930s and in contemporary editions and any of her readers inevitably imagine its author as this imposing, steely-gazed figure. That her image came to be so abidingly consistent was not a mistake on Moore's part. She actively tried to repress any other depiction of herself being used in association with her work, including the photograph that was eventually used in *Authors Today and Yesterday*. In response to what seems to have been a complaint from Moore about the use of the photograph, Stanley Kunitz—poet and editor of *Authors Today and Yesterday*—writes to Moore stating: 'The photograph at the office is the profile one that you libel. I'd be interested, personally, in seeing a print of the sculpture; but since we've found that sculptures don't give much of a likeness when reproduced, we've stopped using them'.[14] Moore had clearly hoped that the publication—which was well known and widely read—would use the Botzaris sculpture in coherence with her own publications, but her controlling hand was overruled on this occasion.

Predominantly, Moore achieved her desire for command over her own representation. Her insistence upon the Botzaris sculpture as an aesthetic identity for her work as Olive Moore 'the artist' provides evidence of a clearly orchestrated self-image. The portrait is commanding and authoritative, attributes that Moore seemingly wanted to be associated with her writing and her value as an author. A reviewer of Botzaris's 1929 exhibition describes a sculpture of 'the artist's own wife, whose actual beauty is perhaps a little marred to the lay mind through his idea of accentuating her intelligent brow and eyes by leaving out her mouth'.[15] The sculpture depicts a steely demeanour of intellect and strength over femininity and beauty, a conviction that Moore clearly wanted to

[14] Stanley Kunitz to Olive Moore, 4 July 1933, The Carter Burden Collection, Literary and Historical Manuscripts Department, Pierpont Morgan Library, MA 5298.
[15] 'The Letters of Evelyn', *Tatler*, 23 January 1929, p. 142.

incorporate into her artistic persona. Moore wished to be taken seriously as a writer of creative talent and worth and Botzaris's sculpture came to symbolise Moore's unrelenting ambition to be perceived not just as a woman but as an artist. The statue also haunts Moore's work throughout her career. In *Spleen*, protagonist Ruth reflects: 'was she not rather a head without a statue? A head, she decided, going back many years and remembering, a head without a statue. Brave and serious her head; a little severe perhaps, judged by certain standards, but with a definite calm speechlessness of stone about it'.[16] This description of Ruth's head, with its 'calm speechlessness of stone' and 'severe' and 'serious' expression could very easily be used as a description of Botzaris's bust of Moore. Certainly the 'speechlessness of stone' recalls the statue's striking lack of a mouth. Whilst this 'speechlessness' could initially be interpreted as representing a lack voice or limited perception, it can also be seen to draw greater attention to the statue's striking and serious brow, an interpretation that holds much more significance for Moore. Throughout her novels she includes imagery that links ancient sculptural forms to philosophical prowess. In *Fugue* we are told 'There should be pure curves of stone about human faces (Lavinia Reade was thinking) as on Chinese and Assyrian statues with their benign and serious planes. Or the calm speechless eyes of the Greek thinkers, their brows packed tight and straight about their eyelids'.[17] Again, Moore reveres the 'speechless eyes' of statues of great 'thinkers', turning the imagery of ancient sculpture into a metaphor for a greater level of philosophical intellect, inherited from these ancient figures. Consistently throughout her novels, characters that represent some level of eternal wisdom are aligned with this imagery of ancient sculpture. A 'certain serenity of brow' or a 'calm, socratic child with stony eyes' become emblems of a philosophical strength that Moore longs to regain.[18] The same distinctive brow can be seen on the Botzaris portrait and Moore clearly liked the implications that this held for her which explains her keenness to use the sculpture as the emblem of Olive Moore, artist. Furthermore, Botzaris himself points out how ancient Chinese, Assyrian, and Greek sculpture 'all depart from academic proportion and are most unphotographic

[16] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 103.
[17] Olive Moore, *Fugue* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1993), p. 50.
[18] Moore, *Fugue*, p. 50; Moore, *Spleen*, p. 7.

representations. Distortion is as old as Art'. He continues: 'The anonymous and known creators of these ancient masterpieces used to do exactly what the Picassos, the Epsteins, the Manleys, and occasionally myself do today; that is to say, give unrestrained vent to our artistic emotions'.[19] Botzaris claims that modernist aesthetics emulate the 'ancient' art of distortion and that the abstraction and distillation of modernist form is in fact an emulation of classicism. Thus, the Botzaris sculpture of Moore is an emblem of the aesthetics of dissent. Moore's insistence that it be used as the visual identity of Olive Moore, the creative artist, is an attempt to align her work with a clear visual emblem of innovative form, intellectual ascendency, and eternal wisdom. The sculpture sits as the frontispiece of *The Apple is Bitten Again*—serious, focused, and impenetrable—perfectly capturing the commanding character of the work that follows. Both the book and the sculpture are powerful portraits of Moore as the ascendant creative artist.

1.2. The Creative Artist

Throughout *The Apple is Bitten Again*, Moore's discussion continually turns to the task of the creative artist. She comprehensively states that:

> For creation is needed audacity, controlled architectonic power of mood and sentence, a brooding deliberation, a superabundance of purely physical energy, and an integrity of thought and purpose that is of itself so exhausting as to explain why it is so rare. In Art there are no second tries. No next time; no audience; no praise; no blame. There is only Oneself (p. 114).

The most significant of these stipulations is her assertion that 'There is only Oneself'. This prioritising of the individual is at the heart of Moore's definition of creativity. As previously identified, Moore uses an 'aristocratic' definition of the artist, one in which they are figured as an ascendant figure, their disapproval of the conditions of humanity guiding their self-extrication from society. This intellectual elevation is a means to

[19] Sava Botzaris, 'Beneath the Mask', *The West Indian Review: the Magazine of the Caribbean*, 6 (May 1940), 21-25, p. 22.

philosophical resistance and the consequent innovative creativity that follows. Thus Moore's conception of creativity is inextricable from a conception of individualism that is rooted in dissent and protest. In D. H. Lawrence, Moore admires that 'the source of his relentless creative urge was a passionate revolt' for 'a work of art is sufficient unto itself […] The wilfulness of its creator needs no excuse or explanation. The correct answer to Why? is Why not?' (p. 163). This prioritising of 'wilfulness' and individualism is the underlying characteristic that links Moore's conception of philosophy, politics, and science, enabling the identification of a coherent epistemological system behind Moore's work. The creative artist is a figure that engages with each of these three areas of understanding and works to assert a resistance against mass thinking in favour of an individualistic re-formation of values. Moore insists that:

> Having no limitations, creative art is the one freedom. The creative artist the one free being, in that he can impose his own limits (within limits!). But at least such limits are his own and not imposed by class, community, or profession (p. 33).

Innovative creativity comes specifically from the rejection of the 'calculable' limits of 'class, community, or profession'. Moore states that the restriction of social stratifications justifies her absolute rejection of its terms. 'The creative artist is the one free being' she asserts, cementing the definition that productive creation can only come from a liberated and self-defining individual.

Moore's linking of individualism and creativity echoes the egotistical impulses of early Modernism. Both Michael Levenson and Tim Armstrong trace the impact of anarchist philosophers such as Max Stirner and Friedrich Nietzsche upon the development of an egotistical impetus at the heart of early modernist ideology, identifying the influence of new English translations of Nietzsche from 1896 onwards and the publication of Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own* in 1907 as key catalyzing moments.[20]

[20] Michael H. Levenson, *A Genealogy of Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 66-75; Tim Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), pp. 64-89.

The most direct influence upon modernist circles can be seen in the 'egoist' politics of two modernist magazines: the *New Age* under the editorship of A.R. Orage from 1907 to 1922 and the *Freewoman* created by Dora Marsden in 1911 (which became the *New Freewoman* in 1913 and then the *Egois*t in 1914, a change encouraged by Ezra Pound).[21] Both of these publications promoted a radical ideology based around the emancipation of the self in the name of progress and reform. Orage championed a Nietzschean anarchism based upon the aspiration for the new 'free spirit' that can transcend the limits of humanity. As he writes in his 1906 account of Nietzsche's works, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, morality and humanity as we know it must be replaced with 'the sense of responsibility, or rather privilege, and the will to create for the future, unhindered by the dead hand of the past'.[22] Orage's promotion of Nietzschean ideas championed the exceptionality of the individual as means to creating a 'new spirit' that surpassed the stagnation and limitation of the masses and thus held more creative power.

Dora Marsden's egoist politics were more closely influenced by Stirner and his conception of the individual will as means to an autonomous self and the vitalist notion of the self 'centered on the idea of will, or life force, as the expression of a restless individuating power'.[23] In *The Ego and Its Own*, Stirner specifically places this sense of individual will as that which opposes and retracts from the will of a society that wishes to restrict it:

> If the duty of obedience [...] a complete "collective will" had come into being, would I not be bound today and henceforth to my will of yesterday? My will would in this case be frozen. Wretched stability! My creature—namely a particular

[21] Bruce Clarke, *Dora Marsden and Early Modernism: Gender, Individualism, Science* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1996), pp. 19-22.
[22] A. R. Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1911), p.63.
[23] Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History*, p.79.

> expression of will—would have become my commander. But I in my will, I the creator, should be hindered in my flow and my dissolution.[24]

This advocacy of distinct individuality as enabling the figure of the willful creator that opposes the societal will reflects the central proponent of the egotistical turn in modern thought. Bruce Clarke cites Stirner and Nietzsche as influential in Marsden's progression from feminism to individualistic anarchism (reflected in the changing nature of her publications): 'in Dora Marsden's London, the movement politics of prewar suffragism and feminism gave way to the personal politics of an individualistic literary practice'.[25] Marsden becomes an exemplary figure when tracing the progression of egoistical philosophies in modernist thought in the first decades of the twentieth century. Focus turns to the power of the individual and the scope of internal forces, rather than that of the collective. Both Levenson and Armstrong conclude that the egoist philosophies of Stirner and Nietzsche influenced the development of the modernist ideology that the artist must cultivate individualistic, innovative and self-willed creation. Armstrong states that 'At a general level, egoism supports arguments for aesthetic autonomy and iconoclasm; for the destruction of realist forms in favor of the vital fragment [...] modernist aesthetics in this formula, are an expression of the "self ownership" preached by Stirner'.[26] Furthermore, Levenson reiterates the vital influence of egoist politics upon the development of modernist anarchism as he defines egoism as purporting that 'rational intellect is overthrown; will and instinct usurp its place. Systematic philosophy is summarily rejected; traditional patterns of thought are seen as distorting and unsatisfactory. The willful individual becomes the source of a truth as the world allows'.[27]

Moore's conception of the creative artist closely reflects these egoistical modernist aspirations. Individualism was cast as the catalyst for progress and self-directed innovation, values that were vital in the creation of art that extricated itself from the limitations of what had come before. The Nietzschean influences at the heart of these

[24] Max Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 175.
[25] Clarke, *Dora Marsden and Early Modernism,* p. 1.
[26] Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History,* p.79.
[27] Levenson, A *Genealogy of Modernism*, p. 68.

egoistical philosophies also become increasingly significant as Moore's social and intellectual circles are considered. Publisher Charles Lahr was a key intellectual intermediary in Moore's philosophical development and he shared many of her more progressive ideas. Lahr ran the Progressive Bookshop in Red Lion Street, Holborn, and was one of the last 'great London radical booksellers-cum-publishers'.[28] Lahr was a notorious figure on the London literary scene of the 1920s and 1930s and the centre of a 'large literary and radical community that included, in the first instance, poets, novelists, critics, booksellers and publishers, and, in the second instance, leftist thinkers, activists and politicians of every shade between pink and red'.[29]Lahr's Blue Moon Press and his literary magazine the *New Coterie*, which ran from 1925 to 1927, would publish work from the likes of T.F. Powys, D.H. Lawrence, H.E. Bates, Rhys Davies, and Aldous Huxley.[30] H.E. Bates claimed that 'Lahr ran his bookshop almost as a pretext for gathering around him writers, poets, artists, revolutionaries, and political oddballs who met at his tiny book-lined shop to exchange gossip and pass the time' and most significantly, Jonathan Rose argues that in the 1930s his bookshop was 'a mecca for down and out Nietzscheans and scruffy poets'.[31] Moore's involvement in this scene was clearly a significant influence upon the formation of her political and philosophical ideas, surrounded as she was by anarchists, socialists, libertarians, and of course, Nietzscheans. Through Lahr, Moore would have quite possibly even met A.R. Orage himself. Orage's

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[28] David Goodway, 'Charles Lahr: Anarchist, bookseller, publisher', *London Magazine,* June/July 1977, pp. 47-55, p. 49.

[29] Huw Edwin Osborne, 'A Bohemian in Grub Street', in *Rhys Davies* (Llandyïe: Dinefwr Press, 2009), pp. 26-35, p. 29.

[30] Lahr was offered the publication of the first authorised paperback edition of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and would also publish the first unexpurgated edition of D.H. Lawrence's last poetry collection *Pansies* in 1929. The manuscript was smuggled into England from France by Rhys Davies before being passed on to Lahr (Osborne, *Rhys Davies,* p. 29). This wouldn't be the last time Lahr was involved in controversy regarding Lawrence. In 1932, friend and fellow publisher Alan Steele would cause contention by withholding Lawrence letters from publishers Heinemann. Olive Moore wrote to Lahr, commenting on the ordeal and revealing a surprising secret: 'Steele ought not to part with it; it is too amusing and will be important if he hangs on to it long enough'. 'Besides' she adds, 'he can truthfully say he doesn't know where it is. I have it, and he doesn't know where I live' (Olive Moore to Charles Lahr, undated, Senate House Library, University of London SL V 36 (ix)).

[31] Dean R. Baldwin, *H.E. Bates: A Literary Life* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1987), p. 68; Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (London: Yale University Press, 2001), p.303.

partner and writer for *The New Age*, Beatrice Hastings, published an account of *The New Age* in 1936 entitled *The Old 'New Age': Orage and Others* in which she directly references Olive Moore.[32] Lahr's Blue Moon Press published Hastings's book.

Moore gains two significant points of inspiration from her association with Lahr and his creative circles. Firstly, a desire for individual liberty and a politicised sense of anger directed towards the state of humanity that frequently turns into an outright rejection of the masses and 'mass thinking'. Secondly a distinct conception of Nietzschean philosophy, translated as an inspiration for creative, artistic productivity. The former suggests an important comparison between Lahr's anarchist libertarian ideology and Moore's prioritising of individualism. In his study of left-libertarian thought and British writers *Anarchist Seeds Beneath the Snow*, David Goodway states that 'There can be no doubt that one type of intellectual has been consistently drawn to anarchism, placing a premium on absolute freedom and non-interference in their personal and social lives'.[33] Already, parallels can be drawn between this definition and Moore's conception of the creative artist and her insistence on their impenetrable autonomy. Goodway identifies the work and socio-political position of John Cowper Powys as exemplary, and defines his ideology specifically as one of 'individualist anarchism'.[34] Goodway's discussion of Powys can help to illuminate our understanding of the values that Moore herself took from anarchism, as I would argue that her work also demonstrates the hallmarks of this 'individualist anarchism'. Furthermore, Moore may have indeed met, and if not, certainly known of John Cowper Powys through Charles Lahr who was the

[32] 'After that book, Katherine [Mansfield] began to play saint, prate about God and, as Olive Moore says, "twittered" her way out of a world she had fouled wherever she went' (Beatrice Hastings, *The Old 'New Age': Orage and Others* (London: Blue Moon Press, 1936), p. 27).
[33] David Goodway, *Anarchist Seeds Beneath the Snow: Left-Libertarian Thought and British Writers from William Morris to Colin Ward* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), p. 9.
[34] Goodway positions Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own* and the ideology of Egoism as 'the most extreme form of individualist anarchism': 'Stirner, who anticipated Nietzsche (although it seems that there was no direct influence) and certainly was a precursor of much of twentieth-century existentialism, rejected not simply nation, religion, class, and ideology, but all abstractions including morality, justice, obligation, reason, and duty, in favour of an intuitive recognition of the existential uniqueness of each individual' (Goodway, *Anarchist Seeds Beneath the* Snow, p. 99).

'favourite German bookseller' (and publisher) of Powys's brother T.F. Powys, and met John Cowper Powys on numerous occasions.[35] Goodway states:

> […] individualist anarchism assumes that, while human beings should certainly be free and equal, they can become so only by their own individual effort, not through the action of collective organizations. Nicolas Walter's comment is that this is "an anarchism for intellectuals, artists, and eccentrics, for people who work alone and like to keep themselves to themselves". [36]

This prioritising of 'individual effort' as the means to personal liberation, is interpreted by Moore as a need for the individual to become 'self sufficient':

> Neither time nor education shall ever make the mass less stupid. For the mass must first un-mass itself, becoming singly aristocratic and self-sufficient; and all civilized education and thought are against this principle (p. 202).

As Goodway highlights in Walter's commentary, this streak of self-asserted individualism is one that appealed greatly to 'intellectuals' and 'artists', indeed, it becomes synonymous with creativity. Goodway argues that John Cowper Powys's 1930 publication *The Meaning of Culture* is 'nothing of the sort, but rather '"The Meaning of Creation"- or "of Creativeness"- or "of Personal Liberation"'.[37] This link between creativity and personal liberation is echoed in *The Apple is Bitten Again*, published four years later, in Moore's vision of the creative artist as an individual who gains their powers of innovative production because 'having no limitations, creative art is the one freedom. The creative artist the one free being' (p. 33). Certainly, productive lines of influence can be traced between John Cowper Powys and Moore, lines which begin to lead us in the right direction with regards to identifying the individualist ideology that lies at the heart of Moore's understanding of creativity and revolution.

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[35] Chris Gostick, *T.F. Powys's Favourite Bookseller, the Story of Charles Lahr* (Powys: Powys Heritage Series, 2009), p. 18.
[36] Goodway, *Anarchist Seeds Beneath the Snow*, p. 98.
[37] Goodway, *Anarchist Seeds Beneath the Snow*, p. 103.

Anarchism also made a clear impact upon Moore's conception of the socio-political concerns of the age. Lahr's circle of artists and intellectuals were seemingly brought together through their shared distaste for capitalist and parliamentary institutions as each reflected the suppression of individual autonomy. Rex Fairburn would frequently write to Lahr declaring sentiments such as 'capitalist civilization is on its last legs this time, I think. I don't think we'll have to wait long before the whole box of tricks comes tumbling down' and 'thanks for the pile of literature. There's enough dynamite in that jumble to blow up the House of Commons'.[38] Moore herself also wrote to Fairburn expressing her 'anger at the folly of it all' and the 'nasty dreary little muddles the nice old gentleman are still making of our world'. With slightly less confidence she concludes 'God damn them, devoutly. But it's no good. The crash is on us. […] And it's all so rotten that one is too exasperated to be anything but glad. The infant may see a new world- but I doubt if we shall'. Moore's despondency was as a result of her disappointment that 'Mr. Ramsay Macdonald has been put up for the Carlton Club'.[39] Moore's implication that Macdonald was to join the notoriously Conservative Carlton Club refers to Macdonald's role in the formation of the coalition National Government in 1931 and the consequent disastrous performance of the Labour party at the 1931 election, seen by many to have been caused by Macdonald's 'betrayal', whilst he continued to claim the National Government was for the common good. Moore's disappointment that Macdonald had, in her eyes, turned his back on his original socialist politics, demonstrates the significance of the complex relationship between socialism and anarchism. Goodway states:

> A fruitful approach to understanding anarchism is to recognize its thoroughly socialist critique of capitalism, while emphasizing that this has been combined with a liberal critique of socialism, anarchists being united with liberals in their advocacy of autonomous associations and the freedom of the individual and even exceeding them in their opposition to statism. The apparent paradox, perhaps

[38] Rex Fairburn to Charles Lahr, 15 March 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, Special Collections, University of Auckland, A-123; Fairburn to Lahr, 8 August 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, A-123.
[39] Olive Moore to Rex Fairburn, 17 August 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, Special Collections, University of Auckland, A-125.

> particularly for the English, is therefore that anarchism has historically been a type of socialism but simultaneously closely related to liberal thought.[40]

Whilst advocating the autonomy of the individual, Moore also clearly felt some affinity with socialism and its political advocates, a propensity that as Goodway demonstrates, is not unusual. It may therefore be useful to view Moore as a 'libertarian socialist', a term that Goodway devises as a means to articulating George Orwell's political position.[41] Both Orwell and Moore would go on to write for *Persuasion* magazine, 'devoted to persuasion, propaganda, and advertising', whose Summer 1944 edition contained the articles 'Propaganda and Demotic Speech' by Orwell and 'Can the Tory Reform?' by Moore, both questioning the tactics and motives of the Tory-led coalition government.[42]

Moore's 'libertarian socialism' informs her complex theorising of class, autonomy, and creativity. Initially, her prioritizing of individualism and self-sufficiency as the means to progressive revolution is revealed in her dismissive attitude towards the lower classes. Moore states that three-quarters of London is 'hopeless slum' characterised by people with a

> […] dull unquestioning in which they neither strive nor starve. And from which not artist nor genius can be produced, they having in themselves, surroundings, or blood-stream, neither music, colour, beauty, nor eloquence. The highest that is open to them is to better their social position through enterprise and application and be received into the wholly middle class (p. 122).

Moore's concern about the lower classes momentarily echoes the prevalent conservative and eugenicist view that the lower classes posed a degenerative threat to society. But importantly to Moore, the value of the lower classes is not lessened because they are poor but because they are English, and thus stuck at the bottom of a parochial class

[40] Goodway, *Anarchist Seeds Beneath the Snow*, pp. 3-4.
[41] Goodway, *Anarchist Seeds Beneath the Snow*, p. 4.
[42] *Persuasion*, (Summer 1944).

system in which their only aspiration is to slowly advance towards the middle-classes. In every other slum in the world, Moore claims

> […] it is possible to believe, to accept, to know, that a great talent, an anger, a genius, may emerge. A sense of striving, a sense of activity beyond mere struggle. But the London slum, stretching its mile on mile, alternating the very poor and the lesser genteel, leaves a consciousness only of minor clerk, shop assistant, and tram conductor (pp.121-122).

However, it is the middle class consciousness 'efficient, dull, parochial', inhabited by the 'Untouchables' (p. 116) that receives the majority of Moore's anger. Moore describes this social stratum:

> After a few Dukes and the few thousands of the Upper Middle region, come the compartmented classes, all gentlemen in varying degree, till they cannot squeeze another ounce out of the wretched creature and it becomes a manual worker. And all are Untouchables one to the other with their set eating-places, quarters, habits, entrances. The workman who wants a drink cannot come and sit at the next café table to our own (there are no café tables at which to sit), as before the surrounding gentry can protest a waiter appears, frowning. Worse, it could never occur to the workman to sit there and have that drink, for the Untouchableness (our peculiar anti-human British brand) is inborn, imbibed early, never lost (p. 117).

Moore's frustration with the 'Untouchableness' of the English middle-classes is very similar to that of Orwell's in *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), which combines a pro-socialist stance with an unflinchingly critical depiction of middle-class socialism. Orwell attacks the hypocrisy of the middle class's enthusiasm towards the dissolution of the class

system, claiming that 'Of course everyone knows that class-prejudice exists, but at the same time everyone claims that he, in some mysterious way, is exempt from it'.[43]

Moore frequently addresses the inequalities of the class system and the capitalist society that reinforces it in her writing. *Spleen*'s final scene offers a damning depiction of the confrontation between poverty and the middle classes. Upon returning to London, protagonist Ruth witnesses a protest of unemployed workers marching through the city:

> On and on the procession shuffled, the men a uniform grey, haggard and emptied of all expression save hunger and weariness. Unsubstantial as ghosts they shuffled wanly past. The traffic held up: the people waiting.
> In the growing press of people gathered there to attend this grotesque Calvary, she stood tearless and detached watching humanity carrying its Cross: bent, beaten and anxious, and yet more innocent than Christ. She turned to the group nearest her on the pavement; warmly dressed, middle-class. The man looked carved: the woman dried: the child bled: the dog inflated.[44]

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[43] George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 141.

[44] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 128. This incident in *Spleen* was based on a real life account from Charles Lahr's wife Esther of a 1930 'hunger march' organised by the National Unemployed Workers Movement. Lahr's daughter Sheila describes the event in her memoir *Yealm: A Sorterbiography* (2015): 'Many hold banners and posters. The waiting crowd on the pavement wave to friends or run to join in the march, but Esther stays put. Suddenly there is a shouting and the march scatters. Mounted police are riding into the crowd. Banners are trampled underfoot as both marchers and spectators struggle to escape the horses' hoofs and the staves of the policemen on foot. In line with Esther is a one-legged man, moving ponderously on crutches. He has been struggling to keep up with his comrades by planting the crutches down firmly and hopping his one leg forward. In the melee the crutches are knocked from under his arms, to be kicked along the ground and the man stands in terror trying to keep his balance, hopping on his one leg... And then Esther sees a policeman, stave raised above the amputee's head while he, futilely, tries to move away. Galvanized, Esther jumps down from the wall to run into the line and grab the policeman's arm. "He's only got one leg!" she shouts "Can't you see?" The policeman lowers his arm and looks at her confusedly, his eyes glazed. She smells alcohol on his breath. "He shouldn't be here" he mumbles and walks away' (Sheila Lahr, *Yealm: A Sorterbiography* (London: Unkant Publishers, 2015), p.20). Sheila Lahr correctly asserts that 'Olive Moore included this incident, related to her by my mother in one of her books'. In this final scene of *Spleen*, Ruth states: 'There was a movement and sudden noise and a sound of angry voices. A policeman was speaking to one of the men. The man answered. The policeman made a menacing movement with his arm. He was threatening to strike the man. To her surprise she began to tremble, she was not certain but had the impression that her teeth were chattering. He must not strike, she thought. She must cry out. It

Ruth perceives the irony of the 'warmly dressed, middle-class' appearing simply to watch the procession of poverty and deprivation. They are depicted as lacking in true empathy, emptied of consciousness and humanity, concerned mostly with the fact that the traffic was 'held up' and there were 'people waiting'. Poverty is an inconvenience for the middle classes, its existence an uncomfortable truth. Moore depicts a capitalist society in which every class stratum is limited and bound by its lack of individualism. Ruth 'thought of the squalor, the grey faces, of blind men standing with uncovered heads because others liked to see them cold, of the dreariness of poverty, the dreariness of gentility, the limited outlook of one, the limited outlook of the other, the decaying world closing in on the new life, and everywhere people being so splendidly brave about nothing, about nothing at all'.[45] Much like Orwell, Moore depicts the relationship between the lower and middle classes as an obtuse symptom of a capitalist society, and each are doomed to perpetuate the other's limitation.

Furthermore, Moore's derisive opinion of the upper-class intelligentsia is much the same as that of Orwell. Whilst Orwell states that 'it is not easy to crash your way into the literary intelligentsia if you happen to be a decent human being. The modern English literary world, at any rate the high-brow section of it, is a sort of poisonous jungle where only weeds can flourish', Moore defiantly argues: '*Example of how a verdict is obtained in the English Literary Courts. Mrs Woolf in a literary weekly reviews the books of newcomers, and find neither of interest nor distinction.* "…Down they come from the two Universities…" Down and DOWN. Left to the Two Universities England would be illiterate' (p. 137).[46] Moore depicts the literary elite as bound by a subtext of exclusivity

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could not be that such a wraith of a man, such a grey hollow of a thing, should be struck a blow, a well-fed hearty blow, for a mere exchange of words. The people around, those standing near him, she thought foolishly, would not allow it. At last the policeman relaxed his arm. He shouted something at the man. The man cursed under his breath, as the policeman turned away' (Moore, *Spleen*, p. 127).

[45] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 127.

[46] Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, p. 121.

and false intellectualism reinforced directly by rigid class structures.[47] Moore felt the English class system to be pointlessly restrictive and at the heart of English artistic impotency. 'The gloom of England comes from the correct' she states, 'It may not be the highest expression of life, but it is the highest expression of our life' (p. 118). She expands this concept into a detailed manifesto against the artistic potential of the English:

> The character of Art is exuberant. That of the Englishman, sober.
> Personifying Art you will find it to be a warm, exuberant, generous, giving, frank sort of person, utterly unselfconscious, possibly gesticulating, talkative, unconventional.
> Melt all the English in one and you will get a form of person well-bred, well-behaved, moderate of language, modest of demeanour, showing little his emotions (unless his dog die suddenly), not expressing very strong opinions if opinions at all, gesticulating never, rather trying to take than to give, always insisting on his money's value, intelligent, and slowly observant (pp. 124-125).[48]

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[47] London's 'Literati' also receive scathing treatment in *Fugue*, in which Moore includes many a thinly veiled parody of these social circles. She devotes an entire chapter to detailing a London literary party attended by Lorwich, the argumentative and slovenly English writer whom Lavinia meets in the Alsace. The opening passage is suitably venomous: '…The eunuchs of literature…the Vestalines of the grammar…the White Voices of free verse. In a room bright as a witchball or the more crude forms of Venetian glass, Gabriel Bethemy receives his friends. Friends on the Bethemy principle that who is not for me is against me. Social and artistic London is pro-Bethemy or contra-Bethemy. Friends, therefore.
Each is glad to be here. It argues a certain distinction. Gabriel Bethemy does not choose at random. As offering each brings a little story, varying in wit but not in malice. To this, their social exchange and barter, they bring an aëry transient coinage: not even paper, just a little wind. And there is much washing of soiled linen at the literary fountains. The room, that gaudy prettily self-conscious room, is filled with smoke and people, through which the lilt of tea-cup and glass has a fresh innocent sound of children laughing. The buffet groans under a load of inventive skill noticeably absent from the work of those who so liberally partake of it. Voices rise in mortal combat, rapier on rapier, fist to fist, attack, parry, thrust; to sink to earth, pause, rise again refreshed, uppercuts, body blows, clinchings, knock-out—One—Two—Three—Four—The clock across the square strikes the hour. It is six o'clock on an evening in late April; an evening of blanched greys and vaporous blue which the trees in the neat Chelsea square turn (it is expected of them) to Whistlerian advantage' (Moore, *Fugue*, pp. 88-9).

[48] In *The Apple is Bitten Again*, Moore introduces this passage with the phrase '*And Uller, laughing, was saying*'. Hans Uller is a central character in *Spleen*, a gregarious, opinionated German artist, who Moore uses to express clear aesthetic criteria for contemporary art. Through

Failures in English character, resulting from their fixation with class and its requirements of behaviour, mean that they have become an artistically impotent nation. The impact of this upon the arts is in Moore's eyes, catastrophic. Moore conceives that England's failures of vision and temperament leave her fighting against an unrelenting wave of bad taste and lack of substance in the arts. 'O get away while you can!' she claims, 'There is no room here for energy and vision'.[49]

Moore continues to prioritise the assertion and ascendency of the individual as means to transgressing these societal limitations. This 'individualist anarchism' means that Moore aims to 'find what solace we can in being mentally as far removed from them as the furthest most star'.[50] But whilst the artist must always be an individual, Moore maintains a socialist streak in her creative ideology. Productive individualism can only be achieved within a society in which all have the opportunity for freedom. In *Studies in a Dying Culture* (1938), Christopher Caudwell, writer and Communist party member alongside Charles Lahr, writes of the relationship between individual freedom and social equality:

> The bourgeois believe that liberty consists in the absence of social organisation; that liberty is a negative quality, a deprivation of existing obstacles to it; and not a positive quality, the reward of endeavour and wisdom. […] This is because he cannot rid himself of the assumption that the individual is free. But we have shown that the individual is never free. He can only obtain freedom by social co-operation. He can only do what he wants by using social forces.[51]

For Moore, not only does this intricate system of social relations and individual freedom matter politically, it also has a vital impact upon the creativity of the artist. The creative

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his characterisation, Moore appears to undertake her challenge of 'personifying Art' and Uller is gifted the traits that Moore outlines here.

[49] Olive Moore to Rex Fairburn, 17 August 1932. Rex Fairburn Papers, A-125.

[50] Moore to Fairburn, 30 June 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, A-125.

[51] Christopher Caudwell, *Studies in a Dying Culture* (New York: Dodd Mead & Company, 1958), p. 216.

artist must be a part of a society in which the political structures work to ensure that they can be at their most creative. The socio-political climate must actively enable the artist's individualism and productivity. Anarchist and art historian Herbert Read identifies this vital interrelation between politics, culture, and art. In a chapter entitled 'The Freedom of the Artist' in *To Hell With Culture* (1963), he details how a libertarian state is more creatively productive than a totalitarian one:

> The totalitarian state has the apparent advantage of efficiency, but by killing individual initiative it tends to make the state an inelastic, inorganic and anti-vital machine. The libertarian state is haphazard, apparently inefficient, certainly exasperating to men with tidy minds, but we claim that, like nature itself, though wasteful, it does live and let live, and that, above all, it allows for the development of individual sensibility and intelligence.[52]

Furthermore, Read argues that 'any kind of exclusiveness or intolerance is just as opposed to the principles of liberty as social exclusiveness or political intolerance. In this respect art, and all cultural modes of expression, are of exactly the same status as political opinion'.[53] Thus for Read the 'libertarian socialist must also plan, but his plans, apart from being tentative and experimental, will make the widest use of all human faculties' for 'a true eclecticism can and should enjoy all the manifestations of creative impulse in man'.[54] Social equality is a means to accessing the full expanse of creative human possibility. If each individual has the liberty to pursue his own individualism, creativity, and ultimately art, will expand into its full scope of potential. Thus, as Caudwell argues, true freedom can only be achieved via social cooperation. To Read, libertarian socialism is productive, individualistic, and most significantly, 'the libertarian attitude is essentially an experimental attitude'.[55] This proclivity for revolution and experimentalism

[52] Herbert Read, *To Hell With Culture and Other Essays on Art and Society* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 118-9.
[53] Read, *To Hell With Culture,* p. 120.
[54] Read, *To Hell With Culture,* p. 121, p. 117.
[55] Read, *To Hell With Culture,* p. 119.

lie at the heart of Moore's definition of artistic creativity. 'In soil so disinclined to exotic growth' Moore states,

> […] such things are not left to chance or individual device. There are laws, restraints, limitations. Endeavor (as in dress) must be distinguished but not distinguishable. Form (however intense the vision) must be Good Form. The first need (however strong the creative urge) must be the need of a clerk and a floorwalker: five hundred pounds and a room of one's own (p. 146).

Moore's description of England echoes Read's description of the 'inelastic, inorganic and anti-vital' totalitarian state. Whilst not politically totalitarian, English society is limited by its cultural totalitarianism, a state that limits and denigrates individualism and creativity. To counteract this, Moore argues that 'a return to a personal sense of destiny is the only anchor by which man can escape the horror of his present day drifting' (p. 64). Through this resolute individualism, Moore hopes to access a transformative, innovative, abundant source of creativity. Her definition of this artistic idealism is undoubtedly indebted to anarchist, libertarian, and socialist politics and thus for Moore, creativity becomes inextricable from a socio-political ideology of dissent.

As previously identified, Nietzschean philosophy and its egoist interpretations become entwined with Moore's political and artistic ideals. Moore was also certainly not the only artist of the period to find inspiration in Nietzsche's work. Many explored Nietzsche's philosophy as a source of insight for the modernist artist because of his veneration of individualism, creative impulse, and innovation. Wyndham Lewis, James Joyce, Ezra Pound, and D.H. Lawrence are amongst those whose artistic philosophy found inspiration from Nietzschean thought.[56] In *Zarathustra's Dionysian Modernism*, Robert Gooding-Williams outlines how Nietzsche's response to modernity would come to inspire his reclamation by the modernists because Nietzsche

[56] John Burt Foster Jr., *Heirs to Dionysus: A Nietzschean Current in Literary Modernism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Robert Gooding-Williams, *Zarathustra's Dionysian Modernism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

> […] makes the new, or, more precisely, the creation of new values, a central philosophical concern. Specifically, in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche invents Zarathustra, a character who is devoted to the project of creating new values. Zarathustra is a modernist who, articulating his vision of the overman, aspires to create new, non Christian-Platonic values that will transform European humanity.[57]

Nietzsche's desire for transformation and revolution through the individual's creation of new values held clear appeal to the earliest formulations of modernism. Significantly, for writers such as Moore, Nietzsche argues that modern systems of morality, based on Christian religion and democratic political systems 'relied on hidden and repressive logic, in which legalistic categories such as rights, equality and individual freedom masked the inequalities and uniformities of liberal society'.[58] Here, the appeal of Nietzsche amongst Moore and her peers, with their vigorous rejection of restrictive and fraudulently hierarchical social structures becomes increasingly apparent. Nietzschean philosophy became politicized as a justification of anarchist individualism. A.R. Orage championed a Nietzsche-inspired anarchism formulated around the radical emancipation of the self in the name of progress and reform. 'Nobody' he writes, 'is more representative of the spirit of the age'.[59] In his 1906 account of Nietzsche's work, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, Orage argues that the moral structures of humanity must be replaced with 'the sense of responsibility, or rather privilege, and the will to create for the future, unhindered by the dead hand of the past'.[60] The individualism championed by the likes of Orage aspired towards the creation of a 'new spirit' that could transcend the limits of humanity, echoing Nietzsche's conception of the 'free spirit' or 'sovereign individual' as one who is able to stand outside of modernity's limitations and assert their own will. The transgressive individual will is central to this Nietzschean conception of transcendent self-determined creation and the possible formation of the 'Superman', the ultimate pinnacle of liberated individualism. As Orage highlights:

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[57] Gooding-Williams, *Zarathustra's Dionysian Modernism*, pp. 4-5.
[58] Rachel Potter, *Modernist Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), p. 192.
[59] Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, p. 12.
[60] Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, p. 63.

> Nietzsche denied any purpose in nature other than man's will, the creation of the Superman may not be left to chance. The modern doctrine of evolution has in this respect misled many people into supposing that men may fold their arms and still progress. Evolve—that is, change from one state to another—they may and must; but evolution is by no means identical with progress. Thus the Superman, if he is to appear at all, must be willed.[61]

Progression becomes an active, self-determined enactment of aspirational agency. Thus the parallels between Nietzsche's 'free spirit' and Moore's conception of the 'conscious discipline, selfishness, purposefulness of the creative artist' (p. 62) become clear. The Nietzschean roots of Moore's artistic ideology imply that the philosophical ascendency of the free spirit provides the template for cognitive individualism required by the artist.

An additional point of importance is the role of Dionysus within Nietzschean philosophy and the reverence that artists like Moore would come to hold for this mythical god. Nietzsche's conception of Dionysus is most obvious in *The Birth Of Tragedy* (1872) in which Nietzsche addresses the dynamic tensions between the Apollonian and Dionysian worldview within Greek drama. The Dionysian impulse informs Nietzsche's conception of a 'sense of approaching a cultural turning point of millennial dimensions, and his proclamation of the will to power', acting as an emblem of vitality and liberation.[62] In *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), Nietzsche describes Dionysus as

> The genius of the heart, the tempter god [*Versucher-Gott* could also mean "god of experimenters"] and born pied piper of consciences whose voice knows how to descend into the netherworld of every soul, […] the genius of the heart from whose touch everyone walks away richer, […] more unsure, tenderer, more fragile,

[61] Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, p. 69.
[62] Foster Jnr., *Heirs to Dionysus*, p. 15.

> more broken, but full of hopes that as yet have no name, full of new will and currents, full of new dissatisfaction and undertows.[63]

For the modernists, Dionysus would come to symbolize all aspects of the 'fascination' that artists felt for Nietzsche for 'the secret of Nietzsche is the secret of Dionysos [sic]'.[64] The 'god of experimenters', 'full of new will and currents' was a clear emblem of the creative power and innovation that artists drew from Nietzschean thought. As such, Dionysus comes to be interpreted as a figure of adulation for the modernist artist. As Foster notes, towards the end of his life Nietzsche even 'signed several letters with the name Dionysus', a story that provides a serendipitous link back to Charles Lahr, whose correspondence from Rex Fairburn was on occasion signed off 'Yours for Bacchus'.[65] The vital spirit of Dionysus lived on through the 1930s, reclaimed by figures like Lahr and Orage as the guiding deity of the creative artist. Orage recalls that Nietzsche believed Dionysus had come to Europe, initiating a period of revolution, and 'we were already on the threshold of the new era. With Dionysos [sic] at our gates, and the spirit of joy, freedom, excess; the spirit of pure energy, the old cry of life desiring to renew itself—how could a chosen disciple of Dionysos [sic] be silent?'[66] Through the creative artist, Moore aimed to reinvigorate this Dionysian spirit of revolution for the modern age. 'Wine puts Olympian fire in man's fist, with none of the uncertainties of stealing it' she states, 'Bacchus has a many thunders as Jove. And none of his pomposities' (pp. 10-11). Moore reveres the liberty and audacity of the Dionysian spirit and thus it is from Dionysus that the artist acquires his model for dissent, for he is the inspiration, the enabling force that provokes man to 'take fire from Olympus'.

Moore's conception of Nietzsche's Dionysian spirit is a vital aspect of understanding the impulse for dissent and creativity that can be traced throughout her work. Dionysus is used as a symbol of protest against limitation, a force for

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[63] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil,* in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. by Walter Kaufman (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), pp. 423-4.
[64] Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, p. 15, p. 25.
[65] Rex Fairburn to Charles Lahr, 19 October 1931, Rex Fairburn Papers, Special Collections, University of Auckland, A-123.
[66] Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, p. 40.

transformation and progress.[67] Yet in line with Nietzsche, Moore acknowledges the necessity of both balance and conflict in the formation of artistic consciousness. As Nietzsche outlines in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the Dionysian impulse gains its strength when placed in direct opposition to the Apollonian impulse. These antithetical forces must be viewed together in order to understand the true totality of life's experience. Orage outlines his understanding of Nietzsche's fixation with this duality:

> Apollo and Dionysos [sic] may stand respectively for law and liberty, duty and love, custom and change, science and intuition, art and inspiration: in their larger aspects they are symbols of oppositions that penetrate the very stuff of consciousness and life. […]
> Life, as it thus appears to the eye of the imaginative, is the spectacle of the eternal play and conflict of two mutually opposing principles: Dionysos [sic] ever escaping from the forms that Apollo is ever creating for him. And it is just this unceasing conflict that is the essence of life itself; life *is* conflict.[68]

By embracing both the Dionysian and Apollonian forces, 'the eye of the imaginative' individual is able to perceive the totality of all life in full. This understanding and embrace of conflict is the secret of the artist, the catalyst for a state of absolute, liberated cognition, because Apollo provides form for Dionysus's inspiration. Like Orage, Moore interrogates the scope of possibility that lies in the dynamic between 'custom and change, science and intuition, art and inspiration'. She identifies the Dionysian and Apollonian antithesis in the dynamic between what she calls 'Emotion' and 'Reason'. 'Emotion' is defined as 'the mainspring of human life, minute on minute. Without it not an eyelid would be raised or nostril dilated' (p. 200). Thus Emotion is the source of the creative force, the cause of 'dreams and fantasy' (p. 200), the 'mystic's drunken embrace' (p. 62). 'But' she continues, 'such sense of purpose cannot be left merely to the mystic', 'The creative principle, the sense of attack and defence, must be brought again to daily

[67] This reading becomes increasingly significant when, for example, Ruth's child in *Spleen* is called 'my Bacchus' (Moore, *Spleen*, p. 65).
[68] Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, pp. 34-5.

life if it is to remain worth living' (p. 62). This oppositional 'creative principle' can only be achieved through the additional embrace of Reason, for 'give him Reason and he will see all things clear, whole, and true. Only through Reason shall life break from the confines of dreams and the mystic's drunken embrace' (p. 62). The Dionysian principle remains vital, for 'only a boundless capacity for Emotion can lead one to the worship of Reason' (p. 62), but in turn, Reason brings vital Apollonian control upon the energy of Dionysian Emotion. Only by embracing the two can the aspirational artistic ideal be reached:

> For dreams and fantasy are natural to all, as Reason is foreign to all. Emotion is the daily bread of life, but as man (erroneously) cannot live by bread alone, Reason is the wine by which life becomes poetry. For (contrary to all literary belief) poetry is not asking the moon what it is doing there. It is telling the moon what and why. Emotion that by which we live: Reason that by which we control life. Emotion is life. Alone Reason is beyond mere life, as Art is beyond mere moment (p. 200).

It is only in the combination of these two opposing forces that creativity can be transformed into something vital and redemptive, something worthy of being deemed art.

Significantly, Moore specifies that Reason is provided by the rationalism of the scientist, whilst Emotion is provided by the intuition of the artist. 'Only two people have ever profited from the lessons of the past: the artist and the scientist. The one understands beauty, the other truth' (p. 204). The artist and the scientist provide the 'Vision and Truth' (p. 204) of the Dionysian and the Apollonian. Moore's ideology centralizes a crucial interrelation between art and science because her artistic vision demands that art must anticipate and reflect the reality that science is able to prove. She states:

> The mediaeval artist of pre-microscopic days evolved labyrinthine ornamentations, inspiring motives, beautiful and fantastic convolutions, for which

> inventiveness we have honored him. Only to find to-day that the microscopic-photographic proves them to exist; and to have existed for millions of years in plants, in minerals, existing as a common state of being which the creator artist not only ignored but had no possible means of suspecting (p. 183).

The artist is the 'fore-runner', the individual with the imaginative power to anticipate what the rationalism of the scientist proves to be true (p. 183). The artist must maintain this relationship with the reality of existence, for 'when art divorces itself from life, it is not life that suffers', but equally the artist holds the visionary, intuitive capabilities that can transform this reality into something transcendent.[69] Moore's embrace of this philosophy epitomizes the extent to which Nietzsche informs her ideology. In *The Birth of Tragedy,* Nietzsche states that science

> […] speeds irresistibly toward its limits where its optimism, concealed in the essence of logic, suffers shipwreck. […] When they see to their horror how logic coils up at these boundaries and finally bites its own tail—suddenly the new form of insight breaks through, *tragic insight* which, merely to be endured, needs art as protection and remedy.[70]

This 'tragic insight', that which encompasses the rationality of Apollo with the vision of Dionysus, is the insight of the artist. Significantly, Orage highlights that Nietzsche identified the 'essential similarity between ancient Greece and modern Europe' in that 'the spiritual condition of Greece during the period immediately preceding the Dionysian awakening was comparable to the spiritual condition of Europe during the eighteenth century. Greece was Apollonian in the sense that Europe was religious' and thus 'the issues involved in the struggle of Apollo and Dionysus are the same now as then. In truth, Nietzsche discovered, the way to modern world is through the portals of the ancient wisdom'.[71] Orage posits that the Ancient Greeks responded to this crisis of thought with

[69] Constance Vaughan, 'Let the Academy be the Mirror of Life!', *Daily Sketch*, 30 April 1932, p. 5.
[70] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, pp. 97-8.
[71] Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, p. 28.

