

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Closure in the Novels of Brian Moore

by

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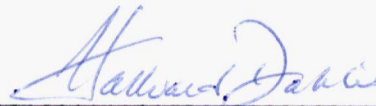
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the faculty of Graduate studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Closure in the Novels of Brian Moore" and submitted by L. Bonita Marshall in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



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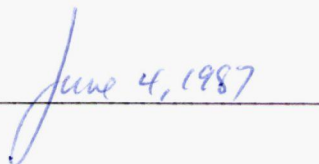


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ABSTRACT

Quite literally, the success of a twentieth century novel is defined by the success of its ending, and since there is a growing demand by readers and critics alike for the open-ended structure which permits and facilitates the imagined continuation of moral and ethical experience beyond "the end," this thesis studies the closures of Brian Moore's fourteen serious novels to date in order to determine whether or not they meet this demand. It is therefore appropriate that I have arrived at the conclusion that all of Moore's novels have, in one sense or another, achieved the goal of open-ended endlessness.

Part of the phenomenon of the open-ended closure is the ability of the novelist to convey to his audience the sense that they are involved in a reading experience which reflects the never ending flux of everyday reality in the process of its unfolding. In Chapter One I have traced the outline of the evolution of consciousness in Moore's novels from the publication of Judith Hearne in 1955 to Black Robe in 1985 by referring specifically to M. M. Bakhtin's theories of meaning in the novel. In Chapter Two I deal with the implicit moral obligation of the artist to himself and to society by defining the nature of modern and post-modern fiction with regard to its meta-fictional implications in An Answer From Limbo, Fergus, The Great Victorian Collection, and The Mangan Inheritance. Chapter Three explores the religious dimensions of Moore's fictional universe and shows how he uses closure to resolve the internal and external conflicts resulting from the psychosocial forces which impinge upon the moral conscience of the characters in Judith Hearne,

Catholics, Cold Heaven and Black Robe. Chapter Four further delineates the changing perspectives of the modern individual in his/her struggle for personal freedom and draws specific conclusions about the emerging emancipation of both Moore's male and female selves in The Feast of Lupercal, The Luck of Ginger Coffey, The Emperor of Ice-Cream, I Am Mary Dunne, The Doctor's Wife and The Temptation of Eileen Hughes.

Endings are critical points for analysis in all examinations of the historical, social, theoretical and aesthetic qualities of literature, and we cannot understand how our assumptions about human life and social change differ from the past without studying closure. Because there is a growing awareness of the importance of closure, especially in the critical and structural development of the genre which is commonly recognized as the youngest existing literary form - the novel, this thesis contains an appendix which demonstrates the nature of the current critical debate regarding the implications raised over the refusal of open-ended texts to conform to traditional hierarchical narrative structures.

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I love you all, each and every one.

TO BRIAN MOORE

with gratitude
for thirty years
of
faithful labor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER ONE: "Introduction: The Novelization Process"	1
CHAPTER TWO: "The Protean Self of the Artist"	28
CHAPTER THREE: "The Problem of Faith in the Modern World"	58
Chapter FOUR: "Changing Perspectives"	87
CONCLUSION: "Open-Ended Endlessness"	120
APPENDIX A	124
END-NOTES	129
WORKS CONSULTED	132

CHAPTER 1: Introduction: The Novelization Process

In Closure in the Novel Marianna Torgovnick suggests that "the word 'next' ceases to be a pertinent question only at the conclusion, and the word 'end' in the novel consequently carries with it not just the notion of the turnable last page . . . but also that of the 'goal' of reading" (3). By making closure the unifying theme of my thesis I hope to demonstrate that the goal of reading Moore's novels does not reside upon the surface of the last page of each work, but rather, that as each conclusion enhances our sense of the potential endlessness of the present moment at the same time that it manages to bind the fragments of human suffering into an epiphany which purifies our sense of reality, our goal becomes one with that of the novelist: to explore the ceaseless ebb and flow of a past that is consumed in a present alive with the possibility of future growth. Aristotle's definition of an artistic whole as "that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end" (65) is most commonly associated with the circle of completion which D. H. Lawrence describes as the "exquisite form: the perfect symmetry, the rhythm which returns upon itself like a dance where the hands link and loosen and link for the supreme moment of the end." For Lawrence, however, such perfection can be contained only in "bygone moments" or "moments in the glimmering futurity," because "in the immediate present there is no perfection" and "nothing finished. . . . There is no round consummate moon on the face of the unfinished tide" (85). According to Henry James, "really, universally, relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily appear to do so" (5-6).

It is obvious that novels must end, just as it is obvious that they must begin, and if they conform to our normal expectations, they must have a fairly lengthy section between the beginning and the end which we call the middle. However, the expanding flux of events and experiences that are expected to bring the novel's characters to a climactic self awareness far beyond their original innocence can no longer be contained by what appears to be a restriction of those experiences. As modern realists we have been trained to read beyond the traditional pattern where endings which close off and reduce experience are believable or acceptable. The finalities of marriage or death, for example, unless they have been reached through an instructive route containing an unexpected turn of events that will satisfy our twentieth century need to be surprised into revelation, are no longer tolerable metaphors for expressing the flux and contingency of life. According to Frank Kermode in The Sense of an Ending:

The story that proceeded very simply to its obviously predestined end would be nearer myth than novel or drama. Peripeteia . . . is present in every story of the least structural sophistication. . . . The more daring the peripeteia, the more we may feel that the work respects our sense of reality; and the more certainly we shall feel that the fiction under consideration is one of those which, by upsetting the ordinary balance of our naive expectation, is finding something out for us, something real. The falsification of an expectation can be terrible, as in the death of Cordelia; it is a way of finding something out that

we should, on our more conventional way to the end, have closed our eyes to. Obviously it could not work if there were not a certain rigidity in the set of our expectations (18).

On the other hand, however, if the closure of a novel is one that continues to hold the previous mounting disturbance, that is, if there appears to be no surface resolution, we are not exercising our hard earned reputations as liberated modernists if we insist that such endings are simply the evidence of hopeless resignation. Our sense of reality, as well as the knowledge that our expectation of an unambiguous closure has been thwarted, should inform us that such open-ended closures contain only the present moment caught between the past and the future. Furthermore, because open-ended endlessness is more or less the goal demanded of twentieth century novelists, the problem of closure has developed into a modern controversy regarding the best way to present the reader with "the sense of an ending" that is consistent with his/her self awareness "in the midst" (Kermode 8).¹

The controversy regarding the phenomenon of closure in the novel is obviously a part of the current debate over what the word "novel" actually means. Most critical books written on "the novel" are devoted to certain kinds of novels, and each seems to lack a field theory capable of encompassing the definitions of the others. For M. M. Bakhtin, who, according to the editor of The Dialogic Imagination, "is gradually emerging as one of the leading thinkers of the twentieth century" (xv), the word "novel" is synonymous with the name of whatever "new" force is at work within "a given literary system to reveal the limits," that is, "the artificial constraints of that

system" (xxxi). According to Bakhtin the novel is a form that has existed alongside what he calls "high" literature at least since the time of the ancient Greeks, whereas the consensus among many literary scholars is that the novel arose in the eighteenth century, and some even name Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe as the first novel ever to be written.² Bakhtin, on the other hand, "comes very close to naming Socrates as the first novelist, since the gadfly role he played, and which he played out in the drama of precisely the dialogue, is more or less what the role of the novel has always been" (xxxii) according to his conception of the dialogue that exists between the novel and other literary systems. In his essay "Epic and Novel" Bakhtin writes:

The novel is the only developing genre and therefore it reflects more deeply, more essentially, more sensitively and rapidly, reality itself in the process of its unfolding. Only that which is itself developing can comprehend development as a process. The novel has become the leading hero in the drama of literary development in our time precisely because it best of all reflects the tendencies of a new world still in the making; it is, after all, the only genre born of this new world and in total affinity with it. In many respects the novel has anticipated, and continues to anticipate, the future development of literature as a whole (7).