'a splendid affirmative. Not Apollo alone; not Dionysos [sic] alone; but Apollo and Dionysos [sic]—What will be Europe's reply?'[72] Contemporary society since the Renaissance has yet to enact the 'splendid affirmative' of Ancient Greek culture and thus remains bound and limited. Nietzsche's philosophy is a call to readdress this imbalance, a suggestion that the way to redeem the modern world is 'through the portals of the ancient wisdom'.[73] Moore's artistic ideology aims to reinvigorate this aim, placing the artist as a vital and redemptive figure, the sole figure in humanity with the ability and insight to enact this transformative affirmation. She shares Nietzsche's belief in the 'portals of ancient wisdom' as the template for this revolution. 'We must go back' she insists, 'back to the first vision before men put frills on their buildings and in their minds' (p. 98). She reveres what she calls the 'pre-sentimental age' in which thought and creation were untarnished by the limitations of the modern condition. Like Nietzsche, this for Moore means a return to the ancient wisdom of the Greeks, in which both the Apollonian and the Dionysian are embraced and utilized to their full, productive potential. Moore praises the 'rebellious Greeks' with their 'freedom, wildness, vitality' but states that modern man 'sees that they are free, angry, vital, and something in him responds, is made to pause before their wildness and their grace. But he cannot *understand* that wildness and that grace' (p. 31). Moore insists that 'We must return to a lost sense of destiny if man is to be saved' for this 'is the only anchor by which man can escape the horror of his present day drifting' (p. 62). Moore's insistence that mankind must 'go back' to this ancient source of wisdom in order to progress is a vital aspect of understanding the consistent veneration of the mythological, primitive, and ancient societies throughout her work. In both *Spleen* and *Fugue*, the traditional, archaic aspects of Mediterranean cultures are frequently positioned as more desirable and productive than modernity. In Moore's mind, this is a symbolic appeal to the redemptive qualities that she perceives, with Nietzsche's help, in Ancient Greek philosophy. Inevitably, this social and philosophical traditionalism is frequently synonymous with conservatism and outmoded values, particularly with regards to gender. Moore negotiates the reality of achieving the philosophical reversion that she longs for, without prompting a restrictive

[72] Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, p. 28.
[73] Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, p. 28.

social hierarchy throughout her novels. Can the wisdom of the ancient world be reclaimed in a society in which equality is valued as the basis of the individualism required for the proactive artist? Jane Garrity identifies what she calls an 'atavistic femininity' in Moore's depiction of 'primitive' Italian communities in *Spleen*.[74] I would argue that this reflects Moore's anxiety about what it would mean in reality to 'go back' and her complex and conflicted relationship with gender essentialism and creative potential. I will explore this issue further towards the end of this chapter.

The question of whether philosophy can and should become reality and the extent to which it can be used as a template for a revolutionary existence is at the heart of Moore's work. She consistently works to negotiate the boundaries between reality and philosophy and address two central propositions: Can the philosophical be truly translated as a template for reality, and can reality ever truly submit to a philosophical revolution? In Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, I argue that Moore uses both *Spleen* and *Fugue* to examine whether Nietzsche's cry for dissent is workable template of revolution for the modern artist. Certainly, she insists that transformative creativity is the only means to a social revolution and transgressive action and individualism must lie at the heart of this impulse. Revolution requires art, and thus art requires a philosophy of dissent in which the mind is utilized to its full, transformative potential. Thus in Nietzsche, Moore finds a clear philosophical manifesto that promotes dissent as the means for transformative creativity. But as both Moore and Nietzsche acknowledge, the innovation of the artist has an essential and productive relationship with the rationalism of the scientist. This factor informs an additional vital aspect of Moore's formulation of an ideology of innovation: her centralizing of the innate, transformative powers of the body. The majority of the final chapters of *The Apple is Bitten Again* are committed to the expression of Moore's physiological rendering of the human body and its potential role in the expression of the revolutionary impulse. The centrality of the body within modernism has been extensively articulated, particularly in relation to the technological and scientific advances of the age

[74] Jane Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 59 (Summer 2013), 288-316, p. 294.

and consequent re-evaluations embodied experience.[75] Its specific relevance to Moore's project is based upon her fascination with the scientific advances that work to inform her conception of a vitalist body. As Omri Moses outlines in his study of the modernist character and vitalism, vitalist theory broadly refers to

> […] a range of nonmechanistic philosophies that regard life as a conjunction of these unique systems that unfold by operations that are self-determining rather than wholly constrained by physical or chemical laws. Vitalist philosophies focus on emergent processes that develop in unpredictable ways and sustain themselves by means of their own internal logic.[76]

This holds great significance for Moore as the justification of the body as an integral part of the creative project. Vitalist definitions of the body emerged from the nineteenth century onwards, a shift that Tim Armstrong places in the hands of Schopenhauer and his reconception of the 'Will' as an embodied life force, rather than a form of detached consciousness.[77] By the early twentieth century, this concept would be at the heart of Egoist philosophy which held a vitalist conception of the will or 'life force' as the 'expression of a restless individuating power'.[78] Henri Bergson also championed a vitalist understanding of the body, developing his theory of the 'Élan Vital' is his 1907 publication *Creative Evolution*. For Bergson, life is defined by continual, accumulative change made possible by this innate life force: 'the truth is that we change without ceasing, and that the state itself is nothing but change'.[79] As Moses notes, the most significant aspect of this process is that its sustained solely by an 'internal logic'. This conception of a self-generated and constantly evolving force as the guiding principle for life held clear appeal for the modernist project of originality and individualism. Equally,

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[75] *Modernism, Technology, and the Body: A Cultural Study* by Tim Armstrong (1998), *Bodies of Modernism: Physical Disability in Transatlantic Modernism* by Maren Tova Linett (2016), and *Reconstructing the Body: Classicism, Modernism, and the First World War* by Ana Carden-Coyne (2009), have been of particular relevance to this project.

[76] Omri Moses, *Out of Character: Modernism, Vitalism, Psychic Life* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), p. 16.

[77] Tim Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), p. 65.

[78] Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History*, p. 79.

[79] Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution* (New York: Dover Publications, 2003), p. 11.

vitalism prompted a reconsideration of the traditional understanding of Cartesian dualism and called for new attention to be paid to the potential, transformative power of the body as a subjective force. Thus for Moore, the potential of the body as a means to the realization of her philosophical endeavors becomes a central concern in her creative project and goes some way to explaining her fascination with physiology. Moore's engagement with vitalism interacts with the evolutionary theory of both Darwin and Bergson and this informs her conception of the body as intuitive and constantly adaptive. Moore defines her own conception of an 'Élan Vital' as 'Soul' or the 'fifth element', an atomic energy that is transmitted through the atmosphere or 'psychosphere' (p. 174). This 'soul' element is attracted 'magnetically' to matter which it animates upon contact: 'Each body and each component part of a body while living captures for itself a certain number of soul-molecules which impregnate every part of the body, animating our brains, our brains animating our organs, our organs animating our actions' (p. 175). Moore also claims that the body is made up of numerous 'Local Brains', each of which has an innate 'self directed purpose' which dictates 'Conscious Intelligent Movements' (p. 173). Moore specifies that each 'local brain' enacts its own 'self directed purpose' (p. 173) which adapts to the localized changes that it experiences. Moore's depiction of the body as an intuitive, adaptive entity, clearly engages with vitalism and evolutionary theory.

Works such as Gregory Moore's *Nietzsche, Biology and Metaphor* (2002) identify the impact of evolutionary biology upon Nietzsche's philosophical project. Gregory Moore argues that Darwinism and the consequent 'widespread contemporary biologism' provided a scientific framework for Nietzsche's conception of aesthetics and influenced his development of an 'applied physiology of art'.[80] In 1872 Nietzsche writes 'aesthetics only has meaning as natural science: like Apollonian and the Dionysian', a statement that requires the Apollonian and Dionysian forces 'to be understood "scientifically"; they are intended as poetic symbols of natural processes'.[81] Moore's engagement with evolutionary biology and the innate transformative potential of the body utilizes this Nietzschean conception of the poetic as metaphor for the physiological. Moore's

[80] Gregory Moore, *Nietzsche, Biology and Metaphor* (2002), p. 85.
[81] Gregory Moore, *Nietzsche, Biology and Metaphor* , p. 92.

understanding of the vitalist body enables the physiological embodiment of her philosophical objectives. The self-regulating, intuitive body enables the tangible realization of the ideological individualism that lies at the heart of Moore's creative theory. Vitalist theory provokes Moore to negotiate the boundaries between the philosophical and the literal, the metaphorical and the real. Both Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 identify how Moore explores the potential of the vitalist body as a component of her creative ideology in both *Spleen* and *Fugue*. *Spleen* in particular sees Moore experiment with the possibilities of re-incorporating the body within a modernist project of creative innovation. Ruth's pregnancy becomes both a metaphor for female creativity and a more literal exploration of the creative boundaries of a vitalist body. After an initial ideological intervention to create 'something new', Ruth's pregnancy becomes a distinctly modernist act of creation that rejects humanity's predilection for mimetic reproduction.[82] 'The monstrous conceit that birth was limited to the reproduction of imperfections hallowed by their association with oneself!' Ruth proclaims, 'Was this then why man had ceased to evolve: as though a doubtful perfection had been attained?'.[83] Humanity's lack of innovative production has halted its evolutionary potential. Ruth further notes the 'exasperating ineffectiveness of man' as demonstrated in his longing for flight:

> Always this thought of wings lifting man to godhead. Knowing their lack, sensing their insufficiency, content to imagine their desires instead of creating them! Their little box with wings attached was nothing was less than nothing, poor travesty of man's first awe![84]

Humanity has stagnated because men have solely been 'content to imagine their desires instead of creating them' and thus, Ruth argues, have built aeroplanes instead of evolving wings. Detrimentally, thought has been prioritised over action, the power of the mind has been prioritised over the power of the body. Significantly, Ruth concludes, 'Women could have shown them how wings are made had they taken heed and used

[82] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 24.
[83] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 46.
[84] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 46.

wisely the centuries of thought and prayer. What Leonardo had dared dream woman could have dared achieve'.[85] Moore implies that the reproductive female body has an urgent role in the reinvigoration of human evolution. This embodied creation that makes use of the body's vitalist powers is perceived to be redemptive and progressive. Thus, *Spleen* plays a vital role in demonstrating Moore's experimentation with the boundary between the philosophical and the literal in the development of her creative ideology. She suggests a literal enactment of a Nietzschean project of human advancement, as enabled by the evolutionary, vitalist potential of the reproductive female body.[86]

As Ruth further considers the desire for flight she concludes: 'who knew in what first dawn this urge came to man? […] The earliest Art had traces of it; stiff broad feathery boards rising from shoulder blades; some winged their beasts; others their gods; others their victories; all, their supermen'.[87] Ruth attempts to undertake the challenge of literally breeding the superman, the pinnacle of Nietzschean aspiration, and as she states 'something above and beyond it all'.[88] But knowingly, Moore uses Ruth's aspiration to identify and interrogate both the creative and moral reality of the task. The Nietzschean impetus, to 'breed the superman', an individual that transcends human limitation, is unavoidably a selective, preferential task. To ensure ascendency, one must define limitation. It is here that Nietzschean philosophy takes a potentially dangerous turn when used as a literal template for human progression. Indeed, Nietzsche would become aligned with eugenic theory in the early twentieth century in the wake of Darwinism and vitalist conceptions of the body. Where Nietzsche provided a template for a moral and philosophical evolution, Darwin's theory of biological evolution was seen by eugenicists to provide a template by which this could become tangibly realised. Darwin's cousin Francis Galton coined the term 'eugenics' and proposed selective breeding as a means to social improvement using Darwin's evolutionary theories as justification. The alignment

[85] Moore, *Spleen,* p. 47.
[86] This preoccupation with the productive, evolutionary potential of gestation as a means to human ascendency inevitably ties women to maternity. Moore's evaluation of this conception of maternity and the reproductive female body in conflict with autonomous female subjectivity is central to *Spleen*'s narrative and further explored in Chapter 3.
[87] Moore, *Spleen,* p.47.
[88] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 24.

of these philosophical and scientific theories suddenly made the goal of breeding the 'superman' seem an achievable, tangible project of human advancement. Certainly, Nietzscheanism in the early twentieth century felt reinvigorated by eugenic theory. In 1913, the *New Age* published an exemplary article by Paul Cohn, demonstrating how the scientific rhetoric of eugenics would become aligned with Nietzschean thought:

> Only Nietzscheanism can lead us out of this impasse. A sound system of eugenics will prevail, free alike from that false 'humanitarianism' which is more devastating to the race than all the Tartar invasions, and from the false eugenic theories that preserve the wrong person. Science, instead of bolstering up an outworn ethical system, will be harnessed to the service of the Superman. Thus Nietzsche's true leaders, the men of strong and beautiful bodies, wills and intellects, will be developed.[89]

As Dan Stone notes in his study of the phenomenon *Breeding Superman* (2002), 'most interpreters looked on this scientific determinism not as a way of benefiting everybody but as a way of redefining or even realising afresh social hierarchies. Eugenics was 'progressive' in the sense that it challenged established orthodoxies'.[90] This challenge held clear appeal for the Nietzscheans as it enabled them to realise an individualism that prioritised those who would be able to perpetuate qualities that were most desirable and progressively diminish the limitations of those deemed dangerous to their project of progression. Stone further notes the appeal that Social Darwinism consequently held for Nietzschean thought, for after the advent of eugenics they had a 'shared emphasis on the value and desirability of conscious selection in breeding'.[91] This justification of an active, 'conscious' participation in selective breeding was perceived as the best means for avoiding the potential jeopardy of stagnant 'natural' reproduction and instead achieving something innovative and progressive. This context must inform our reading of *Spleen*, in which Ruth's active intervention in her pregnancy and her rejection

[89] Dan Stone, *Breeding Superman: Nietzsche, Race and Eugenics in Interwar Britain* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2002), p. 66.
[90] Stone, *Breeding Superman*, p. 66.
[91] Stone, *Breeding Superman*, p. 74.

of natural heredity in reproduction now appears to reflect this eugenic/Nietzschean rhetoric and Moore's desire for creative dissent. Indeed, she describes her child as the culmination of having played a 'trick on nature' and promotes a programme of selective breeding based upon the encouragement of specific phenotypic qualities that are deemed to be progressive:

> Swiftness of leg should have bred hoofs; swiftness of thought wings; swiftness of mechanical labor a Siva-like many-handedness. Only thus in its never-ending combinations should man have achieved that which he desired and envied; have evolved instead of atrophied, and been born new instead of old; new, strange, and different.[92]

To have evolved to be born 'new' and 'different' instead of 'atrophied' is the ultimate Nietzschean goal enabled by Ruth's suggested eugenic programme based upon the enactment of creative dissent. This conception of reproduction would produce 'never-ending' combinations and thus is a scheme of constant innovation that can lead us to the realization of the superman. The acknowledgement of the eugenic implications of Nietzschean thought in the early twentieth century is vital in any reading of Moore's work. By the 1930s, eugenics was a contentious but prevalent scientific proposal and social 'degeneration' was still deemed an ever-present threat. As Armstrong points out, the mainstream status of eugenic theory means that it was often more readily supported by progressives rather than conservatives and seen as a method through which society could be positively rejuvenated, pinpointing its support in modernist circles from the likes of H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, D.H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, W.B. Yeats, and Vita Sackville-West.[93] Armstrong proposes that its appeal to modernist thought was its immediacy: 'the past is not relevant to the question of the present interaction of genetic variation and environment; the moment must be seized and the future shaped *now*'.[94] Moore's fascination with the potential of embodied progression and innovation

[92] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 125, p. 47.
[93]Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History*, p. 75.
[94]Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History*, p. 78.

seemingly shares this enthusiasm although I would argue that she uses her novels (especially *Spleen*, as analyzed in Chapter 3) to explore the extent to which she finds eugenic thought to also be morally productive. In addition, the prevalence of disability and the interrogation of the able/disabled binary throughout her novels prompts a vital consideration of eugenic influence in any reading of her work. Certainly, this has so far been the prevalent analytical approach in academic analysis in work by Jane Garrity, Matt Franks, Renee Dickinson, and Maren Tova Linett.[95] Though not the sole focus of this work, I discuss my own understanding of Moore's conception of disability as demonstrated by her novels in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. I argue that Moore's vitalist conception of the body, her Nietzschean philosophy, and its interaction with early twentieth century eugenic ideology informs her discussion of disabled bodies and the symbolic potential of deformed bodies as a literary device.

Moore's vitalist understanding of physiology reinstates the body as a central aspect of subjectivity. In *Volatile Bodies* (1994) Elizabeth Grosz opposes the mind-body separation that she sees as central to Western philosophy as a means to reconfiguring our understanding of subjectivity in a process that can be used to reclaim female autonomy. Grosz proposes

> […] a refiguring of the body so that it moves from the periphery to the centre of analysis, so that it can now be understood as the very 'stuff' of subjectivity. The subject, recognized as a corporeal being, can no longer readily succumb to the neutralization and neutering of its specificity which has readily occurred to women as a consequence of women's submersion under male definition.[96]

[95] Jane Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 59 (Summer 2013), 288-316; Matt Franks, 'Mental Inversion, Modernist Aesthetics, and Disability Exceptionalism in Olive Moore's Spleen', *Journal of Modern Literature*, 38 (2014), 107- 127; Renee Dickinson, *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the Modernist Novel: the Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore* (London: Routledge, 2009); Maren Tova Linnett, *Bodies of Modernism: Physical Disability in Transatlantic Modernist Literature* (Michigan: Michigan University Press, 2017).
[96] Elisabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. ix.

Moore's prioritizing of the female body as an active extension of a progressive and vital mind echoes this desire to avoid the 'neutering of its specificity' and instead explore its unique potential as a tool of innovation. But whilst Grosz sees this technique as a means to subverting women's 'submersion under male definition', Moore's complex and undeniably problematic conception of gender means that her reclamation of the female body cannot be deemed an act of feminist liberation. Moore arguably fights to centralize the vitalist potential of the body within her definition of female subjectivity because she perceives maternity to be the only possible outlet for female creativity. 'Woman's limitation is that she is only physically adventurous and a-moral' Moore argues, whilst 'mentally she is circumscribed, passive, and censorious; estimable qualities for the home and State; inadequate to the higher creative efforts of mankind' (p. 140). Moore implies that the 'a-moral' potential of the female body has a greater capacity for creative revolution than that of the female mind because external societal forces do not hinder its innate creative capacity. Contrastingly, the female mind has lost its capacity for dissent, thus excluding women from artistic ascendency. Where the artist must strive to 'take apples from Eden', 'woman (enclosed in her world within herself)' now takes the apple and places it 'carefully out of reach on the mantelpiece above the hearth'.[97] Moore concludes that it is this active participation in her own mental circumscription that means woman will never achieve true artistic ascendency. Moore's damning conception of women's limitation inspires the chapter of *The Apple is Bitten Again* entitled 'Woman as Uncreative Artist' in which she bluntly asserts that 'Art is a masculine prerogative'.[98] Instead of the ardent individualism required of the artist, 'woman's creative gift is self-sacrifice',

> This, their deepest impulse, militates against any creative genius they could have. For the creative artist is the supreme selfish being: Art that which you alone can do and to which you will sacrifice all things—but yourself, who must be alone, secure and impregnable, to create it (pp. 105-106).

[97] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 26.
[98] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, pp. 127-145, p.127.

Moore's language integrates the body within her definition of artistic subjectivity as she knowingly asserts that the artist must be 'secure and impregnable' in order to achieve the rigid subjective boundaries of individualism. Moore implies that woman is 'unsecure' in both body and mind and thus is unable to cultivate true subjective agency. She further asserts that art must 'go to man with his sewn up body and thicker blood-stream. Art is the fertilization of life. Man, the fertilizer' (p. 127). Woman's physical and ideological permeability stops her from being able to achieve the creative agency and untarnished individualism of protected, 'sewn up' man. Men are the active agents of artistic ascendency whilst women can only ever be passive counterparts. That Moore uses the language of reproduction creates a conspicuous metaphor for her conception of this gendered hierarchy. Man is 'the fertilizer', whilst the pinnacle of woman's achievement can only ever be to enact a responsive gestation. Women can receive and carry masculine ideology but cannot create their own. Thus it is the specificity of the female body that in fact enables what Moore sees as her necessary subordination. Woman's pregnable and penetrable body is the catalyst for her inactive and impressionable subjectivity.

Moore's complex conception of gender and creativity is a consistently problematic element of her work. Understandably, critics have attempted to negotiate routes of redemption in her conception of gender and women in her writing.[99] But Moore's non-feminist stance must not be softened or excused in an attempt to find a more pleasing place for her amongst her modernist peers. Whilst she experiments with the boundaries of essentialism and explores potential modes of female autonomy, I would argue that her overriding stance on women, especially with regards to artistic production, is one of futility, insufficiency and derision. Art is a solely masculine field and women remain excluded and incapable of the same level of creative ascendency. The masculinization of modernism and women's consequent exclusion has been extensively

[99] Renee Dickinson, 'The (R)Evolution of Olive Moore: Fugue as Bridge to a New Feminist Awakening', in *Essays on Music and Language in Modernist Literature: Musical Modernism,* ed. by Katherine O'Callaghan (New York: Routledge, 2018); Erin M Kingsley, '"In the Centre of a Circle": Olive Moore's Spleen and Gestational Immigration', *Feminist Modernist Studies*, 1 (2017), 138-156.

evaluated in contemporary analysis. Gilbert and Gubar assert that the very form and language of modernism was formulated to save literature from 'effeminacy', whilst Bonnie Kime Scott's much cited statement that 'modernism was unconsciously gendered masculine' has been received by many as a definitive account of high modernism.[100] Moore's relentless stance on woman as 'Uncreative Artist' is comparatively a definitively conscious concurrence and makes no apology for its resultant bias, instead insisting that this gendered hierarchy must be maintained and enforced for the sake of artistic quality. As a female writer, Moore's peculiarity is that she maintains that art *should* be masculine, can *only* be masculine, and is persistent in her dismissal of women from the artistic sphere. Works such as Marianne DeKoven's *Rich and Strange: Gender, History, Modernism* (1991) have identified the productive potential of women's exclusion, proposing this 'outsider' status as a distinctly modernist quality in itself. DeKoven highlights Rachel Blau DuPlessis's statement that '"literature by women, in its ethical and moral position, resembles the equally nonhegemonic modernism in its subversive critique of culture"'.[101] The concept offers a similar premise to Hélène Cixous's notorious suggestion that there is a distinct value in 'L'ecriture feminine' which finds its own strength in a unique space outside of patriarchal discourse.[102] Moore concedes to a similar sense of essentialized difference within literature, acknowledging that 'women are excellent at fiction', but maintains that 'for fiction you need only emotion' whereas 'for the creation of Art is needed universality, curiosity, impersonality' (p. 128). Moore makes sure to not only exclude women from the masculine sphere, but also denigrates any potential distinct autonomy or productivity generated by this exclusion. Bound by emotion and a lack of 'the essentiality of the task', 'women confuse sincerity with art, achievement with purpose. Which is the cause of the shoddy literary goods and sentimental thinking of the day' (p. 130). Moore leaves no space for any reading of

[100] Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century, Volume 1 The War of the Words* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); *Gender in Modernism: New Geographies, Complex Intersections*, ed. by Bonnie Kime Scott (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007).
[101] Marianne DeKoven, *Rich and Strange: Gender, History, Modernism* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1991), p.8.
[102] Hélène Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa', trans. by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen, *Signs,* 1(1976), 875-893.

positive essentialism in her conception of gender and art, insisting unyieldingly that whilst women may partake in creation, it will never achieve the artistic status obtained by men.

Moore's own curious position within her own framework of gender and art offers the only glimpse of a possible redemptive clause for women. Significantly, Moore doesn't extricate herself from artistic definition, frequently using the terms 'us' and 'we' when discussing the creative artist in *The Apple is Bitten Again,* yet relentlessly insisting that the artist is by definition, male. Moore never directly acknowledges this logical dissonance but it begins to suggest that she occasionally concedes that the only option available to women is the emulation of masculine creativity, a provision that is directly formulated around the imitation of the 'male' capacity for dissent. Distinctly unlike the androgynous artistic mind advocated by Virginia Woolf, or the 'womanly woman' of Dorothy Richardson's 'feminine prose', Moore instead appears to advocate that female subjectivity must be completely overruled with the emulation of the masculine artistic impulse if woman is to succeed within the artistic sphere. Whether an emulation of 'male' cognitive prowess could indeed successfully counteract this gendered limitation and invert, or at the very least, offset women's artistic circumspection, is a thematic concern throughout Moore's work. Moore's most generous conclusion is her occasional consideration that the limitations that she perceives in the female mind are performative rather than innate and could be rectified if women became willing to re-evaluate their conception of disobedience in more 'masculine' terms. Women's writing, she continues, suffers from an innate 'sense of limitation' and an 'accurate and deadly knowledge that the writer would rather be taken for a lady than mistaken for an artist. A lack of virility; a lack of rebellion' (p. 141). Moore offers a brief glimmer of redemption, suggesting that if woman were to address this moralistic restriction and self-imposed courteousness, and instead embraced opportunities for mental 'virility' and 'rebellion', she may be able to access the creative ascendency of man. Thus her own championing of philosophical and socio-political frameworks of dissent as earlier outlined offers perhaps, a practical attempt at enacting this re-conception of moral integrity and goes some way towards justifying her own self-definition as an artist, exempt from the limitations of the modern

woman. Indeed, the title of *The Apple is Bitten Again* suggests her conception of the work as an emulation of Eve's original act of dissent. In her ideological manifesto, Moore is attempting to replicate the rebellion at the heart of the myth, and thus enact her own cognitive liberation and artistic ascendency. Dissent remains a central component of Moore's manifesto of progress, a template by which women may be able to extricate themselves from the gendered limitations that Moore perceives in a stagnant and artistically impotent society. Art requires rebellion, creativity demands innovation, and Moore aims to be a revolutionary pioneer of each.

Ch. 2. 'The Light Must Come from Within Oneself': *Celestial Seraglio* as a Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman

2.1. A Portrait of the Artist

Moore's first novel *Celestial Seraglio* (1929) has been largely overshadowed by the subsequent *Spleen* (1930) and *Fugue* (1932). It is less stylistically adventurous in comparison to Moore's later works and perhaps as a consequence has received no critical attention despite its republication in the Dalkey Archive Press's *Collected Writings: Olive Moore* (1992). This collection refers to the novel in its blurb simply as a 'wicked account of coming of age in a Belgian convent school'.[1] Moore's friend Alec Bristow asserted that *Celestial Seraglio* 'was of course largely autobiographical, and she confessed to me that the character Mavis was very much a self-portrait. The second, *Spleen,* was much more a novel of ideas'.[2] Additionally, the frontispiece of the 1934 edition of *The Apple is Bitten Again* contains a list of Moore's publications in which both *Spleen* and *Fugue* are listed as 'a novel', whereas *Celestial Seraglio* is simply described as 'a tale of convent life'. This purposeful distinction (most likely requested by Moore herself) actively sets *Celestial Seraglio* apart from the later works and implies that she perceived it as unworthy of being deemed a 'novel'. These accounts have perhaps contributed to *Celestial Seraglio*'s critical omission, positioning it as a frivolous and inferior precursor to Moore's subsequent intellectual bloom. Yet, this chapter argues that *Celestial Seraglio* must be analysed as a vital example of Moore's developing artistry. Its implicit concern with the nature of subject formation and the potential cultivation of individualism offers clear links to Moore's other works and her creative philosophy. *Celestial Seraglio* directly demonstrates Moore's preoccupation with the potential of the

[1] Olive Moore, *Celestial Seraglio,* in *The Collected Writings of Olive Moore* (Illinois: Dalkey Archive Press, 1992), pp. 1-108, cover blurb. Subsequent references are to this edition and are given in parentheses.
[2] Olive Moore, *Spleen* (Illinois: Dalkey Archive Press, 1996), pp. 131-132.

individual to achieve a creatively productive state of liberation from the homogenous limitations of a defective society. Protagonist Mavis progressively negotiates moments of confrontation between the boundaries of her upbringing and her own anarchic potential. In this manner, the novel is indeed a 'coming of age' narrative that follows Mavis as she navigates the transition from childhood to maturity, adhering to the structural linearity of a classic *Bildungsroman* narrative. Beginning the novel in childish innocence, Mavis proceeds through her narrative of formation, progressively gaining moments of experience and self-knowledge. Furthermore, this chapter argues that *Celestial Seraglio* traces the development of the artist. Mavis sequentially navigates the conflict between social conformity and her own artistic and subversive potential. Moore utilises the *Bildungsroman* narrative to its full potential, employing *Celestial Seraglio* as an interrogative and unflinching analysis of subject development and the productive potential of dissent.

Published in 1929, *Celestial Seraglio* falls into what Gregory Castle terms a 'period of revival and transformation' for the *Bildungsroman* genre. Distinct from the classical *Bildungsroman* tradition of the 18th and 19th centuries, Castle highlights a modernist reframing of the *Bildungsroman* narrative at the beginning of the 20th century in which the genre 'becomes a powerful and relevant form for the negotiation of complex problems concerning identity, nationality, education, the role of the artist, and social as well as personal relationships'.[3] Castle argues that whilst the traditional *Bildungsroman* narrative depicts an initial rebellion followed by a process of subject formation that eventually culminates with the subject's reconciliation with the social values (or bourgeois ideological structures) that had previously been rejected, the modernist *Bildungsroman* instead uses the traditional structure of the genre whilst critiquing and revising the values that it presents:

> The modernist *Bildungsroman* represents the failure of classical *Bildung* in this institutional climate; but it also maps new points of resistance in the processes of

[3] Gregory Castle, 'Coming of Age in the Age of the Empire: Joyce's Modernist Bildungsroman', *James Joyce Quarterly*, 40 (2003), 665-690, p. 670.

> formation and encourages the emergence of new conceptions of self-formation that are more concerned with evading and resisting socialization, with disharmonious social spheres with hybrid, ambivalent, sometimes traumatic processes of identity formation.[4]

In its adamant rejection of social reconciliation, the modernist *Bildungsroman* promotes singularity and non-compliance over conformity and moralistic notions of duty and obedience. Subject formation becomes a process of increasing individualisation and dissent from normative action. Castle proposes James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) as an exemplary modernist *Bildungsroman*. He states that 'by challenging the pedagogical assumptions of the genre—that is, by narrating a failed or problematic educational odyssey followed by the beginning of an artistic apprenticeship in exile—Joyce effectively challenges the historical and ideological values the classical *Bildungsroman* more or less overtly legitimises and celebrates'.[5] Indeed in Joyce's novel, as protagonist Stephen Dedalus navigates his way from childhood to adulthood he progressively confronts and rejects conventional expectations of religion, family, nationality, and politics in his journey towards the realisation of his innate potential as a self-determined artist. Stephen repeatedly chooses to reject the traditional foundations of adulthood presented to him by his society in order to achieve the individuality and insight that enable him to achieve the successful transformation from boy to artist. In this modernist adaption of the classical *Bildungsroman* framework, the artistic subject blooms in moments of dissent and individualism.

Olive Moore describes James Joyce in *The Apple is Bitten Again* as a contemporary example of the true creative artist. The list—which also includes Goya, Manet, Picasso, Voltaire, and Stendhal—collates artists who Moore believes exemplify the ability of the true artist to appear 'as bold as the flag of anarchy or the cold gleam of a scalpel', 'just when the despair and gangrene are about to take effect'. 'The creative artist is the forerunner of a civilisation's beginnings and end' she continues, 'Priestless

[4] Castle, 'Coming of Age in the Age of the Empire', p. 675.
[5] Castle, 'Coming of Age in the Age of the Empire', p. 675.

oracle: Cassandra whose message is read too late, if at all; world barometer; sensitive desert fern that shrinks and dies before an earthquake is due; a certain brave wintry flower that foretells an earlier approach of spring, a richer gathering of autumn'.[6] Moore's definition of the creative artist directly echoes a line from *A Portrait of the Artist*: 'In the silence their dark fire kindled the dusk into a tawny glow. Stephen's heart had withered up like a flower of the desert that feels the simoom coming from afar'.[7] Moore clearly identifies something valuable within Joyce's depiction of the sensitivity of artistic consciousness in *A Portrait of the Artist, which* she then echoes within her own definition of the artistic subject. Consequently, a comparison between *A Portrait of the Artist* and Moore's own artistic 'coming-of-age' narrative, *Celestial Seraglio* becomes valuable. Moore's 'Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman' follows protagonist Mavis Clare as she navigates the transition from childhood to maturity in her final years as a student at a Catholic convent school. The novel consequently shares many of the thematic concerns of *A Portrait of the Artist*: religion, morality, sin, loss of innocence, sexuality, and disobedience are all central ideas explored in *Celestial Seraglio*'s narrative. Much like Stephen Dedalus, Mavis experiences many of the 'symptoms' of her artistic potential throughout her time at school. Both suffer an acute sense of difference that sets them apart from their peers, a capacity for sudden wayward and dissenting impulses, sensitivity to aesthetic pleasures, and an increasing desire for individualism. These moments of artistic predilection emerge within Mavis's interior perception with increasing frequency, offering Mavis moments in which to actively transcend the social conformity that she faces. Much like Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist*, Mavis's progression as the protagonist of this modernist *Bildungsroman* relies upon her ability to interpret this innate capacity for dissent as means to rejecting conventional discourses of subject formation and thus realising her own creative potential.

There are also clear structural and stylistic comparisons that can be made between the two novels. *Celestial Seraglio* is divided into four chapters, each of which consists of a selection of momentary fragments arranged chronologically but each

[6] Olive Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again* (London: Wishart & Co, 1934), p. 55.
[7] James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as Young Man* (London: Penguin Books, 1965), p. 114.

unrelated to the last—an arguably Joycean narrative technique. Jeri Johnson's description of *A Portrait of the Artist's* narrative structure could very easily be a description of *Celestial Seraglio*:

> It breaks repeatedly into sections within chapters. Each break marks a temporal and geographical shift. Each new section opens without any consoling narrator explaining where we are or how we got there or how much time has elapsed since the last section. Each chapter breaks even more decisively with its predecessor.[8]

In *A Portrait of the Artist* these fragments are however, consistently focalised through Stephen, creating an unyielding portrait of his lived experience in which 'each individual episode mirrors, in effect, the general movement of the whole; each is a minidrama of rising from lowliness to triumph'.[9] Contrastingly in *Celestial Seraglio,* the third person narrative continually re-focalises the text within each fragment, shifting between the perspectives of pupils and nuns alike. A reviewer of *Celestial Seraglio* described how Moore 'constantly changes the angle of vision, she hops like a tame, wise bird from shoulder to shoulder. The resultant picture is thus peculiarly complete, unbiased, unheroic, lifelike'.[10] Mavis remains the predominant focus of this technique but our moments of insight into her perception are framed by a variety of contrasting perspectives from those around her. As a result, Mavis's personal transformation is perceived as only part of a much broader whole and the reader is given deliberate moments of distance in which to perceive and judge her actions from a perspective other than her own. Moore establishes a narrative structure that encourages a lack of allegiance with Mavis by enabling the reader to evaluate her actions within the broader context of her external social environment. This space of judgement is a vital aspect of the novel's significance because ultimately by the end of the novel, Mavis is a protagonist who has failed. Where Joyce's Stephen Dedalus is the triumphant subject of his *Bildungsroman*

[8] Jeri Johnson, 'Introduction', in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, James Joyce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. vii-xxxix, p.xvi.
[9] Johnson, 'Introduction', p. xv.
[10] Arnold Palmer, 'Arnold Palmer writes on The Humorous Novel and Other Books', *Sphere*, 14 September 1929, p. 503.

transformation, Mavis Clare is continually given opportunities to reject conventional discourses of formation but she repeatedly fails to realise her innate potential. As a consequence, the novel concludes ambiguously and the reader is left uncertain as to whether she will chose a future of dissent or conformity. It is the novel's depiction of the broad and intricate context of Mavis's actions that enables Moore to critique the social structures that Mavis continually fails to reject. Consequently, Moore's novel is not a narrative of aspiration but one of warning. How is it that despite her innate artistic inclinations, Mavis is unable to rise autonomous and triumphant from her own *Bildungsroman*?

2.2. *Non Servium*, I Will Not Serve

Of central importance to the success of the subject of a modernist *Bildungsroman* is an innate aspiration for individuality. The form insists that the subject becomes increasingly removed from societal norms and must not be reconciled if a productive artistic consciousness is to be achieved. This concept clearly appeals to Moore's creative project of individualism and dissent and her adoption of the *Bildungsroman* form allows her to explore the extent to which this vital creative impulse can be cultivated and maintained as the subject reaches maturity. With Moore's philosophical ambitions in mind, *Celestial Seraglio* can further be read as a Nietzschean coming-of-age, tracing the cultivation of the free spirit and the processes of spirit-transformation and self-overcoming that are required for the liberated and vital individual to come into being. Moore uses the novel to identify and explore the metaphysical obstacles that must be overcome in the subjective development of this Nietzschean conception of creative consciousness. Mavis is characterised to reflect the aristocratic thinking, transgressive action, and existential cogitation required of the Nietzschean free spirit and Moore's creative artist. In *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits* (1878), Nietzsche outlines a methodology for the development of the free spirit which is defined as continually unfolding process of subject formation catalysed by a sudden moment of 'great liberation'. He states

> One may conjecture that a spirit in whom the type "free spirit" will one day become ripe and sweet to the point of perfection has had its decisive experience in a great liberation and that previously it was all the more a fettered spirit and seemed to be chained for ever to its pillar and corner.
>
> […]
>
> The great liberation comes for those who are thus fettered suddenly, like the shock of an earthquake: the youthful soul is all at once convulsed, torn loose, town away—it itself does not know what is happening. A drive and impulse rules and masters it like a command; a will and desire awakens to go off, anywhere, at any cost; a vehement dangerous curiosity for an undiscovered world flames and flickers in all its senses.[11]

Nietzsche provides a structure of development that can be easily interpreted into a *Bildungsroman* narrative. Once this 'will and desire awakens', prompting a 'dangerous curiosity', the Nietzschean subject experiences 'sudden terror and suspicion of what it loved, a lightening bolt of contempt for what it called 'duty', a rebellious, arbitrary, volcanically erupting desire for travel, strange places, estrangements, coldness, soberness, frost, a hatred of love, perhaps a desecrating blow and glance backwards to where it formerly loved and worshipped'.[12] This process of subject formation based on dissent, estrangement, and individualism enables the process of spirit transformation that culminates in the renewed and liberated subjectivity of the free spirit. Significantly, Nietzsche defines this process specifically as a 'great liberation' of the subject from the limiting structures of morality. The formation of the free spirit is 'an act of wilfulness, and pleasure in wilfulness', and 'full of inquisitiveness and the desire to tempt and experiment, he creeps around the things most forbidden' before concluding 'Can all values not be turned round? And is good perhaps evil? And God only an invention and finesse of the Devil? Is everything perhaps in the last resort false?'.[13] This moral dissent and the interrogation of the existential implications of religion is the philosophical power

[11] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 6- 7.
[12] Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, p. 7.
[13] Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, p. 7.

of the free spirit. Thus, Nietzsche's consistent denigration of religion and its negative impact upon the liberty of the individual spirit are based upon the desire to maintain this intellectual autonomy. He insists that the 'Christian faith is a sacrifice: a sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of the spirit' and describes 'an incurable pessimism that forces whole millennia to bury their teeth in and cling to a religious interpretation of existence: the fear of that instinct which senses that one might get a hold of the truth too soon, before man has become strong enough, hard enough, artist enough'.[14] Nietzsche implies that the truth of religious futility can only be understood by those who are philosophically brave, or indeed those who are 'artist enough' to comprehend and embrace the existential expanse that opens up in the wake of religion's dissolution. The vital insistence upon the rejection of religious constructs of morality and the cultivation of the creative free spirit becomes increasingly clear. Consequently, as a *Bildungsroman* of Nietzschean subject formation, *Celestial Seraglio*'s clear religious thematic concerns become increasingly important. As Mavis negotiates her potential development into an active, ascendant free spirit, she must confront the moral structures of the Catholicism that have imposed themselves upon her own subjective agency. For her *Bildungsroman* narrative to be successful, she must release herself from these binds and articulate the 'great liberation' a Nietzschean free spirit.

However, Mavis's limitation is that she is repeatedly unable to negotiate potential points of resistance over the course of the narrative and thus *Celestial Seraglio* repeatedly fails as a *Bildungsroman* narrative. This deviation from the traditional course of the modernist *Bildungsroman* structure purposefully adapts the traditional triumphant masculine *Bildungsroman* into a narrative of feminine failure in order to demonstrate what Moore perceives to be an unbridgeable gap between womanhood and artistry. In *A Portrait of the Artist,* Stephen Dedalus's triumphant transformation comes as he increasingly rejects the Catholicism that defines his prior conceptions of morality. As the narrative progresses, Stephen increasingly demonstrates the rebellious curiosity of the Nietzschean free spirit who 'full of inquisitiveness and the desire to tempt and

[14] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil,* in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. by Walter Kaufman (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), pp. 179-436, p. 250, p. 261.

experiment, he creeps around the things most forbidden'.[15] This is encapsulated with reference to Lucifer's proclamation, '"*non serviam*: I will not serve"', a phrase later echoed by Stephen at the height of his transformation: 'I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use—silence, exile, and cunning'.[16] Lucifer's sin, 'an instance of rebellious pride of the intellect' which results in his exile, comes to act as a metaphor for the transcendent, transgressive artist and a template for Stephen's conversion, reflecting Nietzsche's insistence that the free spirit must embrace the potential of disobedient structures of thought and the question 'Can all values not be turned round?'.[17] In contrast, Mavis is unable to undertake this re-evaluation of morality and repeatedly disregards opportunities for progressive individualism in an attempt to hide her sensations of 'difference'. Mavis's parents are separated, a transgression that Mavis longs to hide for 'She was suddenly aware that she was regarded as something apart; a curiosity to be questioned; a mystery to be solved […] Pondering these injustices her heart was heavy with a dull resentment against those who had put this indignity upon her' (p. 14). Her parent's divorce, which subverts the expectations of the Catholic faith, is perceived as the cause of 'a hostile fate from which all other girls in the schooled seemed immune' (p. 14). Mavis continues to perceive her parent's actions as something immoral because this enables her to remain integrated with her peers. She does not question these restricting structures of thought or articulate a Nietzschean interrogation by asking 'and is good perhaps evil?'. Mavis instead describes the secret as 'a snake, devised especially for her injury' which 'lay concealed in the grass' (p. 13). Moore uses this snake imagery to ensure that Mavis's difference is perceived as devilish intervention and thus as an opportunity for progressive dissent and the undoing of morality. It is after all a snake that tempts Eve into her original sin, a mythology that Moore uses as an emblem of her artistic philosophy that progress will be achieved when 'the apple is bitten again'.

[15] Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, p.7. Sam Slote's *Joyce's Nietzschean Ethics* (2013) provides a detailed exploration of the impact of Nietzschean philosophy on the work of James Joyce. Chapter 2 'Ecce Auctor: Self-Creation in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*' offers a useful comparison to my reading of Moore's *Celestial Seraglio*.
[16] Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist*, p. 124, p. 269.
[17] Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, p. 142.

Celestial Seraglio reiterates this using imagery to imply that Mavis's opportunities for transgressive potential are contrived by the devil, offering her moments in which to embrace her transgressive potential and elect the motto of the artist: 'I will not serve'. But *Celestial Seraglio* also sees Moore reassert her conception of a gendered difference in the interpretation of this 'rebellious pride' necessary for the artistic transformation and the cultivation of the Nietzschean free spirit. Moore uses Mavis's repeated intellectual limitation and dismissal of progressive opportunity to reiterate her perception that feminine cognitive circumscription is innate and impedes their ability to access modes of transgressive potential. This tension lies at the heart of the repeated failures of Moore's *Bildungsroman* and demonstrates her assertion that art must remain 'a masculine prerogative'.[18]

The interrelation between religious structures of morality and the philosophical restriction of the individual is a central concern of *Celestial Seraglio*. Moore reiterates Nietzsche's concern that religion's demands for obedience and self-sacrifice opposes the necessary conditions for the development of the free spirit and the creative artist. Moore further identifies the gendered differences in this restriction and uses the novel to explore how religious morality has a direct effect upon the limitations that she perceives in womanhood. *Celestial Seraglio* examines the extent to which the patriarchal structures of Catholicism hinder female potential and whether women could gain access to the individualism necessary of the free spirit if they were to reject the social obligations of religious morality. The detrimental qualities of Catholic constructions of female identity and their overwhelming prevalence within the hegemonic social order have been extensively interrogated. Irigaray insists:

> How desperately hard it is for mortals to understand and, more especially, to demonstrate God's reality and truth; yet these have the force of law. They regulate the orderliness of the universe that has been formed in God's image. All that really exists is like Him. Anything divergent will be abandoned. […]

[18] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, pp. 127-145, p.127.

> Thus he finds himself in the presence of his Ideas alone, though this is not to say that he recognizes himself equally in each, male and female. The fact that each is in some measure his reflection still allows for a hierarchy in the degrees of self-realisation, the degrees of affiliation, of ancestry.[19]

The hierarchical, gendered structures that Irigaray highlights within the religious social order dominate feminist interpretations of Catholic perceptions of womanhood. Catholic tradition insists that if woman is to maintain a relationship with God she must adhere to strictly defined notions of duty and self-sacrifice. Both Marina Warner and Julia Kristeva argue that Catholicism defines perfect womanhood within the figure of the Virgin Mary who is the emblem of pure, maternal, and self-sacrificing femininity. Warner dubs the Virgin Mary the 'model of the sex', 'the Church's female paragon, and the ideal of the feminine personified'.[20] Kristeva further insists that 'Christianity is no doubt the most sophisticated symbolic construct in which femininity, to the extent that it figures therein—and it does so constantly—is confined within the limits of the *Maternal*'.[21] This confinement requires any individualism to be subsumed under these strict models of womanhood. Any behaviour that diverges from these boundaries of identity will, as Irigaray notes, cause the subject to 'be abandoned' by the religious social order. Kristeva proposes that 'A woman has only two choices: either to experience herself in sex *hyperabstractly* […] so as to make herself worthy of divine grace and assimilation to the symbolic order, or else to experience herself as *different*, other, fallen. […] But she will not be able to achieve her complexity as a divided heterogeneous being'.[22] These studies work to reiterate the strict dividing line between divine womanhood and sinful womanhood that dominates Catholic conceptions of femininity. Divinity is associated with purity and obedience, whilst 'difference' or individualism is seen as synonymous to sin. The fear of this female capacity for sinful transgression is repeatedly used to justify their submission within the patriarchal structures of Catholicism. Warner identifies how

[19]Luce Irigaray, 'Divine Knowledge', in *Speculum of the Other Woman*, trans. by Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 330-338, p. 330.
[20] Marina Warner, *Alone of All her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. xxxvi.
[21] Julia Kristeva, 'Stabat Mater', *Poetics Today*, 6 (1985), 133-152, p. 142.
[22] Kristeva, 'Stabat Mater', p. 142.

the threatening evils of sexuality, death, and sin 'were particularly identified with the female' for 'woman is the cause of the Fall, the wicked temptress, the accomplice of Satan, and the destroyer of mankind'.[23] Indeed as Warner notes, it is Eve's original sin and the consequent loss of Paradise that is used as evidence to prove that autonomy and transgression in woman threatens the stability of man's relation to God. Eve is used to justify the prohibition of curiosity and dissent within Catholic constructions of acceptable female identities. Only by renouncing dissent, individualism, and intellectual inquisitiveness can woman begin to attain divine redemption.

The ideological conflict between these religious constructions of female identity and Moore's conception of the creative artist are clear. Moore specifically articulates that the creative artist must emulate Eve's transgression, taking 'apples from Eden' and inciting a transformative revolution of awareness and understanding. Catholic constructions of womanhood directly prevent women from accessing the behavioural philosophy of the creative artist. Religion can therefore be declared a determining component of Moore's exclusion of women from the artistic sphere. Thus the potentially productive autonomy of sin and transgression becomes a particularly significant theme within *Celestial Seraglio* as Mavis negotiates the development of her identity. Mavis is repeatedly confronted with moments in which there are opportunities to form a reconception of 'sinful' behaviour as a potential source of liberation from the binds of catholic constructions of female identity. This re-valuation of dissent is a fundamental aspect of Mavis's potential transformation but Moore depicts a social landscape that directly opposes her success.

The novel opens with two scenes that demonstrate how Catholicism works to diminish subjective autonomy and female disobedience using fear and the threat of retribution. In class, Sœur Damiana describes a cautionary tale of two women who have gone astray: '"They were very rich ladies, and though they once had been devout and had done gladly their work for the poor, they gave themselves up to the vanities of the world and now listened more to the voice of the Devil than to the voice of Jesus."' (p. 3).

[23] Warner, *Alone of All her Sex*, p. 19.

Their sinful existence is specifically detailed as '"a life of vanity and pride"' (p. 3). The story reaches its climax when the young woman becomes blind because '"God does not forget."'(p. 4). It demonstrates how the female emulation of the devil's prideful egoism is perceived as a threatening excess of female sexuality, punished with blindness, an act of 'castration' transposed onto the female subject. The jeopardy of Mavis's position is clearly articulated. If she is to emulate the 'rebellious pride' required of the artist, she must commit to her exclusion from the catholic constructions of female identity that deny and punish dissenting modes of femininity. The difficulty of this subversion within the context of the convent school is demonstrated as a classmate dares to question the validity of the story: '"But…but…I don't call that fair…I call that a horrible story…I think it was *mean* of God…I don't think she meant to be bad at all…I call it cruel to make her blind for going to a party…"' (p. 4). This attempted re-valuation of the moral code reinforced by the story is punished with a rejection by the obedient majority as 'In a heavy silence the class waited for her to resume her seat, and eyes bulged at her as though the Devil who had just spoken through her lips was now about to rush out from them. Some, despite their curiosity, turned away, feeling it almost a sin to look on her' (p. 4). In spite of their 'curiosity', the girl's classmates immediately ostracise her for her transgression and Moore implies that questioning the moral structures of Catholicism incites immediate rejection.

It is of course within this rejection that Mavis may attain the liberation necessary for her Nietzschean transformation. Her potential is demonstrated in moments in which she is drawn towards modes of female identity that fall outside of the strict definitions of Catholic womanhood. In particular, Mavis longs to understand forbidden female sexuality. Despite being completely ignorant of sex and sexuality Mavis clings to any scant information she can find, scouring the bible for anything seemingly suggestive in an attempt to be able to claim the authority of insight. Moore depicts a conversation between Mavis and her best friend Joyce:

> '"Mavis, I'll tell you something I heard Violet Grey say to Mona last night. She said: 'Read Genesis XXXIX, 7-15'. I turned it up immediately but I cant make anything of it. See if you can".
> Joyce pulled a small bible from among the lesson books under her arm. They read it very carefully, a finger pointing under each line, and at the end lifted puzzled faces to each other.
> "Lie with her?" echoed Mavis. "Lie with her? But, Joyce, what could he lie to her *about*?"' (p. 6).

Mavis understands that power lies in the knowledge of the forbidden but in her innocence must initially falsify an intellectual maturity that she has yet to gain: 'one must not betray that one understood nothing; or understood so imperfectly as to be puzzled at the nonsense. Strange jokes must always be greeted with laughter: loud laughter, often before the point was reached' (p. 11). The scene foreshadows Mavis's oncoming journey of transformation by demonstrating her potential capacity for dissent and desire for knowledge. Significantly, another of Mavis's secrets is the news that '"Emily Jennings is being sent away!"'(p. 5). Mavis concludes: '"I did hear a little bit but it didn't sound sense. I heard Dorothy and Mona whispering about it in Chapel this morning. Something about a baby being born without a head. But that couldn't be all, could it? You don't get expelled for *that*"'(p. 5). Despite Mavis's ignorance, Moore knowingly implies that Emily Jennings has been expelled for articulating forbidden knowledge. The 'baby being born without a head' is a frequent motif in Early Modern stories of women's blasphemous actions being punished with the birth of a headless child as a sign of god's displeasure.[24] The most notorious of these, John Locke's *A Strange and Lamentable Accident That Happened Lately at Mears Abbey* (1642), presents a deeply anti-Catholic rhetoric which would be impermissible within Mavis's Catholic convent school. Emily Jennings's fate acts as an unsettling reminder that disobedience will be punished with exile. The scene

[24] Mary Elizabeth Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.157. This moment also appears to speak directly to *Spleen* in which Ruth's intellectual transgression is 'punished' with the birth of a deformed child. Moore repeatedly sees that intellectual transgression from the established social order is embodied and materialised in subversive aesthetic form.

foreshadows Mavis's oncoming decision between obedience and conformity or the disobedience and isolation required for her ascent into artistry.

Mavis's developing potential is most clearly demonstrated in a scene in which she discovers a distinctly symbolic picture postcard:

> It came as a shock to Mavis when, after furtive looks to check that no nun was around, the postcard was placed in her hand. She had not known. She was still not quite certain; but she had no intention of exposing herself to any malice, or risking the indignity of being considered 'innocent'. So she gazed at the picture with an emphasised indifference and wisely kept her counsel.
> It was a statue. A white marble statue, that struck her for all her morbid preoccupation as being somehow something supremely beautiful. A naked man with a lovely girlish face, and curls twisted on his shoulders. His feet were bound with sandal-laces and a small wing grew on either heel.
> She handed it back with a studied smile. That then was the difference. Men did not just wear trousers and talk in deep voices and have short hair. They were not simply girls one fell in love with (p. 11).

The postcard's depiction of Hermes, with his winged feet, is a significant symbol of possibility for Mavis and her artistic future.[25] Greek mythology and Mount Olympus appear repeatedly within Moore's work as symbols of the Nietzschean 'portals of ancient wisdom' that enable the creative artist to transgress normal human potential.[26] Moore's definition of the 'creative artist' is one who must 'steal fire from Olympus', an allusion to the myth of Prometheus (meaning 'forethought'), a titan who disobeys Zeus and steals fire (symbolic of wisdom or creation) from Mount Olympus in order to bestow humankind

[25] This is reflected in *Spleen* where Ruth's intellectual progressiveness is marked by her 'wings'. Whilst pregnant she runs across the grass 'with mercury's wings at her heels', gaining access to Hermes's celestial power. She also 'seemed to wing across floors leaving no footprints' and insists that there are to be 'only young light-footed people in the nurseries' upon her giving birth.
[26] A. R. Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1911), p. 28.

with its power.[27] Moore perceives the artist as a 'forerunner', a figure who holds the power to similarly 'steal' celestial wisdom for the benefit of humanity and enact a line of communication between the heavens and the earth.[28] Consequently, the symbolism of Hermes appearing as the sculpted figure on Mavis's postcard becomes increasingly important. Hermes is himself an Olympian god but most significantly, he is also the messenger of the gods and symbolic of the 'transgression of boundaries and breaking of taboos'.[29] Hermes consequently represents many of the criteria of Moore's 'creative artist', inhabiting a unique liminal space between the human and the divine and roaming beyond the confines of each with ease. The postcard is Mavis's first invitation to transgress beyond the frontiers of her lived experience into the realm of the artist, symbolically delivered from Olympus in a message from Hermes himself. Simultaneously, the postcard also provides Mavis with her first experience of her own forbidden sexuality. Mavis is struck by the fact that she finds the statue 'supremely beautiful' with his 'lovely girlish face' and 'curls twisted on his shoulders'.[30] Mavis's initial sensation of physical attraction quickly develops into a more articulate understanding of sexuality and biological sex. Men, she realises, are not 'simply girls one fell in love with' that happen to 'wear trousers' but instead there are specific anatomical differences between men and women of which she has only just become aware. It is the corporeal difference of the statue's naked masculine body that arouses within Mavis the curiosity and excitement of the unfamiliar, whilst also confirming to her the conditions of heterosexual attraction. Conclusively, the postcard is an exemplary moment of transition for Mavis which adheres to Castle's definition that the modernist *Bildungsroman* 'maps new points of resistance in the processes of formation and encourages the emergence of new conceptions of self-formation that are more concerned with evading and resisting socialization'.[31] Mavis's postcard offers numerous 'point[s] of resistance' that enable her to potentially transgress

[27] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 98.
[28] 'The creative artist is the forerunner of a civilisation's beginnings and end'. (Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 55).
[29] Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion*, trans. by John Raffan (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 156.
[30] Moore also implies a potentially 'deviant' sexuality as Mavis is attracted to the 'girlish face' of the statue and thus potentially begins to transgress beyond the boundaries of heterosexual attraction.
[31] Castle, 'Coming of Age in the Age of the Empire', p. 675.

her current socialised expectations. A symbolic image of dissent and artistic ascendency, the postcard directly opposes the limited constructions of identity offered by Catholicism by suggestively positioning knowledge, sexuality, and art as modes of powerful self-formation.

But whilst Mavis clearly holds the potential she needs, she also retains an undeniable level of limitation. She is progressively able to dismiss and subvert Catholic constructions of womanhood, but she replaces them with equally limited, unproductive models of femininity. Her initial reluctance to deviate from conventional modes of existence develops into an aspiration for a sentimentalised and intellectually limited image of feminine success. Instead of transforming her potential into an ascendant process of artistic development, Mavis looks elsewhere for templates of achievement and finds only the seemingly 'rebellious' glamour of beauty and romance because this is all that is available to her. Mavis's egoism becomes trivialised as her vanity moves further from the intellectual pride of Lucifer and instead manifests as a longing to be deemed prettiest within the coded expectations of femininity. This diminishment of intellectual pride into sentimentalised vanity is shown to consistently undermine Mavis's transgressive potential. Mona, a school friend of Mavis's, confesses to her that Sister Imelda was overheard commenting on how pretty she was, a comment towards which Mavis felt 'surprisingly elated'. Mona adds, '"She never said anything about your conduct being nice. And I'd rather she praised my conduct than my face, anyway"' to which Mavis responds:

> "Somehow I wouldn't care a hang if I'd only been called a good girl…" and without warning, at the back of her mind an echo suddenly said: And nor would she… She wouldn't have bothered to confess you that…and something seemed to show her Mona very far below gazing up at her, and lots and lots of girls, ugly girls, very far below, all gazing up at her, and not because she was good at all; and she tossed back her curls with the air of a pretty circus pony, and felt proud (p. 28).

Mavis is still instinctively rebellious and very quickly dismisses being 'good' as an unworthy goal that would in no way offer the sensation of prestige and individuality that she craves. The confirmation that 'goodness' is not perceived to be a part of her nature gives her the sensation of powerful superiority in which her peers are imagined 'gazing up at her' from 'far below'. Mavis experiences the potential power that rebellion can bring but Moore quickly demonstrates that this sensation of pride is predominantly inspired by Mavis's longing to be deemed the most beautiful rather than the most transgressive. The moment of 'rebellious pride' is not transformative or progressive. Mavis misses its potential instructiveness and instead concludes the moment simply delighted to be a 'pretty circus pony' rather than an enlightened creator on the cusp of rejecting the restrictive structures of morality and identity.

This narrative structure, in which moments of potential transformation are consistently thwarted by Mavis's preoccupation with sentimental vanity, is repeated throughout the novel. The 'points of resistance' in Mavis's *Bildungsroman* continually fail because of her fixation with her own beauty. In a particularly vivid scene, Mavis undertakes a period of 'Evening Meditation' in which she is forced to read 'a fat illustrated volume on the Lives of the Saints' (p. 34). Mavis's initial unwillingness quickly turns to morbid fascination as she works her way through the book, concluding that 'the pictures were very horrible, Mavis thought, as, with some effort, she compelled herself to look again at the more gruesome ones. She had never seen anything like them before; had never imagined such people could exist' (p. 34). The gory illustrations include Saint Bolognia ('In her outstretched hands lay her smiling head casting a shining circle of light on the waters from its halo' (p. 34)), The Holy Virgin Thea and Saint Valentina ('one on the rack, blood streaming from her sides in which hung great iron hooks; the other on her knees, tied to an iron ring in a stone, her back ravaged by the scourges of her torturers' (p. 34)), and the Blessed Catherine of Fingo ('The victim's headless body lay over a block, and a pool of blood flowed from it' (p. 35)). The tales of martyrdom presented in the book are Mavis's first encounter with the true ascetic ideal of Catholicism and she is horrified by the visceral images of pious self-sacrifice. Marina Warner identifies how these brutal mythologies of female martyrdom were used to reinforce the construction of

virginal, self-sacrificing womanhood as an aspirational identity. Warner states that the 'subjection of the body to the pains and ordeals of ascetic discipline was an integral part of sanctity' used to emphasise that 'virginity confers extraordinary strength, that spiritual virtue is mirrored by physical powers'.[32] That the virginal body could withstand such violent torture demonstrates its powerful sanctity, thus justifying violence against women in the name of divine redemption. Moore uses the *Lives of the Saints* as a narrative device that illustrates her belief that Catholic constructions of female identity are rooted in masochistic structures of power that demand the submission of women under violent patriarchal dominance.

However, Moore also articulates an additional interpretation by demonstrating Mavis's own response to the book. Mavis 'read it raptly, her curiosity getting the better of her horror' (p. 35) whilst also noting that 'there seemed to be, Mavis noticed, a great many people looking on at the martyrdom' (p. 34) in one of the illustrations. Mavis does not find a model of female self-sacrifice in the *Lives of the Saints* but a template for power and prestige. Her response echoes the Nietzschean argument that the saint has the unique power to take complete command of their own desires and instinct in order to achieve their ascetic existence. Nietzsche argues that this strength should be understood as an example of the dominant will, similar to that of a powerful ruler.[33] Moore appears to echo this sentiment in her account of the *Lives of the Saints* as Mavis's interest is peaked by the power and singularity of their stories. Mavis replicates a Nietzschean interpretation of the value of the saints, perceiving the tenacity of their asceticism as indicative of a level of self-discipline that enables them to become elevated beyond the weaker, unenlightened masses. When read through Nietzsche, the aristocratic individualism of the saints is comparable to that required of Moore's creative artist. Moore suggests that the artist should emulate the dominant, carefully controlled wilfulness of the saint, demonstrating a strict ascetic discipline. The only difference is that the cause must instead be art, not religion, but the goal of spiritual transformation

[32] Warner, *Alone of All her Sex*, p. 18.
[33] Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 56.

remains. Moore is however, careful to not simplify this comparison. In *The Apple is Bitten Again* she extends her argument:

> *Reason for resisting the blandishments of saints.* Because they acquiesce. They accept. They withdraw.
> Yet rebellion and curiosity are the only values which raise man above the commonplace. These two alone have relieved the tedium of the maudlin and the vulgar; *i.e.*, his virtues indistinguishable from vices, his vices indistinguishable from virtues.[34]

Moore asserts that the artist must emulate the dedication of the saint whilst also embracing the 'rebellion and curiosity' necessary of the creative spirit. This capacity for dissent allows them to evade the ever-present danger of the 'maudlin' corroding the necessary vigour of the spirit. The religious saint suffers from both sentimentalisation and passivity. In comparison, the artist retains an integrity that is not marred by the corruption of religious limitation and can instead articulate only the most powerful and vital forces of dedication.

It is important that Mavis is able to differentiate between these hugely divergent models of spiritual transformation and access the autonomy of the artist. Certainly, she emerges from her spiritual retreat seemingly transformed:

> Now a change came over Mavis. She could feel it circulating as something physical within her, such as seasickness or giddiness in the head. Sitting tense on her hard rush seat while Pere Damien spoke to them all of humility, she was intensely aware of being different from what she had been on entering the Chapel twenty minutes ago.
> She sank herself deeper into this sensation of difference. On the walls of the Natural History class was that picture of the glossy golden snake lying beside its empty skin. She leaned her head against the high back of her chair and closed her

[34] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 59.

> eyes, shedding, she felt, a skin. An ugly skin; a layer of sin; dark and pursuing like a shadow, which was what Pere Damien was calling sin; *une ombre, nos ombres a nous tous* (p. 38).

For the first time, Mavis embraces this visceral 'sensation of difference' instead of rejecting it, sinking 'deeper' into it with her head held back and eyes closed, assuming a position of surrender and experiencing an exultant moment of transformation. Mavis uses the terminology of religious fervour, feeling herself to be shedding a 'layer of sin' and emerging righteous and sanctified. But Moore extends the symbolism of the scene by additionally alluding to the picture of the 'glossy golden snake lying beside its empty skin' (p. 38). For a second time, Moore uses snake imagery as metaphor during a moment in which Mavis confronts her innate 'difference'. Whereas previously the snake lay dormant and 'concealed in the grass' (p. 13), Moore now describes the snake as 'shedding […] a skin' (p. 38) and emerging transformed. Again the imagery of the snake evokes associations with the devil's serpent incarnation and Mavis's declaration that this moment is a shedding of 'ugly skin; a layer of sin' initially appears to be a renunciation of all devilish influence and a rejection of her transgressive potential. But the scene's additional imagery ensures that the passage holds a deeper subtext. The snake is no longer 'concealed' as it was previously, instead it is developing and growing. Indeed, the snake that sheds its skin is not completely altered but instead emerges stronger and renewed. Consequently, Mavis's moment of communion appears to be not with religious holiness but with the rebellious individualism of the devil, thus reiterating her innate potential for artistic ascendency. Mavis momentarily engages with her transgressive 'difference' and a potential future is unveiled, one based not on spiritual self-denial but with the wilful self-affirmation required of the creative artist and the free spirit.

But, upon opening her eyes, Mavis catches the gaze of classmate Josephine 'who must have been staring at her for some time' (p. 38). Mavis's response is immediate: 'Quickly it had flashed through her mind: she was thinking how pretty I looked like that…with my eyes shut…like, like…what did Sœur Marie-Joseph once say? ...like an angel in a Holy Picture…' (p. 38). Again, her desire to be deemed prettiest and her pride

in her appearance rather than the power of her innate difference, shatter a moment of potential transformation. 'Why had anyone ever told her she was pretty?' Mavis complains,

> Why had Ida James, a big girl of seventeen, ever said that she was the prettiest girl in the school? And having said it, why O why, did they come and tell her about it? Before that she had not known, not cared, not understood how nice it was to be prettier than other girls.
> Why was someone always saying: I wish I had hair like yours Mavis? Wish I'd your teeth. Oh *you* needn't worry with eyes like that. And why was that itchy feeling down the spine so pleasant as one replied politely: I like your hair so much better Doris? (p. 39)

The passage demonstrates how limited constructions of female identity and power are imposed upon Mavis from external sources. Before those around her started insisting how pretty she was she had 'not know, not cared, not understood'. Moore demonstrates that the sensation of superiority that Mavis experiences upon being told that she is the prettiest is based upon a system of limited values that have been imposed upon her by her social context. Thus the sensation of prestige and dominance that should be transformed into the ascendant artistic spirit becomes circumscribed and confined within limited templates of femininity. Moore insistently proposes that Mavis cannot subscribe to conventional constructions of womanhood whilst also articulating her innate potential as an autonomous creative spirit. Moore's interrogative voice continues as the passage extends further:

> Why should one long to grow up, to grow up quickly, to put up one's hair (Mavis knew exactly how her hair was to look, in fat bronzed ringlets and little plaits interwoven with a velvet ribbon and a few pads, like that illustration in the *Sphere* that Violet Gray received last month from home) and wear long skirts, and have a waist no more than eighteen inches, and have a fine full figure like Zilla Ray on the picture postcards? And…and charm…tall men with deep dark eyes like John the

> Beloved; only real men one could dance with, and who would fall on their knees at one's feet like in the picture called 'Bliss' which Milly Martin kept under her mattress.
>
> Mavis knew exactly how everything would be; she was rehearsing it more and more frequently these days. The first meeting; the proposal; the first kiss; the wedding dress of stiff cream satin; the engagement ring that was causing her so much thought in the choosing (p. 39).

Mavis's attempt to transgress the Catholic constructions of womanhood in fact finds her trapped within different but equally limited conceptions of female identity. She aspires to replicate the women she has seen in picture postcards and magazines with their accentuated femininity and fictionalised romances. Mavis considers these images of womanhood to fulfil her urge for rebellion because they oppose the religious conceptions of female identity that she has previously experienced. But as Moore knowingly implies, Mavis has simply replaced Catholic restriction with a new template for restricted womanhood. Mavis's potential is impeded by aspirations of marriage and romance and her capacity for enacting the necessary autonomy and individualism of the artist is severely reduced. Moore demonstrates how female ambition is repeatedly halted and impaired by the relentlessly limited constructions of female identity made available to women within society.

Mavis however, has no conception of the detrimental restriction that is being forced upon her. This societal limitation has halted her capacity to re-define aesthetic vanity into intellectual pride, thus blocking her from the potential rebellious power of artistic ascendency. Mavis is trapped in a cycle of limitation that enforces either self-sacrificing piety or romanticised femininity as the only routes of female power or accomplishment. Moore summarises this conflicted entrapment when Mavis 'came out of the Retreat with flying colours' but still reveals her persistent sentimental vanity as Moore concludes the passage:

> Walking down the aisle on leaving the Chapel Mavis did not stare around at her friends and smile, as was her customary exit. Instead she kept her eyes fixed steadily in front of her, and about her expression there was something gentle and aloof. It was not altogether her fault that in a far corner of her mind a small voice goaded her with the reminder that this was perhaps the most becoming expression she had ever used (p. 41).

Mavis's response to the experience starkly contrasts that of Stephen Dedalus who leaves his period of religious retreat in *A Portrait of the Artist* profoundly changed and spiritually transformed. He experiences a period of intense and sincere religious enlightenment that has an enormous impact upon his subjective formation and conception of morality. In comparison, Mavis's experience is largely frivolous and has little intellectual impact. She leaves her retreat hindered by the same limited conception of her own potential. The contrast between the two protagonists provokes the vital conclusion that whilst Stephen will conclude his narrative as the autonomous creative artist, Mavis is seemingly destined to fail. She is repeatedly unable to emulate the intellectual progressivism required of the successful transformation of the artistic spirit because she cannot articulate a construction of female identity that would give her the necessary freedom and individualism. Moore reiterates her assertion that womanhood is incompatible with artistry and that art can only remain a 'masculine prerogative'.

2.3. Mavis Clare and *The Sorrows of Satan*

Many have commented on the significance of Stephen Dedalus's name in their analysis of Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist*. 'Stephen' recalls Saint Stephen, who was executed for blasphemy and became the first martyr of Christianity, reflecting the religious turmoil that Joyce's protagonist undergoes. Contrastingly the surname 'Dedalus' refers to the Greek myth of Daedalus, the 'great artificer' and craftsman, and his ill-fated son Icarus. As Stephen negotiates his transformation, the novel consistently alludes to the imagery of the myth in which Daedalus and Icarus first escape entrapment before Daedalus creates the wings with which Icarus would fly too close to the sun with disastrous consequences.

Stephen inherits both the creativeness of Daedalus and the (perhaps foolhardy) ambition of Icarus as demonstrated in the final passage of the novel in which Stephen symbolically proclaims 'Away! Away! […] And the voices say with them: We are your kinsmen. And the air is thick with their company as they call to me, their kinsman, making ready to go, shaking their wings of their exultant and terrible youth' before the notorious final line of the novel: 'Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead'.[35] Many aspects of Stephen's fateful transformation are inherited from his mythological namesakes. In *Celestial Seraglio,* Olive Moore again imitates Joyce's tradition when she names her own protagonist 'Mavis Clare' and thus bestows Mavis with a very specific fictional inheritance of her own. 'Mavis Clare' is also the name of the protagonist in Marie Corelli's 1895 novel *The Sorrows of Satan,* a fact that cannot be deemed coincidental. 'Mavis' had never been used as a given name before the publication of *The Sorrows of Satan* and the popularity of Corelli's work meant that the novel was well known long after its publication. Corelli enjoyed great success as an author and her novels were immensely commercially popular despite their critical derision in the press. *The Sorrows of Satan* 'sold more copies on first publication than any previous English novel' and Corelli herself was a major celebrity in Victorian society.[36] Her novels were famous for their fantastical style, which moved away from literary realism and into the fanciful and romantic imagination whilst also preaching clear moral and social values. The shared initials of Mavis Clare and Marie Corelli prompted many readers to speculate that the character was an alias of sorts and although the author never confirmed this suspicion, there are many parallels between writer and protagonist. Mavis Clare is also a popular novelist not taken seriously by the literary establishment whose work rails against the immorality that she perceives in society. The novel itself follows 'idealistic and impoverished' writer, Geoffrey Tempest, as he navigates a sudden vast inheritance and a new corrupting friendship with charismatic Prince Raminez who transpires to be none other than Satan himself. Mavis Clare features as a paragon of virtue and purity who morally opposes Sibyl Elton, the corrupt and decadent 'New Woman' of the novel. Mavis Clare also antagonises Tempest throughout the novel as he remains immensely jealous of her success as a

[35] Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist*, p. 276.
[36] Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 115.

writer. Like all of Corelli's novels, *The Sorrows of Satan* is a largely melodramatic narrative of sentimental fantasy. With reference to the critical backlash that Corelli faced in the press, Rita Felski places Corelli as an example of the 'clash between the values of the literary intelligentsia and those of low and middle-brow taste' at the end of the nineteenth century, through which

> […] previously value-neutral terms such as "sentimental," "melodramatic," and "romantic" acquired increasingly negative, feminine, and old-fashioned connotations as labels for those texts which sought refuge from the critical understanding of reality in the form of beautiful illusions and exaggerated displays of feeling.[37]

Corelli came to be the public figurehead of this trivialisation of aesthetic qualities deemed to be symptomatic of 'feminine' and unintellectual writing, an image that would endure well into the twentieth century. Significantly, even James Joyce refers to Corelli and *The Sorrows of Satan* in *Ulysses* where it is used as a mocking dismissal of protagonist Stephen's aspirations to rewrite *Paradise Lost*.[38] That Joyce refers *The Sorrows of Satan* as a feeble and ineffectual imitation of Milton's work reconfirms his influence on Moore's *Celestial Seraglio*. Moore's unrelenting insistence that women are incapable of the artistic achievements of men is demonstrated in Joyce's assertion that Corelli's novel bears no comparison to Milton's epic. *Paradise Lost* of course details the Fall of man as prompted by Eve's transgression, the event that Moore asserts women must emulate if they are to reinstate themselves within the artistic sphere. Moore clearly implies in her reference to *The Sorrows of Satan* that female writers such as Corelli are incapable of replicating this necessary rebellion and can instead only produce sentimental and inadequate works.

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[37] Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, p. 117.

[38] 'Have you found those six brave medicals, John Eglinton asked with elder's gall, to write Paradise Lost at your dictation? The Sorrows of Satan he calls it' (James Joyce, *Ulysses* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2010), p. 476). See also Don Gifford's *Ulysses Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's Ulysses* (1988) and R. Brandon Kershner's *The Culture of Joyce's Ulysses* (2010) for extended explorations of Marie Corelli's influence within Joyce's writing.

Suzanne Clark notes that 'the idea of the "sentimental" was used by modernist critics to repudiate and for many years effectively silence a whole generation of women writers by linking emotionalism to women—or by suggesting that women's continuity with nineteenth century conventions of narrative made them less than intellectually respectable'.[39] Moore's artistic philosophy directly reiterates this high modernist stance, acknowledging that 'women are excellent at fiction', but 'for fiction you need only emotion' and thus 'women confuse sincerity with art, achievement with purpose. Which is the cause of the shoddy literary goods and sentimental thinking of the day'.[40] Moore specifically places women's proclivity for emotion and sentimentalism in direct opposition to the 'universality, curiosity, impersonality' needed for the creation of art.[41] Moore demonstrates her perception of limited female artistry through her allusion to Marie Corelli and *The Sorrows of Satan*. *Celestial Seraglio*'s Mavis Clare inherits the 'vulgarity, sensationalism, self-aggrandizement, an inflated imagination, lack of restraint, and, above all, an incurably commonplace mind' of her namesake's creator.[42] It is this inheritance that forms Mavis's irrepressible instinct to romanticise and sentimentalise any opportunity for intellectual transformation, reflecting what Felski defines in Corelli's writing as a tendency towards 'regressive emotionality unchecked by the considerations of reason or art'.[43] Olive Moore also directly reflects Felski's assertion that 'regressive' sentimentalism must be countered by reason. Moore prioritises reason as a vital creative principle that ensures the ascendency of intellect and creativity: 'Give him Reason and he will see all things clear, whole, and true. Only through Reason shall life break from the confines of dreams and the mystic's drunken embrace'.[44] The rationalism and foresight gained from the embrace of intellectual reason is at the heart of the 'masculine' capacity for artistic accomplishment and is a creative principle that remains inaccessible to women, thus reinforcing their exclusion from the artistic sphere. It is Mavis's inability to access this

[39] Suzanne Clark, 'Sentimental Modernism', in *Gender in Modernism: New Geographies, Complex Intersections*, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007), pp.125-135, p. 125.
[40] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 128, p. 130.
[41] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 128.
[42] Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, p. 116.
[43] Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, p. 126.
[44] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 62.

intellectual reason that lies at the heart of her repeated failures. In *Celestial Seraglio*, Moore proposes that this intellectual limitation and consequent propensity for sentimentalism comes as a direct result of the restrictive constructions of female identity made available to young women in society. Clarke confirms that 'the sentimental' came to be associated with 'the maternal authority of the domestic: propriety, religiosity, cultivated feelings, and good taste; or with the enforced passivity and limitation of lifestyles prescribed for women'.[45] Moore's interrogation of the damaging conditions of Catholic womanhood upon the subjective autonomy of the developing female subject reflect this concern that these social constructions of identity limit women's intellectual horizon and ability for artistic success. Fellow Nietzschean, writer and activist Dora Marsden 'thought that the Christian religion made women in particular lack the psychic structure that would enable self-realisation: '"Seeking the realisation of the will of others, and not their own, ever waiting upon the minds of others, women have almost lost the instinct for self-realisation, the instinct for achievement in their own person"'.[46] The 'self-realisation' of the Nietzschean subject is directly impaired by the religious constructions of female identity. The demand for self-sacrifice hinders the development of the intellectual, subjective individualism required of the 'free spirit' and Moore's creative artist.

Moore's unrelentingly negative perception of womanhood and art confirms the interpretation of *Celestial Seraglio* as a novel of female failure. Mavis's gender dictates her inevitable inability to succeed in realising her potential as an artist. In the chapter 'Woman as Uncreative Artist' in *The Apple is Bitten Again,* Moore articulates her conception of female limitation in greater detail:

> Art must not be confused with freedom or education. A natural manifestation in woman is self-adornment. Centuries of irate fathers, despotic husbands, or lack of facilities have not prevented woman from giving expression to this urge and need

[45] Clark, 'Sentimental Modernism', p. 126.
[46] Clark, 'Sentimental Modernism', p. 126.

> of her nature. How then not Art, had it been as womb-rooted as her impulse to physical procreation and personal adornment?
> Woman is outward appearance. Her realm the minor emotional realm of Dance, Stage, and Fiction.[47]

Moore insists that art is not a 'natural manifestation' in women. Instead, Moore states that women are suited only to creation in the 'minor emotional realm', an accusation that echoes Corelli's 'regressive emotionality'. Any creative energy found in women goes towards 'self-adornment' and 'outward appearance'. This assertion clarifies Mavis's obsession with her own physical beauty in *Celestial Seraglio*. Her sentimentalised vanity is the only form of expression that her feminised mind can articulate because her intellectual and creative potential has been so damaged by the limited constructions of female identity that have been made available to her. Moore uses the traditional *Bildungsroman* structure and emulates Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist* in order to demonstrate this unrelenting female limitation. That Mavis consistently fails in her *Bildungsroman* transformation arguably results in a subject that is un-formed, or indeed formed incompletely. Moore adapts the structural tradition of the *Bildungsroman* in this way to confirm her theory of women's minor status in the arts. In comparison to Joyce's triumphant masculine *Bildungsroman*, Mavis's consistently halted development results in an inferior subjectivity and an artistically unproductive subject. Mavis's feminine *Bildungsroman* inevitably fails because Moore resolutely believes that women cannot emulate the artistic success of men. She insists upon this hierarchical division between the 'high' art of masculinity and the 'low' art of femininity, using the clear comparison between Stephen Dedalus and Mavis Clare to actively assert the stark distinction between the two. Art remains inaccessible to women for as long as they remain a passive part of a society that insists upon their denigration within limiting constructions of female identity.

[47] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, pg. 136.

2.4. The Orchard and The Circus

Mavis's only possible mode of liberation is to extricate herself from the binds of her society with an enactment of dissenting individualism. Mavis is offered a final opportunity for transformative autonomy when the girls leave the confines of the convent and take their annual school trip into the local town to visit the Christmas fair. The excursion is the girls' first and only chance to leave the sheltered confines of the school and enter the 'real' world of the nearby town. These two distinct spaces offer a metaphor for Mavis's precipitous position between maturity and youth. The trip is an opportunity for her to leave the sheltered innocence of the school and her childhood and explore the unknown experiences of the adult world outside. Moore describes that the girls 'marched in crocodile formation' (p. 70) and for their trip 'a remarkable amount of soap and brush work had been done' so that 'even Sœur Mannes had to admit that the trim uniformed crocodile did not disgrace the Order' (p. 71). The pupils are neat and unvarying in their appearance, an image of dutiful obedience that reflects the principles of the school. Mavis however is late and rushes towards the coaches just as they are leaving 'her hat in hand, her pelegrine unbuttoned' (p. 71). Mavis's wayward appearance and tardiness immediately distinguishes her from the rest of the girls. In her rush she 'had forgotten to put on her hat' (p. 73) and as she tries to find a space in one of the coaches she finds that 'there was no seat' causing her to have to sit 'up in front beside the coachman' (p. 70). Moore litters the scene with forgotten or half-worn items of uniform, offering a clear metaphor for Mavis's shedding of her childhood and its imposed uniformity. Her final act of distinction is in her sitting away from her schoolgirl companions outside the coach, an image of individualism that hints at her oncoming graduation to adulthood.

The journey into town continues:

> The ceaseless clop-clop-clop gobbling up the long country roads, the wide shady branches holding out their leaves in a gesture of grave and spontaneous homage; the height at which she sat, all these played up to that urge, that cold near-

> tyranny which was breaking out now at odd moments through her childish exuberances and enthusiasms (p. 74).

Moore's imagery transforms the journey into a procession of reverence in which Mavis is the subject of admiration. From her elevated and distinguished position up next to the driver, she feels even the great branches of the trees to be bowing to her passing in 'homage'. The scene is a moment of culmination in which all Mavis's prideful potential is allowed to surface. This sensation of 'urge' and 'near-tyranny' that has increasingly been 'breaking out' of her with increasing regularity is the manifestation of her innate capacity for deviant power and the aristocratic status of the artist. Mavis describes it as an overwhelming desire for elevation and dominance, 'an uncomprehending exaltation' in which 'she longed to be a queen, or an emperor, or a devil, or a peacock' (p. 74). The experience on the carriage inspires a fragmentary recollection:

> When she wanted to be still for a long period of time and never be touched or spoken to; when she wanted to stare in front of her, as she did in Chapel when this mood came on her, until the candle-flames dissolved into a single spluttering and blinding radiance through which she went on staring in a trance until her eyes ached or a chair grated noisily and woke her. Strange thoughts came to her then (p. 74).

The memory suggests a moment of elevated perception inspired by a 'blinding radiance', language suggestive of a visionary, transcendent experience. Significantly, the language of the passage echoes Moore's conception of the nature of the true creative artist:

> For creation is needed audacity, controlled architectonic power of moods and sentence, a brooding deliberation, a superabundance of purely physical energy,

> and an integrity of thought and purpose that is of itself so exhausting as to explain why it is so rare.[48]

Furthermore, it is significant that for Mavis, these moments of visionary experience inspire acts of dissent:

> Once she had said to Joyce: "I want to see what Sœur Mannes looks like without her coif." And sure enough she had stayed awake until long after Sœur Mannes had been heard getting into bed; and had crept to the end of the dormitory and slightly moved the curtain, and seen Sœur Mannes' head on its pillow. The sight of the black, cropped mop had given her an indescribable nausea, as though something horrible and hitherto unguessed at had been revealed to her but which she still failed to completely to grasp (p. 74).

Consumed in a moment of transcendence, Mavis longs for deviant knowledge. The literal unveiling of Sœur Mannes is a striking metaphor for Mavis's confrontation with the stark reality of her religion. Her youth means she 'failed to completely grasp' the significance of her discovery but these moments of compulsive transgression are the purest expressions of Mavis's innate capacity for productive dissent. Her sudden and overwhelming curiosity, inspired by an intense sensation of pride reminds again of both the visionary potential of Lucifer's 'rebellious pride of the intellect' and Eve's original sinful transgression.[49] Leaving the confines of the school enables Mavis to reinvigorate her connection to her transgressive potential and the intellectual conditions of the artist. Her apparent increasing individualism and insight appears to imply that *Celestial Seraglio* may still yet have a successful conclusion and Mavis may find redemption.

Once in town, Mavis becomes separated from her classmates and gets lost. During her attempts to return to the her friends, she instead encounters a new, unknown space:

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[48] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 143.
[49] Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist*, p. 142.

> […] a way she could not have used before as the small green lawn on which she found herself was unfamiliar. A path lost in a wide curve led apparently to the front of the church and into the Grande Place. In front of her stretched a long low wall, whitewashed a delicate green, and cut into the centre of it a severe wrought-iron gate stood unlatched.
> An impulse for which she could not account, for her mind was with the roundabouts and delay was foolish, made Mavis walk to the iron gate, push it open and pass through (p. 78).

This deviation is again inspired by an 'impulse', similar to the 'urge' described during her journey on the carriage. The temptation of this impulse is too great for Mavis to resist and once again she is lead astray as she pursues a path—both literal and symbolic—that separates her from the conformity of her peers. The scene that greets her through the gate is abundant with symbolism:

> She found herself in the deep grass of an orchard, staring at the most beautiful sight in the world: warm ripe fruit hanging heavily in their leaves from the arms of a tree. She stood a moment uncertain what to do next, but feeling no desire to pick the fruit (p. 78).

In the midst of her conflict between conformity and dissent, Mavis is confronted with a beautiful and abundant apple tree. This Edenic allusion provokes thoughts of Eve's original disobedience and Moore's use of the biblical myth in her artistic philosophy. In *The Apple is Bitten Again* (a text in which the title alone demonstrates Moore's celebration of Eve's transgression and her desire to replicate it), Moore associates Eve with Prometheus, suggesting both demonstrate the necessary rebellion of the creative artist: 'Steal fire from Olympus, apples from Eden, answer why with why not, and bring fiery reason to man'.[50] Eve's theft from the Tree of Knowledge provides mankind with the knowledge of good and evil, an opposition Moore believes to be artistically productive.

[50] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 55.

Consequently Mavis's apple tree initially appears to be a symbolically rich opportunity to ensure that 'the apple is bitten again'. Concerningly, Mavis's initial reaction is that she feels 'no desire to pick the fruit'. Instead an approaching monk offers the fruit to her:

> "You want some fruit, little one?" asked the monk as she came near. "Then fill your pockets with what you like best. But don't despoil our little orchard," he gave a high thin laugh, "because it is really extraordinary how you young ones can hide it all away!" He was an old man, a very old man Mavis thought, thin and tall, with a long gentle face from which two grey eyes gazed peacefully. Although his mouth was so shrunken he still had all his teeth; and his voice was friendly and reassuring (p. 78).

The moment invites comparison between the monk and the serpent in the biblical depiction of the Fall of man. Both offer temptation and encouragement that provokes the taking of the fruit and the monk's 'friendly' and 'reassuring' nature could easily be interpreted as a reflection of the serpent's cunning tools of persuasion. Despite his 'peaceful' eyes and 'gentle' face, the monk that Mavis encounters in the garden also has a 'shrunken' mouth and 'high thin laugh', an unsettling contrast of features that support his devil-like characterisation. In the biblical version, Eve's sin occurs because the serpent's deception provokes her disobedience and leads to their banishment from Eden and the burden of Original Sin upon mankind. Moore's reimagining offers a more complex interpretation, as she does not perceive Eve's coercion by the devil in negative terms. Instead, she portrays it as a moment that enables the creative liberation that comes with the knowledge of both good and evil. But Mavis's response to the monk's words of encouragement begins to complicate her comparisons to Eve:

> She put out her hand and picked a beautiful red apple, but she felt it right to say as a sort of grace before eating: "I didn't come to pick the apples. I really didn't. I wanted to see what was on the other side of the gate, just because I didn't remember seeing it before. But thank you very much for this one". After which display of good manners she felt entitled to bite (p. 78).

Both Eve and Mavis are initially prompted by curiosity, but Mavis possesses the additional attribute of decorous good manners. Also, Mavis's curiosity may have inspired her to discover what was beyond the gate, but it falls short of embracing what it is that she finds there. The scene demonstrates how multiple, restrictive layers of indoctrination continually determine Mavis's behaviour and limit her potential to emulate Eve's disobedience. Instead, her priority is politeness, so that she may feel 'entitled' to take what is being offered in a restrained and delicate manner, and 'as a sort of grace' she insists that she didn't come for the apples at all. When faced with her very own Tree of Knowledge she immediately reverts to a show of polite and apologetic femininity in accordance with the constructions of womanhood that have been imposed upon her. Any potential disobedient inheritance from Eve has been diluted in a society that teaches its women to refuse wisdom and curtail their curiosity.

Moore extends her positive reimagining of the devil as an old, friendly monk as the scene continues. He suggests that Mavis 'fill her pockets with what she likes best' and thus 'Mavis began to pick the apples with him and roll them into the basket, while he cooed away like a wise and elderly pigeon, making speech seem natural in the quiet, sun-speckled orchard given up to the green silence of the summer heat' (p. 79). Here with the devil, the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge is accessible and abundant. It is no longer something prohibited and clandestine, but is instead volunteered generously. True wisdom—or the complete knowledge of good and evil—is shown to be a state of liberation offered by association with the devil. As the scene continues, Mavis gains the confidence to begin to question the monk:

> "Don't your feet get awfully cold in the winter without stockings on?" she ventured.
> The old monk laughed. "Not after forty years of no stockings!" He bustled among the clusters of ripe apples, taking their energy into himself. "At first it is very cold, a true punishment. But then you are very young, and you welcome the cold and the punishment. Soon there is no more punishment. The feet are happy whether

> it is cold or warm, and they laugh at the rain. And then when you are old…well, then you are only glad that your feet still like you and carry you about with them, though just a wee bit too slowly sometimes" (p. 79).

Within this discussion of stockings, Moore allegorises the new conception of true knowledge that the monk represents. The monk takes his 'energy' from the apples and thus does not notice the 'cold' of wearing no stockings, which lessens over time. The apples, or indeed the unrestricted knowledge that they represent, provide the monk with an energy that supersedes the 'cold', here representing the social alienation of pursuing this knowledge. The stockings symbolise the comfortable 'warmth' of ignorance offered by unquestioned obedience. The monk implies that stepping out of this restriction is very difficult— '"At first it is very cold"'—but the autonomy and wisdom that is gained is worth the discomfort. Significantly, Mavis replies to the monk: '"I wouldn't like to go without stockings all my life. A girl couldn't very well, could she?"'(p. 79). Just as before when she politely denied any interest in the garden, Mavis now cannot help but see an unbridgeable separation between this un-curtailed wisdom and her conception of femininity. She cannot completely renounce the limitations of womanhood that she has been taught to obey and she cannot embrace the disobedient wisdom of the monk if she is to successfully conform to these notions of femininity that rely on her to accede her blossoming individuality. Moore uses the scene to reiterates her conception of woman's intellectual limitation as the root cause of her artistic restriction. Mavis is unable to conceive of a way in which to integrate the dissenting knowledge of the monk with the circumscribed constructions of female identity that have been previously imposed upon her. Again, Moore demonstrates that womanhood is incompatible with the dissent necessary of the creative artist. This limitation causes the scene to end unsuccessfully:

> Mavis understood that she was not wanted any more and must go away. She was sorry it was all over. She was aware again of herself and her surroundings and she remembered the Fair, and wished the old monk could come with her and see all the exciting things that were happening on the other side of the wall. She no

> longer saw him as old, but as wise and happy and eminently desirable as a companion (p. 80).

Mavis struggles to reconcile this new conception of abundant knowledge with her own reality. Instead, Moore's language advances the notion that her time in the garden has been a dream-like unreality from which she slowly awakens becoming 'aware again of herself and her surroundings'. Equally it is inconceivable that the monk could enter into this reality with her despite her wishes that he could see the 'exciting things that were happening on the other side of the wall'. The garden is a distinctly separate space, closed off from the real world both physically and philosophically. Mavis's eventual alienation from this space suggests an irredeemable distance between these images of liberated knowledge and the limited constructions of womanhood that she unrelentingly emulates.

Upon returning to the fair, Mavis is immediately transported into another richly symbolic space as she finds her friend Milly and is persuaded to sneak into the circus tent, an act that has been strictly forbidden. Once inside the girls are confronted with an eclectic array of 'freak show' performers. They acknowledge a 'bearded lady' who 'followed them with her eyes for a nightmare moment and said something to the fat dwarf sitting on the chair beside her' whilst 'a long thin man with elastic skin slipped off his dressing-gown and wearily prepared for work' (p. 83). This is followed by an 'enormous balloon-like creature of a peculiar white flesh tint and with heavy black hair clipped short in her neck and a black clipped shadow on her upper lip' with her 'vast tower of a body and the long thick crease that rose from the top of her pink cotton bodice exposing a large piece of swollen and divided flesh' (p. 83). They observe 'a dark beautiful doll with a high curved bust and baby hands studded with diamonds and gold, stuck out a red tongue at them and wrinkled up a piece of putty nose while they stared at her', and finally a 'half-thing without legs, though one foot dangled somewhere in the middle of it as though it grew from the base of the stomach, and with two half-arms, thin stumps of grey flesh, bound with gold bracelets' (p. 84). In the circus tent, the diverse physical disparities of the performers demonstrate Moore's use of the aesthetic as

metaphor for the social. Each of the performers is indicative of the variant societal extremities of modernity. The buildings of the industrialised modern city are invoked in the woman's 'vast tower of a body', whilst another performer displays the fatigue of the downtrodden employee as he 'wearily prepares for work'. Equally, the 'beautiful' 'dark doll' suggests both the fear and fetishisation of racial difference whilst the 'bearded lady' and the 'creature' with 'hair clipped short in the neck' and the 'clipped shadow on her upper lip', are monstrous caricatures of the androgynous 'modern' woman. The performers reflect the prevalent concerns of modernised society, confronting boundaries of class, race, gender, and disability. Initially, the characters of the tent appear as a pessimistic reflection of social stability becoming undermined by its own margins. But equally, the detached space of the 'freak show' tent offers a location in which the marginal characters of society can express and perform their difference. Deborah Parsons highlights how Djuna Barnes uses the circus space and its physically, racially, and sexually anomalous performers throughout *Nightwood* (1936) in order to transgress categorisation, using the trope of 'circus misrule' to subvert social limitations and create a space of positive and creative transgression.[51] However in *Celestial Seraglio*, the positively subversive potential of Moore's circus performers remains ambiguous as the scene is focalised through Mavis's response as spectator. Mavis does not interpret the tent as a space of liberation and instead leaves horrified, concluding '"I'll never go near anything like that again. Never! You wouldn't think you could live, would you?"' (p. 84). The tent presents Mavis with a spectrum of existence that she has never before encountered. The performers embody the anti-normative forces of individualism and transform their dissenting and exceptional corporeality into artistic performance. But Mavis overlooks this subversive creative potential, unwittingly betraying the scale of her remaining incapacity for creative and intellectual progressivism.

[51]'[Djuna Barnes] presents alternative evaluation of such inhabitants of the modern city that does not assess them as negatively corrupt and degenerate, to release the subversive potential of the circus in which its performers manipulate their identification as grotesque and physical 'other' for the expression of their own voice. […] For Barnes the meaning and lifestyle of the bizarre and the theatrical suggested a symbolic order alternative to that prescriptive bourgeois morality that she could use to write a veiled social critique'. Deborah L Parsons, 'Women in the Circus of Modernity: Djuna Barnes and Nightwood', *Women: A Cultural Review*, 9 (1998), 266-277, p. 270.