The "authentic folkloric roots of the novel," claims Bakhtin, are found in a "low" form of literature that contains "contemporaneity," is "flowing and transitory," and represents the everyday life "without beginning or end" (20-21). In contrast, for example, the epic is

"absolute and complete" because it always deals with a "valorized" and "hierarchical" past that is "walled off from subsequent times. . . . It is as closed as a circle; inside of it everything is finished, already over" (16). And even though Aristotle's poetics can be applied to the already completed genres "right up to the present day," when "faced with the problem of the novel, genre theory must submit to a radical re-structuring" (8).

For Bakhtin, the development of the novel is fundamentally an evolutionary process that will not permit "generic monologue," and he begins his essay by reminding us of its birth: "Of all the major genres only the novel is younger than writing and the book; it alone is organically receptive to new forms of mute perception, that is, to reading." In contrast, we know nothing of the birth of the epic because its "primordial process . . . lies outside of historical documentation." Its "defining features are considerably older than the written language and the book, and to this day they retain their ancient oral and auditory characteristics." We "encounter the epic as a genre that has not only completed its development, but one that is already antiquated." The same may be said "with reservation" of all other genres that have fully developed canons already existing as "authentic historical forces." It is into these genres that we know as "completed" and "more or less fixed pre-existing forms that we may then pour artistic experience." The novel, however, "has no canon of its own, as do other genres; only individual examples of the novel are historically active, not a generic canon as such" (3).

Bakhtin insists that, since the novel "is joyously aware of the inadequacies of its own language," and consequently, also "aware of

the impossibility of full meaning, presence, it is free to exploit such a lack to its own hybridizing purposes" (xxxiii). Central to Bakhtin's theory is "the highly distinctive concept" that language partakes in the continual "struggle at the heart of existence, a ceaseless battle between centrifugal forces that seek to keep things apart, and centripetal forces that strive to make things cohere." Bakhtin holds that this struggle "is present in culture as well as nature, and in the specificity of individual consciousness; it is at work in the even greater particularity of individual utterances. The most complete and complex reflection of these forces is found in human language, and the best transcription of language so understood is the novel" (xviii). As distinctly formal and well developed literary genres are subjected to the novel's "antigeneric power," their systematic purity is infected and they become "novelized." In other words, as the novel assimilates and hybridizes the so-called "higher" literary forms they "become more free and flexible" by taking on "an indeterminacy, a certain semantic openendedness," and "a living contact with unfinished, still evolving contemporary reality." This contemporary reality is the personal and never ending open-ended present (7). It follows, then, that the "new world" of which Bakhtin writes is a literary form in which "the individual is either greater than his fate, or less than his condition as a man. . . . There always remains in him unrealized potential and unrealized demand. The future exists, and this future ineluctably touches upon the individual, has its roots in him." Furthermore, the reality of this new world "is only one of many possible realities; it is not inevitable, not arbitrary," and "it bears within itself other possibilities" (37).

Bakhtin reminds us of the process of what he calls "novelization" by mirroring its nature in the conclusion of "Novel and Epic":

The process of the novel's development has not yet come to an end. It is currently entering a new phase. For our era is characterized by an extraordinary complexity and a deepening in our perception of the world; there is an unusual growth in demands on human discernment, on mature objectivity and the critical faculty. These are features that will shape the further development of the novel as well (40).

It is my intention to develop Bakhtin's concept of the novelization process in my thesis by showing that Moore's "hybridizing" novels evolve through a system of open-ended closure. Not only is there a movement toward more complex experience in each novel, and consequently in the expansion of consciousness in each of his major characters, there is also an evolving process of development from one novel to the next. Moreover, because each ending leaves the reader with a feeling that the possibilities for the growth of consciousness are limitless, each closure produces a profound sense that Moore has managed to capture yet another moment of revelation in the continuous movement of life.

As I have already noted, Bakhtin's main concern is with the nature of language, and most specifically with the aspect of speech, or individual utterance. Although his preoccupation with language is

central to his concept of the process of novelization, it is very different from that of linguists in that he does not believe there is a "general language," or a language "that may be divorced from a specific saying, which is charged with particular overtones.

Language, when it means, is somebody talking to somebody else, even when that someone else is one's own inner addressee" (xxi). Not only does an individual's language reflect the struggle between the forces that would diversify and those that would unify, it is also subject to the effects of the struggle, which may be why language occupies so central a place in the activity of mind, or, more explicitly, in human consciousness. In his essay on "Discourse in the Novel" Bakhtin writes:

Every concrete utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces are brought to bear. . . . Every utterance participates in the "unitary language" (in its centripetal forces and tendencies) and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal, stratifying forces). . . . The authentic environment of an utterance, the environment in which it lives and takes shape, is dialogized heteroglossia, anonymous and social as language, but simultaneously concrete, filled with specific content and accented as an individual utterance. . . . It is possible to give a concrete and detailed analysis of any utterance, once having exposed it as a contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two embattled tendencies in the life of language (272).

It is from this point of view that each of Moore's major characters might be seen as a receptacle for the complexity of the language that reflects the theme of each novel. The simplest example of this fact is obviously to be found in Moore's first and famous novel, Judith Hearne. Not only is this novel a reflection of the "low" literary form that depicts the "contemporaneity" of the "fleeting language of an epoch and a social group" (Bakhtin 272), it is also a brilliant metaphor for the expression of the conflicting forces contained within the language and experience of an individual. The unifying images that control Miss Hearne's reactions to her environment are of the home grown variety, but they nevertheless mirror her social conditioning: a picture of her dead aunt, another of the Sacred Heart, and finally, the buttons on her long pointed shoes that are "little shoe-eyes" winking up at her and "always there": when it seems to her that everyone else has finally abandoned her, they wait patiently where she can see them until she is able to step into them and walk into the future on her own two feet. Because Judith Hearne ends up where she began, enclosed within a single room with only her comforting but seemingly deceptive images to sustain her, the reader is forced to accept the closure of the novel as one that continues to hold the previous mounting disturbance. On the surface level there has been no resolution. On the moral, or ethical level, however, the reader senses that the expanding flux of events and experiences that brought her to a climactic self awareness far beyond her original innocence cannot be contained by what appears to be a restriction of those experiences. Through careful textual analysis "of the authentic environment" of Miss Hearne's final utterance it is

possible to deduce that her consciousness has expanded to encompass acceptance of the self that has always terrified her, the self that she has always feared no other person could love. As the novel closes she is just beginning to discover within herself the spiritual reality of the last word in the novel: home.