The tent provides a clear development in our identification of Mavis's limitations, but equally, Moore also uses it to expand her commentary on the status of modern art through the metaphorical depictions of disability. The performers' deformities are the embodiment of both lack and excess: 'half' bodies 'divided' and 'bound' bodies 'swollen' and 'ballooned'. Their corporeal distortions are experimentations of form and the performers produce transgressive enactments of de-formation and re-formation, redefining the boundaries of aesthetic integrity. In this manner, they embody the stylistic intentions of the modernist aesthetic, reflecting an avant-garde predilection for experimental form.[52] Consequently, Mavis's response can be reinterpreted as a confrontation with both the challenge to normativity demanded by disability, and the aesthetic progressiveness of modern art. Moore continues to describe how 'neither of them had expected it to be quite so appalling. Every time she looked at something new Mavis gave a little squeak of dismay, and now and then they turned their heads aside. It seemed so very unreal, so untrue, so ugly, and so unlike anything they had seen before' (p. 83). Mavis's affective reaction to the unfamiliarity is a demonstration of what Robert Hughes terms the 'shock of the new' in response to modernist aesthetic reform.[53] It is directly related to the aesthetic qualities of the performers as she derides the spectacle for being 'unreal', clearly referencing modernism's rejection of artistic realism in favour of the new and formally transgressive. Moore's figurative evocation of modernism through the metaphor of disabled bodies appears again in her subsequent novel *Spleen*, which also uses disability as a metaphor for modernist aesthetic distortions.[54] However, in contrast to Ruth's active engagement with modernist experimentation in *Spleen,* Mavis's

[52]Both Wyndham Lewis and Ezra Pound made comparisons between Modernism's atypical and esoteric values and circus-like disorder. Lewis wrote of the "Pound Circus" and stated that '"Being an American, he was perceived as the P.T Barnum of London Literary life"', whilst Douglas Goldring published some 'satirical verses about "Ezra's circle of performing Yanks"'. Pound himself decided in 1918 that he couldn't '"run the triple ring circus forever"' (K.K. Ruthven, *Ezra Pound as Literary Critic* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 91).

[53] Stephen Eric Bronner, *Modernism at the Barricades: Aesthetics, Politics, Utopia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 148.

[54] See Jane Garrity's discussion of *Spleen*'s deployment of disability as metaphoric device: 'Richard powerfully embodies this interpretative multiplicity as both a figure for Ruth's failed aesthetic potential and also the inspiration source for Moore's literary experimentalism. These conjunctions (among many others) are the basis for what I call *Spleen*'s deformation of narrative' (Jane Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 59 (2013), 288-316, p. 291).

confrontation with modernism is as a passive and reluctant spectator. Consequently, the moment works to further highlight Mavis's limitations as a participant in a form of intellectual progressivism because she cannot bridge the divide between realist and experimental aesthetic production. Having increasingly longed for transgression, she is in fact horrified when confronted with it and is again unable to completely shed the outmoded and limited attitudes of her upbringing in moments of potential intellectual liberation. She instead merely glimpses a mode of potential reform, before dismissing it as unacceptable and hurrying to return to the fair, which greets them 'this time with the caress of bright wings of guardian angels waiting for their return to the light' (p. 84).

However, Mavis's unease when confronted with disability also demonstrates Moore's frequently complex and uncomfortable perception of disability. Whilst the disability of the circus performers redefines notions of bodily normativity and offers a metaphor for aesthetic progressiveness, Moore's uneasy fixation with disability throughout her work provokes a more troubling interpretation. Moore's physiological theories and the eugenic implications of her desire for the embodiment creative progressivism inform her troubling conception of disability. Moore's vitalist understanding of the body creates a quantifiable system through which bodies can be valued. Disability or physical weakness results in the depletion of the 'soul particles', which animate the body. This has a direct affect upon the intellectual strength of the mind, which correspondingly weakens as the body deteriorates. Consequently, Moore's theory of 'soul' as a vitalist force offers an explanation of her unrelenting depiction of disability as deficiency. This inevitably prompts an increasingly negative interpretation of the circus tent as Moore's understanding of the vitalist body constrains her to a conception of the disabled performers as atavistically de-formed rather than productively re-formed.[55] This negative re-conception of the space and its symbolic potential elicits a

[55] The symbolic circus imagery is echoed in Moore's subsequent novel *Spleen* in association with both Richard (Ruth's disabled son) and Hans Uller (the masculine Impressionist artist), Moore once again uses it to depict art's increasing abstraction of form and colour but also connects this style with primitivism and the perceived 'unproductivity' of Richard's disability. Jane Garrity discusses the connection between Richard and Hans Uller as figurations of modern art's experimentations with abstractions of form and colour and Moore's sustained association between this and the archaic primitivism associated with traditional circuses and the native people of Foria: '[Richard] is

re-evaluation of Mavis's horror upon confronting the performers. As previously noted, Mavis's repeated failure within her *Bildungsroman* results in an un-formed, or incompletely formed subject. Moore asserts that her consistently halted subjective formation results in Mavis's intellectual impairment in comparison to the successful masculine subject of Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist*. Thus, the physical disability of the performers in the circus tent can be interpreted as a metaphor for female artistic potential. Incapable of emulating the ascendency of the male artist, the female artist retains an un-formed or de-formed intellectualism, which is the root of her unrelenting limitation. Moore interprets her negative conception of the disabled body as corporeally inferior and translates it into a metaphor for the 'disabled', intellectually inferior female mind. As a consequence, Mavis's horrified confrontation is an encounter with her own innate limitation and inevitable failure. Her instant evasion and dismissal serves to emphasise her lack of awareness and the futility of her position. Her 'return to the light' as she flees is in fact a return to her own passive ignorance and another missed opportunity to confront the 'crippling' (p. 84) restrictions that have been imposed upon her own subjective formation. Throughout Moore's work, disability is used in this way as both a symbolic figuration of the aesthetic reformulations of the modernist project, and an emblem of female creative limitation. This contrasting metaphorical duality is vital to understanding the dissonance and uneasiness within Moore's depictions of disability as she explores both its potential for innovation and inferiority.

Immediately upon leaving the circus tent, Mavis and Milly meet another classmate, Violet, who insists they visit another 'little blue tent' in which there is '"A woman on a tightrope", "and a funny man making jokes. She balances all alone with an umbrella over her head. O, it looks *lovely*. You cant think how lovely it looks"' (p. 85). Once inside they decide quickly that there is 'nothing to terrify them here' as a large man announces the 'One and only Lola, Queen Beauty of Tight-Rope Walkers' (p. 86), who

attracted to "bright colours" (p. 66) at a time when the English regarded strong, clear hues as barbaric and appropriate only for "children's toys, circus decoration and gypsy caravans". Moore plays with this association between bold, strident color and primitivism when she depicts Richard's fascination with Uller's "circus-tent taste in shirts"—he "stared and stared" at the yellow-sleeved garment (p. 66)' (Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', p. 301).

then enters and begins to parade along her rope. With the combination of Violet's endorsement and the compere's patter, the two girls watch Lola's performance with great anticipation. But the excitement quickly fades as the girls begin to notice that her satin slippers are mismatched ('one a dirty grey white, the other a faded pink' (p. 86)), and as she smiles she unveils 'two bright gold teeth and two or three spaces where teeth should have been' (p. 86). Their disappointment continues as she simply 'ran up and down the rope with an ugly wading movement' (p. 86) and the compere interjects with a lewd joke that makes the two girls feel '"awful"', '"like losing your drawers in the street or something"' (p. 88). The girls find the show distasteful and unsatisfying: they quickly perceive the underlying shabbiness and vulgarity that is passed as entertaining and awe-inspiring spectacle. Lola herself is a paling vision of desperate femininity whose 'yellow' hair and 'stockings of a deep muddy pink' are depicted as gaudy and unsuccessful attempts at beauty. Additionally, even her act itself—balancing precariously on a tightrope for the amusement of a braying audience—is a discerning metaphor for the labour of womanhood. Moore perpetuates this comparison as she continues:

> The two girls sat dumb and shocked, and stared at all the mirth and at the purply-red gestures of the fat man. Now the golden haired lady bounded up and down the wire like a much-used but still active ball. She kept her mouth with its spaces of missing teeth open all the time in a grimace of welcome. Her whole face seemed to be petrified into this perpetually grinning acknowledgement of the homage and admiration forever wafted to her from the changing squatters on the wooden benches (p. 87).

Lola's womanhood is 'much used' and she maintains a 'grimace of welcome' as 'acknowledgement of homage and admiration forever wafted' from her audience. She has been literally and metaphorically elevated to a position of veneration for which she feels she must demonstrate perpetual gratitude, but the femininity that is required to keep her there is strained and disintegrating. Lola offers a depressing vision of womanhood as spectacle, a vision of entrapment and exertion. As such, the second tent offers a depressing vision of Mavis's future if she continues to emulate the restrictive

constructions of female identity demanded of her by a society that defines womanhood solely as self-adornment and aesthetic beauty. The bleak reality of the postcards of Zilla Ray and Mavis's desire to make men 'fall on their knees at one's feet' is demonstrated in Lola's performance and the integrity of this female identity disintegrates before Mavis's eyes.

The second tent consequently leaves Mavis and Milly shocked and disappointed and they find it definitively unappealing. The effect of the tent hangs about them heavily even after they leave:

> This time the sunshine and noise did not strike them so dramatically or so gratefully. It was merely like coming out into the Fair again. Perhaps it was only natural that after the unbearable excitement of the first tent, they should feel cheated and unimpressed (p. 87).

The experience of the second tent leaves their senses and perception somehow deadened and the sunshine and noise do not 'strike them so dramatically' as before. However, Mavis and Milly are seemingly the only audience members who dislike the second tent. The rest of the audience 'guffaw' and 'everyone joined in' (p. 87), and even their classmate Violet had excitedly described the scene as 'lovely' (p. 85). Despite its strained façade, the performance of the second tent is universally popular and celebrated by the majority. Moore uses the tents to demonstrate a broader critique of creativity, art, and society, which she continues to develop throughout her writing. The second tent demonstrates the dangers of mundane and un-progressive artistry, developed simply to appease the masses. In *The Apple is Bitten Again*, Moore describes why society continues to venerate this type of art: 'it feels so safe. Nothing is so safe as an imitative artist. It has its little fence around it. It cannot run amok. Once off its little rails it would be lost'.[56] Indeed, Moore realises this metaphor in the tent scene of *Celestial Seraglio*: the physical boundaries of the tent, its 'little fence', representing the limitations of its artistic value. Furthermore, Moore's issue is specifically with the 'imitative' artist. The

[56] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*. p. 51.

outstanding moments in her description of the second tent's performance is its strained imitations: Lola's mediocre showgirl costume and the 'purplish-red mask' of the compere. Its feeble attempts at spectacle only serve to emphasise the deficiency of its imitations but its popularity proves that the majority of the audience (as a representation of society), relish its unexceptional 'safety'. With art like this, she continues, 'you know their end at their beginning. Their depths and heights are calculable and mechanical. There are no setbacks or advances. But there are no *surprises*'.[57] In comparing the two tents side by side, Moore makes clear assertions about the state of artistic worth and its social influence. The mundanity of the second tent acts as a sensorial sedative and its predictability works to distract the audience from the true nature of reality. The first appears threatening in its capacity to produce the unknown and society regards it as horrifying deviation but it is at least able to provide the shock of progress that Moore requires of true creativity.

2.5. *Si Sage et Si Belle*

The frustration of *Celestial Seraglio* is that despite Moore's clear and articulate comparison of both restricted and progressive creativity, Mavis is never able to approach or utilise this potential artistic freedom when presented with the opportunity. She frequently balances on the boundaries of enlightened perception but always, at the last moment, fails to make a final bid for liberation because of her entrapment within the boundaries feminine limitation. This continues even throughout the second half of the novel as Mavis experiences the world outside the convent. Mavis fails to completely engage with the message of the monk in the garden because she instead becomes fixated upon his words of thanks as she leaves:

> As she stood under the roundabouts trying to catch sight of Violet Gray, the old monk's last words sounded in her ears above the crash of the hurdy-gurdy. *Si*

[57] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*. p. 51.

> *sage et si belle*. Unconsciously she turned it all back on herself, spoiling it with the cheap romanticism of adolescence... si sage *et si belle*…(p. 80).

Equally, she does not completely dismiss the inferior spectacle of the second tent because again, her own vanity distracts her on the cusp of revelation:

> "Did you see her gold teeth all shiny? And black holes all round her mouth. She wasn't a bit like the pictures you see of tight-rope walkers, was she? Why, I call her downright ugly!"
> "I wouldn't like to have to monkey about on a wire," said Milly, "would you?"
> "O, I dunno, I would rather. Only a nice one of course, and all in pink satin, not a silly cotton thing like hers".
> Mavis thought of all the people looking up, always looking up, looking up at her, breathless and admiring. But she kept that bit to herself (p. 87).

Mavis's sense of pride continually retains a preoccupation with feminine beauty instead of the powerful pride of intellect that would enable her to emerge triumphant. The monk offers her unrestricted knowledge but she is distracted by how pretty he finds her. She is offered a moment to confront the bleak 'tight rope' of subjugated womanhood but she still longs to replicate it, only with a more beautiful costume. Her desire to be revered relies upon the admiration of an un-progressive society and thus she will continually replicate its values until she abandons her longing to conform.

However, despite the relentless sense of futility throughout *Celestial Seraglio*, Moore concludes the novel ambiguously. Having finally finished school, Mavis and her classmates are depicted on the train home. But instead of being excited, Mavis is decidedly nervous that their arrival at the station will cause her biggest secret to be revealed. Amongst the crowds of students and families, Mavis knows that her arrival will not replicate those of the others: 'Not for the world would she have betrayed that even now, within ten minutes of her arrival, she was ignorant as to who would meet her; or whether she would be met at all' (p. 105). 'What would Joyce, kind affectionate Joyce,

think,' Mavis asks herself 'if she knew that she had even no idea with whom she was to spend her holidays? Her heart contracted at the thought that perhaps her whole life would be spent in the one long secret battle of guarding her "difference" from the world' (p. 106). Mavis knows that despite her best attempts, she will always remain 'different' somehow despite not yet being able to understand the potential of this sensation. Her future will be guided by her decision to either hide or embrace this innate disparity, neatly symbolised by the fact that she is unsure of which of her parents will arrive to meet her. Mavis's mother personifies a cold, restrictive femininity and a source of limitation for Mavis.[58] Contrastingly, her father is wise, masculine, and creative, the embodiment of Moore's creative artist.[59] The moment of decision builds to a climax as Mavis waits at the station to be collected:

> Now, indeed, she felt alone; alone and unutterably miserable. She looked around but she saw no one; no one belonging to her. So they had not come. Of course, they must have forgotten the date… Everyone seemed to be rushing madly at everyone else. Everywhere arms seemed to be outstretched and embracing. Good-bye, good-bye, good-bye; good-bye everything and everyone (p. 106).

[58] Mavis's mother is an 'elegant beauty' but is depicted as cold and distant with a 'light impersonality which gave Mavis the impression that her mother had come to visit any neat and good-looking girl who might care to be taken to the sea for a short holiday'. Her mother imposes rules and limitations insisting '" Little girls must eat what they are told. Do stop frowning in that sulky way. It makes you look *so* plain"' (p. 17, p. 15).

[59] Mavis's father, 'a great red-bearded man with fine grey eyes and large milky hands covered with red tufts of hair', has 'a hearty masculine generosity which pleased Mavis more than her mother's elegance and she felt he was fond of her' (p. 15). He is also a writer (p. 17). Mavis's parents, especially her father, are characterised very similarly to Ruth's parents in *Spleen.* It is implied that Ruth's mother killed herself because 'My mother dearest, never wanted me' (Moore, *Spleen*, p. 23) and Ruth describes 'little desire to hear her mother spoken of, or explained to her, or described. Her father sufficed'. Ruth's father is also described as having large bushy beard (Moore, *Spleen*, p. 22, p. 37) and is idolized by Ruth as a figure of wisdom and liberation. 'The day on which she came to the story of Pallas-Athene springing from the forehead of Zeus her father, was one of extreme emotional content for her. She recognized it at once, this divine symbol of the unity existing between her father and herself' (Moore, *Spleen*, p. 38). Moore reflects the assertion here in *Celestial Seraglio* that intellectual and artistic progressivism is inherited from patriarchal and otherworldly sources.

The insistent good-byes to 'everything and everyone' show Mavis emerging from her childhood unavoidably alone. Moore depicts Mavis achieving the isolation required for the artist that will allow her to transcend above the conformity of her peers, but rather than openly embracing it, Mavis enters into it rather forlornly. Compared to Stephen's triumphant declarations at the end of *The Portrait of the Artist*—'I do not fear to be alone or to be spurned for another or to leave whatever I have to leave'—Mavis approaches her fate 'frightened and humiliated' (p. 107).[60] Yet, despite her persistent longing for conformity, Moore suggests that Mavis must confront her innate potential. Suddenly the scene transforms into a moment of conversion as her future is confirmed:

> She raised her head, and beside a luggage rack stood a tall, bearded man in an unusual felt hat and stubborn clothes, loose and aloof, staring down at the children; and as she caught sight of him her heart beat so quickly that it seemed to her to tremble.
>
> Dear father! Dear, dear father! I shall love you all my life, now! For ever and for ever.
>
> […]
>
> He had not seen her; and feeling suddenly self-conscious and grown-up, she walked up to him and said: "Here I am, father!" and held up her face (p. 107).

In a moment of recognition and realisation, the sight of her father provokes a declaration of affiliation from Mavis. Her affirmation is assertive and visionary, echoing Stephen's final statement in *A Portrait of the Artist*: 'Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead'.[61] Mavis's allegiance to her father ensures that it seems momentarily plausible that she may still yet pursue her transgressive and artistic potential. 'Feeling suddenly self-conscious and grown-up' she 'held up her face' to her father in a gesture of compliance to his authority and guidance. Yet whilst initially seeming to be a positive image of liberation, the final image of the novel remains largely ambiguous with regards to Mavis's future autonomy. Her father enables her to ascend beyond the confines of the

[60] Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist*, p. 269.
[61] Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist*, p. 276.

restricted constructions of female identity that she has previously been offered. He offers a route into another mode of subjective transformation in which the individualism and creativity of the subject are willingly embraced. Yet, Mavis's emancipation is only enabled by the admission of masculine superiority. She is able to escape the limited boundaries of womanhood, but only by pledging to emulate the conditions of masculine creativity. Thus her allegiance to her father is also a pledge of compliance with the patriarchal hierarchy of art. Moore offers no concession for a female subjectivity that is compatible with the conditions of the artistic spirit. Womanhood must be completely renounced if the creative artist is to emerge triumphant. In some ways *Celestial Seraglio* is a narrative of progression for Mavis, in which she is ultimately liberated from the relentless cycle of limitation that precedes the final passage and finds a template through which to realise her potential as an artist. Yet she also arguably ends the novel resigned to accept of her inferiority and the necessary dismissal of her own subjectivity in order to emulate that of the masculine artist. Moore's *Bildungsroman* is unrelenting in its assertion that only the masculine spirit can achieve the subjective transformation necessary for artistic success.

Ch. 3. The Power of Life: 'Conscious Intelligent Movements' and Embodied Progressivism in *Spleen*

3.1. Something New, Something Different

In the opening chapters of *Spleen*, protagonist Ruth contemplates her pregnant body and decides she is being 'made use of against her will'.[1] Maternity is not a desired state but is instead one that she feels has been imposed upon her and which overrides her own individual agency. She perceives that she has undertaken her pregnancy simply because 'I am expected to' (p. 21) and not because it has been consciously chosen. Ruth's perception of motherhood reflects theoretical evaluations of maternity as a 'contemporary ideology' that entraps women within the maternal role under the guise of natural duty rather than subjective choice.[2] Ruth discloses her frustration with 'protected'

[1] Olive Moore, *Spleen* (London: Dalkey Archive Press, 1996), p.27. Subsequent references are to this edition and are given in parentheses.

[2] Sharon Hays, *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood* (London: Yale University Press, 1998). Second wave feminism placed great focus upon this aspect of patriarchal control and undertook detailed analysis of motherhood as institution, imposed as duty upon women in order to maintain patriarchal control of women within society. This notion was articulated in Adrienne Rich's groundbreaking text *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (1976), which redefined the field of feminist maternal writing and is still a text of great influence in contemporary studies. The central premise in *Of Woman Born* is its differentiation between motherhood and mothering as oppositional terms. Rich defines 'motherhood' as the patriarchally defined institution of motherhood as oppressive and obligatory to women, whilst 'mothering' is the female defined 'potential relationship of any woman to her powers of reproduction' (Rich, *Of Woman Born*, p. 13). This distinction has become central to feminist discussions of the maternal experience which since Rich's publication have been largely concerned with exploring the nature of institutionalized motherhood. Primarily, analysis worked to address the nature of women's repression in motherhood by identifying and countering the societal proposition that motherhood is a biologically natural state for women and instead interrogating it as an externally imposed duty that perpetuates female subordination in society. Following in the wake of Rich's text, Elisabeth Badinter's *Mother Love, Myth and Reality: Motherhood in Modern History* (1981) and Ann Dally's *Inventing Motherhood: The Consequences of an Ideal* (1983) build upon the theorization of motherhood as a social construction with specific and restrictive tenets of definition. Badinter's 'myth' of motherhood is the perceived existence of mother love and consequent maternal instinct as biologically natural and inherent in all women. Equally, Dally proposes that motherhood, as

(p. 24) and 'eternal' (p. 19) motherhood, highlighting the societal perception of motherhood as an innate and immutable state, integral to female identity. Adrienne Rich originally proposed the subversive potential of liberated, female defined 'mothering' outside of patriarchal control. As Rich states 'to destroy the institution is not to abolish motherhood. It is to release the creation and sustenance of life into the same realm of decision, struggle, surprise, imagination and conscious intelligence, as any difficult, but freely chosen work'.[3] Andrea O'Reilly extends Rich's definition of feminist motherhood and 'the *potential* relationship of any woman to her powers of reproduction', proposing possible forms of resistant maternal subjectivities which could enable the 'destabilization of the patriarchal institution of motherhood'.[4] With this in mind, Ruth's initial rejection of motherhood seems similarly progressive, reflecting a similar desire to 'destabilize' and transgress preconceived conceptions of maternal experience and access new modes of female autonomy. Yet Moore moves beyond this initial literal reading of maternal experience and additionally utilises Ruth's pregnancy as a metaphorical narrative device representing female creativity more broadly. Ruth's significance is that she acknowledges the subversive potential of her pregnancy and proposes 'Why can one not have something else, something different, something more worth having if one has to go through all this?' (p. 26). Ruth's pregnancy is immediately figured as a symbol of creative dissent and an emblem of revolution against the predominant expectations of society. The significance of this with regards to Moore's philosophical project becomes clear in light of her creative methodology. Moore advocates a definition of creativity that relies upon the autonomous individualism of the artist and their outright rejection of all values promoted by the 'stagnant' and 'impotent' masses. Thus, the impetus for revolutionary individualism and the goal of innovative creation at the heart of *Spleen*'s narrative

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defined by the consistent care of children by their biological mother, is not an 'eternal ideal' but is instead a 'social invention' (Dally, *Inventing Motherhood*, p. 27).

[3] Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (London: Virago, 1976), p. 280.

[4] Andrea O'Reilly, *From Motherhood to Mothering: The Legacy of Adrienne Rich's "Of Woman Born"* (New York: University of New York Press, 2004), p. 13. O'Reilly expands upon this premise in her book *Mother Outlaws: Theories and Practices of Empowered Mothering*. 'Outlaw' motherhood and differing modes of challenging patriarchally controlled maternity, or indeed 'mothering against motherhood' is positioned as a potential technique of subversive autonomy (Andrea O'Reilly, *Mother Outlaws: Theories and Practices of Mothering* (Toronto: Women's Press of Canada, 2004)).

informs my reading of Ruth's pregnancy as a clear metaphor for Moore's artistic project.[5] The conspicuous affinity between Ruth's creative manifesto, 'Something new. Something different. Something beyond and above it all' (p. 28) and Ezra Pound's notorious modernist dictum, 'Make it new!' is a point of productive comparison. Ruth's pregnancy becomes a clear metaphor for the modernist project of creative originality. *Spleen* can thus be read as Moore's exploration of female creativity and the extent to which women can achieve the individualism and dissent required of the creative artist. As previously identified, Moore's conception of gender and the creative impulse is a problematic and contentious issue within her artistic philosophy. *Spleen* thus offers a vital and enlightening opportunity to explore Moore's developing conception of female artistic potential.

Significantly, Ruth's initial methodology attempts to refuse the limitations of womanhood by rejecting the female body. By refusing the corporeal reality of her pregnancy, she aims to prioritise the cognitive individualism of the masculine artist and thus achieve her desire for creative innovation. Ruth initially describes her pregnancy as an experience of 'one's mind in revolt against one's body' (p. 19) and she increasingly distances herself from this maternal body that she feels 'had nothing to do with her from start to finish' (p. 21). 'She was growing larger now,' Moore states, 'but that, as she had said about the pain, meant nothing to her. She seemed unable to notice it' (p. 25). It is this mind-body separation that inspires Ruth's crucial conclusion:

> I think I carry my womb in my forehead. I quite definitely feel it here, pursued Ruth, drawing her brows sharply together and staring across at her husband perplexedly. Whereas I do not feel it here at all (and her hand touched her body). So that if you came and told me that all the time it is growing in my head I should not be in the least surprised (p. 24).

[5] This reading supports those made by Jane Garrity in 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman' (2013), Matt Franks in 'Mental Inversion, Modernist Aesthetics, and Disability Exceptionalism in Olive Moore's *Spleen*' (2014), and Renee Dickinson in *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the Modernist Novel: the Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore* (2009).

In order to achieve her ambition for a maternal experience based upon autonomous, subjective control, Ruth perceives her pregnancy as now definitively divorced from the body and instead relocated to the mind. It is this that Ruth feels to be growing and developing, a pregnancy of cognition, a womb-brain solely consumed with the task of understanding the revolutionary potential of her pregnancy. She achieves 'a courage of a sort unusual in woman in that she accepted nothing but that which her mind had tested. She was no longer afraid or angry or bitter' (p. 25). Moore's language opposes prior descriptions of Ruth's anguish: she is now 'no longer afraid' (p. 25) rather than 'frightened' (p. 19) and 'natural' (p. 19) rather than 'unnatural' (p. 22). The only thing that is now 'unusual' (p. 22) she states, is her courage. By enacting a separation between body and mind, Ruth has forced a space in which she can develop a gestation of liberated individualism. As a consequence, Ruth's doctrine of creative autonomy becomes clear in its intention: 'an answer had been found to her questioning. Something different, said the message. Something worth having. Something beyond and above it all, said the message. Something new' (p. 28). Ruth's pregnancy is defined as a resolution for originality and creative dissent achieved through individualism and subjective liberation and thus becomes the ultimate symbol of Moore's artistic project.

Furthermore, Ruth's cognitive gestation emulates the masculine philosophical superiority that Moore defines in *The Apple is Bitten Again* as a crucial factor of male domination in the artistic sphere. The imagery that Moore adopts in *Spleen* to depict Ruth's creative project purposefully recalls the birth of Athena from the forehead of Zeus. As Jane Garrity notes, Ruth's emulation of 'male parthenogenesis' in place of biological reproduction, 'enables her to align herself with conventionally held notions regarding masculine intellect and male aesthetic practice against the supposed organicism of the female body'.[6] Ruth's adoption of masculine modes of production is of great significance with regards to Moore's overwhelmingly masculinised conception of artistic ability as outlined in Chapter 1. Ruth reiterates Moore's belief that only the male artist has the capacity to cultivate an individualistic, innovative act of creation. She attempts to

[6] Jane Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 59 (2013), 288-316, p. 298.

transgress the limitations of her womanhood by rejecting the biological creativity of the female body in favour of the cognitive creativity of the masculine mind and thus attempts to expand women's creative limits by emulating these masculine techniques of production. Garrity further notes the significance of Michael Davidson's assertion that the male modernist has the ability to '"transmit his literary legacy parthenogenetically"', which has 'become a trope for aesthetic fecundity in literary modernism'.[7] Moore 'demonstrates the utility of this trope for the female artist' through Ruth's emulation of these masculine modes of gestation and the imagery of Athena's birth.[8] This consequently enables Ruth to access the philosophical and artistic methods of production prioritised by the 'masculine' modernist project. Significantly, Michael Davidson further notes that the modernist trope of male pregnancy as a symbol of creative fecundity is a 'queering' of the pregnant body that he sees as representing Modernism's repeated perversion and subversion.[9] Ruth's emulation of this transition reflects modernism's displacement of creative fecundity and rejection of normative modes of production. Thus Ruth's pregnancy is a consummate emblem of modernist creative dissent: a project of progressive and original production that rejects the coded expectations of the past.

3.2. A First Motion, a Sacred Yes

Ruth's pregnancy works both symbolically and literally as an emblem of creative dissent as Moore examines the transition between biological and philosophical fecundity. As opposed to *The Apple is Bitten Again*, *Spleen* sees Moore utilise the creative possibilities of metaphor and fictional prose as a means to more extensively articulating her artistic and philosophical project. In this way, Moore's narrative draws inspiration from Nietzschean philosophy, in particular his work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1891), in which the ideological project is allegorised through the prophetic figure of Zarathustra. Robert

[7] Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', p. 298.
[8] Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', p. 298.
[9] Michael Davidson, 'Pregnant Men: Modernism, Disability, and Biofuturity in Djuna Barnes', *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, 43 (2010), 207-226.

Gooding-Williams argues that 'having grown sceptical of historiographical, dialectical explanation, he [Nietzsche] turns to literature, to a fictional protagonist, to account for the possibility of cultural innovation'.[10] Moore similarly grasps the potential of the poetic imagination as means to expressing a philosophical proposal for the creation of new, artistic values. *Spleen*'s fictional narrative realises Moore's creative project in Ruth's pregnancy, thus examining both the literal and symbolic potential of Moore's desire for creative innovation. This methodology echoes Nietzsche's utilisation of Zarathustra's journey as an allegory for the creation of new ideological values and a productive comparison can be made between the two narratives. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche develops his conception of the 'creator' or 'free spirit', the individual who is able to transcend the limitation of the masses and achieve true innovation. 'Behold the good and the just' states Zarathustra, 'whom do they hate the most? Him who smashes their table of values, the breaker, the law breaker—but he is the creator!', a sentiment that is echoed throughout the early passages of *Spleen* within Ruth's assertion that her act of creation must be 'Something new, something different, something beyond and above it all' (p. 28).[11] Nietzsche asserts that progress can only be achieved through the rejection of pre-existing values and insists that 'Man is something that must be overcome'.[12] At the heart of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is an allegorical template for the necessary metamorphoses of the spirit that Nietzsche proposes is required in order to achieve the superman (*Übermensch*), a figuration of the next evolutionary stage of mankind. In a section entitled 'Of the Three Metamorphoses', Nietzsche outlines the progression of the spirit that may enable the individual to enact this process of self-overcoming. Zarathustra begins by describing the Camel, the 'weight-bearing spirit in which dwells respect and awe: its strength longs for the heavy, the heaviest'.[13] The camel is ruminative, acknowledging the weight of all that can be perceived by the spirit. Sheridan Hough defines this moment specifically as a reflection upon the burdens of culture, a state of recognition that acts as catalyst for the next moment of spirit

[10] Robert Gooding-Williams, *Zarathustra's Dionysian Modernism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 7.
[11] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: a Book for Everyone and No One*, trans. by Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 51.
[12] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 53.
[13] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 54.

transformation: 'When this 'camel spirit' reflects on this way of life, however, the reflective question gets raised: "Why should I bear the weight of my cultural heritage? Why is it necessary to transmit these practices and values and not others?" In other words, what is the value of these values?'.[14] Nietzsche then describes the second transformation of the spirit:

> The spirit here becomes a lion; it wants to capture the freedom and be lord in its own desert. It seeks here its ultimate lord: it will be an enemy to him and to its ultimate God, it will struggle for victory with the great dragon. What is the great dragon which the spirit no longer wants to call lord and God? The great dragon is called "Thou shalt". But the spirit of the lion says "I will!"...[15]

The rich symbolism in this passage works to extend Hough's suggestion that Nietzsche requires suppressive culture to be confronted before the spirit can be transformed. The great dragon stands as a representation of archaic values and domineering authority. It is confronted by the lion who demonstrates that the spirit is now able to utilise self-determined autonomy and 'create freedom for itself and a sacred No even to duty'.[16] The lion is not able directly to create, but he enables assertive subjectivity, an enactment of refusal, the 'sacred No' which directly counters the rulings of a suppressive, imposing authority.

Moore mirrors this template of spirit metamorphosis within *Spleen* as a method of articulating Ruth's newfound creative autonomy. Nietzsche's metaphorical beasts become more literally ascribed as characteristics of a single individual and Moore echoes these stages of progression in Ruth as she develops her wilful creativity. The rumination of the camel, its questioning of obligation and the inherited values of society is reflected in *Spleen* as Ruth begins to question the culturally ascribed motherhood that she experiences. Ruth asserts that women have been suppressed because they have refused

[14] Sheridan Hough, *Nietzsche's Noontide Friend: The Self as Metaphoric Double* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), p. 86.
[15] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 55.
[16] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 55.

to question their burden: 'Not from woman that despairing cry: My God what am I in thy universe?'(p. 25). Ruth's significance lies in the fact that she does interrogate her obligation, a characteristic that aligns her with Nietzsche's conception of the first stage of spirit metamorphosis. Ruth moves beyond the perception of a static and un-transformable self that accepts its repression. Zarathustra states 'Man is something that should be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?', a question towards which Ruth seems to be responding.[17] Furthermore, as her awareness grows (as her spirit becomes increasingly transformed), Ruth's nature becomes that of the autonomous and repudiating lion. Now that the camel has enabled the confrontation of old values, it is the role of the lion to create the possibility for new values to be formed. This aspiration is reflected in Ruth's assertion that her pregnancy will specifically create 'something new' (p.30). By refusing the obligations of motherhood in its expected form, Ruth symbolically refuses the 'Thou Shalt' of the dragon and continues the process of Nietzschean spirit metamorphosis. Nietzsche specifically replaces 'Thou shalt' with the assertive 'I will' of the lion. The authoritative demand is countered with the affirmation of the individual and Ruth's sense of duty is replaced with the personal aspiration 'If I am to create [...] I will create' (p. 29). The phrase becomes a forcible assertion of individual agency proposing an enactment of dissent that reclaims and redefines the creative value of the individual. This proactive wilfulness is central to Nietzsche's conception of the individualism needed for the metamorphoses of the spirit that enables man to be overcome. To create beyond oneself is the true intention of this dissenting will.

This intention becomes increasingly significant when the final point of Nietzsche's process of transformation is compared again to *Spleen*. The lion transforms into the figure of the child:

> But tell me my brothers, what can the child do that even the lion cannot? Why must the preying lion still become a child? The child is innocence and forgetfulness, a new beginning, a sport, a self-propelling wheel, a first motion, a sacred Yes. Yes, a sacred yes is needed, my brothers, for the sport of creation.

[17] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 41.

> The spirit now wills its own will, the spirit sundered from the world now wins its own world.[18]

The transformed spirit finally takes the form of the child. The child enables the re-creation of values, a process that Nietzsche specifically defines as a state of innocence and forgetfulness that enables a spiritual tabula rasa or the negation of all that has gone before in order to achieve true innovative progression. Nietzsche's child is a symbol of pure, assertive individualism, the final stage in a process of spiritual metamorphosis that culminates in the overcoming of limited man. In *Spleen*, Ruth's process of transformation ends significantly with the birth of a literal child, Richard. Ruth's child can be read as symbolic of a Nietzschean first motion, a culmination of individual autonomously willed creation. Indeed, Richard is the final stage of a spiritual metamorphosis of self-overcoming and a symbol of pure progressive potential.

Moore's Nietzschean allusions indicate an affinity with his individualist philosophies and reiterate the centrality of self-willed creative power within Moore's ideology. However, the most significant aspect of Moore's Nietzschean inheritance is the way in which *Spleen* makes literal what for Nietzsche is only ideological metaphor. Ruth embodies the Nietzschean metamorphosis and her pregnancy becomes a literal site of self-willed creativity—ideology is materialised. This return to the body becomes of central importance in *Spleen*'s narrative. As a technique of subversion, Ruth's initial rejection of the body seems to hold the potential that Ruth desires and enables her spiritual metamorphosis and consequent creation of new ideological values. But the reality of her body cannot be influenced by ideology: she is still undeniably physically pregnant, not only in her mind, but in her womb. This corporeal reality one day interrupts her aspirational thought: 'And then one day in her morning bath she noticed for the first time how large she had become. She couldn't believe it. Impossible! Yet it must be true for the water refused to cover her' (p. 27). Ruth is forced suddenly to realise that the creative dissent that she has been gestating in her perceived womb-brain has not halted

[18] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 55.

the biological progress of her body. Cognitive fecundity has not been enough to deny or replace reproductive reality. Moore continues:

> She had the illusion that all these mental questionings, the denials, the whys and wherefores, bitterness and revulsions in which she had been solely and persistently concerned, had arrested the action of her body, as though this thing was not to be until a satisfactory reason could be found for its being and for her wilfulness in denying it life; as though gestation was suspended until she had prepared herself to accept its consequences (p. 27).

Ruth is forced to acknowledge that her wilful dualism cannot be sustained and has not served its intended purpose. Her initial anger subsides and her denial of the body begins to thaw as she slowly comes to find her bodily sensations reawakened, a process she describes as giving her the 'very definite physical sensation of having been badly bruised' (p. 26). The subsequent passage describes that she

> Had to admit. That it was not happening in her forehead at all, but was happening very much where it was meant to happen. That while she had been angry and despairing it was growing. It was becoming. It was happening. The eternal bun was baking in the eternal oven (p. 27).

If previously Ruth was moving in a direction of dissent, wilfully denying motherhood and her pregnancy, we can see in this moment that something has impeded this aspirational momentum in a manner violent enough to bruise, to impose an obstruction of force that impresses upon Ruth a sense of physical injury but also sudden, painful clarity. Her attempted denial of the body is unsuccessful and from this point Ruth realises that she cannot deny what is happening and she becomes 'aware only of the sudden and appalling change which had come over her' (p. 28). This change is inspired by her new perception that her own will alone cannot deny the obligatory motherhood that has been forced upon her. Ruth describes this moment specifically as a death of the self:

> But the tears came again, insisted on coming. On an impulse she leaned forward and made them fall in large warm drops on her heavy white bubble of a tightly stretched stomach which the water refused to cover. They fell one by one, quite large and warm, ran down the sides in smooth even rills and were lost in the water lap-lapping below. A baptism. A dirge. A funeral dirge over the unborn. You burial service, said Ruth, wept fifty years too soon. A white bubble of a coffin and tears dropping on it like earth (p. 28).

The realisation of the reality of her pregnant body and the oncoming maternity that it represents is perceived by Ruth as a moment in which her own subjectivity and individuality die as a direct result of an external will being imposed upon her. Her tears are an act of mourning the individualised self that she perceives to have been destroyed by the realisation of the child and her oncoming maternity. We are reminded again of the futility that Moore perceives in womanhood with regards to achieving the autonomy required of the creative artist. 'Woman's creative gift is self-sacrifice' she insists,

> This, their deepest impulse, militates against any creative genius they could have. For the creative artist is the supreme selfish being: Art that which you alone can do and to which you will sacrifice all things—but yourself, who must be alone, secure and impregnable, to create it.[19]

Moore's insistence upon the embodiment of subjectivity within her creative ideology repeatedly works to ensure that women are omitted from the creative sphere. Women are defined by self-sacrifice, both of mind and body, and thus are unable to maintain the untarnished individualism required of the true artist who must remain 'impregnable'. In *Spleen*, Moore takes this adjective and realises its imagery with Ruth's pregnant body. The permeability of women's bodies and the lack of physical and mental integrity that Moore sees as woman's defining characteristic means she cannot herself create or articulate the new ideological values of the creative spirit. Yet woman's creative value lies in her ability to undertake the sacrifice of the self that Moore perceives to be represented

[19] Olive Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again* (London: Wishart & Co, 1934), pp. 105-6.

by pregnancy. Moore proposes that woman epitomises Nietzsche's idiom that 'what is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal'.[20] The pinnacle of woman's capacity is her ability to physically reproduce something that may ideologically ascend beyond her own self. Thus it is the creative capacity of woman's body that is prioritised over the creative insufficiency of her mind. Thus, when Ruth's attempt to deny the body fails and she is forced to reintegrate the body into her creative project, her perception of her potential power dramatically transforms and 'she was aware only of the sudden and appalling change which had come over her', a change which she specifically describes as a moment of 'conversion' (p. 28). From this point onwards, Ruth rejects her initial technique of denying the body, and instead undertakes a new doctrine of revolution that utilises the creative potential of the body. Ruth reiterates that 'an answer had been found to her questioning. Something different, said the message. Something worth having. Something beyond and above it all, said the message. Something new' (p. 28), but now, the body is a central component within this resolution for originality.

3.3. Conscious Intelligent Movements

As Ruth slowly adjusts to her new creative methodology she describes the 'new and strange being which slowly her mind was bringing to perfection in her womb' (p. 32). In a complete inversion of her previous attempt for liberation, Ruth perceives her pregnancy to be enacted within a newly conceived brain-womb rather than her previously attempted womb-brain, which will allow her to control the progression of her gestation in order to make it adhere to her new intentions. She regains control over her innate creativity in a manner that does not require the impossible task of attempting to deny the body. This reinvigoration of the body as a vital part of a subjective autonomy enables us to align Moore with Elizabeth Grosz's project of reconfiguring the body as a central component of subjectivity. Moore's return to the body as means to accessing a unique mode of female creativity, specifically drawn from the innate, productive potential of a

[20] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 44.

female body and its capabilities reflects Grosz's proposition for an understanding of the potential of a subjectivity informed by the specificities of the body. Grosz states:

> As a discipline, philosophy has surreptitiously excluded femininity and ultimately women, from its practices through its usually implicit coding of femininity with the unreason associated with the body. It could be argued that philosophy as we know it has established itself as a form of knowing, a form of rationality, only through the disavowal of the body, specifically the male body, and the corresponding elevation of mind as a disembodied term.[21]

Men are able to remain the active, assertive gender because they are able to remove themselves from the body (the object which can be imposed upon) and relocate the male self to the mind (that which is defined as the source of subjectivity and creative power). By contrast, women are more closely bound to the body, and therefore more easily objectified and limited by this perception. Moore initially reflects this assertion in *Spleen* as Ruth primarily identifies the body as the source of her limitation. It is her body that betrays her initial bid for autonomy by adhering to its biological processes, a factor that Ruth perceives as confining her within limited definitions of womanhood and impeding her from achieving a masculine cognitive liberation. This notion inspires her first technique of liberation: the withdrawal from the body into the masculine domain of cerebral freedom in order to achieve the technique of masculine, disembodied philosophical power as also theorised by Grosz.

Yet as we have seen, Ruth very quickly realises that the denial of the body is insufficient as a means to creative autonomy. Through an embodiment of her new-found ideology of dissent, Ruth enables a transformation of the body's creative autonomy. Moore describes this process in terms of a complete conversion:

> And now after the dreary perplexity of the past months, the listlessness, the morose staring, there was an unreal and luminous quality about her as though she

[21] Elisabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 2.

> were possessed of an abundant and inexhaustible fount of serenity of which she alone knew the source. She was transformed. She was radiant (p. 28).

It is this transformation that enables the reassertion of a specifically female subjectivity, one that is reliant upon the body as part of its definition, and one that directly opposes male disembodied subjectivity. Moore's insistence upon the essentialized specificities of gender proposes that women's creative power lies solely in her reproductive potential. Women are able to materialise the ideology that men can only imagine. Indeed, Ruth distinctly defines this process of transformation as one in which women come to usurp men in their creative power:

> So it was true that if one asked one received. If one questioned one was answered. Woman was a witch filled with a terrible power over mankind. The power of life, of creation, of death. How puny then the thunder of man! Jove's toy squibs. Vulcan's toy swords. Women's thunderbolts (p.28).

Ruth's newfound strength relies upon a distinction between the sexes and female autonomy is gained via this essentialist separation of male and female techniques of creative liberation. Whilst Moore's return to the body may initially seem to perpetuate the definition of womanhood as the more corporeally bound of the two sexes and thus more cognitively limited, Grosz enables us to see that by reclaiming the body in definitions of subjectivity, we can begin to re-inscribe previously assumed limitations. 'If women are to develop autonomous modes of self understanding and positions from which to challenge male knowledge's and paradigms' Grosz states, 'the specific nature and integration (or perhaps lack of it) of the female body and female subjectivity and its similarities and differences from men's bodies and identities need to be articulated'.[22] Ruth's pregnancy becomes the embodiment of her aspirations for dissent, her creative force becomes affixed to matter that can be accordingly manipulated and her aspirations can be physically realised. This is the distinctly female creative power that usurps the

[22] Grosz, *Volatile Bodies*, p. 19.

strength of male cognitive power, this is 'woman's thunderbolt' that outranks the 'puny thunder of man' (p. 28).

Moore's insistence upon the creative power of the body and the possibility of the embodiment of ideology relies upon her conception of the scientific physiological debates of the early twentieth century with which she was clearly engaged. Her affinity for Nietzsche and his conception of man as a single point in an on-going linear progression of transformation has already been identified. But Moore's engagement with this concept also interacts with the evolutionary debates of the likes of Darwin and Bergson, both of whom arguably inform Moore's centralising of the body and her focus upon physical reproduction as a vital aspect of social regeneration. In the final chapter of *The Apple is Bitten Again*, Moore undertakes an extensive and complex discussion of physiological processes that can enlighten our understanding of her conception of the body. Moore directly engages with Darwinian theories of evolutionary biology and these inform her depiction of the body as intuitive and constantly adaptive. This scientific understanding means that Moore also dismisses natural theology as one of the limiting factors of mankind's perception of the world and its forces, a concept that echoes the understanding that Darwin 'did not believe that it is possible to understand a single, God-given morality, reason, or logic as regulating all life on earth. Rather, each species, each bodily form, orients the world, and its actions in it, according to its ability to maximise action in the world, the kind of action that its particularly evolved bodily form enables'.[23] Moore specifies that 'Man loves to give trees and natural phenomena in general an Outside Directing Intelligence: god, providence, nature' before continuing, 'One look at a bird, a root, a leaf, and there can be but one conclusion: that no such thing as an Outside Direction exists. And that not only is an Outside Direction neither possible nor needed, but that it could not work'.[24] Society's persistent belief in this 'Outside Direction' is directly responsible for the stagnation of progressive ideas: 'Yet we not wanting, not daring, to admit that the world about us teems with Great Thinkers who

[23] Elisabeth Grosz, *Becoming Undone: Darwinian Reflections on Life, Politics, and Art* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), p.22.
[24] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 172.

bring reforms and improvements in all their manifestations, dismiss the problems elegantly by inventing Nature and the sleight-of-hand Creator'.[25] Moore condemns creationist ideology for perpetuating an apathy and ignorance in mankind toward the autonomous evolutionary agency of organisms. The perception of a dictatorial outside force has resulted in the elimination of personal agency. Moore has previously identified this as a factor in the oppression of women in society, arguing that their passive acceptance of external dominant forces has resulted in their perpetuated restriction. Here, Moore applies this idea to man's blinkered perception of bodily potential and its own internal creative forces, misconstrued as the influence of an external 'creator'. Moore continues:

> Why must man fight against Brain in all its manifestations, including that of his own species? Why must he always inherit, like a lazy elder son? Why must all efforts be lifted from his sluggish shoulders to those of an ancient and sleepless watchman with a passion for interfering in the business of an entire growth of an entire world? Why does he think the sweet strong grasses will wave as vigorously above the earth when he long since has disappeared from its surface, if not that grass has singleness of self-directed purpose while man has but an outer-directed morality.[26]

Moore begins to conceive of a vitalist definition of life and this sense of 'self directed purpose' engages with the evolutionary concept of an autopoietic life force as an innate physical energy. This inherent purpose is the motivating force that enables life to survive and flourish. Moore's concern is that man has lost sight of this instinctive biological ability and has instead sought 'outer-directed morality' as guidance for development. This misdirected obedience means that humanity is now 'fighting' the body and ignoring its transformative potential. Moore perceives this potential as enabled by the 'Brain in all its manifestations', alluding to her perception that the body is made up of numerous 'Local Brains' which dictate 'Conscious Intelligent movements':

[25] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 172.
[26] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 173.

> Whether directed by our brain or various nerve centres, they are self-intelligent. When therefore we notice an intelligent movement as the healing of a wound on a hand or tree or the forming of an apple, that healing and that forming are simply and incontestably an action of what I shall call Local Brain'.[27]

She continues by clarifying: 'By Local Brain is not meant an actual miniature copy of that under the skull. But that Brain which inhabits vegetables and is as yet undetected to science or microscope, and which might be a few atoms concerned in the direction of one single activity'.[28] Moore's body is made up of self-regulating parts and each component of an organism possesses specific goals that it pursues autonomously with the power of a 'local brain'. The body is able to adaptively respond with constant 'intelligent movements' to localised changes that it experiences. The influence of evolutionary biological theory becomes increasingly apparent in Moore's understanding of the body and its instinctive, transformative potential.

Moore expands upon this perception of biological processes and emphasises its implications for autonomous, self-determined action:

> So much are we independent that our hearts will beat, removed, cared for, artificially supplied with blood and oxygen. A lump of flesh or skin will grow in cultures. Teeth form either in the mouth or in the stomach. The stomach does not care from which end it gets its food; the veins from whence the blood that fills them; the heart will have no sentimental regrets that it is not feeding our particular brain or nerves. Each is dependent on need, but not on the source of supply. The source is unimportant, provided the need is satisfied.[29]

[27] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 173.
[28] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 177.
[29] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 177.

Moore specifies that each 'Conscious Intelligent Movement' is driven only by survival rather than sentiment and each 'Local Brain' is motivated only towards the completion of a specific task that enables its continuation. Moore references a type of evolutionary adaption by insisting that the motivation to survive results in a body that responds to environmental fluctuations creatively. These adaptions result in the evolution of the organism and its increasing complexity and progressive transformation. As a consequence, each organism becomes increasingly unique as the scale of transformation becomes increasingly elaborate and the gradations of difference increase. Moore reiterates that '*Intelligence is localised, not universal*' (italics in original) and most relevantly:

> Up to now, whether mystically, religiously, philosophically, scientifically, the verdict has always been: There is one who knows all. Or nature provides. Rubbish. "Nature" provides all the mechanical movements, rain, winds, atmosphere, heat from the sun and earth, cold. And there "Nature" stops. In this provision we (all living beings from corals to man to eagles) fight for aeons to hold our ground and assert ourselves. All this is a personal matter; a personal responsibility. All this is Local Brain.[30]

In this passage, the boundary between the subject and their body becomes increasingly blurred. Moore begins to use her concept of 'Local Brain' as a metaphor for individual subjectivity. The autonomy of the 'self directed purpose' of the individual body parts becomes a state of aspiration for the individual themselves. We must 'assert ourselves' Moore states, 'all this is personal matter. All this is Local Brain'. The self-determined transformative power of the 'Local Brain' becomes a metaphor for the revolutionary potential of autonomous cognition. Both must undertake a personal accountability for transformation by rejecting the dominance of abstract, external forces that diminish self-assertion. Moore's understanding of the body provides a technique of liberation for the subject.

[30] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 177.

Another key idea in Moore's conception of the evolutionary body is her vitalist definition of 'Soul' as the life-giving element that animates organisms. She states:

> With the soul as the life-giving spirit in the human-animal-plant body, divided in as many parts as it need be, each particle giving life to one part of the body, we possess possibly a thousand souls, the sum total of which makes up the so-called human soul.[31]

This 'Soul', life force, or 'fifth element', is characterised as an atomic energy that is transmitted through the atmosphere, or 'psychosphere': 'then like air, like water, soul must be penetrating and surrounding the earth. This surrounding layer I would call the psychosphere. A layer rich in soul element'.[32] This 'Soul' element passes through and amongst organisms, attracted 'magnetically' to matter which it animates upon contact:

> Each body and each component part of a body while living captures for itself a certain number of soul-molecules which impregnate every part of the body, animating our brains, our brains animating our organs, our organs animating our actions. When the body expands and acquires a greater number of matter-molecules, automatically it attracts the corresponding number of soul molecules.[33]

Moore's conception of 'Soul' engages with a broad range of vitalist philosophies that define an animating 'life force' as that which transforms matter into living beings. Whilst now discredited, vitalism was still a prevalent physiological theory in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Its impact upon modernist thought has been identified and the prominence of Henri Bergson's philosophy is greatly influential.[34] Whilst Bergson's definition as a vitalist philosopher has been called into question, his philosophy centres on vitalistic definitions of embodied life forces that produce

[31] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 174.
[32] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 174, p. 175.
[33] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 175.
[34] See Omri Moses, *Out of Character: Modernism, Vitalism, Psychic Life* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014) and Paul Ardoin, 'Bergson, Vitalism, and Modernist Literature' in *Understanding Bergson, Understanding Modernism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 78-118.

evolutionary progression from one state into the next.[35] Moore adopts this sense of vital force as impetus for advancement of the body. It is the animating power of the 'Soul' that gives energy to the 'Local Brains' of the body that in turn evolve adaptively. For Bergson, life is defined by continual, accumulative change: 'the truth is that we change without ceasing, and that the state itself is nothing but change'.[36] It is this endless evolution that Bergson defines as the vital force of life, a concept Moore engages with in her definition of 'Soul'. Moore's 'soul molecules' are attracted to what she terms 'matter molecules' and it is the incorporation of the two that animates matter to become a living organism. This synergy unleashes the potential of matter to achieve the endless transformative power that Bergson equates as the definition of living entities. In her discussion of Bergson, Elisabeth Grosz identifies the creative, transformative potential that he sees in the convergence of matter and vital force:

> Life inserts itself into materiality and follows its paths, its modes of canalization of energy, in order to reinsert into that "explosive force" of action, of indetermination, of the future, that life returns to the material. Life unfolds that which is folded into matter; it runs in the inverse direction, dilation rather than contraction, unrolling rather than rolling, ascent rather than decent, creation rather than entropy.[37]

Moore conceives of a Bergsonian relation between life and matter, converging in the body. It is the vital life force of the 'Soul' that upon contact with the materiality of the body enables its 'ascent' of evolutionary progress. Moore's 'Conscious Intelligent Movements' reflect the dynamism that Grosz sees in Bergson's conflation of life and matter as they enable a trajectory of 'dilation' and 'creation' that sees the materiality of the body become transformed into new, expansive and innovative forms.

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[35]Hisashi Fujita 'Bergson's Hand: Toward a History of (Non)-Organic Vitalism', *SubStance,* 6 (2007), 115-130.
[36] Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution* (New York: Dover Publications, 2003), p. 11.
[37] Grosz, *Becoming Undone,* p.34.

Moore's engagement with the physiological debates of evolutionary biology and vitalism demonstrates an overriding interest in an embodied progressivism. Grosz groups Darwin, Nietzsche, and Bergson as the twentieth century pioneers of a 'philosophy of becoming' which poses that 'if the human is simply one among many of the trajectories that life on earth has elaborated, then many of the most cherished beliefs about how humans will and should behave in the light of manifest and lived differences that divide the human will be thrown open to new lines of development, new kinds of practice, and new modes of thought'.[38] Moore utilises these 'philosophies of becoming' in order to explore the creative potentialities of progressive innovation. She uses her understanding of physiology to propose an embodiment of creative energy that brings the body to the forefront of revolutionary production that aspires beyond mankind in its current form. These philosophers of becoming all demonstrate the creative and autonomous potential of a continual process of human transformation. The evolutionary theory of Darwin and Bergson proposes a biological methodology for the metaphorical processes of metamorphosis that Nietzsche promotes. Nietzsche's assertion that 'man is a rope, fastened between animal and Superman' bears striking resemblance to Darwinian theories of evolution.[39] For both, man is a mid-point in a process of progressive becoming, or indeed whilst Nietzsche suggests that 'man is something that should be overcome', Darwin offers a theory which proposes that man in his current form *can* be overcome.[40] These philosophies are united in their aspiration, but even more importantly, they are united in their sense of indeterminate aspiration. Nietzsche's Zarathustrian metamorphosis is a trajectory of development with the intention that man must simply 'create beyond itself' and ends with the child, a state of 'innocence' and 'forgetfulness'.[41] Equally Darwin perceives life as emerging from earlier forms in a progressive process of continual elaboration and unpredictable transformation. Bergson's process of transformation is a slightly more complex process of progress inspired by memory and self-reference. Bergson's endless transformation is a continual dynamic system that develops new states but remains essentially itself: 'States thus defined cannot be

[38] Grosz, *Becoming Undone*, p.3.
[39] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 32.
[40] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 43, p. 41.
[41] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 55.

regarded as distinct elements. They continue each other in an endless flow'.[42] But ultimately, the contingency of this process still remains and the process of becoming still relies upon progressive gradations of difference. This sense of indeterminate aspiration is one of the corresponding factors between these philosophies of becoming and it is this notion that Moore transposes to the narrative of *Spleen.* Ruth states of her pregnancy, which she has already decided must be a gestation of innovative creation, that:

> She intended no replica of herself or Stephen. That would indeed be a shocking waste of her new-found and terrible power, laughed Ruth. Something new. Something quite different. Something worth having. Something beyond and above it all. Something free that would defy the dreary inevitable round of years (p. 30).

Ruth specifically states an aspiration to create 'something beyond' echoing the terminology of transformation outlined in Nietzsche. She also intends for her child to 'defy the dreary inevitable round of years' and become 'no replica' of its parents. Ruth wants her pregnancy to produce a child that has evolved beyond what has come before it in order to take its place as the next stage on a trajectory of innovation. Moore continues:

> She made no actual demands in her prayers, which in the strict sense of the word were not prayers at all but only an aching desire which possessed her utterly and made, as it were, its own demands. There was nothing shaped or definite about her plea. There was no I want this and I must have that, with a clear mental image of what it was she desired and expected to receive; and that was the most curious thing about it all. She desired no say in the matter (p. 30).

Ruth confirms her intention that her pregnancy must undertake an evolutionary transformation but she has no sense of how this will be articulated, there is 'nothing shaped or definite' about her ambition, echoing the contingent quality of the process of

[42] Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, p. 3.

becoming outlined in Nietzsche and Bergson. But Moore implies that Ruth does not need to oversee the act of creation herself and is instead able to leave this process to the transformative power of her body. The 'aching desire which possessed her utterly and made, as it were, its own demands', alludes to Moore's conception of the self-determining autopoietic 'Conscious Intelligent Movements' that continually work towards evolving and adapting. Moore's engagement with this conception of physiological autonomy means that Ruth's desire to create 'something new' is an impetus for evolution and progression that can be undertaken by the vital forces of the body rather than the finite perception of the subject. It is this resignation of personal control in favour of the contingent powers of evolutionary transformation that enables Ruth's pregnancy to become truly liberated from the binds of human limitation. Ruth's bid for truly autonomous creation is an act that enables the innate revolutionary power of the body to become mobilised. In Bergson's work, Grosz highlights the importance of what she terms a 'zone of indetermination' that 'characterises both the freedom representative of life and the capacity for being other wise that life can bestow upon material organisation'.[43] This 'zone of indetermination' is central to the creative potential that Moore perceives in evolutionary physiology. The human subject will always limit the aspirations of the mind, but the body is indeterminate in its potential. Consequently, it is within the body that Ruth's true potential for progressive creation lies. Grosz suggests:

> Indetermination is the 'true principle' of life, the condition for the open-ended action of living beings, the ways in which living bodies are mobilised for action that cannot be specified in advance. The degrees of indetermination are the degrees of freedom.[44]

Spleen sees Ruth navigate a similar sense of relationship between indetermination and freedom. The more her enactment of creative liberation becomes abstracted and defined only in its potential for innovation, the more she perceives it to exist as an autonomous act. Indeterminacy liberates her creation from the binds of human limitation and enables

[43] Grosz, *Becoming Undone*, p.69.
[44] Grosz, *Becoming Undone*, p.69.

it to truly become 'something beyond and above it all' (p. 28). Moore re-configures the limitations of motherhood in order to suggest its innate potential as a site of true creative freedom.

The physiological theories of Darwin and Bergson give Moore a hypothesis with which to justify her preoccupation with the innate creative and innovative potential of the human body. This enables *Spleen* to be read more literally as an exploration of scientifically supported bodily potential and an argument for the reinstatement of the female body as a productive and creative tool. But as previously suggested, Moore's conception of womanhood infers that the body is women's sole source of creative potential whilst cognitively she remains inferior, only able to replicate the philosophical projects of men. Certainly this is reflected in *Spleen*, as Ruth's desire for creative dissent remains eager but unformed:

> She had no misgivings and no fears. She felt abundantly strong and eager. She thought of the dreams and legends of her youth and knew that no child conceived and sired as she had been could give birth to a thing commonplace or usual. As she had made no specific demands, had projected no definite mind-image, she could not anticipate (p. 48).

As she here acknowledges, Ruth's capacity for dissent is a heritable trait and she implies that her own unusual parturition is the root source of her longing for transgression. She claims that no child 'conceived and sired as she had been' could ever produce a 'commonplace' child, a lesson she claims to have learnt from 'dreams and legends'. Ruth is here referring to her adamant belief that her birth was like that of Pallas-Athene 'springing from the forehead of Zeus'.[45] Ruth describes her first encounter with the myth as a transformative moment of her childhood:

> She recognised it at once, this divine symbol of the unity existing between her father and herself. She read and re-read, heart hammering on her ribs, eyes round

[45] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 38.

> as croquet balls, a smile on her lips, very happy. Everything then tended towards the deification of this rare father! They too recognised him, these divine beings from whom he sprang! Thus and therefore she was born. And secretly studying her father's high and tolerant brow she found the theory not only feasible, but wise and perfect (p. 38).

The reimagining of her own birth, as a 'springing' from the head of her father directly reflects that Ruth's 'spirit of rebellion derives from her intellectual identification with her father'.[46] Her cognitive difference is a direct inheritance and her aspirations for revolution continue this lineage. The imagery of Zeus and Athena is echoed in Ruth's initial sensation of her own womb-brain as she attempts to emulate this cognitive gestation inspired by her association with her father.[47] Moore clearly asserts that Ruth's capacity for creative dissent is the emulation of her father's transgressiveness, reinforcing her proposition that women can only reflect the cognitive potential of men. Certainly her behaviour during her pregnancy emulates modes of liberation directly learnt from her father. During Ruth's childhood, her father would insist that she walk barefooted across the grass each day:

> […] putting herself as he explained to her in direct contact with the earth, with the generative power which bore mountains, poured streams, moved sap. He told her to think of this as she began slowly crossing the grass backwards and forwards; and sure enough quite soon the soles of her feet would begin to tingle and impelled she knew not how, with mercury's wings at her heels, she would begin running, faster, faster, laughed, elated, breathless, glowing (p. 28).

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[46] Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', p. 297.

[47] The intellectual transgressiveness that Ruth inherits from her father is clearly articulated. Ruth's father is a radical and reformist pedagogue who invents the 'Justin Dalby method' that shapes Ruth's unusual but idyllic childhood experiences. Garrity identifies that the progressive methodology of Ruth's father 'can be read as an amalgam of late nineteenth-century pre-Raphaelite, socialist, and Medievalist reformers who rebelled against the cultural establishment and were deeply influenced not only by nature but also by the emancipation of women in both clothes and politics' (Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', p. 294). Indeed 'the distinction her father had made as between races, peoples, classes, differed in many ways from the distinctions common to his day […] which was a pleasant one of smug imperialism, good queens and good will' and he directly opposes the 'mob educative value' of societal norms (p. 39).

Her 'direct contact with the earth' is a source of abundant vitality and 'generative power' and Ruth replicates this 'generative' natural force during her pregnancy. In the midst of her reproductive revolution, Ruth 'took to avoiding the house a good deal and to wandering secretly in the isolated and unsought woods bordering a part of the grounds. Here she would lie for hours on the earth as though embracing it. She had not done such a thing since she was a child and it brought her immense comfort and a spiritual content' (p. 29). The divine nature of the natural environment for Ruth is further articulated as she describes that 'grass had always had an intense and spiritual significance for her. Once as a small child out walking with her father she had pointed with her blackberrying cane to a particularly wild tangle of grass and tufted clover and said: Look father, earth's beard. All divine and noble beings she had thought had beards' (p. 29). The forces of progressive liberation that Ruth gains from her direct connection with the earth are clearly inherited from the patriarchal guidance of her (bearded) father. Ruth's methodology for creative dissent is the replication of her father's transgressive ideology. The progressiveness of Ruth's body is catalysed by her embodiment of a masculine philosophical project and cannot be solely defined as an act of feminist autonomy.

Furthermore, it is significant that it is from her father that Ruth first inherits her 'wings', emblematic of progress and creative power. As she runs across the grass 'with mercury's wings at her heels' she gains his access to his otherworldly, celestial power. The image is evoked again in the midst of her pregnancy, as she 'seemed to wing across floors leaving no footprints' (p. 29) and insists that there are to be 'only young light-footed people in the nurseries' (p. 31) upon her giving birth. In Greek mythology, Mercury is named Hermes, messenger of the gods and child of bearded patriarch Zeus and thus Moore's winged imagery creates a further link between Ruth and ancient sources of power.[48] Ruth's wings imply an innate connectedness to this higher realm of power, a divine and celestial force for progress. Moore reiterates the association

[48] Hermes first appears in *Celestial Seraglio* when Mavis receives a postcard with his image symbolising her potential for a creative and progressive future. Here in *Spleen*, Moore again uses his image to represent the transition from the human to the celestial and the consequent creative power that this move enables.

between Ruth's liberation, her father's intellectual progressiveness, and his identification as an emblem of the divine and source of ancient wisdom. Ruth's father embodies the 'portals of ancient wisdom' that Moore longs for in her insistence that 'we must go back, back to the first vision' in order to access an eternal and redemptive creative philosophy.[49] Throughout *Spleen*, Moore uses mythological references to represent moments in which this intention can be realised. Ruth's tendency to deify her father, as first demonstrated in her recognition of her own birth in the myth of Zeus and Athena, reflects this intention and continues over the course of the novel. His seemingly otherworldly power continually inspires Ruth's progressive aspirations for her pregnancy. Upon her initial decision to ensure that her pregnancy produces 'something new', she perceives the ideas as one gifted to her by Zeus himself proclaiming 'Ah no, Zeus!' (p. 30) as the thought occurs to her. From this moment, Ruth remains fascinated by the concept of producing a child whose 'newness' would be achieved by their status as half human, half god. Inspired by this thought she directly addresses her god-like father, 'something new, she begged of the grassy beard. Let me be the first' (p. 30). She considers the 'seducer who comes in the shapes of the wounded bird' or 'treacherous garlanded bull', a 'shining and forbidden creature' sent from the gods to tempt 'young innocence' (p. 30). Excitedly she concludes that 'these marriageable and disobedient young women' are 'borne off in absurd and smiling attitudes to be breeders of gods and heroes' (p. 30). This longing for hybridity, a fascination with the conception of the part-human, part-animal, part-god, becomes the template for Ruth's desire for innovation in her own pregnancy. Her figuration of her father as part-human, part-god, acts as a template for this boundary-crossing transgression. She considers these mythological composite forms, 'thinking of what Minos must have said on being presented with the infant Minotauros', 'the river god and the muse with their litter of strange siren daughters, half-woman half-bird, half-woman half-fish', the 'nameless nymph' who first marvelled at the 'shaggy haunches and tufted chin' of a satyr, and Hera, 'what were her thoughts when the infant centaur burst from that cloud-image' (p. 40). Ruth's consideration of these mythological creatures, the offspring of gods and mortals, gods and beasts, inspires her longing for transgressive

[49] A. R. Orage, *Nietzsche: The Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1911), p.28, Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p.98.

reproduction. She longs to align herself with these 'breeders of gods and heroes' by refusing to replicate any 'anachronistic' (p. 40) human features and instead replacing them with something more divine, more exceptional.[50] 'You will not like it' she acknowledges, 'and it will understand you as little as I do' (p. 41), but she remains adamant that she wishes to emulate these myths of amalgamated, category defying, hybrid births. These mythological reproductive transgressions act as a metaphor for Ruth's longing to cross boundaries and to repeal divisions between the human and the 'beyond' human. Ruth alludes to a set of mythological creatures that exist as reformulations of the human body as a result of reproductive innovation found in communion between gods and mortals.

3.4. The *Fiasco di Vino*

The suggestion that progressive transgression is embodied as aesthetic difference and is a divine inheritance from the gods can directly inform the interpretation of Ruth's intentions for her pregnancy and indeed, its culmination in her eventual child, Richard. Richard is the materialisation of the ascendant ideology that Ruth has inherited from mythological sources but this reading becomes additionally complex and significant in light of Richard's physical and mental disability. We are told that 'he was beautifully whole and finished; except for his feet' which 'hung loose and shapeless from the ankle, soft loose pads of waxen flesh' (p. 49) and as he grows Ruth realises that his 'speech and movement were lacking' (p. 66). Upon Richard's birth, Ruth's response is one of immediate regret and she is 'sobered and appalled. It was terrible to her' (p. 49). When confronted with his disability Ruth is horrified with the reality of what she feels she has willed into existence. The materialisation of her philosophical project shocks her with the degree of its transgression from normative physicality. Yet arguably, despite his physical disability, Richard is the embodiment of the innovative progressiveness that Ruth

[50] 'They did not deserve this conspirator in their midst, outwardly quietly believing and quietly respectful; who yet recoiled from the humorous possibility of reproducing a Stanner eye as from reproducing a blind eye, and would as soon perpetuate Ganesha's swaying funnel as perpetuate the anachronistic Hungerford nozzle' (p.40).

demanded and holds the otherworldly, shape shifting qualities that she wished to him to inherit from the gods. Richard is frequently described as suddenly being 'catlike' (p. 66) with a 'feline intensity' (p. 66), or as having the 'eyelashes of an attractive woman' (p. 109) or hands that were suddenly 'not a man's hands at all' (p. 109). Richard has a mercurial physicality, constantly transgressing the boundary of human/non-human and defying gendered categorisation. In this way he is the embodiment of the hybridity that Ruth esteemed in the mythological tales of progressive reproduction.

Richard's divine inheritance also has a direct influence upon his capacity for progressive creativity. Ruth fearfully describes the 'will-to-know look that came in his eyes, his brows drawn down and tense, that she would suddenly feel that only speech and movement were lacking and that he was not' (p. 66). This 'will-to-know' emulates the cognitive ascendency of the individualist creator and Richard demonstrates a capacity for progressive innovation. Whilst he cannot walk, Richard instead learns to move himself on a chair 'jerking slowly from side to side; the legs of the chair advancing slowly carefully, controlled by the mechanism of his spine and back' (p. 67). Ruth asks 'what divine dispensation had come to his aid with the nerves and spine of an acrobat, and the sudden power to seize and use them?' (p. 67). Again, Richard is aligned with a 'god-like' source of power, a 'divine' intervention that enables him to transform his physical difference into a progressive and innovative capacity for movement. Ruth even goes as far as to call him 'my Bacchus' (p. 65), directly identifying him as the embodiment of the Dionysian spirit so vital to the creative artist.[51] Yet Ruth remains fearful and repentant about Richard's capabilities, unable to see beyond his physical disability. Despite her initial ambitions for originality, Ruth becomes increasingly anxious that people will realise Richard's disparity is an otherworldly power and 'once, hearing the words *fiasco di vino* she had become red and hot and moved away thinking that they had called her child a divine fiasco, instead of innocently calling for another bottle of wine' (p. 81). Ruth's failure and limitation lies in her inability to understand the potential that Richard represents. As a woman, she can only aspire towards an ambiguous sense of innovation that she

[51] See Chapter 1 for a more detailed discussion of the role of Dionysus in Moore's creative philosophy.

inherited from masculine sources of creative progressiveness but cannot comprehend the formal realisation of these impulses.

Ruth's limitation is doubly significant when Richard's metaphorical function within *Spleen*'s narrative is further extended. Richard does not just embody the dissenting creative impulses that Moore associates with the creative artist, but also presents a figuration of abstracted aesthetic form more broadly. Jane Garrity uses the language of David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder's assertion that 'the narrative deployment of disability' can function as '"an opportunistic metaphoric device"' and thus reads Richard as the 'inspirational source for Moore's literary experimentalism' and '*Spleen*'s deformation of narrative'.[52] Matt Franks reiterates this argument in his discussion of *Spleen*'s 'aesthetic deformation' and states that 'in keeping with other works of literary modernism, the novel deploys disability aesthetics as a mode of anti-normative critique'.[53] With this much more expansive metaphorical reading, Richard's physical disability becomes a stark emblem of the aesthetic innovations of the modernist project. Thus Richard's association with Hans Uller, a German painter who briefly stays on the island of Foria, is hugely significant. Moore describes how Richard 'seemed never to tire of staring at the bright-coloured patterns. He liked bright colours. Any new bright pattern could hold his attention for hours. He would lie watching Uller at his easel with a catlike intensity of concentration, following the ladling on of colour' (p. 66). In response to Uller's paintings, which as Garrity notes exclusively advocate an aesthetic which holds 'art as an interrogation of form and colour—the hallmarks of early twentieth century Post-impressionism', 'Richard stared and stared and seemed to approve them' (p. 66).[54] Uller embodies the 'spirit of experimentation', insisting upon the rejection of formalism, realism, and parochialism and claiming that 'unless a thing is three times removed from nature it is not art' (p. 79).[55] That Richard 'seemed to approve', aligns these two characters as allies in a project of formal innovation and creative progressivism.

[52] Jane Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', p. 291.
[53] Matt Franks, 'Mental Inversion, Modernist Aesthetics, and Disability Exceptionalism in Olive Moore's Spleen', *Journal of Modern Literature*, 38 (2014), 107- 127, p. 111.
[54] Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', p 305.
[55] Garrity, 'Olive Moore's Headless Woman', p. 305.

Significantly however, Ruth cannot comprehend their aesthetic proposals. Whilst watching Uller paint she realises that 'All that which to her was static […] was to him nothing short of an eruption' (p. 72). 'I do not see it like that' she tells Uller, for 'she, as indeed most people, saw only what she had been taught to see' (p. 73). Ruth can never fully comprehend the potential of either Richard's or Uller's formal innovations despite her initial aspirations for creative progressivism. Moore presents a relentless and unforgivingly limited depiction of womanhood as being incompatible with the cognitive ascendency required for innovative creative production. Ruth remains merely an intermediary point of ideological transference, carrying the progressivism of her father as a heritable trait that is realised in Richard but remains incomprehensible to her in its material form.

3.5. You Who Have Wisdom But No Peace

In a moment of self-awareness towards the end of the novel, Ruth asks 'Was it then true after all that women were but the receptacles for man's thought and children? Only that which he placed within her could be hers; her consciousness and life derived only from him' (p. 91). Ruth's fight for subjective agency and the conflict between her impulse for revolution and her resultant guilt is epitomised in the tension between herself and Uller. As the novel progresses and her inability to comprehend Richard's singularity is repeatedly reinforced. She reflects upon her initial desire for innovation concluding that 'she had been wrong and foolishly young and romantic and trustful' and that now

> […] she knew that there is but one purpose in life. Man woman and child and child and child. Woman and child. Wash child, wash corpse. That was all there was to it. That was all there should be to it. Could be to it. Woman from the neck downward. Man from the neck upward, as he chose. But for woman no choice (p. 57).

Ruth completely renounces any previous conception of potential female autonomy and advocates an archaic and limited conception of womanhood. She repeatedly asserts that

women must be excluded from the realm of cognitive progressivism and must only access creativity 'from the neck downward', limiting women's potential to their reproductive function. She also repeatedly insists that Richard is a failure because he is 'unproductive' and 'rootless' (p. 97). Despite her initial intention for something 'beyond and above it all', Ruth is repelled by this 'rootlessness', or indeed, Richard's absolute originality. Ruth therefore conclusively dismisses the modernist project by rejecting the 'parable of absolute self-creation' that defines it.[56] This is further symbolised when in addition to her rejection of Richard as she leaves him on Foria and returns to London, she also rejects Uller, turning down her final chance for a future with him 'as a nun about to break her vows and unable to do so' (p. 98). Ruth appears incapable of embracing the aesthetic progressiveness symbolised by both Richard and Uller and this conservatism increases as the narrative progresses. However, despite her apparent repudiation of her original dissenting impulse, she acknowledges that 'she could not rid herself of the feeling that in betraying him [Uller] she had betrayed herself' (p. 98). As a consequence, Ruth remains haunted by a sense of 'doubt', and within all her dismissals and retributions, she cannot help but admit that 'put back the clock twenty-three years and she would still do very much the same thing. She would still try. She still thought much about mankind as she had thought then' (p. 57) for 'she still found it difficult to believe that man as he existed was the highest form of life' (p. 58). Ruth cannot completely reject her desire for the enactment of embodied progressivism but she remains incapable of ridding herself of a eugenic understanding of its aesthetic materialisation, perceiving only Richard's lack, instead of his possibility. As Matt Franks notes, Ruth 'does not reject the biopolitical and eugenic systems from which she exceptionalizes herself. Rather she reinforces the hierarchical stratification between disabled and able bodies by securing her own capacity against her son's disability'.[57] Ruth is unable to see beyond a normative conception of the body and cannot comprehend a progressive framework through which to articulate Richard's difference in a positive way. 'She had asked of life a new form. A being who would have escaped the worn-out form and order of life' she concludes, but 'she still

[56] Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-garde and Other Modernist Myths* (London: MIT Press, 1985), p. 157.
[57] Franks, 'Mental Inversion, Modernist Aesthetics', p. 111.

could find it strange that what man conceives in stone and colour and sound he cannot conceive in flesh and blood' (p. 58). The body remains bound to eugenic conceptions of form, wholeness, and productivity and can never hope to emulate the abstraction and reformation of the modernist project in a manner that is deemed to be positively progressive. Moore suggests that as a consequence, women will remain unable to participate in the creative sphere because their creativity remains tied to the body.[58] Thus despite Ruth's attempted emulation of masculine cognitive creativity, she remains fated to forever remain as Uller describes, 'you who have wisdom but no peace' (p. 100) because her womanhood demands that her creative impulse must be embodied. Ruth's philosophical project of innovation is frustrated by the biological reality of the female body and the societal demands for its continual perpetuation of mimetic reproduction and eugenic standards of physicality.

However, Moore does not solely place this blame with Ruth but instead implies that the problem is perpetuated by the societal reception towards her attempted revolution. Ruth's primary concern is how much Richards's embodied difference will be negatively received by a society that works to deny transgressive individualism. Ruth notes 'how old, how nearly rotten with age seemed man's world. Hourly on its crust swarmed new life' but 'the worn-out world closes in on the new life. And by the time the new life has freed itself (if it ever really does) it has acquired the prison garb and the prison habits. So that it cannot be free. It can never be free. Freedom is not for the new thing on the musty-smelling earth' (p. 58). Humanity's limitation is positioned as the adversary of progress, working to suppress and restrict any individual that ever attempts

[58] Uller's painting of 'The Blue Boy' directly reconfirms this proposition. The painting is undertaken by Uller during his time on the island and depicts a young local boy, Giovanni. Ruth is horrified because 'he had painted him blue against the blue sky, among blue leaves, on blue stones. It was all quite absurd, of course; even ridiculous. No one was blue; a sky might be, but leaves were green and stones were grey and the naked child was brown. And yet for all its absurdity he had caught the browny-blue bloom which Giovanni have off like a fruit, even though he had painted him bluer than the skyey background, or any sky that had ever shone for that matter. Was it blue or purple? Still more unusual, Uller had declared himself satisfied with the work' (pp. 77-8). Ruth later sees the painting on display in Italy alongside a description that declares Uller to be a 'Modern Master of Colour'. Uller is allowed to embrace abstraction and deviate from formal reality in a way that Ruth is not. His child is celebrated as a masterpiece whilst hers is the cause of her exile.

transgressive innovation. Moore argues that individualism, the quality at the heart of her creative philosophy, is repressed and subdued by 'rotten' humanity. Upon Ruth's return to London at the end of the novel, she is horrified and

> She could not help, on turning aside suddenly from an elegant residential street, coming immediately on the rows of damp and stale-smelling public houses in their rows of damp and stale-smelling alleys. She saw the sour-smelling unkempt blowsy peacock-voiced women, the hollow-faced children sitting for hours on the cold evil-smelling pavements. Unhealthy and rotten like soaked stumps of dead trees (p. 119).

Ruth compares these London scenes to her memories of Italy and the 'vast a luminous sky and colour and plenty and people strong in their work and with warm-baked skins and naked strongly planted children with backbones like ropes of vine' (p. 120). The stark contrast inspires a 'feeling of bitterness and impatience', 'as to one who sees a favourite child doing mean and unworthy acts' and Ruth realises she will never be reconciled with the corrupted and decaying England that she now sees before her. This realisation finally allows her to reconceive her conception of Richard and her own consequent guilt. Upon walking through London,

> Again she has a sight of him lying in the shade of the rock on the hot yellow sand under a blue outstretched sky. How she had feared him! How long now, she wondered, had she feared him, imagining his reproach? What then was the more culpable: physical or mental insentience? To be unable to understand or to refuse? She thought of the squalor, the grey faces, of blind men standing with uncovered heads because others liked to see them cold, of the dreariness of poverty, the dreariness of gentility, the limited outlook of one, the limited outlook of the other, the decaying world closing in on the new life, and everywhere people being so splendidly brave about nothing, about nothing at all. What could she, she asked, what could she have told him? (p. 127)

For the first time in the novel, Ruth perceives Richards's potential for superiority. The 'dreariness' and 'limited outlook' of the 'decaying world' are worsened by humanity's refusal to understand or make change. In comparison, Ruth considers that at least Richard is 'unable' to understand the futility of humanity's plight rather than simply refusing to understand. By leaving him on the island under the peace and clarity of the 'blue outstretched sky' that she so misses, Ruth begins to consider that she has saved him from the fate of the 'decaying world closing in on new life'. In his exile, he is at least free from the threat of modern society's grasp. Foria becomes a symbolic liminal space, extricated from the deterioration of modernity, an 'eternal' and 'unalterable' place of freedom in which his 'new life' can exist untroubled and saved from humanity's demands and despair.

In the final passage of the novel, Ruth stands to watch a procession of unemployed workers make their way through the city:

> In the growing press of people gathered there to attend this grotesque Calvary, she stood tearless and detached watching humanity carry its Cross: bent, beaten and anxious, and yet more innocent than Christ.
> She turned away, again wondering what she could have told him. But now she smiled. She no longer reproached herself (p. 128).

Only in this final confrontation is Ruth able to forgive herself for Richard's difference. As she considers 'those fortunate few who, like himself, were lifted above such desolate reality' (p. 126), she finally perceives the potential of difference as a means to liberation, and conceives that Richard's inability to understand society at least means that he is freed from its suffering. Yet despite her renunciation of guilt, Ruth remains adamant that Richard must remain in exile. Whilst she finally understands his unique potential, Ruth also simultaneously acknowledges that he cannot return to a society that will not be able to productively comprehend his difference. If Richard were to be integrated back into a society as corrupted as that which Ruth witnesses in London, he would lose his potential power and his freedom. Moore utilises the duality between Richard's narrative and the

fate of Uller's painting *The Modern Blue Boy* to reinforce this assertion. Whilst Richard remains free on Foria, Ruth learns that Uller's painting is on display at the Tate Gallery having been purchased for 'two thousand guineas' (p. 124), considerably more than the sixty pounds Uller had sold it for after the war. Ruth notes that 'she knew that they were now valuable these tortured fierce-looking paintings which she had watched him at work upon and found so strange. And still found strange but for the grape-bloom glow on this child made of the earth he squatted on, and which she too had understood' (p. 124). But she remains troubled by the lack of understanding that she perceives in the press and biographies of Uller, now a famous and renowned painter, but far removed from the reality that Ruth knew first hand. In being seized and popularised by society, Uller has lost the clarity of individualism that is so vital for the artist. 'She could not recognise Uller in these pictures' she states, 'they made of him a braggart, overbearing, callous, which seemed to give him additional glamour in their eyes. They worshipped him from far as a form of human burning bush which none dared approach' (p. 125). Uller's picture is venerated for its exceptionality, but Ruth suddenly feels a stark and destructive dissonance between its public reception and the truth behind the image. Society venerates only its novelty, without understanding any of its innate values or sharing an understanding of the reality of the child's 'grape bloom glow' that Ruth witnessed on Foria. Whilst 'Giovanni stared from the walls of a great gallery and made London no longer strange to her' (p. 125), Ruth acknowledges that in leaving Richard on Foria, she has saved him from this same fate, saved him from being exposed to these dangers, trapped on display and misinterpreted by hoards of society who have no way of comprehending him. 'Sitting there staring at the blue distorted child she seemed to have been on a long journey and to be nearing home' she considers, 'have I repaid my debt? Or was there ever a debt to repay but in her willful mind?' (p. 125). Both Ruth and Uller undertake a project of innovation and produce a 'distorted child' that transcends the aesthetic of mimetic reproduction. Where Uller was able to express his ideological idealism artistically, Ruth translated her intentions physiologically, experimenting with the creative boundaries of women's embodied powers. But Uller's project was tarnished as soon as it entered a society that was too decayed and impotent to understand its true integral value. Ruth is eventually able to forgive herself only once she realises that she

has at least saved Richard from this fate, and saved him from a society that is not yet ready for his difference and the potential that he represents. In this way, *Spleen* promotes Moore's ideology of creative dissent as the basis for progressive revolution but it remains a tentative proposal. The visionary is received into a world that is not yet ready to comprehend it, a proposal Moore consistently reiterates: 'no man has ever been ahead of his Time. His Time has always been behind its great men'.[59] Conclusively, society's lack of progressiveness will forever stifle the potential of the visionary individual. Thus Ruth's position at the end of *Spleen* is uncertain, for whilst she is able to finally comprehend the potential and necessary innovation that Richard symbolises, she is also able to articulate that there is no possibility for integrating this potential within society. Thus, whilst *Spleen* proposes techniques of creative potential and progressive innovation, it also presents fundamental concerns. Through both Uller's artistic project and Ruth's embodied ambitions, Moore articulates modes of dissenting and individualist creativity that manifest within non-mimetic, revolutionary aesthetic forms. Yet ultimately, the former loses its power and dynamism upon reintegration into society, whilst the latter only maintains liberation through exile. Ultimately, Ruth's decision that her revolution must remain hidden from humanity if it is to retain its powerful integrity poses the vital question at the heart of *Spleen*'s narrative: can revolutionary creativity ever make an integrated and lasting impact upon humanity whilst also maintaining the individualism and progressivism required of the creative project? *Spleen*'s ambiguity reveals Moore's concern with the impermanence of dissent as a means to revolution and it is a narrative that insists upon the necessity of a solution being found. Most significantly, *Spleen*'s gestures towards the vitalist body and Moore's on-going fascination with its physiological potential mark the burgeoning of a potential mode of redemption that Moore would go on to explore with even more depth and determination in *Fugue*.

[59] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 204.

Chapter 4. Embracing the Psychosphere: Death, Vital Optimism, and the Fifth Element in *Fugue*

4.1. Soul as Vital Force

In 'Notebook Number Fifteen' of *The Apple is Bitten Again*, Moore introduces a section entitled 'Soul as Fifth Element; an exploration without balloons into a psychosphere and ultra-psychosphere'.[1] Moore's conception of 'soul' is an integral part of her vitalistic philosophy of the body. 'Soul particles' are the vital force that activate the matter of the body upon contact and are the energy source that enables the adaptive response of the 'local brains' of which the human body is comprised.[2] Moore describes 'soul' as a distinct element:

> We must no longer speak of one soul and another soul. But of soul. There is no human soul and animal soul, as there is no human air and animal air. There is air. There is soul. Which, like water, like air, should be considered an element. *I would call soul the Fifth Element.*[3]

Moore's definition of the soul as an 'element' renders it completely non-subjective. 'Soul' becomes the collective noun for the animating force of many 'soul particles' which are indiscriminate in their adherence to corporeal matter. Moore removes any sense of individual soul-ownership as each person's 'soul' is made up of particles which could just as easily have adhered to a different human, or indeed animal as Moore suggests. The 'soul' is not an invariable, stable component of individual identity. Furthermore, Moore's definition adopts the terminology of the Ancient Greek conception of the four classical

[1] Olive Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again* (London: Wishart & Co, 1934), p. 180.
[2] The creative potential of the 'Local Brains' is explored in Chapter 3 in relation to *Spleen.*
[3] Olive Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 180.

elements: earth, water, air, and fire. In addition to these four terrestrial elements, Aristotle posited the existence of 'aether' (*aithēr*) as the fifth element existing instead within a celestial sphere. Long before the 1930s, evidence of atomic theory and chemical compounds had of course drastically invalidated the notion of the Classical Elements, yet Moore insists that 'There is air. There is soul. Which, like water, like air, should be considered an element'.[4] Moore resolutely defines 'soul' within this archaic system of categorisation and yet this additional 'fifth element' exists within a contemporary system of atmospheric stratification:

> Then like air, like water, soul must be penetrating and surrounding the earth. This surrounding layer I would call the *psychosphere*. A layer rich in soul element. The present theory that after the stratosphere there is only ether spread over the universe, is too simple. The stratosphere is not the last wrapping of a planet and in time we shall prove it.[5]

Moore's innovative conception of the 'psychosphere' (a name which embraces the etymological inheritance of the Ancient Greek word *psukhḗ*, meaning 'soul' or 'breath') is constructed with the terminology of legitimate scientific atmospheric exploration.[6]

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[4] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p.181.

[5] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again,* p.181.

[6] French meteorologist Léon Teisserenc de Bort confirmed the existence of atmospheric layers in 1902. His research used unmanned balloons travelling to a maximum distance of about 9.1 miles to prove the existence of two separate atmospheric layers that he dubbed the troposphere and the stratosphere. By the early 1930s scientists and pilots around the world were engaged in a race to reach even higher altitudes within the stratosphere. Jean and Jeanette Picard famously developed and flew high-altitude balloons to ever-increasing heights. The most successful of these flights flew in October 1934 (also the year in which *The Apple is Bitten Again* was published) and was piloted by Jeanette in their balloon *Century of Progress* to a record height of 10.9 miles into the stratosphere. Aspirational thinkers were inspired to consider the possibilities of atmospheric exploration. Moore's chapter title—'an exploration without balloons'—indicates her own engagement with the endeavors of these scientific explorers. Additionally, Moore's comment that 'beyond the stratosphere there is only ether' is a result of societal, not personal ignorance. The additional atmospheric layers—the mesosphere, thermosphere, and exosphere—exist 18.6 miles from earth, far beyond the distances travelled by the research balloons of the 1930s. Moore was correct to assert that in time we would prove that 'the stratosphere was not the last wrapping of the earth'. Her theory of an additional 'psychosphere' lies not too far beyond the realms of scientific fact.

Despite her insistence upon its definition as the 'fifth element', Moore's conception of 'soul' otherwise maintains a scientifically astute grounding. Moore may simply have chosen the terminology of antiquity in order to invite comparison. The classical 'fifth element' ('aether' or 'pure, fresh air') remained separate from humanity in its celestial sphere, breathed only by the gods. By contrast, Moore's 'soul' is a definitively earthly element, a 'life giving spirit', and the universal animating force that humans cyclically acquire and displace by 'breathing it in and spitting it out'.[7] The fifth element has been reclaimed from the gods in an action that echoes Prometheus's original elemental theft, a myth which lies at the heart of Moore's conception of the creative spirit. This 'theft' of celestial vitality is an act of dissent that provides the vital energy required by the creative spirit to enact their transformative potential. Soul is thus a central component of Moore's creative philosophy, fuelling the creative spirit and enabling their ascendancy.

Despite her initial terminological gesture towards antiquity, Moore's discussion of the properties of 'soul' otherwise engages directly with contemporary scientific theory. Her vitalistic conception of soul as a 'life giving' element involves a complex conception of soul-particles existing on an atomic level and being attracted to the matter of the body. She states that 'there are millions upon millions of molecular-atomic little souls and different beings and growths are allotted as many as they need'.[8] The 'neediness' of the body is directly correlated to its mass. Moore states simply 'When the body expands and acquires a greater number of matter-molecules, automatically it attracts the corresponding number of soul-molecules'.[9] It is the blood, or specifically the 'iron' within it, that 'MIGHT-SHOULD-MUST-CONDUCT AND ATTRACT SOUL' implying a process of magnetism between these two elements.[10] Indeed, Moore concludes that 'Soul then is a combination of magnet and electricity; of the family of electro-magnetic fluids. What I have ignorantly called soul-molecules and soul-atoms might more accurately be called soul-waves and wavelets, or soul-vibrations and second-vibrations: the ether waves, the

[7] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 179, p. 180.
[8] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again,* p. 180.
[9] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 180.
[10] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again,* p. 182.

light vibrations'.[11] As she acknowledges, Moore's statement amends her initial definition of soul. Soul is now defined as an electro-magnetic force, generating oscillations of electro-magnetic energy in waves and vibrations. These waves are attracted and conducted by the blood, enabling the transference of energy by penetrating and interacting with the matter of the body. Inspired by the electro-magnetic spectrum, Moore was clearly fascinated by the hidden potential of the non-visible. Man is only 'discerning three or four shades of universe' and 'it is not given to him yet to see the ultra-violet of the rainbow, nor to fathom the infinitesimal range of both sides'.[12] The imperceptibility of 'soul' does not justify the dismissal of its existence. In her striving to be a pioneer on the frontier of perception, Moore discerns 'soul' as a plausible addition to the electromagnetic spectrum.[13] With her usual assertiveness she concludes: 'I have no seventy years in which to grow dusty and old, dedicated to this subject. Its implications are both too vast and too obvious. I know nothing of what I am talking, but that I know it to be true'.[14]

Additionally, Moore's soul-theory implies that vitality is a self-perpetuating force in the body. A strong and robust heart rate enables a greater quantity of 'soul' to be conducted in the blood. The more dynamic and active the body, the more 'soul' will be attracted to it. The state of aspiration for Moore is a body that achieves its peak capacity as a soul-conductor, a full and vital existence that relies upon the embodiment of strength and health. The inverse of this principle of course, is that 'weak' bodies will continually expend but not attract 'soul'. Moore asserts:

> If each time the body deteriorates the soul diminishes, the soul must be measured mechanically by the state of the body.

[11] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, pp. 181-2.
[12] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p.183.
[13] Gamma rays were only added to the electro-magnetic spectrum at the turn of the 20th century having been discovered in 1900 and named in 1903. Moore's assessment that there must be additional discoveries to be made would certainly not have appeared improbable.
[14] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 183.