In Moore's second novel, The Feast of Lupercal, the environment in which the last utterance of Diarmuid Devine "lives and takes shape" is similar to the one that created Miss Hearne's consciousness because it contains the same "anonymous and social" forces of a Belfast setting, but it is also individualized and "concrete" because it is "filled with specific content" that is different from the content of Miss Hearne's language. Mr. Devine is an English teacher and he has therefore had a formal education that Miss Hearne did not have. As a consequence he consciously embodies the unifying mythology of an ancient tradition whose antiquated methods of societal control reflect his subconscious reactions to his own environment. These reactions control the personal choices he makes, and these choices, in turn, control his relationships. His final utterance, the word "yes," is a concrete, multilevelled "heteroglot," a conception of the world that encompasses "a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and the hour" (Bakhtin 293). It is the "conflict-ridden, tension filled" final word of an individual who has chosen to accept a fate greater than himself because he is "less than his condition as a human being."

Already the hybridizing effects of Moore's "dialogic imagination" can be seen at work. As his second novel moves to a highly structured and formal level from the more or less primitive level of the same

society depicted in the first novel, it encompasses a more complex "heteroglot" of the conflicting forces which mold his characters. Furthermore, the advent of a second novel that continues to thwart our expectations for the realization of personal potential forces us (the reader referents) to look for the future, which we know exists because we live there, in the next novels. We need "new" characters who have been able to move beyond the confines of an anonymous mass of socially stultifying traditions which, as Bakhtin says about the absoluteness of the epic, are considered "the single source and beginning of everything good for all later times as well" (Bakhtin 15). This is how the novelization process works, and Moore has not disappointed us with his third novel. The Luck of Ginger Coffey contains a central character who literally moves, both physically and spiritually, from the old world which imprisons Judith Hearne and Diarmuid Devine to the "new world" which provides him with the freedom to be the unheroic person that he needs to be in order to evolve and learn from life. His final utterance is explicitly expressive of the novelization process itself: "Life was the victory. . . . Going on was the victory. For better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health . . . till . . ."

The symbolic marriage that closes Moore's third novel binds its major characters to the transitory, flowing, and eternal continuation of a present that contains no permanent or idealized essence distanced by values set beyond the reach of human contact. Ginger Coffey's final moment of what Frank Kermode calls "temporal integration" (71) preserves the novel's contemporary living profile in the realm of "low" reality where time is always an integration of past, present and

future. In Moore's fourth novel, An Answer From Limbo, an aspiring writer tries, unsuccessfully, to separate the relative and temporal values of his artistic aspirations for the future from his specifically human connections to the past. When Brendan Tierney's mother comes from Belfast to live with him and his family in their New York apartment, she carries with her the contemporaneity of a past from which Brendan wants to dissociate himself. By refusing to face the "conflict-ridden, tension filled" present that results, Brendan also separates himself from his wife and children who carry within themselves his concrete connection to the future. His final utterance reflects this fact: "I have altered beyond all self-recognition. I have lost and sacrificed myself." Although he managed to escape from the confines of an old world mentality that held traditionally antiquated values, he has, paradoxically, turned the new world of his own creation into one that contains similarly destructive values that have walled him off from his own contemporary reality.

In order to re-establish the temporal integration of the novelization process Moore returns to the Belfast setting for his fifth novel. Gavin Burke, the hero of The Emperor of Ice-Cream, is an adolescent whose life and circumstances reflect for us the possible nature of Brendan Tierney's rejection of parental authority. Gavin is at first too young and insecure to escape beyond the confines of the old world mentality which brands him a misfit, and even though he is more intelligent than his parents and his older brother, they all brow beat and bully him in their effort to make him conform to the traditional but hypocritical world to which they blindly cling because they fear annihilation. Not only does Moore return to the old world

for the setting of this novel, he also utilizes a universal holocaust, World War II, to demonstrate the difference between the destructive values of the old world and the constructive values of the new. Ironically, as Gavin's family frantically flee from the break with the past which comes at the climax of the novel when Belfast is bombed, Gavin welcomes the bombs and stays to face danger, loneliness and death. His ability to face the grisly reality of possible extinction gives him his freedom not only from the false values he has been fighting, but also freedom from retreat into the childhood fantasies and daydreams which had previously been his only relief from the prepackaged monotony and unchanging abstractness of these epic-like structures with their stilted heroizing. As the novel closes Gavin's father has become the child: as Mr. Burke leans his head on his son's shoulder and admits his past foolishness Gavin's "new voice," his own inner addressee who has now become the adult, "counsels silence," and he takes "his father's hand" instead. The distance between the old, dead world and the new, living world is thereby closed through an act of wisdom and forgiveness. Father and son are united in a supreme moment of temporal integration which heals the rift that could have existed between them for the rest of their lives.

"The new cultural and creative consciousness lives in an actively polyglot world . . . [where] completely new relationships are established between language and its object (that is, the real world)," and consequently, "a process of active, mutual cause-and-effect and inter-illumination . . . is set in motion" (Bakhtin 12). Moore's fifth novel establishes a completely new father-son relationship by freeing the father from the past so that he can follow his son into a future

that contains the possibility of obtaining a new identity, and thereby modifies the commonly accepted belief that a person's past determines who he/she is to the suggestion that present experience can change and heal the past. His sixth novel takes an even more radical leap into the future by establishing the importance of one's connection to the past in the face of an ever changing identity. Mary Dunne/Phelan/Bell/Lavery, the female protagonist and first person narrator of I Am Mary Dunne, has been divorced twice and married three times, and has consequently changed her name, and her identity, three times. Lost in the chaotic mutability of human consciousness that is the result of the modern woman's freedom to choose her own identity, Mary searches through her memory and chooses selected events from her past in order to connect them in a meaningful way to her current crises, the fear of madness and personal obliteration. The temporal framework of the novel is limited to a twelve hour period that eschews the conventional chronology of beginning, middle and end because it "interweaves" various levels of consciousness together through a process that Bakhtin calls "internal dialogism," thereby creating a narrative pattern that continually dislocates time. Mary's struggle to define the nature of her existence at the present moment becomes a moment coexistent with her birth, and the closure of the novel implies that personal identity depends upon a never ending "interillumination" between past and present in order to preserve the future: "I will remember what mama said, I am her daughter, I have not changed, I remember who I am and I say it over and over, I am Mary Dunne, I am Mary Dunne, I am Mary Dunne."

Alan Kennedy³ feels that while reading I Am Mary Dunne "the reader should be constantly aware of the fact that this is a man telling a woman's story" because he believes that such an awareness "is essential" to the recognition that Moore is deliberately attempting "to transcend the limits of his personal view of the world in order to see it through a woman's eyes" (vii). Fiction, declares Kennedy, "leads us to see other lives as if they were as real as our own" and we are consequently changed because "we transcend our personal limitations." Furthermore, "while we make the effort by means of the words on the page to imagine Mary Dunne's life, we are discovering our own" (viii). Bakhtin holds that we all transcend our personal limits merely by using language, and it is thus our means of proclaiming an identity which we establish through continual "internal dialogism":

As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adopting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist as a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his word!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from

there that one must take the word, and make it one's own.
(293-94).