> It is absurd to give a great soul to a sickly old man and the proof is given daily in our hospitals. The weak, the old, the drunken, the dissipated, drop their souls at the first shaking.
> SOUL AND VITALITY GO HAND IN HAND.[15]

The inevitable implication of this system of loss and acquisition is that it marks the superiority of some bodies over others. Problematically, Moore's theory of 'soul' creates a quantifiable system through which bodies can be valued by asserting that the amount of 'soul' is indicated by the physical condition of the body. Moore specifically identifies the 'weak', 'old' and 'dissipated' as individuals with less favourable significance. The terminology that she uses to describe the body's ability to act as a vessel for 'soul' encourages an able/disabled binary system of categorisation. It takes only a small leap to identify how Moore's theory could be compared to eugenic dialogues. Through the assertion that 'degenerate' bodies lose soul, less-able or disabled bodies become quantifiably defined as deficient. All of Moore's novels deal with the boundaries of definition between able/disabled bodies and indeed repeatedly argue the primacy of the former over the latter. Moore's soul theory, whilst by no means a justification, offers at the very least an explanation of Moore's unrelenting depiction of disability as deficiency. Disability or physical weakness becomes an indicator of the body's value with regards to acting as a conductor of vitality. Moore perceives the body as operating on a linear sliding scale of vitality, ranging from death on the one side, to a state of 'full-capacity' life at the other. The less 'soul' the body attracts, the closer it is to the emptiness of death. As such, physical weakness comes to be defined as a state of living in closer proximity to death. Conversely, Moore perceives that the goal of living is to refuse to let death supersede the energy of life and thus she retreats from any formal embodiment that doesn't depict abundance. The eugenic implications of Moore's creative project begin to become increasingly apparent because she defines the physical capabilities of the body as an expression of its vital energy. Moore's vitalist theory of 'soul' is a central component of her reintegration of the body within the creative project because soul particles fuel the creative spirit. An abundantly active, healthy body signifies an abundance of 'soul'. This

[15] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 179.

in turn indicates the subject's greater capacity to enact the transformation of the ascendant creative spirit. The vital energy acquired through an increased number of soul particles fuels a transformative process of self-realisation, an embodiment of the powerful individualism of the creative artist. Thus the creative artist must be abundant in both body and mind, as both are required in Moore's project of creative progressivism. It is undeniable that Moore's creative philosophy and its physiological components definitively exclude subjects whose physicality falls outside of what is deemed to be most productive. The creative artist is fit, young, physically strong, and able bodied.

4.2. Eternal Death

In direct contrast to vital abundance, Moore asserts that death is the final 'emptying' of any remaining 'soul' from the body, the culmination of an aging process in which the 'soul' progressively diminishes. 'When a man dies he does not give up his soul' she asserts, 'He gives up the last insignificant remains of a polluted viciated element that would not keep a rat alive'.[16] By Moore's definition, life is marked by this continual movement towards death. Our diminishing 'soul' is a consistent reminder of our own unavoidable mortality. The quantity of 'soul' held by the body acts as a morbid indicator of death's proximity. Death's continual presence as a condition of life forces us to confront its meaning as a factor of the human condition, a tension philosophy has long debated. Simone de Beauvoir notes the influence of Heidegger in Sartre's conception of death in *Being and Nothingness* (1943), disclosing that 'the real nature of man is bound up with death because of man's finite state. […] If death were not resident in human life, the relation of man to the world and to himself would be profoundly disarranged'.[17] Death is a constant determinant of humanity, *arranging* man's relationship with existence and reasserting its finite conditions. Heidegger's own *Being and Time* (1927) interprets this relationship positively by insisting that the affirmation of our mortality, life lived as a state of 'being-towards-death', is the means to an 'authentic' and liberated existence.[18]

[16] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again,* p. 182.
[17] Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 39.
[18] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (Albany: State University of New York Press. 2010).

By embracing our mortality we can positively mobilise the anticipation of death into a state of increased freedom. Heidegger's philosophy on death is representative of what Grace Jantzen deems the 'necrophilia' of the western symbolic, an 'obsession with death' and the 'death-dealing structures of modernity'.[19] This obsession manifests as a simultaneous 'dread and desire' for death, a conflict that forms the basis of modernity's morbid fascination with what Jantzen terms the binaries of 'mortality/natality; destruction/creativity'.[20] In her discussion of Jantzen, Robin May Scott identifies that:

> This fixation on death in philosophy is connected to the conceptual and methodological interest in opposition and conflict. [Jantzen] pointed out, for example, that since Hegelian dialectics is built on the procedure of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, then conflict is presupposed as the necessary condition of progress; and that in Anglo-American philosophy, an aggressive, adversarial method has dominated philosophical debates for decades.[21]

The 'necrophilia' of early twentieth century thought lies at the heart of the modern preoccupation with the productive tension between conflict and advancement.[22] The disruptive and potentially regenerative conditions of death sees it become reframed as a vital tool in the eradication of anything deemed obsolete within a cultural framework formulated upon constant advancement. Jantzen defines modernity as a cultural obsession with the capacity for reformation in the space created after death.

In an exemplary demonstration of Jantzen's argument, Nietzsche notoriously proclaimed God as a fatality of modernity, an assertion that shapes much of his philosophy. With the increasing secularisation of thought, modernity no longer perceived

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[19] Grace M. Jantzen, *Foundations of Violence* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 5.
[20] Jantzen, *Foundations of Violence*, p.5.
[21] Robin May Scott, *Birth, Death, and Femininity: Philosophies of Embodiment* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), p. 5.
[22] 'The language of death is rooted in philosophy, not only through the philosophical reflections on death, but also through the metaphorical use of 'death' in modernity, as in twentieth-century preoccupations with the death of God, the death of man, the death of the subject, and the death of the author' (Scott, *Birth, Death, and Femininity*, p.5).

a universe governed by divine providence. Nietzsche defined the advent of god's death as a moment of possibility, marking the end of 'religious cruelty' and the 'moral epoch of mankind' when 'one sacrificed to one's god one's strongest instincts, one's "nature"'.[23] This 'moral epoch' is in many ways bound to our conception of human mortality. In the western Christian tradition, the promise of eternal life after death is offered as a reassurance against our mortality. Our finitude in this life is mitigated by the promise of eternal salvation, providing the individual has adhered to the strict teachings of Christian morality. Conversely there is the promise of eternal damnation in hell for those who have deviated in sin. The conditions of human mortality become inextricably tied to this binary system of morality. Nietzsche conceives of a moment in which humanity can rid itself of these limited boundaries of understanding. Instead,

> At hearing the news that 'the old god is dead', we philosophers and 'free spirits' feel illuminated by a new dawn; our heart overflows with gratitude, amazement, forebodings, expectations—finally the horizon seems clear again, even if not bright; finally our ships may set out again, set out to face any danger; every daring of the lover of knowledge is allowed again; the sea, *our* sea, lies open again; maybe there has never been such an open sea.[24]

In the space made available by the death of religious meaning, Nietzsche envisaged that humanity would be able to find new structures of understanding. The 'free spirit' embraces the possibility of this 'new dawn' by creating their own individual values with which to assert their individuality. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* Nietzsche defines this 'free spirit' further as culminating in the figure of the '*Übermensch*' or 'spirit who wills his own will'. But despite his aspirations for the 'free spirit' to which he returns throughout his work, Nietzsche reluctantly concedes that humanity may fail to grasp the potential of god's passing. Instead of the 'will to power' of the free spirit, humanity may instead embrace a 'will to nothingness' in which instead of creating new meaning, humanity will

[23] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil,* in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. by Walter Kaufman (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), p. 257.
[24] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, ed. by Bernard Williams, trans. by Josefine Nauckhoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 199.

instead perceive life as meaningless. Heidegger noted that 'if God as the suprasensory ground and goal of all reality is dead, if the suprasensory world of the ideas has suffered the loss of its obligatory and above it its vitalizing and upbuilding power, then nothing more remains to which man can cling and by which he can orient himself'.[25] Nietzsche feared that the loss of God as a orienting device would provoke humanity into a state of nihilistic pessimism, completely jeopardising his aspiration that God's death must instead inspire new structures of self-asserted meaning in which the individual does not 'turn away from life' but instead embraces all its possibility. Whilst God's death offers us moment of constructive opportunity, it also places humanity on an ontological precipice whereon meaning, truth, and value are uncertain. Nietzsche urges that this is not a moment in which to be despondent, instead it must inspire the beginning of a period of spirit metamorphosis (as analogised in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in the transformation of the spirit from camel, to lion, to child): 'a new beginning, a game, a wheel that propels itself, a first movement, a sacred Yes. Yes for the game of creating, my brothers, a sacred Yes must be uttered: the spirit now wills its own will, the one who had lost the world attains his own world'.[26] For this self-asserting individual, the '"Thou shalt!"' of religious ideology instead becomes '"I will!"'[27]

Olive Moore strongly demonstrates Nietzsche's influence in her conception of religion, morality and its role in human limitation. 'Man's moral skies are overworked, overcrowded, and nearing their end' she declares, echoing Nietzsche's insistence upon religion's demise as the only solution.[28] Moore similarly conceives of the promise of eternal life (and indeed the threat of eternal damnation) as a form of moral extortion that has coerced humanity into the denial of its true potential. She laments,

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[25] Martin Heidegger, 'Nietzsche's World: God is Dead', in *Heidegger: Off the Beaten Track,* trans. by Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 157-200.

[26] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: a Book for Everyone and No One*, trans. by Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 85.

[27] 'What is the great dragon which the spirit will no longer call lord and God? "Thou shalt" is the great dragon called. But the spirit of the lion says, "I will!" (Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, p. 108).

[28] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 193.

> Is this what they have done to you, Humanity, the dark aeons through which you have crept, with their denials and their messages, their martyrdoms and their doubts, the dreary clash of arms which precedes the clash of bells, peaceless on earth, good-will in death, for which men have hanged and burned and crucified and laid down lives, all to bring you the comfort of an eternal life?[29]

Man's apprehension of death as an unknowable state has resulted in his fearful turn towards religion. Christianity's promise of immortality uses fear to generate obedience and the forceful destruction of non-conformity. Like Nietzsche, Moore longs for a 'new dawn' for humanity that resists these archaic demands upon the autonomy of the spirit. Moore proposes that the solution lies in a new philosophical confrontation of death and our own mortality. The demise of religion offers an opportunity for the re-orientation of thought away from the binds of morality and towards new structures of meaning. 'Too many, too long, too often, these passionate misinterpretations of a primary mechanical law, with their tears and negative joys, little soured sects, anger, pain, mistrust, despair, and chill futility. Eternal life has had its cheerless day. I would offer you Eternal Death'.[30] Moore's theory of Eternal Death reflects the 'necrophilia' of modern thought that Jantzen identifies. Moore is fascinated by the potential reformative power of death and it is dedicated its own chapter in *The Apple is Bitten Again* entitled 'Eternal Death: Credo for Adults Only', in which Moore outlines her re-conception of mortality as a philosophy through which humanity will be redeemed.[31] Moore insists that our conception of death must be unbound from the promises of religion and morality. 'All life is brief and uncertain' she states, 'all death is long and without end. These things are, and there is no comfort. No extra-terrestrial concession. No mystical-emotional bargaining'.[32] Moore's assertion is clear: death is an absolute end with no compromise. As a consequence, we must not allow ourselves to be distracted from our finitude with fearful longings for an imagined eternity. Significantly, Moore does not frame this acceptance as a pessimistic turn from an imagined future towards a pointless and limited present. Life does not lose

[29] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p.194.
[30] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 195.
[31] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, pp. 192-207.
[32] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 206.

meaning simply because it gains a full stop. As Heidegger argues in his insistence upon the potential liberation of life lived in a state of 'being-towards-death', Moore similarly asserts that the acceptance of our unavoidable mortality must re-frame our relationship to living in a way that re-invigorates it. The possibility of life must be embraced as the sole counter-balance to the emptiness of death:

> It is the inevitability of death that sharpens out wits; the uncertainty of death that gives us curiosity; the finality of death that gives us rebellion. From these and from this Uncertain Certainty, spring our (brief) greatness, our (momentary) heroic stature: the Arts, our protest; Science, our questioning; Thought, our arrogance; Reason, our godhead. All these man owes to death. To death alone.[33]

Moore is very clear that death that must bring positive meaning and productivity into life. Our inevitable death should inspire affirmative, life-embracing action in the form of philosophy and creation, not a pessimistic despondency. The memory of the 'sacred Yes' of Nietzsche's free spirit is evoked in Moore's credo, reminding us of the potential generated when the 'spirit now wills its own will, the one who had lost the world attains his own world'. Nietzsche's free spirit loses the communal world governed by religion but gains a world ruled by their own self-asserted individualism. Similarly, Moore insists that in embracing Eternal Death the individual is no longer subject to the falsified world of Eternal Life and instead gains possession of their own autonomous potential. Eternal Death is productive, 'For Death is the intensification of life; the answer to all doubt. Because of Death we put forward our finest urge; our silkiest plumage; our most luminous song'.[34] We are able to assert *our* own will and potential by embracing Eternal Death, because we are no longer governed by external principles of thought but by our own mortal selves, our own 'free spirit'.

Moore responds to the assertion that upon God's death 'nothing more remains to which man can cling and by which he can orient himself'. In fact God's death should force

[33] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 195.

us to confront the fallacy of immortality more broadly by accepting the inevitability of our own death. Moore claims that Eternal Death is the only remaining and constant truth by which modernity can re-orient itself. The embrace of Eternal Death brings new structures of meaning and values that can replace those which have been cast aside in the destruction of religious morality. Death can and should, as De Beauvoir claims, *arrange* our relation to life, motivating us to assert our individual will and embrace all living possibility. Moore reminds us 'Before the beginning and after the end man is alone. Each thing struggles separately. Each blade of grass, each man. All he can be certain of at last is that he has made the most of the days which have been given him'.[35] Importantly, Moore outlines very clearly how life must be embraced:

> Life gives us many gifts to counterbalance our brief being, our implacable end. Passion, sudden and intense happiness, vitality, wine, hazard, laughter, the satisfaction of work, Memory which is the subtlety of sensation, and Thought, greatest of all adventures a man may know.[36]

Moore is clear that death must be counterbalanced by abundant vitality in life.[37] Her vision of a successful character also evokes Nietzsche's description of the 'illumination' offered to the 'free spirits' in the wake of god's death: 'Indeed, at hearing the news that "the old god is dead", we philosophers and "free spirits" feel illuminated by a new dawn; our heart overflows with gratitude, amazement, forebodings, expectations – finally the horizon seems clear again'. Moore, like Nietzsche, envisions the approach of a 'new dawn' which must be embraced with happiness, enthusiasm, and vigour. Only in this state of spiritual fullness can the possibilities of life (including the unavoidable presence of death within it) be truly embraced. Equally whilst both describe subtle affective responses ('passion', 'happiness', 'relief' 'amusement'), they also perceive these states as the catalyst for cognitive enhancement. Moore champions a turn to 'Thought, greatest of

[35] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 206.
[36] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 206.
[37] Death reaffirms the relevance of Moore's theory of soul-particles, as the vitality they bring to the body becomes a central component of a life that reaches a state of 'fullness' that appropriately counters the 'emptiness' of death. Again the abundance of the body is seen to enable the abundance of the spirit. A 'healthy', full body enables a 'healthy', full mind.

all adventures' while Nietzsche directly addresses 'We Philosophers', 'whose eye is strong and subtle enough for this spectacle'. With vitality comes a tenacious philosophical clarity.

The 'new dawn' provoked by death provides a moment in which thought can gain true autonomy. The demise of past structures of meaning creates an empty space in which 'we philosophers' must create new modes of understanding. Moore grasps this premise as an opportunity for redemption insisting that 'by lack of faith alone shall man be saved'. She proposes that this philosophical space can and must be filled with two new pillars of wisdom: 'Eternal Death and Reason: twin realities he has spent the lost centuries in evasion and denial'.[38] An intellectual embrace of Eternal Death is the credo by which 'Reason' can be reached. 'Reason' for Moore is the pinnacle of 'Thought', a refinement of wisdom. It lies at the end of a scale of cognitive evolution beginning with 'Arts, our protest; Science, our questioning' before reaching 'Thought, our arrogance; Reason, our godhead', each step a reactionary response to the 'new dawn' of cognition that a re-conception of mortality enables.[39] Moore uses the term 'Reason' very specifically to denote a state of peak cognitive clarity. 'Give him Reason and he will see all things clear, whole, and true' she states, 'Only through Reason shall life break from the confines of dreams and the mystic's drunken embrace'.[40] Moore's definition of Reason does share the ambition of Enlightenment thinking in that it is a call for truth and rationality but she also specifically places reason in opposition to emotion, claiming that the latter is too subjective to be elevated to the height of reasonable thought. But Moore also doesn't completely discount emotion, as it is the antithetical dynamic between the two states that enables the productive conflict of the Dionysian and the Apollonian, an intellectual opposition that lies at the heart of Moore's definition of the creative principle.[41] An affective, emotional response is still valued as an indication of a life lived 'fully', but it is

[38] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 198.
[39] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 195.
[40] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 199.
[41] See Chapter 1 for a more detailed discussion of Moore's conception of the antithetical forces of the Dionysian and Apollonian in relation to her creative philosophy.

deemed to be a 'lower' state of cognition in comparison to the clarity and precision of reason. Moore continues:

> Emotion is the daily bread of life, but as man (erroneously) cannot live by bread alone, Reason is the wine by which life becomes poetry. For (contrary to all literary belief) poetry is not asking the moon what it is doing there. It is telling the moon what and why.
> Emotion that by which we live: Reason that by which we control life. Emotion is all life. Alone Reason is beyond mere life.[42]

Reason is so vital because it is the controlling force by which individuals can assert their own will upon life. It is an intellectual force 'beyond' existence on a higher plain of cognition that prioritises individualism. Reason is thus vital to Moore's creative philosophy, enabling the intellectual self-assertion required of the ascendant creative artist. Within the existential re-assessment that Eternal Death demands, Moore perceives a moment of cognitive potential in which this intellectual reason can be realised. By adjusting the focus on life through the lens of death, Moore wishes to see beyond the fallacies of faith and bring reason into view. The intellectual embrace of death is thus a central component of Moore's creative, existential philosophy because it enables the cognitive individualism required for the perception of reason, the pinnacle of intellect. The creative artist must therefore embrace this philosophical re-conception of death in order to achieve the intellectual redemption of Nietzsche's free spirit and their own consequent heightened creative potential.

4.3. *Da Capo*

However, there is an undeniable contradiction at the heart of Moore's credo. Whilst emphasising the finitude of existence and the absolute conditions of death, Moore also concedes:

[42] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 201.

> Eternal life? But you cannot escape eternal life! You have no choice. That you are alive implies eternity of being. Strike a mindless match and you have cast its breath down the ages to the last flicker of infinitude.[43]

But Moore's definition of Eternal Life does not betray her insistence upon the Eternal Death of the subject and her repudiation of any credo that views eternal life as heavenly salvation. Crucially, Moore's observation of the possibility of Eternal Life relies upon the formal properties of her soul particles. Soul is not a subjective element of consciousness, but is instead only an animating force that mobilises the matter of the body. Upon the death of the individual, the soul particles vacate the body but are not destroyed, instead returning to the atmosphere before being repurposed by another life form. As such, 'life', defined as vitality or as an animating force, is part of an eternal cycle. Thus Eternal Life stands distinct from Moore's theory of Eternal Death, which instead insists upon the mortality of the subjective individuality that makes up our sense of self. The individual will die, but the energy that has given them life will continue eternally, evolving infinitely into new forms of life. It is the Fifth Element that is immortal:

> Only an exchange and ceaseless metamorphosis. Sickly and humbling the thought that we have no new materials; that the distribution varies but not the quality; that we must put back in circulation the same quantity of matter, same quantity of energy, reshaped in myriad forms; the same familiar amount of energy and matter kept eternally in circulation.[44]

The finite subject exists as part of an infinite cycle in which both the matter of the body and the particles of the soul are repeatedly dissembled and re-assembled. Existence is not a spontaneous emergence of original matter that then proceeds to follow a linear temporal trajectory towards an absolute demise. Instead it is a process of continual redistribution, an eternal cycle of 'ceaseless metamorphosis'. Matter and energy are

[43] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 194.
[44] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 186.

eternally becoming, whilst subjectivity is a small moment of synthesis in an interminable sequence.

Moore's theory of eternal life argues existence as structured by a cyclical chronology. Moore asserts, like many others before, that to follow the trajectory of eternity would be to trace a circle. Furthermore, if life is kept 'eternally in circulation' it must by definition periodically return to where it has begun. Arguably, a circle is an endlessly constrictive shape for existence, insisting that it always return to a point of origin. Subsequently, Moore's conception of eternal life again owes much to Nietzsche, in particular his theory of Eternal Recurrence, which also conceives of existence as an infinite cycle in which everything is inevitably repeated. Nietzsche argues that the eternal repetition of life is the 'Greatest Weight' of existence that the individual must confront if he is to transcend his own limitation in a perpetual movement of self-overcoming. In *The Gay Science* he poses:

> What, if some day or night a demon were to sneak after you into your loneliest loneliness and say to you: 'This is life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you, all in the same succession and sequence'.
>
> […]
>
> If this thought gained possession of you, it would change you as you are or perhaps crush you. The question in each and every thing, 'Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?' would lie upon your actions as the greatest weight. Or how well disposed would you have to become to yourself *to crave nothing more fervently* than this ultimate eternal confirmation and seal?[45]

Nietzsche suggests that the acknowledgement of eternal recurrence must force the question 'do you want this again and innumerable times more?' upon the subject,

[45] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 273.

prompting a continual action of turning towards life and its inherent value. The prospect of continual self-reflection in light of eternal recurrence prompts man either to 'curse the demon who spoke this' or embrace this truth as a 'tremendous moment'. Nietzsche argues that eternal recurrence is the 'highest affirmation that is at all attainable'.[46] Those who are able to embrace the endless repetition of life and strive to find life-affirming meaning within it are the 'free spirits' who Nietzsche reveres throughout his work. Moore's philosophical interest in the potential of the 'free spirit' as a template for the creative artist is reflected in her emulation of Nietzsche's conception of the cyclical structures of existence. Her philosophy of eternal life works to replicate Nietzsche's demand that the free spirit must embrace eternity in order to attain complete existential autonomy. Moore's creative philosophy reiterates this Nietzschean preoccupation with the temporal structures of existence and the ascendency of the individual spirit as it progresses through them. The creative spirit must therefore embrace eternity if they are to enact their own progressive intellectual transformation.

In *Beyond Good and Evil,* Nietzsche further expands upon the task of the free spirit in the light of eternal recurrence:

> […] the ideal of the most high-spirited, vital, world affirming individual, who has learned not just to accept and go along with what was and what is, but who wants it again just as it was and is through all eternity, insatiably shouting *da capo* not just to himself but to the whole play and performance, and not just to a performance, but rather, fundamentally, to the one who needs precisely this performance—and makes it necessary: because again and again he needs himself—and makes himself necessary.[47]

The 'world affirming' spirit actively *demands* the return of all that has come before, turning towards life and wilfully embracing the prospect of living every moment

[46] Lawrence Hatab, *Nietzsche's Life Sentence: Coming to Terms with Eternal Recurrence* (Oxford: Routledge, 2004), p. 6.
[47] Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 157.

repeatedly. '*Da capo*' is the rallying cry—*from the beginning*—because 'again and again he needs himself—and makes himself necessary'. An intense eagerness for life and a commitment to understanding its essential meaning propels the philosophically prosperous individual through all eternity. Crucially, the premise of eternal recurrence requires the active embrace of *all* existential conditions. Nietzsche specifies that 'every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you'. Nietzsche argues that the life-affirming individual must eternally receive both the joyful and the painful aspects of life. This commitment to the totality of life's experience is the crux of finding existential meaning within eternal recurrence. Life can only be completely affirmed with the equal acceptance of all oppositional forces, any prioritising of one over the other would in Nietzsche's mind be a form of life denial. In his study of Nietzsche, Lawrence Hatab identifies what he calls the 'agonistic force field' at the centre of Nietzsche's philosophy wherein 'any state is partly constituted by its "contest" with some counter force, its drive to overcome resistances. So world conditions emerge in a network of tensions that cannot be reducible to stable identities'.[48] Nietzsche insists that the individual must not aim to resolve or negate negative or oppositional forces but must utilise the dynamic energy of the conflict that they cause. This embrace of both force and counter force lies at the heart of eternal recurrence, which relies upon the energy of this 'agonistic force field' in its resolution of life-affirmation. Hatab demonstrates how oppositional forces lie at the heart of another of Nietzsche's theories of transcendence, that of the will to power. Whilst the will to power is indeed a means to overcoming and supremacy, Hatab demonstrates that Nietzsche insists that '"the will to power can manifest itself only against resistances; therefore it seeks that which resists it"'.[49] Movements of overcoming can only be achieved within the tension between point and counterpoint and vitally 'if resistance were eliminated, if ones counter power were destroyed or even neutralized by sheer domination, ones power would evaporate, it would no longer be power. Power is overcoming something, not annihilating it'.[50] Eternal recurrence shares this reliance upon oppositional forces as

[48] Hatab, *Nietzsche's Life Sentence*, p. 7.
[49] Hatab, *Nietzsche's Life Sentence*, p.16.
[50] Hatab, *Nietzsche's Life Sentence*, p.16.

sources of transcendent energy. Life affirmation requires the acceptance of the positive alongside the negative, meaning and power is found in the intrinsic dualities of existence. The eternal tension between point and counterpoint, 'every pain and every joy', 'again and innumerable times again', is the source of all meaningful becoming, and all transcendent overcoming.

Moore's creative project relies upon the antagonism of these dynamic tensions as a progressive force. Once again reflecting Nietzschean thought, Moore perceives potential in the oppositional interactions of vitality and mortality, reason and emotion, eternity and impermanence. Her existential philosophy interacts with each of these tensions in turn, relying upon the antagonism between each opposing force to generate a progressive and revolutionary intellectual existence. It is this Nietzschean conception of dynamic antagonism at the heart of Moore's creative philosophy that enables us to turn finally to *Fugue* (1932). Moore uses the novel to explore her conception of the philosophical and physiological structures of existence, using her theory of soul and embodied vitality to demonstrate her conception of the dynamic interrelation between life and death, progress and degeneration, creative ascendency and creative impotency. Her theory of soul enables Moore to quantifiably justify the hierarchy of these binaries, as the quantity of soul particles present in each opposing state confirms its value as a component of the creative project. Life and progress, for example, are correlated by the abundance of soul present in these conditions, whilst death and degeneration are associated by their lack of soul and their consequent detrimental effect on the creative spirit. But as noted, Moore is interested in the interrelation between these opposing states, the potential dynamism created by their antagonism and the consequent attraction or emanation of soul generated by the interaction between the two conditions. In *Fugue*, these oppositional forces are personified through the protagonists, Harrion and Lavinia. The interrelation of these two characters allows Moore to explore the dynamic potential of their antithetical qualities and its relation to creative potential. Lavinia is the personification of the creative spirit because she is the embodiment of vitality, for 'one

felt visibly her abundant life and the bold rhythm of her blood'.[51] She is forceful and strong, embracing the possibility of life and encapsulating the individualism and life-affirming force of the Nietzschean free spirit. Lavinia's vitality finds its direct antithesis in Harrion, of whom we are told 'the anaesthetic of indifference had been administered and under it he had died'.[52] Where Lavinia is an 'ardent participant' in life who is committed to living fully and passionately, Harrion is discouraged, fatalistic, and withdraws from life at any given opportunity. In *Fugue*'s two protagonists, Moore explores the interaction between vitality and death and the impact of each upon the progressive self-affirmation of the creative spirit. Equally, Moore introduces a gendered binary through her personification of these oppositional forces. Significantly, *Fugue* sees Moore's usual gendered hierarchy inverted, as the female character is deemed to be more philosophically and artistically capable because of her abundant vitality whilst the male is withdrawn and limited. With Lavinia cast as the creative spirit, Moore is able to explore whether the abundant vitality of the subject is enough to enable and maintain the ascendant individualism and self-affirmation of the artist. *Fugue* explores whether soul is the element by which woman can transcend her gendered limitation and finally become the creative artist.

At present, only Renee Dickinson has published extended analysis of *Fugue* and her argument focuses primarily upon the significance and textual implications of the novel's title.[53] As Dickinson notes, etymologically 'fugue' hails from the Latin *fugo* meaning 'flight' as well as *fugere* meaning 'to flee'. Additionally, by contemporary definitions the term 'fugue' holds two common meanings. Firstly, a fugue may be a psychological condition, 'a disturbed state of consciousness in which one affected seems to perform acts in full awareness but upon recovery cannot recollect the acts

[51] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 20.
[52] Olive Moore, *Fugue* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1993), p. 30. Subsequent references are to this edition and are given in parentheses.
[53] Renee Dickinson, 'The (R)Evolution of Olive Moore: *Fugue* as Bridge to a New Feminist Awakening', in *Essays on Music and Language in Modernist Literature: Musical Modernism,* ed. by Katherine O'Callaghan (New York: Routledge, 2018) and Renee Dickinson, 'Flights of the Feminine and Textual Orientation in Olive Moore's Fugue' in *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the Modernist Novel: The Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore,* (London: Routledge, 2012).

performed'.[54] Secondly, a fugue may be 'a musical composition in which one or two themes are repeated or imitated by successively entering voices and contrapuntally developed in a continuous interweaving of the voice parts'.[55] Dickinson explores the presence of each of these definitions of 'fugue' within her analysis of Moore's novel concluding that the content and form of the narrative reflect both definitions, concluding that the 'fugue-ing' of the text and its multiple voices 'illustrates the necessary and multiple flights of the modern and especially female, subject.'[56] Dickinson further asserts that the musical fugue-form is reflected in Moore's manipulation of the developing relationship between the two central protagonists Lavinia and Harrion. A musical fugue 'uses imitative counterpoint where the musical theme is developed through reversal, inversion, augmentation, or diminution. More than a round, a fugue expands or plays with the theme in each voice, typically returning to a restatement of the theme'.[57] Protagonists Lavinia and Harrion act as the personification of these interrelating voices, each character developing their own 'themes' independently whilst remaining inextricably linked to a shared point of origin. Lavinia and Harrion are two English writers who have found themselves in a state of physical and social exile in the politically ambiguous region of Alsace. They enact a cycle of separation and reconciliation over a period of years, a process progressively revealed to the reader in a series of fragmented and non-linear narrative episodes. Harrion continually evades Lavinia's efforts of pursuit until finally he escapes (or indeed *flees* as Dickinson notes) to Strasbourg and then to Paris, whilst Lavinia begins a new romantic entanglement, each event in turn signalling the abrupt and inconclusive end of the novel and its respective narrative veins. Dickinson argues that Lavinia and Harrion's relationship and the novel's 'contrapuntal narrative

[54] Dickinson, *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity*, p. 54.
[55] 'Definition of Fugue', https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fugue.
[56] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 112, 'While the narrative of *Fugue*, develops a psychological fugue-ing or splitting of dissociation in the separation of mind and body by the characters, in the separation of geographical bodies, and in the separation of national ideologies, the form of *Fugue,* through its dissolving contrapuntal techniques, reverses the narrative's portrayal of the fugue states of the modern woman by presenting new possibilities for female subjectivity. Through its textual experimentation and resistance to conclusion, the form of *Fugue* provides a textual orientation to the schizophrenic splits of modern female subjectivity, the text operating as he place in which the feminine can be re- or ungrounded and also find articulation and presence' (Dickinson, *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity*, pp. 112-13).
[57] Dickinson, *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity*, p. 112.

techniques' represent the point-counterpoint formal development of the musical fugue. Specifically Dickinson identifies a 'double narrative' through which she claims Moore is specifically emulating the form of a 'double fugue', 'which develops two subjects simultaneously' and in which 'the two themes are never reconciled by returning to a unified restatement of the theme'.[58]

Whilst Dickinson identifies how the fugue-form influences the narrative structure of the novel as a whole, it can also be identified as a guiding force behind the 'staging' of individual scenes. Although not specifically addressed by Dickinson, the opening chapter of the novel aptly demonstrates how Moore utilises the musical fugue-form to influence the movement and interrelation of Harrion and Lavinia.[59] Their voices continually interweave in moments of independent development and moments of emulation through which we perceive the 'reversal, inversion, augmentation, or diminution' of the fugue-form. The movement and language of the opening scene as Lavinia and Harrion chase and withdraw from each other around the village, conjures the image of a fugue's musical notation. It is Harrion who initiates the score when he sneaks out of the village pub leaving Lavinia behind. With this initial flight, he becomes the original subject of the fugue-form, a lone voice. But Harrion knows that he will not remain the sole subject and prepares for the entrance of Lavinia, stating that 'from the moment he had got up from the table, he had known she would pursue' (p. 4). Lavinia's movement as she follows his path into the village, offers the countersubject of the fugue. The countersubject, whist occasionally deviating from the original theme, seeks to reconcile with the original subject through emulation or direct replication. But Harrion's voice begins alone, developing an independent and original theme. We follow him as he continues through

[58] Dickinson, *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity,* p. 112.

[59] Moore was not the first modernist to experiment with musical form, or indeed the fugue-form, as a means to aesthetic experimentation in structuring prose. Academics have reflected upon the similarities between Ezra Pound's *Cantos* and fugue-form, and indeed the influence of the fugue upon the 'Sirens' chapter of Joyce's *Ulysses*. See for example *Literary Modernism and Musical Aesthetics: Pater Pound, Joyce and Stein* by Brad Bucknell (2001) which includes chapters on both Pound's *Cantos* and Joyce's 'Sirens', 'The Fugue of the Sirens in James Joyce's "Ulysses"' by Nadya Zimmerman (2002), and indeed *Essays on Music and Language in Modernist Literature: Musical Modernism* by Katherine O'Callaghan (2018) which includes amongst others 'The (R)evolution of Olive Moore: Fugue as Bridge to a New Feminist Awakening' by Renee Dickinson.

the vineyards and ascends to the top of the bank overlooking the road where he is provoked by the wooden crosses that mark the boundaries of the fields to recollect and berate the impact that Christianity has had upon his life. As subject to the fugue, Harrion's voice is given space to develop intricate and autonomous structures. Lavinia's countersubject is comparatively limited because she is always one step behind. She can only attempt to emulate his movements but cannot access the internal complexities that Moore's prose allows him to develop independently. Moore presents an unbridgeable gap between subject and countersubject, demonstrating how the fugue form of the novel can be read as a suggestive metaphor of the Harrion and Lavinia's relationship. The fugue-form strives for reconciliation, but Moore hints from within the opening passages of the novel that this may remain an unobtainable goal.

Initially however, Harrion and Lavinia's score continues regardless, unaware of its own inevitable structural futility. Harrion insists that Lavinia 'would find him here. She would take the road he had taken with an instinct as sure as though she had placed her nose to the ground. She would stand where he stood now' (p. 4). As countersubject, Lavinia pursues Harrion, intent on reconciliation, echoing his steps perfectly with only the occasional improvisation before re-joining his path once again. This dynamic proceeds accordingly until mid-way through the scene when both subjects momentarily pause. Harrion stops atop a hill where he looks down and watches Lavinia as 'she came as though led to the foot of the slope from which he watched her and stopped dead' (p. 6). This moment of stillness, a pause for breath in which the subject momentarily 'listens' to the conclusion of the countersubject, is broken suddenly as Lavinia looks 'once more down the road, and then with an impatient movement turned on her heel and went back the way she had come' (p. 7). Whilst Harrion may be anticipating the final cadences of the evening, Lavinia denies him this conclusion by swiftly reversing the fugue dynamic and asserting a new theme with herself as the subject. The movement forces Harrion to begin his pursuit of Lavinia as he works to 'overtake her in the village and let her lead him back, obedient to heel, up the steps' (p. 7). His emulation of her path up the steps evokes the image of notes ascending in a composition and Harrion is confirmed as the countersubject of Lavinia's new primary voice. Their paths eventually cross as 'they met in

a side street leading to the bridge' but again Lavinia 'walked past him, her head high. So he hurried after her, feeling he might as well see it through' (p. 7). Lavinia and Harrion's relationship is defined by their continual transition between dutiful echo, resolute self-determination, and irresistible reconciliation. Moore uses the ever-changing dynamic of their contrapuntal interrelation as inspired by the fugue-form to explore the potential dynamism of Lavinia and Harrion's oppositional forces. Their oppositional interactions and the shifting hierarchy of their association is the realisation of Moore's Nietzsche-inspired philosophy that antagonism generates progress.

It is significant that whilst Lavinia concludes the opening scene with a voice that provides subject for Harrion's countersubject, ultimately it is Harrion who primarily establishes the structure of the novel's fugue-form. The opening chapter is focalised through Harrion, making him the primary voice of its fugue-structure and the first to establish an independent movement of flight. This initial action gives him a dominant advantage within the novel's narrative, creating a structure in which he flees, pauses or repeats action (allowing Lavinia to catch up), before fleeing again. As such, Harrion is always in control of the rhythm of the narrative, and the entire performance relies upon his repeated moments of deceleration and concessions to Lavinia's occasional independent movements. Thus whilst there are moments in which the dynamic is changeable or ambiguous, overall, Harrion maintains a role of authority over Lavinia. Significantly, Lavinia first appears to us as Harrion recollects her in a moment in which she appears 'with her back to him' (p. 3), which he takes as an opportunity to slip away unnoticed. Lavinia is not described as facing towards the scene in the pub, she is described as facing away from Harrion, demonstrating how she is always defined primarily by her relation to him. At the height of their relationship, Lavinia's devotion and unyielding submission to his authority consumes and overwhelms her own voice. Lavinia becomes 'pale and used up' (p. 22), 'extinguished' (p. 24), and feels 'unequal and diffused' (p. 25). Harrion is able to move independently and his action remains self-determined whilst Lavinia is defined by his dominance and her overwhelming desire to emulate his inclinations. 'She was all obedience' Moore states of Lavinia, 'she must be waiting for him and he must come to her' (pg. 24). The novel only concludes when

Harrion finally completely extricates himself from Lavinia and their fugal interrelation, escaping first to Strasbourg and finally to Paris. Upon his departure he states that 'Tomorrow he would leave, would walk away, the last human contact would be broken; he would be free' (p. 81). As Dickinson also notes 'Harrion is not simply the counterpoint or inversion of Lavinia. Instead, his narrative strives to develop and move independently from Lavinia's, often working through counterpoint, but ultimately ending up in a very different place'.[60] Lavinia's liberation is only granted when Harrion terminates their dynamic of interrelation and she is no longer able to emulate structures of movement already created by him. She confirms this autonomy when she finally declares that she will 'Let him go!' (p. 107) and no longer wishes to pursue him. Lavinia consciously acknowledges that she no longer exists solely as Harrion's determined echo, but the degree of autonomy and choice in this declaration is arguably contestable. Harrion is already long gone and Lavinia further undermines her claims of autonomy by immediately embarking upon a new romance with fellow expatriate, Sebastian. As such, Moore initially uses the fugue-structure of the novel to reiterate her assertion that women are inferior to men with regards to their ability to enact self-asserted autonomous modes of existence. At the beginning of the novel, Lavinia emulates this gendered limitation, defining herself only in relation to the men that dominate her. Her interrelation with Harrion drains her potential as his definitive influence overwhelms any counter-force she may attempt. Only towards the end of the novel, once Harrion releases her from their fugal antagonism does she articulate any clear sense of true, subjective autonomy, but the success of this remains ambiguous as the novel ends inconclusively. Moore's conception of gender and the creative spirit in *Fugue* is complex and unforgiving. Female potential is repeatedly curtailed or waylaid as Lavinia repeatedly falls short of complete self-assertion in moments of opportunity. Moore uses the novel to interrogate whether Lavinia can retain her womanhood whilst also navigating the antagonistic interrelation between her own innate ascendant forces and the inhibiting forces imposed upon her from external sources. *Fugue* is a narrative that explores the possibility of female redemption and the renunciation of their exclusion from the artistic sphere. It interrogates Lavinia and the plausibility of her capacity to take charge of the fugue-form

[60] Dickinson, *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity*, p. 112.

and sustain its dynamic oppositions in a productive way that would enable her to embody her full potential as a creative spirit.

Initially, Lavinia's redemption seems improbable as the entire novel is imbued with echoes, reflections, and refractions as scenes are doubled and repeated. The effect is that of premonition and anticipation, we are prepared for the events that occur long before they transpire in the narrative and Lavinia seems eternally trapped within this cycle of repetition. Our final encounter with Lavinia and Sebastian occurs moments after they have kissed for the first time, an event that leaves 'Sebastian flushed and extremely annoyed, Miss Reade calm with confidence in the future' (p. 123). Their narrative then abruptly ends and the fate of their relationship remains un-concluded, but Moore has ensured that it seems hard to believe that this time Lavinia will successfully assert herself. In fact, it seems rather likely that things will transpire just as they did with Harrion and after an initial period of adoration, the relationship will fail to successfully overcome irreconcilable differences and unbridgeable gaps of understanding. Furthermore, Lavinia's first meeting with Harrion is echoed in the passage, moments before she begins her new relationship with Sebastian. Both men are attracted to a moment of unselfconscious radiance that suddenly appears on Lavinia's face. Harrion responds when 'It seemed that she smiled and that the words which followed that smile were the articulate expression of its radiance', whilst Sebastian is overcome with desire when 'Miss Reade had looked up at him in rueful admiration. But she could not know the look that lit her face at that moment' (p. 122). Lavinia herself responds to Harrion's advances feeling 'that the worst was over and she was safe' (p.22) and to Sebastian's feeling 'calm with confidence in the future' (p. 123). Significantly, when Lavinia and Harrion finally reunite at the end of the opening scene, Lavinia untruthfully claims to have been looking not for Harrion but for Sebastian. The scene ends as Lavinia and Harrion encounter Sebastian on a bridge in the village where he is 'standing in a heavy trance swaying at the river' (p. 22), the river here again providing a prophetic reflection of Lavinia and Sebastian coming together. The conclusion of the novel therefore causes us to recollect this first scene, like the echo of a melody that has been hinted and repeated throughout a piece of music until it is finally allowed to conclude in the culmination of the piece. Therefore despite

Dickinson's claim that 'the two themes are never reconciled by returning to a unified restatement of the theme', we do in fact, find ourselves concluding the piece as we started it, with Lavinia wilfully giving herself up to a new relationship that has been foreshadowed at the beginning of the novel.[61] Consequently, the narrative fugue successfully completes when Sebastian recovers the structure of its original subject and Lavinia follows suit accordingly. Moore uses the fugal structure of the narrative to imply despite our meanderings, we will return to a preconceived point of origin. Lavinia admits that 'love may become a habit' (p. 64) from which one cannot escape, and thus seems fated to continually impair her potential self-assertion by submitting to relationships that overwhelm her own individualism.

The structure of the fugue is a structure of longing, a longing to be reconciled with an inaugural pattern. This longing emanates from Lavinia and defines her relation to life and to others. Lavinia appears trapped within this cycle of repeating pre-established structures of interrelation and returning to the same established point of origin in which she sacrifices her autonomy. This entrapment may seem limiting and frustrating to the reader, reiterating female subordination and limitation, but Lavinia herself states,

> And goodbye to all regrets and yesterday's mistakes. For now she knew that she would always be as foolish as she was now, even when she was an old woman. For always she would be in the midst of life and feeling. She was not one of life's spectators but an ardent participant. How then regret mistakes, when one could but repeat and repeat them? (p. 107)

At this moment we receive a reflection from another source, a Nietzschean echo, which works to reminds us of the cry of the vital spirit: '*Da Capo!*' (From the beginning!). This, 'the ideal of the most high-spirited, vital, world affirming individual', who 'again and again needs himself and makes himself necessary'.[62] Lavinia wilfully embraces the concept of eternal repetition, actively longing to 'repeat and repeat' all that has come

[61] Dickinson, *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity*, p. 112.
[62] Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 157.

before. Her cyclical narrative mirrors the cycle of continual life affirmation in Nietzsche's conception of eternal recurrence. She longs to continually repeat life in spite of its limitations. Her declaration appears as a conclusive answer to Nietzsche's existential inquiry: 'do you want this again and innumerable times again?'.[63] Her repetitious relationships are an embrace of the 'highest affirmation', that 'every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you'.[64] Additionally, comparisons can be drawn between Lavinia's Nietzschean cycle of affirmation and the fugue-form of the narrative. The significance of the fugue-form is that it *returns* to where it has begun. Its structures echo the cyclical form of Eternal Recurrence, the promise that everything will 'have to return to you'. Equally, the momentum of the fugue relies upon the internal antagonism between subject and countersubject. In turn, this reminds us of Nietzsche's conception of life affirmation as that which must 'manifest itself against resistances' and 'seeks that which resists it'.[65] Consequently both the internal structures of the fugue-form, and the oppositional requirements of Nietzsche's philosophy echo the dependent interrelation of Lavinia's relationships. Lavinia's pursuit of Harrion over the course of the novel demonstrates the continual desire to 'seek that which resists' and her cycle of reconciliation and resistance relies upon the energy of the developing contrapuntal tension between oppositional forces that she seeks to 'repeat and repeat'.[66] The development of eternal structures and cyclical affirmations also reminds us of Moore's conception of Eternal Life. Moore comprehends eternity as a process that embraces its potential, enabling 'ceaseless metamorphosis', 'evolving infinitely'. Equally, the cyclical structure of Lavinia's narrative, the fugue-form, and Eternal Recurrence, all embrace the capacity for eternal opportunity. On the circular path that we follow between our leaving and our reconciling with a point of origin, there is space for infinite possibility. The potential of the cyclical chronology of eternity to produce endless variations is also mirrored in the fugue-form, which 'leaves the extraordinary impression of an infinitely

[63] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 273.
[64] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 273.
[65] Hatab, *Nietzsche's Life Sentence*, p.16.
[66] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 273.

expanding universe'.[67] These internal structures of infinite interrelation mirror Nietzsche's existential structures of becoming in the process of Eternal Recurrence. Thus, from a Nietzschean perspective, *Fugue's* fugue-form echoes the natural rhythm of eternity, and Lavinia is the vital, life-affirming spirit that emulates this rhythm and its ascendant path. It is for this reason that Lavinia must be approached as a protagonist with the potential to enact the transformative individualism required of the creative artist. Her emulation of Nietzschean structures of existence and philosophical self-affirmation must be read as a template for her revolutionary re-valuation of female artistic capacity. Moore suggests that if Lavinia can articulate her full potential as a Nietzschean free spirit, in spite of her gendered limitation, then women have found a potential route of redemption towards becoming the ascendant creative artist.

4.4. Harrion

In direct contrast to Lavinia, Moore uses Harrion to demonstrate the conditions that oppose the subjective transformation of the creative artist. Despite his gender, Harrion is limited and unproductive, exemplifying the conditions through which the creative spirit can be destroyed. His narrative movement is shaped by his constant retreats from Lavinia and the ardent life force that she represents. It is Lavinia's pregnancy—the literal embodiment of her abundant, productive vitality—that provokes Harrion's first escape.[68] Harrion reflects that 'neither her foolhardiness nor her child was of interest to him. From a height he looked down and saw her and was neither interested nor angry not amused. The anaesthetic of indifference had been administered, it seemed, and under it he had died. So she glowed, she burned about him, announcing her bringing of new birth, yet

[67] Margot Singer describes how Bach's *The Art of the Fugue* 'displays a contrapuntal sophistication never seen before or since. Mirror canons, crab canons, augmentation and diminutions canons, canons at every interval, canonic fugues, double, triple, and quadruple fugues: *The Art of Fugue* contains them all, each "contrapunctus" a variation of one central D-minor theme. For the pianist Glenn Gould, the piece calls up "an endless range of gray tints…It leaves the extraordinary impression of an infinitely expanding universe."' (Margot Singer, 'Can a Novel Be a Fugue?', *Paris Review*, 31 July 2017).

[68] Moore's linking of Lavinia's reproductive fecundity and the vital spirit's embrace of repetition, productivity, and vitality will be explored later in this chapter.

could not warm him back to life' (p. 8). Moore's prose purposefully emphasises the contrast between Lavinia's abundance (burning and passionate) and Harrion's comparative deficiency (cold and detached). His 'indifference' and disconnection from Lavinia's vital, productive energy is depicted as a fatal withdrawal. Throughout the novel, where Lavinia is associated with abundance and vitality, Harrion is aligned with death and atrophy. Even his name and its evocation of carrion builds upon this association. Moore makes it clear that his indifference and its resultant dulling of sensation and seeping apathy are tantamount to a state of living death. Harrion consciously resigns himself to this deathliness in a form of psychological suicide:

> He who had lived so long among dead things and dead people was now one with them. He too shared their dead life: but knew his deadness. He was not, as they, spines upholding flesh, indifferent to all but their surrounding and immediate needs. An indifference of the will; a coldness of the mind. In detachment absolute he looked about him and knew himself dead among the dead. They, the other dead, believed themselves alive. They found in the movement of an arm or leg a proof of life. But he knew otherwise. Never again was he to need the wine of love or comradeship to make life palatable. But knew that only illness or sudden death could alter that which he was now; and that then this husk-like self would cease to be (p. 9).

Harrion perceives a social epidemic of living death, contaminating swathes of the modern population. He clearly articulates the futile mindlessness of society, people existing solely as 'spines upholding flesh', and yet instead of actively renouncing it he willingly sinks into its deadly embrace. The 'indifference of will' and 'coldness of mind' symptomatic of this social limitation specifically contrasts the wilful and visionary force of Moore's creative spirit. Thus, Harrion has submitted himself to the fate of the masses, the herd mentality that Moore defines as 'an unawareness; a moving in shoals; apart; indifference upon indifference. Here all that is angry, or aware, or warm-blooded, or questioning, is a

betrayal of the mass instinct of a people'.[69] Moore's consistent denigration of society and its limitation is here articulated as a widespread cultural death that denies any individualism or progressiveness. In his yielding to indifference, Harrion becomes its latest victim. Lavinia eventually notes 'how cold, how dead he was in the sudden unapproachable indifference which he seemed to have spun about him in an aura of decay' (p. 23). Thus where Lavinia represents the life, vitality, and independent spirit of the artist, Harrion is consigned to represent the deathly indifference of the stagnant masses and their relationship acts as metaphor for the conflict between these two opposing entities. Harrion's draining influence upon Lavinia's vitality demonstrates the threat that mass thinking poses for the individualism and intellectual progressivism of the artist, another very Nietzschean piece of imagery that Moore uses to reiterate the importance of self-asserted subjectivity for the creative spirit.

Under this 'anaesthetic of indifference', Harrion is described a 'husk' and 'released from the shell of himself' (p. 9). Moore's terminology implies that his state of living death has caused a physical emptiness, an embodied absence. Here, Moore's theory of 'soul' as the life-giving element becomes a useful tool in articulating Harrion's condition. Moore insists upon a link between the quantity of soul particles that a body is able to attract and its subsequent vitality. The less 'soul' a body attracts and conducts (via the blood), the closer its proximity to death. As a consequence, Harrion's 'husk' like existence is indicative of his deathly state. His indifference has caused him to emit 'soul', a continual emission of vitality that progressively diminishes his ability to attract 'soul' in a self-perpetuating cycle of receding life force. By contrast, Lavinia's abundant vitality determines her ability to both attract and conduct a great quantity of soul particles. Upon their initial meeting, Harrion is roused from his detachment by Lavinia because 'one felt visibly her abundant life and the bold rhythm of her blood'. [70]In her movements, in her

[69] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again,* p. 165.

[70] Renee Dickinson interprets Lavinia's body as demonstrative of the female abject, stating 'The repetition of "blood" and the description of that blood as "infectious" associates Lavinia with the abject as physically expelling as well as contagious and threatening. This threat stems directly from Lavinia's femaleness, the blood of the passage connoting menses as well as her pulse and courage' (Dickinson, *Female Embodiment and Subjectivity*, pp. 250-51). Dickinson asserts that Harrion is fleeing the feminine abject, but I would argue that their opposing embodiment of 'soul'

words, in that long independent neck, in her silence, one felt the bold rhythm of her heartbeats' (p. 20). Lavinia's plentiful life force is tangibly embodied and the 'bold rhythm' of her blood and heartbeats directly echoes Moore's insistence that 'the iron in the blood might—should—must—conduct and attract soul'.[71] Significantly, Harrion is specifically attracted to the 'rhythm of her heartbeats, which now seemed to him so urgent in their invitation' (p. 22). In his own state of deprivation, Harrion finds Lavinia's abundance an inviting novelty. He is drawn to her body because he interprets its plentiful energy as denoting a sexuality that is both generous and irrepressible. 'It excited him strangely that she had had lovers' Moore states, '[…] and that with it all she was gay and untouched as a virgin' (p. 22). Harrion's interprets Lavinia as a fantasy of femininity. Her body is a plentiful and inviting resource that he perceives as being sexually attainable whilst retaining the 'untouched' integrity of innocence. Lavinia's ample embodiment of life is preserved, ready to be claimed by Harrion who now longs to possess her, because of her tangible vitality. Lavinia's life force is immediately defined as an indicator of sexuality and is interpreted by men as something for them to claim and consume for their own benefit. Lavinia experiences this parasitic dynamic as a deathly and debilitating act of possession. We are told that during her relationship with Harrion, he 'consumed her' (p. 23) and 'drained her' (p. 23), left her feeling 'lost and impaled' (p. 23) with only 'this rapt and consuming fire of his which slowly and relentlessly extinguished hers' (p. 26). The depletion that Lavinia suffers at the hands of Harrion culminates when 'the ebb and flow of her blood was not so swift and careless. Nor was the rhythm of her heartbeats so bold' (p. 24). Moore implies that Harrion's deathliness progressively drains Lavinia's vitality, ultimately compromising her abundant soul. Moore presents an inescapable gendered dynamic of superiority and inferiority between Harrion and Lavinia. It is Lavinia's womanhood that leaves her vulnerable to the loss of her own vitality, for Harrion longs to claim and possess it. Femininity is depicted as threatening to the vital integrity of the creative spirit and Lavinia's gendered weaknesses seem at this moment, irredeemable.

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as defined by Moore's theory of soul particles is a more pertinent factor in the hierarchy of their interrelation and prompts a positive interpretation of Moore's description of the 'bold rhythm of her blood'.

[71] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 182.

The deathly antagonism between society and artist is further articulated within the symbolic parasitic dynamic between Harrion and Lavinia. The relationship, described for Lavinia as a 'dance with death' (p. 26), demonstrates the physical, tangible danger that the 'empty' pose for the 'full'. Ultimately Moore asserts that the living dead weaken the creative vital spirit. We are told that at the peak of their relationship, Lavinia attempts to write several stories but finds that they are 'unequal, diffused' because she feels herself to be 'dying piecemeal from a pernicious mental anaemia' (p. 26). The quality of her creative output is diluted because of the 'mental anaemia' she suffers as a result of Harrion's vampiric siphoning of her energy. Contrastingly at the end of the narrative, Lavinia's final vow to release herself from Harrion and reclaim her identity as the vital, creative spirit—'Let him go!'—is in fact 'cried' by 'Lavinia's quickened pulse' (p. 107). Her re-animated pulse restores her autonomy and enables Lavinia to once more embody the 'secret of the artist: intensity' (p. 108). 'She knew this must always be', she continues for 'Where there was no intensity there was no enthusiasm, and where there was no enthusiasm there was deadness and decay. For intensity was life. And life she had abundantly' (p. 107). Lavinia's assertion seems to directly contrast herself and Harrion. Lack of 'intensity' and 'enthusiasm' (or indeed, indifference) is directly correlated with 'deadness', whereas Lavinia's artistic intensity is definitively an abundance of 'life'. The creative artist must retain this intensity and vitality, indeed must make sure the integrity of their abundant soul remains untainted by the deathly embrace of the lifeless masses. Lavinia is at her most powerful when she most fully embodies the creative spirit in self-contained in isolation, thus enabling a state of ascendant individualism.

Comparatively, Harrion's characterisation is unsettling because he actively submits himself to the deathly unthinking masses. Despite the 'anaesthetic of indifference' he remains just conscious enough to perceive and articulate his own destruction. Thus through his voice, Moore is able to demonstrate why he has found himself in such a futile state of despondence. Primarily, Harrion's resignation is prompted by an overwhelming grief that overshadows his existence. In retrospective, fragmentary accounts, it is revealed that Harrion has previously been married and has had two children. His

daughter Selina is depicted as Harrion's greatest love, who tragically died very young having been hit by a truck. His adoration of Selina is depicted as an overwhelming and self-sacrificing transference of energy. Moore's depiction of the relationship between Harrion and Selina directly demonstrates her definition of love as 'a desire to give oneself, or possess, or belong to, another. You willingly disembody your spirit. The self in detaching itself creates an emptiness or semi-emptiness, struggling to give or possess'.[72] Love becomes a force that prompts the disembodiment of spirit, or indeed, the transmission of soul or vitality from oneself to another. As a result of his love for Selina, Harrion embodies this 'emptiness' and any vitality or potential is transferred. However, this self-sacrificing love is not depicted negatively because it enables Selina to inherit an abundant life force. Before her death, she is the personification of spirited, youthful innocence and she 'danced away in front of him ringing like a little bell. This was always his impression of her, that she rang out her own effortless joy as she danced across rooms and pavements' (p. 14). Harrion justifies his self-sacrificing love because 'those sharp eager facets of his soul which time had ground down and experience dulled, shone from her with the poignant gleam of innocence. The best in him, it seemed, though dead was not to die. Nor must it die in her' (p. 14). Selina inherits 'the best' of Harrion, which in him has become 'dulled' with time but in her 'shone' with the 'gleam of innocence'. His only burden from this process is the resultant limitation of this 'self-sacrifice' which impedes Harrion's capacity to enact the self-assertion and individualism of the creative spirit. Moore asserts that vitality is a heritable and transmittable force, and again insists that is best put to use in a youthful, active body where it can be most productive. For Harrion, fatherhood prompts the detachment of the self, an act of willing self-sacrifice, in order to secure the productive, vital future of the next generation. Moore's conception of vitality as a transferable and quantifiable quality once again holds clear eugenic implications. Vitality is used as means to asserting the greater value of some bodies in comparison to others. Youth and exuberance are deemed to be traits that surpass the value of the old and the weak and thus should be actively cultivated at the expense of these others. But Selina's death interrupts this process of advancement and means that Harrion is both empty and bereft of his scion of vitality. Articulating his fate upon Selina's

[72] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 186.

death, Harrion laments, 'How frail this thing on which his life had hung!' (p. 15) and 'all things that fade, are not renewed; grow dim, are not replaced; and life once good to live has lost its savour' (p. 16). Selina's death is the death of all that was left of Harrion, all his vitality has been irreversibly lost and he remains 'emptied' of spirit and consigned to a state of non-existence, 'dead among the dead' (p. 9).

Selina's symbolic function within the text is multi-faceted and she represents a multitude of significant thematic concerns. Primarily, she has a strong significance within the context of Nietzschean philosophy and she extends Moore's experimentation with Nietzschean thought as metaphor and symbol. At the end of the narrative, Harrion reflects:

> Who can explain why a child falling under a lorry can make of a lifetime a matter of hours half lived? Perhaps because a child is an innocent untroubled little thing, symbol of some lost state of grace. There is no harsh edge to its voice; no memories in its laughter; and to the touch it is as though one put an arm through a branch of apple blossom. Perhaps because a child is oneself reborn, and one will take greater care of this second more precious self; this other chance one dared not hope one had deserved (pp. 80-81).

Moore's language once again evokes a Nietzschean metaphor. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche presents the path of spirit metamorphosis for the vital being progressing from the camel, to the lion, and finally to the child. For Nietzsche, the child is representative of the pure, joyful affirmation of the vital spirit, untarnished by experience and cognitive limitation. 'Innocence is the child, and forgetfulness, a new beginning, a game, a self propelling wheel, a first movement, a holy Yes for the game of creating, my brothers, there is needed a holy Yes unto life: The spirit now wills its own will'. Selina's 'innocence', with 'no memories', and her figuration as Harrion's self 'reborn', align her to Nietzsche's vision of the child of spirit metamorphosis, the child of new beginnings, and perpetual, unburdened creation. Through Selina, Harrion is ensured a legacy that surpasses all that he could ever achieve. Selina can exceed all his limitations, all his

failings and ensure spiritual ascendancy. But of course with her death, the cycle of spirit metamorphosis is suspended and is no longer a progressive force. Harrion's deathly indifference is as a result of this cessation of hopefulness and spiritual potential. He is doomed to an existence of 'hours half lived', a partial existence in which he can never regain his lost vitality. This irretrievable potential is why Harrion, despite his gender, cannot articulate the ascendant individualism of the creative artist. Whilst Moore usually depicts the male artist as a superior spirit, capable of greater progressivism and self-assertion than the female artist, Harrion's characterisation sees her invert this binary hierarchy and explore the consequent ramifications.

Harrion's attraction to Lavinia is an attempt at a spiritual salvation, an attempt to replace the life that he has sacrificed for Selina and overcome his limitation. Lavinia's embodied vitality appears to him as an offering of replenishment that could work to counter-balance his own deprivation and the loss of his daughter. Thus it is significant that the two are repeatedly linked in his perception as Lavinia echoes the impression of Selina. Harrion's first conception of Lavinia directly mirrors his aspirations for Selina before she dies. Of Lavinia he states that: 'unaware of it herself she gave an instant impression of courage, even of foolhardiness' (p.21). Equally, for Selina he decides that 'He wanted her courageous; he wanted her brave, even foolhardy. He wanted her generous' (p.14). Additionally he adds that

> He wanted her to give whole-heartedly of herself, her thoughts, her days. He wanted her to love; to love completely and irrationally. And give herself: when the urge came to her she must give herself, without thought, without regret. […] For she must be brave and the life within her must not die but glow more proudly (pp. 14-15).

Harrion's aspirations for Selina echo Lavinia's final affirmation in which she declares that despite the fact that she was 'not fortunate in her love affairs' it did not matter because 'she would be in the midst of life and feeling. She was not one of life's spectators, but its ardent participant. How then regret mistakes, when one could but repeat and repeat

them?' (p. 108). The remarkable similarities between Lavinia and Selina urges that both must be read as the personification of Nietzsche's wilful, vital spirit, the pinnacle of the spirit transformed. Both are courageous, unrelenting, and open to experience life again and again 'without regret'. All that matters, Lavinia claims, is 'Now', 'and that was the sum-total of all happiness. That was the secret of intensity, of life, of eternal youth' (p. 108). Harrion is attracted to Lavinia because he perceives in her the exuberant vitality that he has only ever before experienced within his daughter. Their relationship is Harrion's last, ineffectual grasp at life as he tries to amend the emptiness and lack of futurity that Selina's death has caused him.

Additionally, Selina's death itself is symbolically significant as a metaphor for a turbulent and fractured modernity. Alongside her relation to Harrion and his emptiness, Selina represents the death of innocence, hope, and a certain future. The image of her being killed by a lorry, a mechanised, modern machine, is an image of a confrontational and destructive modernity. That her death is the catalyst for Harrion's defeated decent into the stagnant masses of humanity establishes a suggestive metaphor for the modern condition. The loss of hope, prompted by the cataclysmic collision of modernity and a past state of innocence, causes the onset of a mindless, empty indifference. Furthermore, the name Selina is an English variant of the Latin '*caelum*' meaning 'heaven'. This celestial name suggestively instigates her figuration as symbol of heavenly salvation. Her death is consequently an image of the destruction of divine redemption in modern society and is a metaphor for the modern ontological crisis. Harrion's response is symbolic of a modern society in turmoil. Nietzsche states in *Twilight of the Idols*:

> Christianity is a system, a whole view of things thought out together. By breaking one main concept out of it, the faith in God, one breaks the whole: nothing necessary remains in one's hands. Christianity presupposes that man does not know, cannot know, what is good for him, what evil: he believes in God, who

> alone knows it…it has truth only if God is the truth—it stands and falls with faith in God.[73]

Harrion's grief is symptomatic of this modern existential crisis. The destruction and fragmentation of all that he has known, as symbolised by Selina's death, results that 'nothing necessary remains'. His life has lost all meaning and only uncertainty and emptiness have taken its place. According to Nietzsche, this is the moment in which a 'new dawn' can be created by the free spirits who are able to create new systems of meaning. As identified, Moore articulates this stance through Lavinia, who once freed from Harrion's anchorage, is able to express and pursue this metaphysical redemption. By rejecting eternal life in favour of the embrace of eternal death, Lavinia is able to find meaning and affirmation in existence. Yet Harrion's lack of vitality means he is unable to find new meaning and instead falls into a paralysing existential crisis. We are told of Harrion that 'once he, too, had believed in an after-life' but now his greatest fear is that:

> Suppose one does not die? Suppose there is another life? Suppose they disturb one still and make ones spirit do idle and unprofitable things? Or make one's bloodless body spin through space? (O how d'you do, Mrs Odle-Heming? You spinning through space also? How pleasant is it not, spinning thus through other lives, for ever better, for ever higher?)
> Then release is but a longer hell; then peace can never be; then is Death itself the final mockery: the savage jest of a vicious child (p. 9).

Harrion can only conceive of eternal life as eternal pointlessness. Death is the 'final mockery' because it potentially can only prolong his suffering by extending his existence in this state or another. An afterlife without the promise of eternal salvation is an eternity without meaning, 'spinning' endlessly through time. Horrified by this thought, Harrion pleads for an alternative:

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[73] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols with The Antichrist and Ecce Homo*, trans. by Antony M. Ludovici (Ware: Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2007), p. 50.

> Then why not fade away? Why not dissolve at last into perpetual astral movement and fade away through the ceiling carrying upward one's little lies and one's little goodnesses and one's tea-cup? A sudden thinning and transparence of flesh: a slow dissolving and elongation on the air. An exit neat and sanitary and decorous. No funeral, no tears, no box, no decomposition, no flowers (p. 9).

The self must perhaps just simply dissipate, Harrion suggests. After a meaningless existence, why would we long for anything more than a simple, abrupt dissolution of consciousness? Harrion is unable to construct any meaning in the space of absence that now confronts humanity and so onwards his futility goes, unable to find or articulate an affirmation or an existential value. All he can fathom is a tepid attempt at self-reassurance, and 'He smiled. For he was safe; borne away on the cold and fathomless sea of indifference which does not give up its dead' (p. 10). Harrion wilfully embraces the 'anaesthetic of indifference' as it enables him to deny the absence of meaning in his existence. As such, Harrion represents Nietzsche's greatest fear, that human nature would not embrace the 'new dawn' as an opportunity for life-affirming revolution, but would instead adopt a state of philosophical nihilism. This existential pessimism, dubbed the 'will to nothingness' is personified in *Fugue* through Harrion.[74] His life denial stands in direct opposition to Lavinia's life affirmation and represents the crisis of modernity.

In the preface of *The Will to Power: An Attempt at the Revaluation of all Values*, Nietzsche begins 'of what is great one must either be silent or speak with greatness. With greatness—that means cynically and with innocence'.[75] Nietzsche then goes on to consider the potential value of nihilism as means to this state of greatness, as he predicts:

> For some time now, our whole European culture has been moving with a tortured tension that is growing from decade to decade, as toward a catastrophe:

[74] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. by Walter Kaufman (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), pp. 437-600
[75] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. by Walter Kaufman and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, 1968), p.1.

> restlessly, violently, headlong, like a river that wants to reach the end, that no longer reflects, that is afraid to reflect.[76]

In response to this oncoming existential catastrophe, prompted by the death of god, and ending in a cowed and 'unreflective' society, Nietzsche champions an 'advent of nihilism'. Nietzsche asserts that nihilism could be figured as an ideological 'tabula rasa' enabling an unfettered period of reflection. It is a state that is paradoxically able to combine both the primacy and instinctiveness of innocence with the analytical cynicism of experience. He longs for the saviour, 'who looks back when relating what will come; as the first perfect nihilist of Europe'.[77] Harrion's state of indifference is reflective of this Nietzschean 'perfect' nihilism that facilitates a mechanism of existential valuation in the remnants of humanity's ontological detritus. Harrion himself reflects after Selina's death, that 'After the perfect love would come the perfect indifference' (p. 30). It is because of Harrion's status as a potentially redemptive figure that we are given a great deal of biographical detail of his life prior to his present existence with Lavinia. Moore describes how as a young man, he secured his reputation as a writer with the publication of a collection of essays on Christianity. Having met and married his wife, he became a journalist, providing 'jingo leader-writing' for the *Daily Flare,* before accepting the editorship of a 'new popular-cum-literary weekly', *Book-o-the-Week*. At a literary party he meets Lavinia, who is also a journalist, and offers her a position at the newspaper when they begin their relationship.[78] Each of these stages of his life offer him an opportunity to confront and

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[76] Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, p. 1.
[77] Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, p. 1.
[78] The biography of Paul Harrion is almost identical to that of newspaper editor and writer Sidney Dark (1872-1947). Dark worked as a journalist throughout the opening decades of the twentieth century for the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* and was sent to France in the aftermath of the First World War where he reported on the Paris Peace Congress. From 1919 to 1924 Dark was joint editor of literary publication *John O'London's Weekly* and became editor of the *Church Times* in 1924. He published over thirty books on a range of topics from Christianity to literature as well as biographies and novels (Natalie K. Watson, 'Sidney Ernest Dark', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2003, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-55625>). Harrion works for the *Daily Flare* and 'later he attended several Peace Conferences, and came back to find the editorship of a new popular-cum-literary weekly *Book-o-the-Week* abegging' (p. 18). '*Book-o-the-Week'* Moore continues, 'is one of those entertaining and popular weeklies devoted to literature and the idiosyncrasies of the literati, ancient and

reject the senseless and unproductive structures of meaning that society has attempted to use to solve the existential crisis of the secularisation of modernity. Even after denouncing religious ideology, Moore demonstrates that society in the early twentieth century simply replaces these theological constrictions with different constrictive frameworks of meaning. Society has not progressed, it has simply formulated different affectations for its restriction.

Thus Harrion's life, as he negotiates marriage, religion, politics, media, and the 'literati', is a continual process of existential inquiry, his indifference enabling him to reflect dispassionately and search for true meaning beyond societal institutions. Harrion's early conception of religious faith is formulated on a romantic conception of finding the divine in nature, articulated in an early experience of 'one of those April mornings so fresh, so green, so undiscovered, that one would not be surprised to find oneself covered in grass or patched with cloud or hung about with sky, so part of it one feels. So ardent, so deathless, so purposeful it seems, to be part of the earth's slow stirring to life' (p. 11). The religious is defined in the discovery of a sensation of the spiritual within the natural world, the eternal, and the pure. This connection with a divine provenience remains with Harrion throughout his life, and is associated with all that is good and pure. Of Selina he states that 'through her that April morning lived again' and his love for her was like 'embracing grass' (p. 35). This sense of the divine is associated with love and abundance, it is significantly 'deathless' and 'purposeful' like a vital force. Yet, 'Having found God in a blade of grass and in the babbling brook and early dew and in other such gentle manifestations of Nature', societal pressure implores Harrion to concede that he has instead 'recently found God in a book of essays which sold 10,000 copies' (p. 11). The

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modern' (p. 18), arguably making it a direct parody of *John O'London's Weekly*. Olive Moore worked as a columnist at *John O'London's Weekly* whilst Sidney Dark was editor. It consequently seems likely that Harrion is indeed somewhat based upon her experiences with Dark, and that Lavinia—the young, talented journalist in a tumultuous relationship with her editor—may well be something of a self-portrait. Significantly, under Dark's editorship *John O'London's Weekly* ran a series of essays by writer and historian Janko Lavrin under the title 'Nietzsche Revisited', addressing Nietzschean thought in the context of the modern age. Furthermore, in an edition published on 13th January 1923, Sidney Dark himself wrote a piece entitled 'Who Was Nietzsche, What Was He?' (Sidney Dark, 'Who Was Nietzsche, What Was He?', *John O London's Weekly*, 13 January 1923, p. 524).

value of his religion is placed solely in its guaranteed 'steady sale at each hallowed approach of Christmastide and Lent' (p. 11). Equally his marriage, which he thought would be 'lavish and beautiful' in reality is concluded to be 'dull and conventional and ashamed'. Of his wife, Frances, he states that 'She repelled him by a dutiful submission more suited to a prayer meeting than a marriage bed' before concluding that 'An autopsy on a wife, Harrion had once thought […] would reveal a dusting brush, a bright array of polished taps, a clock or two admirably precise: the whole culminating in a heart shaped box of plain English walnut, or inlaid Sheraton, or a slab cut from the Dutch dresser on which how many housemaids had polished off their youth' (p. 13). The pure, innocent expectation of love and generosity with which Harrion approaches both religion and marriage is dashed by his realisation of how bourgeois sentiment and modern convention has left both limited and corrupted. Religion is depicted as a force for control and restriction. The promise of salvation is used as a tool to exploit the masses and the priority is to monetize the divine teachings. Equally marriage is shown to be a fraudulent guise for 'dull' formality and joy-less union. Frances's priority is to display their wealth and their conformity to expectation of the bourgeois middle-classes and Harrion feels deceived.

Of the war he reflects in horror upon the false value and reassurance found by society in his 'jingo leader-writing' at the newspaper. Harrion is able to clearly see the role that the over-zealous patriotism of his writing has in his reader's justification of the mass-slaughter of thousands of British soldiers. Equally, he laments the willingness with which these young men sacrifice themselves to an unworthy and futile cause:

> The collective and incredible heroism of the men who fought: went out in the full throated ardour of belief, went out again in good-humoured disillusionment, was a dimension of the human soul which neither words nor tears could reach or compass. But the, I have given: I have lost: we are giving: we have lost, he saw for what it was. Saw also the dreary record of one mistake after another repeated with the same bravura, the same self-satisfaction, the same shouts, the same bloodshed, the same pomposity; and with a clear sense of what he was doing

> continued daily to renew the hope and courage of those who sat secure above their toast and marmalade (p. 17).

The war demonstrates the depth of the futility and absurdity that has contaminated humanity. A false sense of commonality and the unquestioned adherence to a 'greater good' as dictated by a higher power, demonstrates how the same limited mentality that once followed religion, now follows a destructive, political ideology. The encouragement of mass thinking—not 'I', but 'we'—enables the blind acceptance of a shared cause. Whilst the young are sent out to blindly repeat mistakes, the privileged few are able to validate the bloodshed. Moore's depiction of war in *Fugue* is consistent with her strictly anti-war statements throughout her work. In *The Apple is Bitten Again* she states:

> In war there is no innocent victim. Each one of us participates. The innocent victim, the self righteous civilian, patriotic wife, elderly man, thoughtless child, send armies to their death as ruthlessly as the politicians who begin the slaughter and the armaments firms who profit by it.[79]

For Moore, war is the epitome of humanity's ignorance and blind limitation. Its justifications are cowardly and unthinking, and further prove the absolute meaninglessness of society and epitomize the destructive fallout of its ontological crisis. Moore concludes:

> Reflect also that man has fallen so far from grace that though one half of him goes out to die and be maimed, the other half is concerned with how safely it can sleep in its bed and pursue uninterrupted its daily life. Reflect that when the next war comes, they still want to live. Their hearts are to be strong to bear the heroic reports of death and sacrifice, but not strong enough to break at the folly and desolation.[80]

[79] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 34.
[80] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 36.

Moore is against war as it epitomizes the absolute limitation of humanity. It forces energy into a stagnant and pointless cause and it distracts the masses from any actual articulation of individuality. At best, Harrion's journalism promotes dull nationalistic conventionalism; at worst it is complicit in the widespread destruction of human life under the guise of futile and cowardly naïve patriotism.

Harrion's function as *Fugue's* perfect nihilist is clear in the way in which his perfect indifference enables a philosophical lucidity that surpasses that of anyone else. Harrion stands apart in his ability to clearly perceive the corruption of mankind. 'Indifference' Harrion reflects, 'is the realists drug. It does not obscure, it clarifies. It sets in *relief* and one is borne above and beyond the limits of its bleak mediocrity to chill distances from whence there is no return' (p. 81). Harrion is elevated above society and is thus able to reflect upon the modern condition from a 'chill distance', an uncorrupted and objective place of reflection. He also displays the necessary isolation of Nietzsche's redemptive nihilist, 'a philosopher and solitary by instinct, who has found his advantage in standing aside and outside'. As Harrion flees from Lavinia for the final time he rejoices that 'To-morrow he would leave, would walk away, the last human contact would be broken; he would be free' (p. 81). As he reaches the peak of his indifference, the clarity of his perception and his ability to discern existential value is at its height. 'He could no longer look at his fellow-men, but could look only through and beyond them' he states,

> It was as though when he looked flesh and blood fell away and he saw a scaffolding of bone, the outline of a skull. In an awful alertness of perception, suspended, apart, he saw the decay in all living matter, the long decomposition above ground which is called life; its fascination, its futility. It pleased him to find that in a walk he could hear the skeleton's dragging of its joints. The child who had crept up to stare at him, and stumbled away as a small heap of bones dancing on strings, crookedly unsure of its legs (p. 81).

All that is left of corrupted humanity is barren, decaying and desolate. The skeletal remains lack substance, are bereft of any essential matter or meaning, are vitally

impaired. Harrion has searched for meaning but is left only with bones. Humanity has corrupted existence and destroyed the vital matter of life. In his perfect indifference, Harrion is able to recognise the circumstance, but is himself too contaminated, too empty of vitality to articulate a solution. Instead he sinks into his fate, indifferent, apathetic, and willing to accept that humanity has failed, and that he must die with it. Yet unbeknownst to him, Harrion provides a source of Nietzschean redemption. Nietzsche concludes of the perfect nihilist that:

> In this formulation a countermovement finds expression, regarding both principle and task; a movement that in some future will take the place of this perfect nihilism—but presupposes it, logically and psychologically, and certainly can come only after and out of it. For why has the advent of nihilism become *necessary*? Because the values we have had hitherto thus draw their final consequence; because nihilism represents the ultimate logical conclusion of our great values and ideals—because we must experience nihilism before we can find out what these "values" really had. —We require, sometime, *new values*.[81]

Harrion's nihilistic state provokes a 'countermovement', that 'in some future will take the place of this perfect nihilism' and in this sense the point/counterpoint tension between Harrion and Lavinia can be figured as productive.[82] Their continual opposition means that where Harrion represents nihilism and pessimism, Lavinia represents faith and optimism. Moore reflects the Nietzschean principle that the corruption of humanity can only be redeemed by the creation of *new* values, and we must conceive of nothingness and perceive absolute meaninglessness, before new values can be created. Lavinia, as the vital, creative spirit, can only achieve true progress as a force that counters, and comes after, Harrion's nothingness. It is through Harrion's nihilism that opportunity is created for Lavinia's vital possibility, because where Harrion is limited, Lavinia is abundant. Indeed, as Harrion concludes that his responsibility is done and he will forever absent himself from humanity, we are told that 'As though to distract him, a stream crossing the field

[81] Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, p. 1.
[82] Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, p. 1.

with the small rustle of a silk petticoat quickened its step' (p. 82). Subsequently, his thoughts suddenly turn to the nature that surrounds him. He looks out across a nearby meadow and is immediately struck:

> What a weaving, a meadow! How lavish a texture of untroubled hours. What a mirror of that brief moment in which one grows self-absorbed as a field in flower. All the sights and sounds of childhood, when staring in a pond is more than a wizard's staring in space, and the water-spider's giant stride, and the water-beetle's metallic gleam. A meadow is one's first innocence. A meadow is a childhood's memory (p. 82).

As Harrion resigns himself from life, an abundance of vital force shimmers around him. The 'small rustle of a silk petticoat' and the provocation of a 'childhood's memory' (rather than a childhood memory) and 'a first innocence', is a recollection of Selina. Despite her death, we are reminded that her innocence and vitality still abounds in the divine abundance of nature, as it always has. As Harrion vows to exile himself from the futility of life, he is reminded of a source of vitality that he had long forgotten and can himself no longer grasp. Vital possibility radiates around him as he bows down. It is ready to take his place and create new values in his wake. Moore presents a formulation of modernity in which the usual superior male subject steps down in order to enable a definitively female vital spirit to take his place. Moore suggests that the corruption of modernity, the loss of hope, and the deterioration of existential values have caused the patriarchal supremacy to be necessarily usurped by a female subject who is the embodiment of vitality and potential. The masculine creative spirit has exhausted his potential and modernity has damaged his subjective integrity and self-affirmation beyond repair. Only now, after this reconception of values has prompted a reconception of gendered hierarchies, can the female artist take her place because she is no longer solely defined by her inferiority to man.

After his revelation in the meadow, Harrion has two final scenes as his narrative moves towards its inconclusive end, the first in Strasbourg Cathedral and the second in a

Paris crematorium. In Strasbourg, Harrion finds himself inside the cathedral pushed in amongst a crowd of people simply because 'the crowd was moving, and the effect was hypnotic' (p. 116). Once inside, a modern stained glass window takes Harrion's attention:

> How misunderstood these modern efforts at stained glass. The colours are crude, the pieces of glass are large, where the colours should not only be sober in the extreme, but the pieces of glass minute and held together by lead-work in such a way that there is more lead than either glass or colour. The modern effect becomes that of a bar-parlour by daylight, when it should be that of a forest at sunset (p. 116).

Moore uses Harrion's response to the window to construct a clear metaphor for the modern condition as experienced through his superior perception. The 'modern efforts' are purported to be lacking detail, integrity and with no beauty or honour in what they have established. At least Harrion implies, old religious belief was sincere, whereas modernity has displayed only some meaningless attempts at faith. He expands conclusively:

> He thought how the impermanence of to-day was not the result of war or the decline in religious belief, though that counted, but was due to the impermanence of the goods of life; the manufactured goods, the plethora of religious beliefs; and the impermanence of these goods is responsible for the sense of impermanence in spiritual matters. When men built this they knew that it was for-ever. They built their homes for-ever, their beliefs for-ever, and, in some unfathomable way, their literature and their arts for-ever. We build for to-day, we live for to-day, we think for to-day, we die to-day (p. 117).

By asserting that the plethora of manufactured goods and religious beliefs are responsible for a socially corrupting impermanence, Harrion provides an interesting comment on modernity and its industrialised capitalist economy. It is suggested that the more faith is divided the more worthless and transient it becomes, a state catalysed by

modernity's obsession with impermanent goods with impermanent value. But it is important to recognise that this statement is specifically Harrion's and it is here that he begins to reveal his difference and his limitation. Society perceives only the current moment of 'to-day' and thus remains bound within the present with no conception of anything beyond, neither learning from the past nor anticipating the future. Contrastingly, Harrion as the perfect nihilist is only able to reflect backwards upon what has already passed. Thus his conclusion, that religion and society have become corrupted is correct, but his solution is to return to the values of the past rather than seek to create new values for the future. Despite his insight, Harrion remains bound to a limited perception that laments the condition of humanity but cannot provide a solution that would move beyond its futility. Instead he concludes:

> Yet to have seen one thing is to have seen all things. A grain of sand on the shores, an incoming tide and the farthest ocean. A certain number of words, and nothing is left to say. If this was all and afterwards there was nothing: then this was not enough. And if there were other worlds, then this was but a waste of time. Christ's remark about gaining the world and losing one's soul was so good as to be unnecessary. For who has lost his soul has lost his world (p. 117).

Harrion in his emptiness (indeed in his soullessness, as Moore here reminds us) has no foresight, no conception of future potential or possibility. He is the eternal nihilist, so trapped by his own existential pessimism that he can only conceive that there is simply 'nothing left to say'. Humanity is 'not enough' but he does not see that there is any point or possibility of trying to make more of it. Moore further confirms her assertion that the male intellect, the superiority of which has previously been used to justify the patriarchal structures of the artistic sphere, is now insufficient and limited. Masculine dominance is no longer productive or visionary, a concept that leaves space for the potential ascendency of the female creative artist who is able to articulate new values in the intellectual space left by this masculine nihilism.

At this moment, 'he rose at the sounds of the bells as though summoned' and is struck suddenly by the sight of a carved column in the cathedral 'rising like smoke, umbilical cord binding earth and heaven, revealing itself slowly without visible beginning and end', upon which a stone angel 'there suspended, leaning a little forward, her lips to the swirl of trumpet along whose length her Gothic fingers rested, her wings in shadow, brave, outward-looking, poised for stony flight, she looked down at him. Up, up, up the fluted column in ascension perpetual' (p. 118). With his face raised to the elevated angel in a pose of reverence, Harrion receives a moment of realisation. 'It is the looking up that makes one giddy, and leaves one dazed' he decides, 'cutting off reason in the pushing back of the head' (p. 118). As he emulates a gaze of heavenly veneration, Harrion concludes that it is this physical action that causes the lack of philosophical 'reason' amongst the masses. In acts of reverence towards a divine providence, cognitive clarity is impaired. 'Such the messenger, such the message' he concludes,

> And it is for him, for he alone had looked up and answered it. All sick things must be thrust aside. All that is tired and sick, he thought, is human garbage. It seemed to him then that she smiled. It was not impartial. It was the bringing of the message and to those who understood it, she smiled. Now it was a matter of days, or hours, yet when the moment came to him (he felt) she would know (p. 118).

In a moment that mirrors a divine revelation, Harrion receives a final offering of existential meaning from the angel. Impermanent modernity must be destroyed and 'all sick things must be thrust aside' because only in its absence can life and value be revived. In *The Apple is Bitten Again* Moore states 'Were I your judge, Humanity, I could think of no conclusive plea by which you might justify the continuance of your existence', 'Futility. Cowed, limited, thoughtless. What can it matter if man perish or save himself? Better to cease to be than drag in a semi-lucid state across more time, repeating the same mistakes with the same shouts, the same pomposity, the same bloodshed, the same self-

satisfaction'.[83] Harrion appears to receive this message in a sudden moment of realisation in which he finally perceives death as the only possible end to humanity's inadequate attempt at life. Society has failed, and the message of solution is simply that we must start again. It is better to 'cease to be' than to continue in such a deficient and unproductive state.

From this moment of revelation, Harrion turns towards death obsessively. In his final scene, he has made it to Paris, but we are unaware how much time has passed since his time in Strasbourg. We join him as he walks to the crematorium, tentative but excited, and it is implied that he has made this journey many times before. He is perversely drawn to the crematorium to fulfil a desire to be closer to death, to watch it, embrace it and understand it. For the first time in the novel, Harrion moves beyond his indifference because 'here he was a different being. Here once more desire returned to him. Once again life held an interest; an interest that now could never fail and which he shared alone' (p. 126). His confrontation with death fills him with a renewed energy and restores his interest in being alive so that he can pursue his new morbid fascination. His visits to the crematorium have a macabre motivation:

> For at last one could love humanity when it suffered as it suffered here. Here, shorn of all its pretence and at its most pitiful; here where all its bitterest tears were held and its darkest fears went uncomforted. Here where the very air reeked with the stench of man, so that as one took in a breath one drank the flesh and blood of one's fellows in an awful communion of fear and ecstasy (p. 126).

Harrion does not just want humanity to end, he wants it to suffer, to be punished for its failings. His faith is restored in the crematorium where he goes to watch and relish humanity's pain and destruction. He is no longer indifferent, he is passionate and inspired. In his final passage of the novel, Harrion is revealed in a moment of grotesque anticipation:

[83] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 203.

> He leaned against a pillar to steady himself, with nostrils distended like an animal flaring at the scent of another; and it came surprisingly quickly after the black burning of the wood, the thin grey column in ascension perpetual with its stench of grease and putrescence. He smiled, and held up his face (p. 131).

The final image echoes the scene in the cathedral, but now the smoke from the burning bodies creates the 'grey column in ascension perpetual' instead of the cathedral's stonework. The effect however is the same, causing Harrion to raise his face in a demonstration of faith, except now his reverence is for death and destruction, not heavenly providence. Harrion concludes the novel having found what he perceives to be existential salvation. His indifference is finally replaced with conviction and a sense of redemption, but it is a fatal and injurious doctrine. He longs for an absolute end, a cataclysmic and decimating conclusion because he reasons that there is nothing worthy of being saved. At times, it feels like Moore herself concurs but it is important that our final image of Harrion is one is which he stands, head held back, looking upwards in the expectation of deathly salvation. As he himself has asserted in the cathedral, it is a pose in which reason is cut off from the brain, a pose of blind faith and limited perception. Reason for Moore of course, is the pinnacle of cognition enabling the visionary thinker to 'see all things clear, whole, and true' because 'only through Reason shall life break from the confines of dreams' (p. 199). Harrion remains limited within his morbid re-conception of faith because he still lacks Reason. In the final passages of the novel, his lack of life and his consequent turn towards death and emptiness means he cannot conceive of the totality of existence and his visionary capacity remains deficient. Harrion cannot offer existential redemption but as the fugue-form insists, his value lies in his ability to generate a counter-point to his point. Thus where Harrion fails, his antithesis must succeed. Lavinia and her 'vital-spirit' constitute a beacon of hope and female potential.

4.5. Lavinia

Lavinia is the personification of the vital and abundant creative spirit. She declares her position of existential affirmation within the opening pages of the novel—'I am. I want. I

must. I will' (p. 4)—a resolute cry of self-determination which echoes the demand for autonomy and individual sovereignty found within Nietzsche's conception of the Will to Power and the creative spirit. As a consequence, Lavinia represents a hopeful possibility that lies outside of and beyond Harrion's morbid nihilism. Consistently throughout the novel, it is Lavinia's unrelenting embrace of life as a wondrous moment of opportunity that saves her from being overwhelmed by Harrion's self-annihilation. Upon the initial dissolution of their relationship, and subsequently upon her realisation that Harrion has this time left her for good, Lavinia draws herself out of morbidity with a relentless buoyancy that stems from her adamant belief that life is a continual gift of possibility. 'O life is a great gift! For what right has one to each new day, to each new hour, but the right to accept and enjoy it?' she proclaims, having decided that Harrion's desertion means that she is simply 'free to love again' (p. 52). Equally when Harrion leaves finally for Strasbourg, Lavinia finds a source of positive affirmation in the thought of their unborn child. 'I want her to be a gay young thing! I shall call her Bernadine' she states before continuing,

> For she could not rid herself of the belief that it was good to be alive and happiness enough to be sitting on the earth crying, when one might be sitting under it with no tears to shed, and nothing to be sad about, and no possibility of laughing or wondering what could happen next, or ever again. For let who would call death the great adventure, life (Lavinia Reade decided) life is a great gift (p. 83).[84]

Lavinia's willing and open embrace of existence, her optimism, and her abundant vitality are the instruments of her potential. Harrion's pessimism stems from his entrapment within the past and his inability to conceive of any way forward that would not replicate humanity's failings. Lavinia seems to directly rebuke him in her denunciation of those who 'call death the great adventure' before asserting her own cause. Lavinia's optimism does not stem from an ability to articulate and control a future vision of absolute success, instead she simply accepts that in spite of its setbacks, life always holds this as a

[84] That the name Bernadine means 'strong', 'brave', or 'bold' seems no coincidence here.

possibility. Lavinia has faith in possibility and in the generative potential of positivity. Her philosophy for extracting from life as much as it can offer relies upon immediacy:

> And all that it had taught her could be summed-up in: now. Now. Not yesterday nor to-morrow: but now. This hour. This moment. This was all. This is the answer to every question: *now*. Later one was swept aside like a floor that is tidied, new sand is sprinkled like earth on one's grave and others sit and drink and argue. But there is Now. And that was the sum-total of life, of eternal youth. And she thought of the many people she knew, interesting enough people. Drifting far-away in London as in the middle depths of an ocean, and all of them neither happy nor unhappy, but only distracted. And she thought that whatever else she lost in life, never must she lose this sense of living for the moment, and of denying that moment for nothing: for what was each hour but a gift that brought one nearer to death? (p. 108)

Again, Lavinia's embrace of life is placed as a direct retaliation against death which is here figured as an end that draws ever nearer, threatening the gift of life. The immediate reality of life must be embraced with passion and veracity, an existence of 'living for the moment', an existence governed solely by the innate potential of 'Now'. This philosophy gains wider implications in reference to Moore's work because Lavinia's intensity and vitality is 'the secret of the artist' (p. 108). The creative spirit must embrace all that life can offer, spontaneously, whole-heartedly and seemingly without reflective contemplation or attempted prophecy. Art, Moore suggests, must emerge from truth, reality, and immediacy. Its role is to reflect existence unabridged with an acute perceptiveness and sharp, deliberate immediacy. Art must not be 'distracted', must not 'drift as in the middle depths of an ocean', but must capture human existence in its entirety as a complete and truthful reflection of all its possibility.

Lavinia's trial over the course of the novel is tied to her attempts to formulate this philosophical, creative ideal within the real world. She is insistent that life is a 'great gift' that must be wrung out for all it can offer but problematically this is the 'secret' of the

artist. She is isolated in her understanding and the ignorant majority consistently oppresses her innate potential. 'O life is a great gift!' she insists but immediately laments,

> Yet so few seemed to know this, urgent though it might be. They seemed so dead, so slowly dying. They seemed disintegrating inwardly, with souls a little sick. The trouble, of course, was being so very much alive among so many dead. People resent it, thought Miss Reade. It's a kind of spiritual Bad Form (p. 52).

In its atrophic state, humanity resents and rejects vital individuals like Lavinia. Again Moore reminds us of their physical emptiness, 'their souls a little sick' having been progressively emitted from the lifeless bodies. For Lavinia, being 'so very much alive among so many dead' leaves her feeling displaced and disheartened. *Fugue* traces her attempts to reconcile her vital, creative spirit with the conditions that will allow it to flourish and advance. Repeatedly, modernity has so far failed to provide for her, leaving her increasingly depleted and isolated. A 1932 review of *Fugue* by literary critic Jane Southron identifies one of Moore's recurring tropes within Lavinia's predicament:

> Lavinia, in her early twenties, had drifted to Harrion, her fourth lover, neither through a modern love of experimenting nor in revolt against standards but because she was Eve in the wrong setting. An intellectual Eve must still have her garden. Lavinia's had turned out to be the aridest of city yards.[85]

This 'intellectual Eve' longs to regain her intellectual paradise, a space in which she would be able to explore and articulate her creative potential. As Southron notes, Lavinia has thus far been condemned to the 'aridest of city yards', but she longs to regain her metaphorical garden space, her artistic Eden. Moore returns to this symbolism throughout *Fugue* as Lavinia navigates her redemption. At the height of her relationship with Harrion, Lavinia states 'I want to sit and wait in a garden' (p. 25). Whilst the garden should symbolise autonomy, it here demonstrates her infatuation with Harrion and

[85] Jane Southron, 'Olive Moore's "*Fugue*" and Some Other Recent Work', *New York Times*, 25 September 1932

consequent depletion of personal agency. She longs for a garden in which to 'sit and wait', sacrificing its true potential for Harrion. She instinctively longs for the garden but is not yet able to perceive and articulate it as a space symbolic of autonomy and potential. Increasingly however, she perceives the limitation that her relationship with Harrion enforces upon her. Harrion takes Lavinia to Kew Gardens and for the first time she feels liberated and 'She felt again the beating of the grassy pulse. The beautiful sane green enveloped her'.[86] Moore once again alludes to Lavinia's abundant heartbeat in a moment of increased vitality, this time initiated by her return to an abundant natural environment. She soon notes that

> She ran full tilt over the grass between the trees; then stood waiting for him to come up to her. Another, she could not help feeling, would have run with her, sharing equally the immediate release of gaiety which the sudden sight of trees and grass must always bring to the town dweller. But that, she thought, watching him staid and smiling in the distance, was the symbol of their relationship; the waiting was hers (p. 28).

Fugue unveils Lavinia as our modern Eve, alienated and displaced, attempting to make her way back to her garden paradise. Eve's original transgression was the cause of her dismissal from paradise for her dissenting action and was interpreted by the dominant forces of religious morality as sinful and demonstrative of the threat of female autonomy. A central component of Moore's creative philosophy is that the artist must emulate Eve's transgression, taking 'apples from Eden' and inciting an intellectual revolution. *Fugue* develops this concept and suggests that whilst the creative artist must emulate Eve's progressivism, they must also be reconciled with her garden paradise. Moore asserts that if creative advancement is to be achieved, the intellectual dissent of the artist must be

[86] This association between a 'grassy' natural environment, vital energy, and intellectual autonomy echoes Ruth's experiences in *Spleen*. Ruth's intellectual progressivism is strengthened by 'direct contact with the earth' and its 'generative power'. She states that 'grass had always had an intense and spiritual significance for her', and 'earth's beard' emulates the creative strength that she inherits from her father. (p. 29). In *Fugue*, Moore develops this imagery in order to suggest that the autonomy and vitality gained through association with the natural environment is a return to an intellectual paradise.

embraced. Eve's 'original sin' must be forgiven if the artist is to find redemption within a society that has thus far rejected their progressiveness. This concept is represented in *Fugue* through Lavinia's increasing desire to be reconciled with a garden in which her intellectual autonomy could flourish. Throughout the narrative, nature symbolises a space of intellectual freedom and Lavinia's own vitality is directly correlated to the natural qualities of her environment.