In his seventh novel, Fergus, Moore experiments further with the problem of personal identity and how it relates to the conflict-ridden, tension-filled environment of "internal dialogism." Fergus Fadden is an Irish novelist living in California while employed by a movie studio to write scripts, or dialogue. As a writer, Fergus is supposedly engaged in the creation of new experiences that have not occurred, but he finds that his imagination is filled with old experiences to which he must apply new responses. These old experiences arise in the midst of his present reality in such a way that they create visions or hallucinations of his past associations. The people who still lay a claim on his internal language project themselves onto the objective (textual) surface so that they appear to be real people. As a consequence the narrative pattern is fluid, protean and metamorphic, and the reader has difficulty differentiating between the subjective dream-like figures from the protagonist's subconscious mind and those that exist on the objective level of his conscious mind. Fergus must creatively exorcise the ghosts of his past through continuous dialogue with both the living and the dead until he is able to produce a situation in which his dead father can tell him what he wants to hear. "And suddenly, knowing this, Fergus raised his arm and waved, releasing them. His father looked up, saw the goodbye wave, and, grateful, raised his old white hat in salute."

The epigraph to I Am Mary Dunne comes from William Butler Yeats' poem "Among School Children"⁵ and very adequately expresses the novelization process at work in all of Moore's novels:

O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,

How can we know the dancer from the dance?

If the present and the past are intimately and necessarily related, as are "the dancer and the dance," one cannot continue to exist without the other, especially if we accept Bakhtin's belief that the future is rooted in the individual. In a strictly meta-fictional sense, Fergus speaks to us from the novel's cover in the same way that I Am Mary Dunne does by suggesting that the book is the identity of the character it depicts, and that identity is therefore fictional. The conclusion of I Am Mary Dunne insists, however, that Mary has become conscious of her "dialogic imagination" by discovering that her internal language is a form of "play acting" and that her mind is a "kind of theatre" in which she must learn to connect herself to her own reality. She must create her own dance by choosing

to assert her will to fight the "dooms." The existence of that consciousness and will is evidence that she is Mary Dunne and that personal identity is more than a bundle of perceptions and memories. Identity, self, somehow transcends merely passive memory: it is active. If identity is active, that means "I" must be an actor and, further, personal existence is established by the same magical logic as is God's: I say "I am," therefore "I am" (Kennedy x).

Just as Mary Dunne the play-actor discovered that it was necessary to connect herself to the physical reality of her mother's existence in order to assert her identity, Fergus Fadden the play-writer found it imaginatively impossible to disconnect himself from the subjective memory of his father's existence without first externalizing various

fantasies wherein he was able to re-enact the past in order to heal the rift between them.

By now it is possible to see that Moore's own internal dialogism works like Yeats "gyres"⁵ of historical change. As we follow the path of Moore's actively developing imagination, we can visualize the narrow end of the new world gyre fitting into the broad end of the old world gyre (or vice versa) and the two gradually converging to become briefly coexistent before they unwind to encompass a larger territory. That Moore was influenced by Yeats is evident when he so obviously employs the "cryptic" imagery from "The Second Coming"⁶ in his eighth novel. The two major dancers in Catholics are caught at the broad end of a "religious dispensation" that is coming to the end of its two thousand year era (or gyre) and the narrow end of a new religious era that is at its merest beginnings. The novel deals with the overlapping "tinctures" between the "antithetical" (subjective) and "primary" (objective) realms of the historical cones whose roots reside in the minds of two proto-existentialists wrestling with the problem of faith in the modern world. The closure of the novel affirms Moore's increasing insistence that each individual proclaim an identity that is consistent with his active participation in the private theatre of his mind. As the Abbot of Muck leads his monks in a final act of faith which he fears is mere role playing, he is acting in response to his personal perceptions of reality. "'Our Father, Who art in Heaven,' he said. His trembling increased. He entered null. He would never come back. In null." The closure of Catholics catapults us into the space of the great Universal void between human comprehension and the invisible future that unfolds itself in front of

us, and our sense of being cast into the emptiness of "null" intensifies the significance of the novel's open-ended closure, for this is a fiction set in the future which we already inhabit.

Moore's ninth novel picks up the theme that has become so familiar in his last three novels and exemplifies it through the use of irony. This theme might be stated most clearly by posing two questions: Does the imaginary constitute the the highest form of truth? And if so, how does one distinguish between the real and the imaginary? In The Great Victorian Collection the contents of the protagonist's dreaming life have mysteriously materialized upon the "concrete" parking lot of a motel in which he is staying while on a vacation. Although Anthony Maloney is momentarily surprised, he immediately claims authorship of the "materialization" and becomes actively involved in protecting and commercializing the "miraculous manifestation." The entire novel might be seen as a metaphor for the process by which art is produced and sensationalized, and Moore has managed to impart a sense that one's freedom of choice is paradoxically undermined by such an extreme form of fictionalizing. Accordingly, the antiquated and fanciful "collection" can be seen as a symbol for the solidification of a mind so set in its ways that it has unconsciously projected its contents into the invisible realm of the unfolding future in order to repress, or avoid, its need for continuous growth and development. In the novel's ironical closure Anthony Maloney gives in to existential despair and commits suicide, while it is the fate of "the great victorian collection" that is left open to the future, as the final sentence proclaims: "The extent to which it will outlive the man who

created it, or its interest to succeeding generations, is, of course, beyond the range of our predictions."

Anthony Maloney's "collection" of Victoriana very adequately demonstrates, by means of parody, what Bakhtin has to say about the already developed "higher" forms of literature: "This idealization of the past in high genres has something of an official air. All external expressions of the dominant force and truth (the expression of everything conclusive) were formulated in a distanced and distant image (everything from gesture and clothing to literary style, for all are symbols of authority)." Not only are such art forms "removed from the sphere of contact, one can and indeed must speak of them in a different style." By way of contrast, claims Bakhtin, the novel "is associated with the eternal living element of unofficial language and unofficial thought," such as "holiday forms, common speech, profanation" (20). Thus The Great Victorian Collection can be seen as a specific and concrete example of the dialogue that exists between the two languages. Throughout the entire novel Moore constantly invokes the reader's "internal dialogism" as he juxtaposes the informal and "unofficial" language of contemporary life with its formal and "official" counterparts. Consequently, the novel becomes "consciously and unambiguously . . . self-critical," as do all novels in Bakhtin's theory. That is one of the qualities of the novelization process, and the reason why novels are "fated to revise the fundamental concepts of literariness and poeticalness dominant at the time" (Bakhtin 10).