This correlation between landscape and vitality is of central importance throughout *Fugue*. Moore repeatedly insists that the more naturally vital, abundant, and productive a landscape is, the more these qualities will be reflected in its inhabitants. Equally, the more removed from nature an environment becomes, the more its inhabitants will become limited and creatively worthless. England suffers most of all at the hands of Moore's scathing commentary throughout *Fugue*. Moore blames the English landscape for the lack of vitality of its people, lamenting that 'Even Nature, in England, wears a fig-leaf' and 'One felt, as one stared, that its sense of decency was being affronted. That being entirely sober, it knew its nakedness and was ashamed. It was eager to be clothed; to be cut in little lots and covered in an excrement of brick; to offer itself up in semi-houses for semi-people' (p. 61). England's shameful 'fig-leaf' emphasises how far removed its landscape is from the unrestrained, proud abundance of the paradisiacal garden. England's landscape is restricted and controlled and resultantly, Lavinia asks:

> Could it be that in England there must be no display of vitality even on the land and sky? Life's expression must not be extravagant and even Nature's voice may not be raised? All is superior and self-conscious. All things merge. The sun-less tradition of the earth is one with its inhabitants. The people are subdued and the fields are subdued. The people are grey and tweedy, and the fields are grey and tweedy. And over both blows the cold breath of primness and gentility and fear; fear of nakedness, of exuberance, of life' (p. 62).

Moore suggests that the character of the English is a form of pathetic fallacy. Its dull weather is directly correlated to its dull inhabitants, reinforcing the assertion that natural environment has a direct impact upon the nature of the subject. The urbanisation of the landscape, its 'semi-houses for semi-people' (p. 61), is defined as an additional cause of the population's limitation. The more the natural environment is regulated or eradicated, the more its inhabitants begin to lack the exuberance and vitality that it generates. Nature is depicted as another vitalist source of energy and Moore implies that its natural abundance can be transmitted to the individual subject if they embrace its potential and connect with its power. England is ashamed, timid and lifeless, forcing a disconnection between landscape and humanity. It is thus an environment that is threatening to Lavinia's intellectual potential. In contrast, she reminisces about time spent in Italy where she felt the great vital power of the earth, 'remembering (particularly) a farmhouse, long, two-storied, coloured the familiar Etruscan red-ochre, its windows outlined in bands of pinkish lime, lost in the ebb and flow of the hills above Petroio' (p. 62) and the 'Tuscan peasants with naked feet pass among their vines and fields, for there a man's feet are not white and pitiful but are sunk in the warm earth like stalks with roots' (p. 61). Lavinia recollects the Italian people specifically as *rooted* to the earth, displaying an unparalleled connectedness to their abundant natural environment. Italy represents an unalterable, abundant 'natural' state that is instinctive, productive, and vital. In the Alsace, Lavinia is additionally struck by the value of 'Simple things, she thought. Simple, unalterable things' as she watches 'the woman with the tiny child in the scarlet boots, who came each evening to the inn corner to meet her husband home from work. When he appeared far down the street she would hold the child high for them to catch a first sight of each other, and then start running. Such a swift, lovely, unalterable impulse, the woman's holding up of the child to its father home from work' (p. 99). The 'unalterable impulse' that Lavinia senses within the scene implies something innately natural, something unchanged, something eternal. There is a profound sense of a universal constant evoked by the child in the scarlet boots, guided by the mother, reunited with the father, a scene replicated again and again over generations. It has an essential, instinctive quality that inspires Lavinia with its innate value. Moore's depiction of both Italy and the Alsace demonstrates her preoccupation with the traditionalism of these archaic, regional

cultures and her consequent positioning of them as more desirable and productive than modernity. Her elevation of the 'eternal' qualities of these cultures is a reflection of her philosophical veneration of 'ancient wisdom' and her insistence that 'We must go back, back to the first vision' if we are to access the greatest source of intellectual progressivism.[87] The traditional and seemingly eternal conventions of these cultures reflect what Moore deems the 'pre-sentimental age' in which humanity was untarnished by the modern condition and had greater intellectual insight.[88]

The difficulty of Moore's veneration of this 'ancient' traditionalism is its inevitable reinforcement of archaic notions of gender essentialism. Lavinia notes that 'When she had remarked on the profusion of walnuts on the trees lining the roads, she had been told: Ah, a good year for nuts means that many women are pregnant! That, too, was a lovely eternal thing, linking their women so warmly, so unquestioningly, with the earth, sharing the effortless burden of trees and fields' (pp. 99-100). This shared fertility between women and the earth is an 'eternal' interrelation which is here positioned positively because of its seemingly innate and intuitive qualities. Yet the concept also binds women to the maternal role, suggesting that this 'sharing' of 'effortless burden' is a productive and progressive re-alignment of mankind within the 'natural order'. Moore's depiction of maternity as the pinnacle of female creativity is unrelenting. The potential of the reproductive female body is continually defined as the most progressive aspect of womanhood. In *Fugue*, Moore justifies this theory as a reinstatement of an 'eternal' interrelation between woman and nature that aids the intellectual redemption of humanity by returning to the essential order of the 'pre-sentimental age'. Again, Nietzsche's work can help us to understand Moore's philosophical ambitions. Nietzsche states a desire to 'translate man back into nature; to become master over the many vain and overly enthusiastic interpretations and connotations that have so far been scrawled and painted over that eternal basic text of *homo natura*'.[89] 'At the bottom of us' he

[87] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 98.
[88] Moore discusses her conception of the 'pre-sentimental age' on pages p.41, p. 62, 91, and p. 98 of *The Apple is Bitten Again*.
[89] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. by Walter Kaufman (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), pp. 179-436, p. 352.

continues, 'really "deep down", there is, of course, something unteachable, some granite of spiritual *fatum* [fate], of predetermined decision and answer to predetermined selected questions'.[90] Nietzsche defines nature as an 'original', instinctive and 'predetermined' condition. Moore interprets this 'spiritual fate' as metaphor and biology, using it to justify both her conception of an intellectual transformation that returns to the 'first vision', and her conception of biological essentialism in which women are bound to the 'natural' maternal role. Moore insists that the 'eternal basic text' of womanhood manifests itself within their innate biological capacity for reproduction. Nietzsche's description of 'spiritual fate' evokes the importance of the transformation of the 'spirit' in his philosophy of the free spirit and their intellectual ascendency. Moore's interpretation of this philosophy insists that this intellectual metamorphosis is aided by the innate physiological powers of the body. Her reconception of 'spiritual fate' is based upon a vitalist definition of 'spirit' or 'soul' as the animating force of the body, thus enabling Nietzsche's philosophy to be directly embodied. Lavinia states: 'How drearily people misunderstood their purpose and the harmony of a setting! […] How willingly people denied themselves' (p. 102). Moore insists that the body is an integral part of the 'self' and of subjective individualism. In denying the body (and its innate biological capacity), Moore perceives that the individual is therefore denying their own subjective potential and capacity for self-affirmation, a limitation that Lavinia states people embrace 'willingly' for they 'misunderstood their purpose'. Significantly when Lavinia herself discovers she is pregnant, Moore states that 'In such things her mind was simple and uncomplicated. It was neither a matter for heroics or repugnance' (p. 28). Her own willing acceptance of maternity demonstrates her potential as a vital spirit because she embraces the innate 'spiritual fate' of her biological body. The pregnancy is the articulation of her body's full creative potential, a redemptive and progressive embodiment of Moore's philosophy.

Lavinia's pregnancy is demonstrative of Moore's unrelenting essentialized definition of gender. Moore argues that the crux of modernity's deterioration is that the distinction between the masculine and the feminine has become progressively distorted

[90] Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 352.

as it has become increasingly removed from this natural order. Moore uses Sebastian to express a dystopic vision of this distorted future at its greatest extreme:

> He said that the last war was probably the end of man in more ways than one. The modern woman with her militant sterility could quite easily run the world on her own. He said the female was now active and in the ascendant, while to-day the function of the male was limited (p. 97).

Sebastian warns of a future in which the male has become completely obsolete. 'In time all that would be required of man was the male semen' he insists, because 'the world was changing too radically and the male virtues were no longer needed' (p. 98). Sebastian lists the 'male virtues' as 'courage, enterprise, foresight, endurance' all which he deems 'useless in a modernly organised community' in which 'Man power was not a need, soon all would be calculated by mechanical horse-power' (p. 97). The increased mechanisation of the modern world is placed as the central factor in the destruction of man and the ascendancy of woman. Man's physical power has become outmoded, unable to compete with the mechanical power of the machine. Sebastian's language defines this as a natural evolutionary process of inevitable and adaptive change. 'Man was no longer necessary' he states, 'when his job could be done almost as well by a woman and a machine. And as soon as he was no longer indispensible he ceased to exist. Only the indispensible is needed and created. That is Nature's demand and supply' (p. 98). Equally of women, Sebastian states that 'their new activity and independence (a lack of servility) was mistaken for masculinity, but was merely adaption' (p. 98). Sebastian argues that gender has been irreversibly changed through a competitive evolutionary system in which the female has begun to dominate. Specifically, women have not evolved into men but instead have been given an environment in which they can evolve beyond 'woman' as it has previously existed. They have not converted to an alternate and more dominant gender, they have instead progressively developed their own gender to a new stage of existence. Sebastian insists that this has only been made possible through the introduction of machine power and that machines have enabled women to have access to a level of physical productivity equal to that of men. As physical strength is no longer a

factor, the division of labour has lost its dividing line and its consequent hierarchical structure. As a result, the concept of gendered roles has been destroyed. Modernity has created a new breed of woman, a modern hybrid, still feminine but with the mechanised strength of a man. Where previously they have been defined only by their embodied reproductive capacity, modernity now values a productivity of a different kind and the mechanisation of industry means that they are able to actively participate. Contrastingly, man has lost his value in society because he is no longer physically superior and thus has become obsolete. Man suffers because he is no longer the dominant productive force. As a consequence, Sebastian suggests that the only thing of value that man will be able to offer is the 'male semen'. Interestingly, Moore depicts a future in which men's only purpose is to utilise their physical reproductive capacity. They have no access to other modes of productivity, which have instead been monopolised by women. This vision of modernity completely inverts the patriarchal structures of power that have previously seen women bound to maternity. But Moore categorically places this idea in the narrative as a warning, not as a vision of feminist utopia. Contrarian to the last, Moore suggests that modernity is failing not because women are deprived of agency, but because they have become *too* powerful.

Furthermore, Sebastian's final warning defines the situation as reflective of a global cultural divide:

> Already the more civilised (industrialised) a community, the more easily were the men dispensed with. A natural process. Where not so long ago it needed a man to guide a horse, to-day you had a woman guiding from 40 to 4000 horse-power. The more mechanical a community, the more feminine: as American, Russia, England. Only in natural (peasant) communities, such as Italy, Spain, the Balkans, France, the man still retained his power. To fight Nature it still required a man. To fight with machines, woman sufficed (pp. 97-98).

Moore depicts a stark cultural division between 'masculine' and 'feminine' countries. In a contradiction of the usual alignments between land and gender, Moore asserts that the

feminine represents industrialised, capitalist nations in which mechanised production has taken hold and more traditional values have been destroyed. Contrastingly, the 'masculine' is aligned with less developed nations who Moore describes as having more 'natural' communities, who existed solely 'to fight Nature', indicating their intimacy with the natural world. Moore implies that in order to retain this connection to the natural world, a society requires a dominant male force and patriarchal hierarchy. Alternatively, the more feminine (industrialised) a society, the less it is in harmony with the 'natural' order of the earth. Mechanisation distorts the 'natural' order that Moore deems to be philosophically redemptive. Sebastian's lecture takes place as he and Lavinia watch a military parade make its way through the village. They watch lines of 'little blue soldiers', followed by 'children in white and pale innocence', 'several handsome young novices from the seminary, a few sisters of mercy', 'girls who left the village each morning for the Schledstadt factories', and 'lastly the old women clutching long candles' (p. 102). Lavinia closely watches the younger women who stand out amongst the crowd for 'their very self-conscious and very condescending in their silk stockings, their high-heeled shoes, their rouged lips' (p. 102). The parade represents the fractures in society, between the traditional and the modern, the natural and the mechanised. The parade of young women appears to be ushering modernity into the village, starkly contrasting the older women and their weakening traditions. The young men in the scene appear doomed, ominously threatened by war, by the church, or as Sebastian warns, by the young women who have left for the factories. As if to reflect the social deterioration that marches past Lavinia's window, the parade is accompanied by music 'tuneless, discordant, insidious' (p. 94). Moore describes how Lavinia 'standing there, staring from the window at the blue prancing soldiers', 'felt a sudden, sharp, quivering movement. Once again, and it ceased. And she found it strange, and perhaps symbolic, that as she looked on at this clatter and mimicry of destruction, the new life she was to bear shuddered in the depths of her body' (p. 96). It is symbolically significant, that as Lavinia looks out upon this parade of disarranged modernity, she senses that her unborn child 'shuddered', 'sudden' and 'sharp' in response. Lavinia's child, a symbol of her creative, vital abundance, seemingly winces at the confrontation. It is implied that the distortion and destruction of modernity

as it moves increasingly further from the natural rhythm of life threatens the continuation of the vital spirit.

Moore depicts a modern society in which gender has become catastrophically distorted. The men have become 'obsolete' and the women have a 'militant sterility'. The values of modernity directly oppose the 'natural order' in a way that threatens to erase its eternal, innate forces. Moore reiterates that for humanity to be redeemed, it must return to the 'first vision', the 'pre-sentimental age' in which each gender embraces their distinctive, instinctual 'spiritual fate' and return to an 'original', essentialized notion of gender in which the men express 'male virtues', and the women retain 'feminine virtues'. Moore perceives that the reinstatement of these essentialized gendered identities would reinvigorate innate biological productivity of the reproductive body, rather than the modern reliance upon the productivity of the machine. For women, this unavoidably means a rejection of the modern 'sterility' in favour of their innate, biological fertility. In Moore's vision of redemption, womanhood and maternity remain inextricably linked as a central component of the 'natural order'. In *Fugue* this is explored most comprehensively when Lavinia goes to visit her friend Evelyn. Their meeting acts as a confrontation between the modern woman and Lavinia's vital spirit. Initially, Lavinia has a moment of realisation whilst in confrontation with a cow:

> This then, with its pendulous pink bag, was the source of civilised life. To this swaying breast, […] to this swollen unappetising fount, the modern mother brought her new-born babe. Here was a field of them, ripping-up with small sharp sounds the fresh grass, to be dropped foaming into pails, to be warmed in tens of millions of bottles and held to puling mouths. All this tearing up of grass by these poor patient beasts on whose broad backs modern woman had shifted her intimate maternal duty (p. 63).

Moore presents another modern shift of labour, this time from woman to cow. Woman's 'intimate maternal duty' has been 'shifted' because the industrialisation of labour has increased the production of the dairy industry and all babies can be fed without even the

need for a mother. Moore suggestively describes the cow's udder with its 'fat pink fingers', which were 'obscene as a fat, soft, money-loving hand', immediately highlighting the financial motivations behind the move towards industrialised production (p. 63). Modern capitalist greed continues to warp the natural order and again, the mechanisation of labour means that the act of production is increasingly further removed from the body. Resultantly, production (and indeed re-production) moves further from the boundaries of the 'natural' order. For Evelyn, whose voice is that of the traditional feminist cause, this is perceived as liberation and cause for celebration:

> She denied that the act of love was for anything as dull and limited as mere reproduction of self. She called children the compensation of the unloved. That the act of love should be for anything but pleasure (she said) was both immoral and unthinkable. Women who desire only to be mothers should be mechanically fertilised. Let them be placed apart and tended and graded like cattle. Let them admit their cow-like vocation. Let them be contented by the yearly child (p. 64).

Evelyn argues that embodied production is 'limited' and 'immoral' and instead longs for sex to be solely about 'pleasure' and passion. Reproduction she says should be a mechanised 'vocation', undertaken only by those that have chosen it. Evelyn's statement is a progressive feminist, capitalist ideal. By treating motherhood as a profession, a branch of industrialised manufacturing, it can be undertaken more efficiently, thus lifting the burden from womankind as a whole. Yet Lavinia refuses to be persuaded and remains unable to conceive of a productive future in which womanhood does not retain motherhood. She counters:

> I am right, said Miss Reade slowly. And you are wrong. I am old-fashioned. I admit it. I need men. And I need children. I am the human cow. But you are the modern woman. You dislike children. You do not really care for men. Where the fear of Aunt Elizabeth has led you, instinct has led me. Yet one should function correctly, said Lavinia Reade with finality. So I am right (p. 64).

For Lavinia, it is sterility and not motherhood that is limited. For a woman to refuse motherhood is to refuse and limit the natural, vital, productive power of the body. We must 'function correctly' she states, meaning that productivity must remain embodied, and our bodies must be utilised to their full biological capacity. Lavinia cannot find a way in which the refusal of motherhood is not a refusal of the body's vital potential and Moore's gendered essentialism is confirmed as a condition of her creative philosophy.

Moore positions Lavinia as a redemptive figure in *Fugue*, standing in direct contrast to Harrion's insufficiency and symbolising the transformative potential of the vital spirit with regards to opposing the limitation and deterioration of modernity. At times it appears that the conditions of modernity may overwhelm Lavinia's potential, demanding that she abandon her individualism and accede to its restrictive criteria. But whilst Lavinia's narrative is left un-concluded and we are left unsure of Lavinia's future success in maintaining her vital spirit, Moore does offer a glimmer of redemption:

> I should have been called Pandora! she thought; full of hope again. Not that she knew that it was hope. She knew only that she was alive and at peace with herself once more. Even this old man with his prophecy of War could not frighten her now. Not even a prophetic glimpse of the folly of men in a world without vision, world in which she must live, the old had made it, the young must accept it, and all who came after must accept what they found here. It didn't matter! One was alive. Only the moment mattered, now and always. Once again she felt the exhilaration of the blood when one is so aware of being alive that one could die and not know it until long afterwards. And that, of course, meant the return of hope. For hope attacks, where possession can only defend. (Which may be why few rich people are really happy, thought Lavinia Reade.) So that hope creates energy and energy creates life. Against evidence, against experience, still hope does not give up (p. 111).

Lavinia's hopefulness and resilience in the face of adversity is the intellectual manifestation of her vital abundance, for 'hope creates energy and energy creates life'. In

direct opposition to Harrion's pessimistic indifference, Lavinia maintains the self-affirming power of hope. Most significantly, this hopefulness is an act of dissent in a world that has lost all desire for progress and wilful affirmation. Thus in *Fugue*, Moore reiterates that dissent must be the definitive feature of the vital, creative spirit. As Lavinia progresses through the novel, increasingly articulating the conditions of her own individualism and autonomy, her vitality is manifested as a resilient hopefulness that she can complete her own process of transformation and become the ascendant creative spirit. Significantly, Lavinia marks her success by exclaiming, 'I should have been called Pandora!'. Like Eve, Pandora is a mythological emblem of dissent. Both figures demonstrate an intense desire to understand that which has been forbidden to them. Eve longs to taste the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, whilst Pandora is overcome with her desire to know what is in the jar that Zeus has gifted to her but told her not to open. Both exhibit an active curiosity and a longing for knowledge that gives way to temptation and transgression of dominant structures of morality. Both Eve and Pandora symbolise Moore's creative philosophy that dissent can be a productive mode of liberation. Even more significantly, both female figures embrace dissent as a means to subverting externally imposed limitation and the demand for female obedience. Both therefore enact the re-conception of the relationship between womanhood and dissent that Moore concedes may enable women to achieve the intellectual individualism required of the creative artist. Lavinia's potential is demonstrated within her emulation of these frameworks of productive dissent. Her figuration as the vital, creative spirit relies upon her capacity for dissent and self-liberation from the societal obstacles that impede her autonomous potential. The final scene of the novel confirms her success as the vital, creative spirit:

> Sebastian flushed and extremely annoyed, Miss Reade calm and with confidence in the future. Yet she leaned against the first tree she came to as though her knees were unwilling to support her further; and suddenly looking-up and seeing that it was an apple tree, impulsively picked the first at hand, bit in it, and held it out to him.
>
> For now at last we know, she said, in which season Eve tempted Adam (p. 123).

Despite Sebastian's annoyance at her independence, Lavinia successfully enacts her final statement of dissent. She concludes the narrative by directly emulating Eve's original transgression and thus enacting the 'virility' and 'rebellion' of the creative artist.[91] The imagery clearly symbolises her successful re-conception of moral integrity and her absolute capacity for autonomous self-affirmation. Moore's creative manifesto demands the replication of the transgression at the heart of Eve's sin as a template by which women may be able to extricate themselves from the intellectual circumspection that society demands of them and instead enact their own intellectual individualism and creative progressivism. Lavinia sees that the apple is indeed, bitten again, directly adhering to Moore's creative philosophy and template of potential. She thus can be perceived as a successful protagonist, embracing her own innate potential as the vital spirit and confirming the rebellious conditions of Moore's creative philosophy.

[91] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 141.

Conclusion: The Apple Comes Always to the Rescue of Humanity

Between 1929 and 1934, Olive Moore developed an intricate and definitive account of the necessary conditions of creativity. Each of her three novels, *Celestial Seraglio* (1929), *Spleen* (1930), and *Fugue* (1932), and *The Apple is Bitten Again* (1934), reiterate and expand her definition of the creative artist and their necessary propensity for dissenting action against the deficiencies of modernity. The central principle of the creative artist to 'Steal fire from Olympus, apples from Eden' inspires Moore's understanding of dissent as a mode of progressive intellectual transformation.[1] Moore argues that disobedience prompts a productive re-conception of the homogenous dominant structures of societal limitation and a consequent expansion of intellectual capability. The creative artist is tasked with an epistemological transformation and the consequent re-formation of intellectual boundaries. Moore prioritises the subjective individualism of the creative artist as a catalysing component of their philosophical resistance for 'the creative artist is the one free being'.[2] This perceived interrelation between individualism and creativity in turn informs her philosophical, political, and scientific ideas. Nietzschean philosophy and its desire for the self-affirmation of the individual and their potential to transform and create new values held clear appeal for Moore's creative project. The parallels between Nietzsche's conception of the 'free spirit' and their necessary 'will to power' and Moore's insistence upon the 'conscious discipline, selfishness, purposefulness of the creative artist' are clear.[3] The Nietzschean roots of Moore's artistic philosophy provide the template for the cognitive individualism required by the artist. Moore also expands upon Nietzschean philosophy by transforming his demand for intellectual autonomy into an embodied experience. Moore integrates the body within the philosophical project by championing its innate, transformative powers as a vital tool for innovation. In *The Apple is Bitten Again* Moore outlines her physiological rendering of the human body and its

[1] Olive Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again* (London: Wishart & Co, 1934), p. 55.
[2] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 33.
[3] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 63.

potential role in the physical expression of the revolutionary impulse. Moore's vitalist conception of the body informs her theorising of its innate intuitive and transformative forces. Moore argues that the body is made up of 'local brains' which hold the ability to enact her philosophical project of innovation upon the physical matter of the body. This vitalist understanding of the body also informs her unrelenting conception of maternity as the pinnacle of female creativity. This in turn, provides the justification of her essentialist and non-feminist stance on gender and creativity. Moore maintains that 'art is a masculine prerogative' and that women are incapable of the artistic ascendency obtained by men because they lack intellectual 'rebellion' and 'virility'.[4] Moore's only concession for women relies upon their capacity to emulate masculine modes of creativity, a provision that demands the emulation of the 'male' proclivity for dissent. Moore's utilisation of philosophical, socio-political, and scientific frameworks of dissent comes together to form an artistic philosophy that promotes a re-conception of obedience as a new mode of potential creative autonomy. As the title of *The Apple is Bitten Again* suggests, Moore's creative philosophy implies that women may gain access to the artistic sphere if they are able to emulate Eve's original act of dissent and prompt a liberating and progressive intellectual transformation.

The preceding chapters have identified how Moore explores this complex interrelation between womanhood and artistry in each of her novels. Moore interrogates different modes of potential female intellectual liberation and the consequent possibility of successful creative autonomy. *Celestial Seraglio* identifies how female limitation is reinforced by social constructions of female identity. Protagonist Mavis has the innate potential for artistic ascendency but repeatedly fails to articulate it as she concedes to the societal expectations of feminine behaviour. *Celestial Seraglio* demonstrates how female limitation is learnt behaviour and it presents a bleak and seemingly inescapable vision. In *Spleen*, Moore's protagonist is more ambitious. Ruth enacts a re-formulation of female creative potential, imposing her own individual will upon her creative project and transforming her potential for innovation. *Spleen* however is a novel of two halves and Ruth's wilful ambition in the first half stands in direct contrast to stark reality and remorse

[4] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 141.

of the second. Ruth has the ambition for innovative creation and is able to enact and embody her potential, but she is incapable of confronting the reality of her transgression and spends the rest of the novel in self-imposed exile. Whilst Ruth's creative project is successful, her progressiveness results in ostracism and her potential is consequently abandoned. *Spleen* suggests that female creative innovation cannot be reconciled with a society that remains intellectually limited. Finally in *Fugue,* Moore presents her most optimistic depiction of female potential. Lavinia is the first protagonist to be deemed more creatively productive than her male counterpart and Moore uses this to explore the true extent of female potential. Ultimately, Lavinia successfully advances her creative spirit, extricating herself from obstacles and ascending beyond the perceived limitations of womanhood. Her final possession of an apple symbolises the extent to which she is now able to emulate Eve's transgressive potential and utilise dissent as a liberating and progressive mode of female behaviour. Moore concedes that women may have the necessary potential for creativity but only if they are willing to adopt Eve's transgression as their template for intellectual progress. Moore's productive reinterpretation of Eve's original sin is a core condition of her creative philosophy. Yet as demonstrated by her novels, the difficulty women face in their attempts to re-enact it is a consistent concern. Moore writes in *The Apple is Bitten Again*,

> It seems not for nothing that the apple comes always to the rescue of humanity. One woman, meaning well, bit an apple. Circumstances were against her (she was ahead of her times) and it turned to superstition.
> Another woman bites an apple. Circumstances are against her and she still may be ahead of her times, and gives back Reason through the medium of Common Sense.[5]

Eve should have been able to enact the 'rescue of humanity', but the progressive potential of her transgression was misinterpreted. She was 'ahead of her times' Moore concludes, and futile 'superstition' resulted in her denigration. The fate of this premature progressiveness is demonstrated throughout Moore's work as her protagonists

[5] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p.191.

continually struggle to maintain their potential within a society that works to deny it. But Moore's creative philosophy is another bite at the apple, an additional attempt to emulate Eve's original defiance and to reconfigure it as progress, not sin. 'Circumstances are against her' still, Moore admits, but she will argue 'Reason' as 'common sense' until society concedes. Moore retains a sense of optimism that her own re-formulation of the progressive potential of the 'apple' may still yet prompt the intellectual redemption that humanity requires if it is to be saved. The future of humanity relies upon the successful dissent of the creative artist, and Moore seemingly hoped that she might still be the necessary 'Eve'.

Moore knew in 1934 that the urgent and visionary ambitions of her creative project would present a challenge, but the abrupt halt in her artistic output after 1934 arguably prompts the conclusion that she would eventually concede that they were not just challenging but futile. The opening years of the 1930s seemingly indicated that the decade would be a period of artistic ascendancy for Moore, but her determination to enact her artistic redemption seemingly came to a sudden end. There may have been numerous contributing factors in this sudden halt in momentum. Despite her public successes, the early 1930s were a tumultuous period for Moore, marred by personal and creative strains. Significantly, the 'Red Lion Street group' of writers and artists of which Moore had been a part largely disbanded once publisher Charles Lahr was imprisoned in 1935 and his Red Lion Street shop 'Progressive Books' lost his guiding influence.[6] The social and symbolic upheaval of this event was no doubt a significant moment for Moore, whose creative momentum seems to have lost its determination around this mid-point of the decade. But the sudden and abrupt end to her creative productivity and lack of publications in the latter half of the decade cannot be placed solely in the hands of Lahr's sudden absence. Biographical information on Moore in this period is scant, but her

[6] For extensive information on Charles Lahr, see David Goodway's essay 'Charles Lahr: Anarchist, bookseller, publisher', *London Magazine*, June/July 1977, pp. 47-55.
Goodway states that Lahr largely stopped publishing material after his imprisonment for receiving stolen books in 1935. The Red Lion street shop remained a central meeting place for many of his authors and acquaintances until it was destroyed in air raids in 1941. Lahr relocated a few times after this but 'all agree that the old atmosphere, the invigorating excitement, had disappeared' (Goodway, 'Charles Lahr', p.54).

correspondence with friend, poet, and 'brother-in-Lahr', Rex Fairburn, provides a rare, intimate glimpse into this period of her life and the obstacles that she faced.[7] Moore and Fairburn were introduced by Lahr in 1932 and quickly developed a friendship predominantly based upon mutual artistic admiration. Before meeting Moore, Fairburn wrote to Lahr claiming 'I haven't read such a fine bit of imaginative prose for ages as "Fugue". It's a gem. I should love to meet Olive Moore—though I should do so with some apprehension, as she seems to know a little too much about the nature of men'.[8] In the August of 1932, five months after *Fugue's* publication, Moore wrote a letter to Fairburn detailing her feelings of despair. 'I feel on the verge of collapse; all day; I weep down streets, uncontrolled and un lady like; and into cups of coffee. […] And nothing seems real' she begins, before insisting that

> It takes all and gives nothing back. This last six months I've been in London have been a nightmare; it seemed to have sapped the vitality of years and given me nothing in its place. I hate it so; the top of the head seems to burst and burn when I try to describe it all. You must forgive me; its all your fault anyway, for you began it. But, I'm so desperately tired, and today has been agony since the early morning, I've been so dazed with hating it.[9]

Moore describes the oppressiveness of London as directly impacting her creative productivity. In a moment of positivity she proclaims 'I want to write my Greek book. I want! And so no doubt I shall- not in spite of the difficulties but because of them', referring to her unpublished *Amazon and Hero: Drama for the Greek War of Independence,* the piece also described as 'daunting' and an 'agony to write' and

[7] A.R.D "Rex" Fairburn was a New Zealand born poet whose move to London in 1930 coincided with the publication of his first book of poetry *He Shall Not Rise.* During his two-year stay in England, Fairburn became well acquainted with Charles Lahr and A.R. Orage amongst others. Lahr's Blue Moon Press published Fairburn's *The County* in 1931.
[8] Rex Fairburn to Charles Lahr, 21 March 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, Special Collections, University of Auckland, A-123.
[9] Olive Moore to Rex Fairburn, 17 August 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, Special Collections, University of Auckland, A-125.

ultimately, never published.[10] Moore's longing to work creatively would be stifled by the necessity of having to support herself financially. Without the luxury of financial security, Moore's art ultimately suffered. Her retort against Virginia Woolf's statement that female artists simply need 'five hundred a year and a room of one's own' is characteristically sardonic but ultimately untrue. 'To the creative artist £500 is not enough' she states, 'It must be five millions. Or five pence'.[11] Behind this flippancy lay a private longing for financial security and the luxury of time and creative freedom that it granted. 'To be damned for not having a little bit of money' she laments, insisting to Rex Fairburn:

> Be glad- dear brother in Lahr- that you have a certain freedom, care-freedom, not having to waste your heart's blood on rents and daily work for bread. (I don't like bread much, anyway.) And use it always- ohow fortunate you are; and don't be intimidated at a fellow craftsman for being jealous and saying so. But I am consumed with envy every time I think of anyone on this earth who has not to do a routine job for the dutiful pleasure of paying landlords and grocery bills.[12]

This financial anxiety meant that Moore continued to work as a journalist throughout the 1930s, a fact that she clearly felt was draining valuable time from her creative endeavours. 'I can't work in London' she states, 'not only hating it as I do, but because I can only do one thing at a time'.[13] The frustration she felt at having to rely upon her income as a journalist was clearly a great point of tension in her life and her relationship with her identity as a journalist was clearly very complex. 'Journalism is loathsome- and I hate it fully' she states before admitting, 'but it has done me many a good turn and taught me much. It has been good training'.[14] The dissolution of her relationship with Botzaris during this period may have been the final straw for Moore both financially and personally. The pair had separated by April 1940 when Botzaris left London for Jamaica

[10] Olive Moore to Rex Fairburn, 17 August 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, A-125, Alec Bristow, 'About the Author', in *Spleen*, Olive Moore (Illinois: Dalkey Archive Press, 1996), pp. 129-133, p. 132.
[11] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 129.
[12] Olive Moore to Rex Fairburn, 30 June 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, Special Collections, University of Auckland, A-125.
[13] Olive Moore to Rex Fairburn, 30 June 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, A-125.
[14] Olive Moore to Rex Fairburn, 30 June 1932, Rex Fairburn Papers, A-125.

before settling in Venezuela, never to return, a situation that Moore found very difficult because 'he deserted her leaving her in a very bad situation financially'.[15] Money, it seems, would be an inescapable hindrance for Moore's creative output.

[15] Anne Ibbetson, personal correspondence with the author, April 2017.
Botzaris's own account of the dissolution of his relationship with Moore reads somewhat differently. In letters written to his friend Dr Shirley Jones between 1948 and 1949, Botzaris gives his account of the aftermath of his relationship with Moore, their apparent estrangement, and eventual divorce: 'From my wife (in England I suppose), I did not hear for years. I have written to her on several occasions and sent her small money gifts. By now, I do not wish neither to hear from her, nor see her: "todo se acabó" as the Spaniards say. May I ask you, please, should you see her by chance not to mention me or give her my whereabouts, I shall explain later, what most likely you are guessing already. Of course I would like to know what happened to her and also if she is in need, but very indirectly and with the utmost discretion is possible please, she used to work at the *Daily Sketch'* (Sava Botzaris to Dr Shirley Jones, 26 March 1948, Papers of Sir Hans Heysen, National Library of Australia, MS 5073, Series 2, Box 31, File 254a). In a letter written the following year he details their divorce, a seemingly difficult process which started in 1942 and was still yet to be concluded in 1949: 'I am in the last stages of my seven year long drawn and stretched divorce case from my first, (1924 model), English wife. All this because it is now eight years that in passing through the enchanted Island of Jamaica, a sweet, London born maiden, the daughter of an English mother and a French physician, happened to be at a party that the Governor of that colony gave at the King's House, where I was staying as his guest at the time and to cut a long and involved story, I finished by stealing the little girl, (which rather encouraged me to do so), taking her with me on a Grace Line Steamer bound for the port of Baranquilla, (Columbia), then on an aeroplane over the Andes to Botoga, city of flowers, celestial love nest, at 10,000 feet above sea level, where I went to model a bust of the President Eduardo Santos. Ten months later we flew across the Andes to Caracas, city of eternal spring, where I came to paint and model General Medina, the then President of Venezuela and so our precocious honeymoon goes on, waiting for the day of our official wedding. I am expecting to extricate myself, any day now, and immediately marry my young, sweet, beautiful, cultured most cheerful and most faithful companion—fiancé of eight proven years of harmonious super-life. My future serious travels are to start only after the settling of this awkward "affaire"' (Sava Botzaris to Shirley Jones, 17 March 1949, Papers of Sir Hans Heysen, National Library of Australia, MS 5073, Series 2, Box 31, File 254a). Botzaris remained in Caracas until his death in 1965. He worked and travelled prolifically, sculpting and painting portraits of society figures across South America, North America, and occasionally Europe: 'It is most likely that I shall be busy in the U.S.A. for two years at least, so I will go there first, in August, as I said, if all is well with my papers. Here I have been working for seven years and could stay here for life, but I have always dedicated myself to the rendering of eminent and exceptional people and that is the true reason for going North on a hunt of great writers, of the American sort, great statesmen, great actors, great scientists, great nothings and great etceteras. There lives also Einstein whom I met years ago in England at Lord Haldane's house, Einstein was quite willing to sit for me, but suddenly he had to go to Princeton University and our project fell through. My dear and poor Shirley, I am telling you all this, so that you should form an idea of my plans, schemes, and the goings on in my life. From the U.S.A I intend to visit Europe: England, France, Italy, Spain if all is well with the world around 1951 A.D. What a pleasure it will be to see you again and present to you my second wife, (1949 model)' (Sava Botzaris to Dr Shirley Jones, 17 March 1949, Papers of Sir Hans Heysen, MS 5073).

Ultimately, beyond 1934 Moore's writing career would be constrained to journalistic endeavours. Yet, Moore would retain her creative and revolutionary impulses, increasingly using her journalism to reiterate her original creative philosophy of progressivism and dissent but within the realm of reality, not fiction. Her journalism would come to provide her with a format through which to articulate her dissenting cry for change against the impotence and drudgery of society. Writing for the *Daily Sketch* in 1932, Moore published an article entitled 'Let the Academy be the Mirror of Life!' (subtitled, 'Such a Fine Show of—Frames') in which she argued, 'I am tired of all that has no relation to the exacting, strange, vivid, changing and daily life about us. Briefly: I am tired of the Royal Academy'. 'This year at the Royal Academy is not merely dull it is lifeless to the point of decomposition' she continues,

> There are many thousand factories in England. We are the Clearing House of the world. There is work, unemployment, life. Yet still they tell us distant fairy tales. The old Academicians are concerned with drawing-rooms and a neat landscape or two. The young exhibitors, thinking it bad form to notice their surroundings, dabble in flower pieces and maiden aunts. They give us weakly what cameras, window-dressers, and tourist-agency windows give us thoroughly and with more satisfying art. Yet when art divorces itself from life, it is not life that suffers.[16]

Moore's final line becomes a new, additional component of her ever-developing artistic philosophy. Art must re-establish a connection with reality if it is to regain an internal value and redemptive potential. Moore championed 'real' life as the only artistic subject matter of value as demonstrated in her article 'Art Goes East, Bow Beats Bloomsbury Blather and Claptrap'. 'Let Bohemians blather in Bloomsbury- the artists are arguing down at Bow' she begins, before praising the 'the practical, no-nonsense approach' of art tutor John Cooper and his pupils at the East End Art Group, a collective whose main focus was 'their habitual environment, the capital's postal district E3' and the depiction of

[16] Constance Vaughan, 'Let the Academy be the Mirror of Life!', *Daily Sketch*, 30 April 1932, p. 5.

'mundane items and settings'.[17] Moore's rebuttal of the 'Bloomsbury Blather' in favour of the 'no-nonsense' realism of the East End Group substantiates her increasing dismissal of artistic intellectualism and conceptual abstraction. 'Bourgeois' modernism is condemned for its perceived lack of authenticity in comparison to the spirited realism of these new, independent artistic factions whose progressive aesthetic autonomy Moore clearly admired.

The demand for progressive autonomy is of course a defining feature of Moore's creative philosophy. As Moore began to prioritise 'reality' over the immateriality of intellectualism, her interest in the socio-economic structures of society increased and the need for progressive autonomy and transformation became a progressively social issue, a transition that can be traced in her novels. In *Spleen*'s closing scene, a hunger march organised by the National Unemployed Workers Movement 'shuffled wanly past', 'the men a uniform grey, haggard and emptied of all expression save hunger and weariness' whilst next to Ruth, the 'warmly dressed, middle-class' family 'stood tearless and detached'.[18] The image epitomises Moore's view of modernity's failures, wherein social inequality, stagnation, and indifference continue to prevail. Moore demonstrates that the increasing class divisions within society perpetuate the apathy of the population as they grow indifferent to deprivation. This indifference leads to the deprivation of other vital faculties and humanity becomes increasingly limited and corrupt. Moore became preoccupied with the necessary transformation of this social indifference and demanded that the 'reality' of the social condition must be directly examined if it is to be progressively transformed. Moore's return to journalism provided her with a medium in which to confront this reality and articulate her demand for its redemption. More so than her fiction ever could, journalism commanded an authenticity that no doubt appealed to

[17] Constance Vaughan, 'Art Goes East, Bow Beats Bloomsbury Blather and Claptrap', *Daily Sketch*, 4 December 1930, p. 5. 'Their key focus was their habitual environment, the capital's postal district E3, and they earned praise for their ability to transform dingy backyards, dirty canals and chimney stacks into aesthetic subjects. They depicted mundane items and settings—the bridge over Mile End Road, the signals at Stratford Station and fog at Clapton—in such a way as to make them charming and even magical, suffusing the grim East End with beauty' (Adele Lee, 'David Buckman, *From Bow to Biennale: Artists of the East London Group* Review', *The Literary London Journal*, 11 (2014), 86-88, (p. 87)).
[18] Moore, *Spleen*, p. 128.

Moore. The transition to journalism provided a tangible connection to reality that enabled Moore to directly address the frustrations that she had tried to express artistically in her novels.

In *Fugue*, Moore argues that humanity's deterioration can only be redeemed through 'courage, enterprise, foresight, [and] endurance'.[19] A decade later, this sentiment would be the defining principle of *Scope* magazine, a publication at which Moore was a guiding force from its establishment in 1942, through to its dissolution in 1959. *Scope* promoted commercial and scientific innovation within Great Britain's industries as the means to successful post-war social recovery. Over her seventeen-year tenure, Moore would write a wealth articles that demanded the re-invigoration of British enterprise and an innovative and the progressive re-evaluation of social initiatives. In a 1947 issue, Moore asserts:

> Out of the gloom in which Britain has wrapped herself one ray of promise emerges. A spirit of fight is rising. More and more people are getting tired of the idea that doggedness will see us through. If we get over the crisis that will come, it will be because human enterprise and wit confound the paper estimates. In the conviction that everything will depend on the deeds of bold men we are scanning the skyline anxiously for signs of returning courage.[20]

The article makes the exact demands that Moore had proposed fifteen years prior in *Fugue*, but this time, the vital 'spirit of fight' has a very specific, tangible cause. To overcome this 'crisis', 'Britain must find its own salvation' and once again become 'rich, busy and vital'.[21] Moore's language, describing a rising, transformative 'spirit', providing vitality and 'salvation', clearly emulates her definition of the creative spirit as outlined in the 1930s. By the 1940s, Moore had developed her creative philosophy and identified a new objective for its transformative power. Instead of an abstract, artistic purpose, the

[19] Olive Moore, *Fugue* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1993), p.97.
[20] Olive Moore, 'On the Razor's Edge', *Scope: Magazine for Industry*, December 1947, p. 37.
[21] Olive Moore, 'Ground Floor', *Scope: Magazine for Industry*, July 1942, p.7.

vital spirit must revolutionise Britain's industrial and scientific ambitions in order to produce the tangible innovations by which society could be redeemed. Moore's terminology throughout *Scope* consistently echoes her original creative philosophy, prioritising individualism, progressivism and revolution. An article on the search for 'suitable recruits for industry' is entitled 'The Men of the Future' and demands 'good young people' for 'progressive companies' wishing to make the 'best use of a limited supply of brains'.[22] In addition to its arguably Nietzschean title, the article's argument also reiterates Moore's association between youth, vitality, and progressivism in her definition of the creative spirit. Furthermore, an article entitled 'Pure Science needs Free Men' states:

> Britain can be saved by the individualism and innovation of industry. Vital brains must be put to work.
>
> Pure Science needs Free Men
>
> But pure science cannot be given orders. You cannot discover to order! Discovery is born in the soul of the creative spirit—WHICH IS ONE MAN.[23]

Moore continues to promote the impenetrable individualism of the creative spirit as the means by which true, self-affirmed innovation may be achieved. The 'vital brains' of these 'free men' also evoke the 'free spirits' of Nietzsche's philosophy which Moore still clearly held as a template for aspiration. By the 1940's and into the 1950s however, Moore had amended the goal of her creative philosophy. The 'creative spirit' had to now pursue 'pure science' and use all of their potential to undertake innovative, progressive scientific research. Moore's initial interest in science, which she used to formulate a physiological rendering of the human body, developed into an enthusiasm for a science-led transformation of British industry. Moore's previously undiscovered work at *Scope* magazine provides a detailed and much extended picture of how her journalistic career would enable her to transform her original creative philosophy into a practical demand for tangible innovation and progress. Vitality, individualism, and aspiration remain as the

[22] Olive Moore, 'The Men of the Future', *Scope: Magazine for Industry*, September 1954, p. 39.
[23] Olive Moore, 'Pure Science needs Free Men', *Scope: Magazine for Industry*, July 1954, p. 52.

tools of the creative spirit in their bid to revolutionize British society. Moore hoped that the addition of 'reality', mobilized by a scientific understanding of the 'real' conditions of life, would finally enable the creative spirit to be successful in their ambition for innovative production and the salvation of society.

The reinvigoration of her creative project that Moore was able to articulate at *Scope* redefines our perception of her accomplishments as a writer. Her creative philosophy was not abandoned in 1934 as it has previously been assumed, it was instead merely transformed into new, dynamic configurations. Moore evolved and adapted to the ever-changing world, taking heed of the responsive resilience that she demanded of the creative artist. We in turn must transform our perception of Moore as a writer who 'mysteriously disappeared'.[24] Moore did not disappear, we have just previously been unsuccessful in finding her. Her prior absence from academic discussion can no longer be justified by her 'mysteriousness' and lack of material, for we must now perceive Moore as a prolific writer with a expansive career and a clear, ambitious creative philosophy. Her relevance as a significant and innovative modernist writer in the 1930s is undeniable and worthy of considerable additional reflection. Our understanding of her subsequent significance as an accomplished and prolific journalist, reporting on the monumental scientific, economic, and political transformations of the twentieth century is not just incomplete but almost entirely unexplored. As a valuable historical and social document, *Scope* magazine demands an entire project of its own and despite the additional sources provided by this thesis, there are still gaps in our understanding of Moore's life and work waiting to be filled. There is no doubt that our rediscovery of Olive Moore is still in its primary stages and that she deserves a great deal more analysis. But, this thesis aims to move our understanding forward into new territory, opening new areas of discussion and comparison and amending our conception of Moore as the 'mysterious' writer who disappeared, instead positioning her as an idiosyncratic and valuable pioneer of innovative and experimental creativity. Moore's own irrepressible perseverance must inform the conditions of our own continued efforts to comprehend and interpret her. The

[24] Moore, *Spleen*, cover blurb.

final paragraph of *The Apple is Bitten Again* aptly demonstrates Moore's unyielding optimism and determination to push towards a more meaningful, vital future:

> *Finale.* I have know the cold of all cold, wound of all injustice, despair of all loss, abyss of all remorse, depths of all solitude, the suicide's last grimace, the closed eyes of love.
>
> I have seen the winter's black entanglement of bough and I have seen Spring come bounding over the hillside like a child's ball.
>
> All these pass. Man cannot hold a moment or a breath. In this alone the hurt of life. Not its pain but its transitoriness.
>
> I love life. I would not barter with the most illustrious dead the privilege of being alive; my feet above ground, my eyes in the sockets.[25]

This resolute ambition, intellectual conviction, and infallible vitality should be our lasting impression of Olive Moore. An appropriate legacy for a discerning and tenacious voice that still has so much more to offer us.

[25] Moore, *The Apple is Bitten Again*, p. 207.

Appendix A

Olive Moore in 'Books Reviewed by Arnold Palmer', *Britannia and Eve*, 1 February 1931, p. 50. Image © Illustrated London News Group.

Olive Moore in 'Books Reviewed by Arnold Palmer', *Britannia and Eve*, 1 April 1932, p. 76. Image © Illustrated London News Group.

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