Having thus eliminated the possibility that one is able to "predict" the future through the analysis of fantastical art objects that have no connection to the continuous reality of human beings,

Moore returns to the present from the void (or avoidance) of the invisible future. By now the primary and antithetical realms of contemporary life, which were just beginning to intersect when Moore wrote his first novels, have created a tinctural overlap that provides for an ever increasing cultural flexibility between the past as he understands it and the modern world as the reader understands it. The setting for his next novel is a world where the contemporary woman no longer finds it as difficult as did Judith Hearne to claim a self-identity independent from the anonymous and official structures of language which authorize and control individualism. Rather, like Mary Dunne, Sheila Redden, the protagonist of Moore's tenth novel, The Doctor's Wife, is able to assert her own will and conscience in establishing a sense of personal identity which she feels will allow her to grow into greater self-fulfillment. Sheila reminds us of Sarah in The French Lieutenant's Woman (see Appendix A) because at the end of her life as "the doctor's wife" she leaves the past and walks into the future with "no look back." She does this, however, not because she is a remarkable Victorian woman who must demonstrate the freedom that allows other freedoms to exist, but rather because she is an ordinary, modern woman who is tired of being taken for granted by her family and her friends. The final sentence of the novel delineates this fact: "She went through the gates and walked off down the street like an ordinary woman on her way to the corner to buy cigarettes."

Jamie Mangan, the protagonist of The Mangan Inheritance is a frustrated writer left rootless and emasculated by his marriage to an American actress until her accidental death releases him to establish his own extraordinary connections to an unknown past that he dreams

will help him discover himself. Through a bizarre series of events which lead him to the discovery that his Irish ancestors were and are less than desirable examples of the new permanent reality he hopes to attain, he returns to Canada, the land of his birth, to carry on the responsibilities which his dying father bequeaths to him. His range of personal mobility encompasses a contemporary world whose diversity of language is taken for granted and his dialogic imagination functions within a cultural milieu that is continually widening and deepening, as is the dialogue between the old and new worlds which are both part of his "inheritance." Although Jamie Mangan might be seen as a prodigal son come home, the textual evidence pointing to the possibility that he will marry his father's wife and become the father of his yet unborn half-brother is certainly not a biblical image. As Jamie and his stepmother sit "in silence" on either side of his father's death bed, "watching him labor to breath, watching him die," the reader senses, if only at a subconscious level, that this closing image reflects the nature of the couple's developing future: a tension-filled, conflict-ridden battleground wherein they will probably need to create another language for defining the dynamic interillumination of family relationships.

Moore's twelfth novel, The Temptation of Eileen Hughes, moves even deeper into the psycho-sexual-spiritual interrelationships between people. Eileen Hughes is a twenty year old virgin caught in the midst of a dangerous liaison with a married couple who are not only her employers, but also, she believes, her friends and benefactors. When she suddenly discovers that their relationship with each other, as well as with her, is not normal, she acts with a sense of self-

responsibility and maturity that belies the commonly held opinion (the anonymous dominant force and truth) that a twenty year old girl - especially one from a small town in northern Ireland - knows enough about whatever she is doing to look after herself, let alone her widowed, half-invalid mother. Eileen Hughes proves that even one as young and inexperienced as she is able to act courageously and independently in order to preserve her self integrity because she possesses and asserts the modern female consciousness. She understands the same language that Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden understand, and thereby demonstrates the hybridizing effects of Moore's dialogic imagination. The closure of the novel provides the reader with an image which indicates that no matter what the future holds in store, a woman like Eileen Hughes cannot be tempted: "At the top of the hill . . . she again looked down the path. There was no one there." The implication is that because she chose to act from the depths of her personal and moral integrity in response to the complex situation which provides the plot of the novel, she has no subconscious guilt that will create threatening phantoms to haunt her in the future.

Moore's thirteenth novel picks up the theme of spiritual haunting and carries it to a much deeper level which consequently encompasses a broader reflection of how the conflicting forces of history become rooted in the intentions of an individual consciousness. Cold Heaven is highlighted with the first two lines from Yeats' poem by the same title.⁷ Because the novel deals with the subject of the entire poem, it is quoted here in full:

Suddenly I saw the cold and rook-delighting heaven

That seemed as though ice burned and was but the more ice,
 And thereupon imagination and heart were driven
 So wild that every casual thought of that and this
 Vanished, and left but memories, that should be out of season
 With the hot blood of youth, of love crossed long ago;
 And I took all the blame out of all sense and reason
 Until I cried and trembled and rocked to and fro
 Riddled with light. Ah! when the ghost begins to quicken,
 Confusion of the death-bed over, is it sent
 Out naked on the roads, as the books say, and stricken
 By the injustice of the skies for punishment?

Marie Davenport, the protagonist of Cold Heaven, is caught up in a series of events described by one commentator as "so gripping and yet so terrifying that we proceed from page to page with a mixture of joyful expectancy and dread."⁸ When Marie receives a vision of the Virgin Mary her emotional response is similar to that of Yeats, as described in the poem. Marie's response, however, does not end with an unanswered question. Instead, she refuses to accept the vision as her own, and eventually discovers a way to give it to a young nun who wants it and needs it. For Sister Anna the vision represents the personal truth of ultimate obedience, as well as public recognition for that obedience, an obedience that Maria refuses to accept. She does not want to remain cut off from the ordinary life that she had before the other world - the mysterious and threatening "injustice of the skies" in which she does not believe - had begun to threaten her. As Bakhtin insists, "there are no 'neutral' words and forms - words and forms that can belong to 'no one'; language is not an abstract

system of normative forms but rather a concrete heteroglot conception of the world" (293) created and made real by the individuals who use it. By refusing to accept the guilt and the sense of being punished for circumstances which are beyond her control, Maria asserts her right to remain a private individual who does not want to be involved in the process of commercializing the language of death and religion. As the novel closes Maria thinks about the battle "that she had fought" against the anonymous forces of history, a battle against "ineluctable forces" and "inexplicable odds," and rejoices because she has won the right to be herself, a free person assuming the responsibility for her own destiny. "The priests were gone. It was over. She had been returned to ordinary life . . . that known and imperfect existence . . . [with] its burdens, its consequences."

"In the actual life of speech," says Bakhtin, "every concrete act of understanding is active: it assimilates the word to be understood into its own conceptual system filled with specific objects and emotional expressions, and is indissolubly merged with the response, with a motivated agreement or disagreement" (282). In his latest novel, Black Robe, Moore delves deeply into the life of a man on the other side of life, a man devoted to what Maria Davenport would call "the other world." This is truly a novel dealing with the "ineluctable forces" of history because it probes the mind of a man involved not only in the spiritual and physical creation of a new world, but also in the process of enforcing the anonymous dominant force and truth of the old world upon the ancient and primitive inhabitants of that new world. The Jesuit priest, Father Laforgue, came to the seventeenth century Canadian wilderness of New France with the

intention of saving the souls of the natives whom he saw as "the Savages" and therefore "the children of darkness." In the process of his journey through that wilderness he enters into the hidden recesses of his own soul and discovers that savageness, as well as love and loyalty, is a condition common to all of humanity. Surrounded on all sides by the "low" and terrifyingly brutal contemporaneity of the authentic folkloric roots of the new world, he learns to assimilate into his closed circle of belief a new compassion for humanity and a new meaning for his faith. As the novel closes and he "pours water on a sick brow," the brow of one of the natives who is dying of a sickness brought by his civilized brethren, he realizes that he will spend the rest of his life in this "vast, empty land" caring for, and loving, his savage children. "And a prayer came to him, a true prayer at last. 'Spare them, spare them, Oh Lord.'"

It is significant that Moore's latest novel most clearly demonstrates the theoretical truth of Bakhtin's concept of the novelization process. Black Robe is a perfect example of the ceaseless battle between the centrifugal and centripetal forces at the heart of existence and a dynamic metaphor for the hybridizing effects of the dialogic imagination. The publisher of the first edition has heralded this novel as "a belief in the ultimate transcendence of the human spirit," claiming that "there is ferocity here and unsparing realism, as the truth requires. Black Robe enlightens and enthralls." Not only has Moore penetrated the anonymous forces of history to question the modern bias for romanticizing the nature of native culture, he has also portrayed the representatives of colonial imperialism as intelligent and compassionate human beings who are capable of independent

and self-responsible action in the face of existential loneliness and despair. By cutting through the reader's "apperceptive background," or what Bakhtin calls the "alien conceptual horizon of the listener," in order to "construct his own utterance on alien territory" (282), Moore's last word to date stresses the necessity of recognizing and understanding the realistic truth of Lawrence's notion that "there is no round, consummate moon on the face of the unfinished tide" of fluctuating experience which provides the physical and spiritual map for the living dialogue of twentieth century fiction.

CHAPTER 2: The Protean Self of the Artist

We, as writers, are losing sight of the real world in which our parents and relatives still live. . . . Most people still live in the old-fashioned world of the nineteenth-century novels. Writers, most of them, don't live in that world anymore, almost from the moment they become professional writers. That's one of the crises of the novel that nobody discusses nowadays.¹

Whether or not one agrees with the totality of these statements, they certainly prove that Moore, like Bakhtin, sees the novel as a force that should reveal the limits and the artificial constraints of a literary system by depicting the "authentic folkloric roots" to be found in the "low" contemporaneity of the flowing and transitory everyday life. Moore's comment regarding the nature of closure in his novels - "They're emotional endings, perhaps a change of thought, or a slight turn of direction. They're what happens when you lose your illusion or your illusion changes" (Cameron 75) - probably applies even more to the endings of An Answer From Limbo, Fergus, The Great Victorian Collection, and The Mangan Inheritance than it does to his other novels because the protagonists, who are all artist figures, are very consciously aware of how their illusions about themselves have changed. These four novels may be seen as a portrait of the evolution of the fictional selves of Brian Moore, the artist.

In his book The Protean Self Alan Kennedy argues that we are all creators of "fictional roles" which make our lives more meaningful, "not just novelists. . . . And in daily life we are all actors, we live in and by drama and fiction" (3-4). The main thrust of Kennedy's

book is an attempt to show that our generalizations about the modern period (roughly 1900-25) and the post-modern or contemporary period, can lead to the illusions about which Moore is concerned. It is often assumed, for instance, that the Moderns "were not at all interested in the reality of the external world," and that because they chose to write about "the inner world of subjective imaginings and 'vision' as opposed to the harsh realities of the 'outer' world of capitalist, industrialised Society," they were implying that "action is not necessary" because they believed that "the external world is only what I imagine it to be - which is the essence of solipsism" (29). On the other hand, we often assume that because the post-modern movement "is concerning itself increasingly with the surface of life," it is "superficial" (30). It is Kennedy's opinion, however, that most contemporary novelists are superficial only in the sense that

they insist on the reality of the external world because they believe in the necessity of acting in the world. They do not, however, sacrifice the inner world of subjectivity. Instead, they are more and more focusing their attention on the moment when 'vision' and imagination are externalized and fulfilled in the 'act'. The moment when what is merely potential in the mind or consciousness is transformed into what is 'actual' in the external world, is the dramatic moment (31).

Brendan Tierney, the artist of An Answer From Limbo, is so deeply involved with his subjective illusions about what it means to be a successful writer that he totally alienates himself from the external

life of his social contemporaries in the pursuit of his artistic goals. As Brendan stands at his mother's graveside at the novel's end, he realizes that he has created an artistic persona that is a fictional self, a "curiously vulgar watcher" devoid of all feeling. He has become a stranger to himself, a man unable to mourn, a man who can only watch and "remember" what he sees in order to record it for the writing of future novels. He now sees himself as the man he had described "only four months ago" as being able to stand "by his wife's bedside watching her face contort, the better to record her death agony. He can't help doing it. He's a writer. He can't feel: he can only record" (64, 269). Although this statement reveals his self knowledge, his recognition of the irony of this statement made when he was drunk and resentful of a friend's writing success - "resentment is, perhaps a key to my character" (8) - it also reveals his awareness of a self that Brendan the man separates from Brendan the artist. On the surface level, this closure might be seen as a denial of the artistic process, but on the moral or ethical level it is an affirmation of the reality which connects Brendan to the world of other people: "as she lay dying on the floor, her only hope of help was in my coming. If I had thought to phone her she might be alive today. . . . But if there is justice anywhere, there is a judgement" (263). When he discovers that "there will be no inquest" he realizes, ironically, that the world will not judge him. "Indifference, it seems, is not a crime punishable by law" (264). He will have to judge himself.

The dramatic action of this closure is that Brendan the artist is

judging Brendan the man in the same unforgiving manner that he had previously judged his mother, even though a man who cannot feel cannot hold himself responsible for his mother's death. Without the ability to stand outside of himself in order to judge himself, Brendan might never have come to the conclusion that to be human is to be depressed about being inhuman. "Am I still my mother's son, my wife's husband, and the father of my children? Or am I a stranger, strange even to myself?" Brendan does not, cannot, answer this question as the novel ends. He does, however, raise the questions required by all aspiring artists: "Will my writing change anything in my world? Is my belief in my talent any less an act of superstitious faith than my mother's belief in the power of indulgences?" (267)

As readers we are not able to answer these questions either because we have not been granted the privilege of reading the manuscript that Brendan's editors tell him could be the beginning of his literary success. All we know is that "the book has very high literary merit," is "beautifully done" and so exciting that they "can't wait to read the last part" because they believe they will "have a best seller on their hands" if "the ending of the book matches" what Brendan has shown them so far (165). We were never meant to know how Brendan Tierney's novel ends because Moore is concerned only with the way the writer relates to his "roles" as an artist and as a human being. Although Brendan finds himself unable to cry at his mother's funeral, while she was dying in solitary agony he was crying real tears because he had been asked to make some insignificant editorial changes: "My book for me," he told Max, "is the

belief that replaces belief. . . . I'm changing from the person I used to be. . . . I've always thought there'd be no question that, when the time came, I'd be ready to sacrifice myself. . . . And I don't know, I don't know" (252-3). The climactic and paradoxical drama of this statement is that Brendan has not yet changed at all. He is crying because he thinks of himself as the fiction he has created, and that is the psychic reality he is forced to enact at his mother's funeral in order to understand the truth of his illusions.

"Fictions about fictions are not [necessarily] interesting because the neuroses of novelists are interesting nor because of some recondite principle of literary criticism," declares Kennedy. "They are worth our attention because the characters in novels are interested in fictions; and the implication of this fact - in so far as characters in novels are like us - is that fictions are important in our own lives, not only the ones we read, but the ones we all make." Just as "characters in novels are presented and perceive of themselves in dramatic terms," so also "the novelist appears to us, as readers, in a dramatic guise" since "we know him only through his 'presentation' or persona" (3-4). He is like any other character in the novel and he is therefore like the rest of us who live in a social milieu which is a construct of reified fictions or beliefs.

The stranger that Brendan Tierney meets at his "mother's funeral" is a fictional self whose dramatic impulse has been defined for him since he was a child:

I read a great deal and like many unsure children I had a taste for tragic endings. But in my reading I discovered

that to fall from the heights of tragedy, heroes must first scale the peaks of achievement. In books I searched for a suitable daydream. When I was fourteen we were asked to write an essay about our ambitions in life. I wrote all night. I was, for the first time in my life, inspired. I wrote that I would become a great poet, that I would devote my life to the composition of a masterpiece and that, at the age of thirty, coughing blood in a last consumptive frenzy, I hoped to die, my gift still clear and unclouded (8).

After he was forced to read his essay aloud by a schoolmaster of "lumpish, pedagogic wit" who used Brendan as a "victim with which to win amusement from a class of captive boys" (8), his classmates ducked him in the school drinking fountain and forced him to read his essay again. "I was to be stripped of my pretensions, to be taught that lesson I had been too long in learning. But I learned nothing." Instead, "I screamed out that I would do everything in it that I promised. And my classmates, hearing the true fanatic in my thin, defiant scream, turned away, uneasy of me." Brendan the stranger is a grown up version of that dramatic boy who has been driven by a "harsh, recurring" nightmare wherein he relives "that moment when, by their fear of" him, his classmates set him on his way, "with no possible alternative route," towards a destiny which he has now reached. In his nightmare he "weeps" (9). In his daydreams he strives to let nothing stand in his way of accomplishing his revenge on society. The day that his publisher assures him that his novel will be a success he is overjoyed because he believes he has "justified" his "boasts" (163), and he believes he has proved the world wrong until he

discovers that his friends and his mother are not nearly so elated as he. "One book did not prove me right. I was not revenged" (168).

Near the beginning of the novel Ted Ormsby, a family friend who is helping Brendan's mother to pack so she can move to New York to look after Brendan's children, looks at a photograph of Brendan and recalls their last conversation before Brendan himself left Ireland. The nature of their conversation reveals much about Brendan's illusions:

'I'm going to New York because I love Jane and I don't want to lose her. Love is important too, or don't you agree?'

'O, yes,' Ormsby said. 'The world's well lost for love.'

'Don't laugh.'

'I'm not laughing.'

'All right then. Don't worry about me selling my writing soul or whatever. When the chips are down, I know my writing's the important thing. I'll be perfectly willing to sacrifice anybody or anything for the sake of my work.

You'll see.'

There are moments in conversations when the truth comes in like death: the friendship does not recover. This, Ormsby remembered, was one.

'Yes, Brendan,' he said. 'I believe you. You'll sacrifice other people, all right. But will you sacrifice yourself?'

(22).

The novel's final statement ironically connects Brendan's self-belief to this conversation which reveals that although he has never really

known his fictional self, the self that reverts to an abstract realm of beliefs where he sees his role as an artist as being more important than anything else, others have: "As we turned from the grave . . . I knew at last the answer to Ted Ormsby's question. I have altered beyond all self-recognition. I have lost and sacrificed myself" (269). The stranger who watches and memorizes the progression of his mother's funeral for future writing in the closing scene of An Answer From Limbo has not lost the world for the sake of love, instead he has lost love for the sake of revenge.

And yet, it is impossible for the protean self, "the self formed by imagination and acts (particularly acts of language)," to lose itself because "its centre (or its 'deep structure' if you like) . . . is dramatic" and can therefore "become all things" (8), declares Kennedy. "Once separateness, isolatedness of being has been achieved, then there is a possibility of marriage" (65) between one's inner and outer reality. Moore's four novels particularly concerned with the role of the artist in society provide the most obvious examples of what Kennedy calls the protean self. In these novels the major characters seem "to be 'playing roles', 'posing', 'putting on an act', being 'stagey', or 'creating a scene' as if they were 'actors on a stage' and as if 'all the world's a stage'" (28), a stage with pre-defined social roles which enclose and imprison their subjective consciousness. It is not until they have "acted out" their internal visions in the final "dramatic moments" of endings which reveal to them self truths about their own particular brands of narcissism, that they recognize the reality of the world beyond themselves. "Free

action is seen to be a necessary hypothesis for any understanding of man's nature that emerges from modern literature" (Kennedy 13), but the artist who defines his activity in that freedom as being something set aside from, or external to, the social heteroglossia of his contemporaneous society is himself living a delusion, a fiction created in 'bad faith'. "Both the Modern and the post-Modern (and here one would perhaps have to include all other periods and all other literature) are in search of something fundamental, which Yeats calls Unity of Being. Unity of Being is to be found on some middle ground between Alienation and Capitulation to Society" (Kennedy 39). True fictions are, and must be, an "escape" into more freedom for both the artist and his audience.

As we wrestle with the multitude of roles presented by the many characters in An Answer From Limbo we are forced to come to the conclusion that once Tierney is able to forgive himself for being who he is, he will also be able to forgive the world for being what it is, for we cannot believe that Moore is counselling a return to what Yeats calls "primary man," the man "who feels the necessity to cease from self-expression and 'substitute a motive of service for that of self-expression'." Primary man is characterised by an "enforced Mask and Will." Antithetical man, on the other hand, is free; "he is free to improvise his roles against the background of an 'inherited scenario'," what Yeats called "'the Body of Fate'" (Kennedy 37). Tierney is more-or-less still at a primary stage in the development of his personal relationships even though he has made the first step towards formal and artistic self-expression. His final "dramatic

self-enactment" is connected to his illusion of having altered beyond all self recognition when in actuality he is only beginning to know himself. Accordingly, his dramatic existentialism is merely a means to an end, a "playing" with the abstractions of society. "And the way to be free from outdated, hypostatized fictions is to make new ones when necessary," claims Kennedy. "The ability to make fictions is thus the guarantee we need that we are not necessarily prisoners of our systems. Fictions may, then, be an 'escape', but they are an escape from fictions, and delusions, and so an escape into freedom" (23).

Fergus, Moore's second novel dealing with the artistic process, provides a perfect example of the protean self as described above. Fergus Fadden is an established writer who has already published "two novels, some short stories and many articles" (75) which "were quite well thought of" (23). His last novel "was published in six countries" (24), and he is currently working on a third which "he had been forced to put aside when he came out to California" (42) to write a film script in order to make enough money to pay for his divorce settlement. "In the past year his life seemed to have become some other person's story, a farcical tragedy or tragical farce from which he was trying to emerge and start a new life. With Dani" (15). But in order to do that it seems that he must first settle his accounts with the selves he still carries around from his past. He will have to change if he plans to live in the same world as his young mistress, if he is to accept the fact that women no longer need to get married.

At least Dani, his girl, doesn't want to. She is happy the way she is. As the novel opens Fergus stands on the terrace of his California beach house "overlooking the sea. He stood facing the deserted beach and the waves breaking over it. And wept" (9) because he has had a "row" with Dani. Although he tells himself it "wasn't his fault," he nevertheless feels guilty:

It was so easy to make mistakes with someone from another country, of another generation, someone from California, for godsakes. . . . And so Dani had left the house angry, driving thirty miles to her work in Los Angeles without even a cup of coffee to start her day. While he had wept and had a vision (16).

Fergus' visions are apparitions which appear on the stage of his immediate environment as if they had walked from the body of "Thalassa . . . the loud resounding sea, our great mother" (11), whose external presence in his back yard is a constant reminder that Fergus is creating a series of fictional characters whose source is his unbounded, autonomous subconscious. The novel's last two lines remind the reader that this source of being is the eternal and never ending presence of the protean self with its ability to become all things: "In the east, dawn came up. Breakers slammed on the morning shore, monotonous as a heartbeat," as Fergus "walked towards the house" (171), his external emblem of the social construction that would contain his new life; a house now emptied of the ghosts of his past which he has finally released. "As symbol," claims Kennedy, "water points to the overcoming of isolation and to the achievement of

belonging - it points hopefully to the overcoming of the paradox of individuality and community" because "its very commonness is demonstrated by a seemingly endless list of the 'erratic originality' of its manifestations. The variety of its forms and the independence of its units are not to be overlooked." Kennedy also makes a juxtaposition of the word "language" for the word "water," noting that just as the human body is made up of 90% water, the major percentage of an individual's "humanity" consists of his/her use of language (77). Seen in terms of the symbolical, Fergus' subconscious must be transformed into the language of his emotions before he can resolve his personal problems. His tears wash away his isolating silence, transforming his internal dialogues into the dramatic expressions which restore his sense of self. Accordingly, as the novel ends his house has become the object of the knowledge he now possesses through the roles he has acted out on its stage, a house now built on the rock of self acceptance rather than on the sifting sands of guilt.

The protean self creates roles that are defined only as they appear and so, although they are dramatic and active and so perceptible to and comprehensible by others, are no predetermined part of any social structure. These unique modes of acting, these individual roles, are appearances of the self, and as appearances they testify to a reality underlying, but they do not by any means give the whole of that reality. They are an economical means of expressing a truth. They are fictions of the self; and not lies about

the self. These fictions realise the inner man, and guard against the solipsism of subjective idealism (Kennedy 9).

Fergus' apparitions are as unfamiliar with his surroundings as he is with his new state of consciousness; he has never seen apparitions before, and he is incredulous; they have never seen California before and they act as if they are surprised and dazed. The presence of the apparitions immediately transforms Fergus' perceptions to those of his younger selves who reveal to him his own immature biases and expectations. His parents have appeared, it seems, in response to his genuine but unspoken plea for help, despite the fact that they, like himself, are as confused as he about this new world in which he now lives, and yet at first he feels nothing but contempt for his father and shame for his mother (12). He still believes that adults should be infallible. When Fergus' father finally becomes aware that he is not in his own house, he demonstrates through his actions Fergus' feelings: "His father looked around the room, confused, looking at Fergus but not seeing him, his face the face of a man on a dark road at night who discovers he has taken a wrong turning and is not sure anymore where he is." Fergus recognized the "hurt, misunderstood eyes" but not the "look of uncertainty" which appears on Mr. Fadden's face when he "looked past Fergus" and "saw something that Fergus did not see," and his good night hug was not the remembered "perfunctory" hug, but "the hug of someone who does not want to let go" (110-11). Mr. Fadden soon regains his composure, however, and in a manner foreshadowing the novel's climactic closure, he tells Fergus in his old, familiar manner:

How can I be expected to get things arranged if you don't cooperate. . . . A great deal of time and trouble has been taken on your behalf, a lot of people have had to put themselves out. It's been very difficult, it's not at all easy, let me tell you. Remember, the world isn't run just for your entertainment."

When Fergus asks him what he is talking about, he replies: "You'll find out when the time comes" (116), thereby indicating Fergus' innate awareness that he is in the process of discovering something his father has always known.

Fergus' apparitions are connected to his internal turmoil, his angst (16), and their appearances immediately create the psychological responses and memories associated with his inherent sense of guilt. At the same time they provide him with the opportunity to work out his problems in a new way. For the protean self "acting" replaces "thinking" and necessitates "the reality of the 'not-self' as a field of action. . . . The intentional, extroverted nature of action guarantees the reality of others and avoids solipsism. . . . The resistance to the Self through which the Self can exist as agent must be the resistance of another self" (Kennedy 84). Fergus' interaction with his apparitions is emotionally and physically dramatic. He talks to them, smells them, touches them (63), argues with them, pursues "them with questions" (34), prays with them (109) and fights with them (69-77). He is even dealt a couple of punches "in the privates" (70, 74) by two Irish policemen, is beaten with a cane by an old school-master whom he in return almost kills (96-97), is hugged by his father

(111) and is finally mocked, bullied and beaten (158) by a mob on the beach where he attends a family picnic in honor of his eighth birthday (153) in the last scene of the novel.

Fergus' apparitions are so real that he has trouble distinguishing them from some of his everyday associates. Boweri, the millionaire producer whom Fergus sees as the threatening "conglomerate wizard" who has bought the rights to his second novel (52, 117), claims to be a man "who never had a mother" and he actually boasts that he is "a real son-of-a-bitch," but his public persona is "seemingly no different" (56) from the apparitions who accuse and mock Fergus, and he wonders if Boweri is also "a hallucination conjured up in the same way" (55, 117). Fergus fears Boweri as much as, if not more than, he fears his apparitions. "Perhaps Boweri was, in reality, infinitely more intelligent than Fergus? With Boweri," as with his apparitions, "it was hard to know. Words did not help. Motives were concealed" (55).

What Fergus learns from his interaction with his apparitions, as well as with Boweri and Dani, is that he must not be afraid to assert his individuality despite external pressure, despite his introverted tendency toward isolated subjectivism. He dreams of "five years to write his Notes from Underground, his hermit's book. In all that time, no correspondence, no phone calls, no visits from or to friends." But then he realizes that Dani should not, and probably could not, "be forced to live in seedy rooming houses . . . for five years of her young life? Ridiculous!" (62) His love for Dani is the bridge which connects him to the community that he has always rejected

and his creative self-interrogations - in the form of objectified "daymares"(105) conjured up from some "pre-speech area of his brain" (63) - provide the bridge to the epiphanies which suggest that "he will become the artist in fact, and in action, rather than merely in temperament, belief or potential." As Kennedy reminds us, "for Aristotle and his Scholastic followers, Knowledge is the human soul in act, a realization of a potency, a perfecting" (80-81). Moore certainly seems to be suggesting the same thing, especially if we pay heed to the novel's highlights, such as the emphasis on the idea that "a man is what he does, not what he says he does" (71, 124) and the importance of discovering one's own answers: 'Look, Fergus. Don't you realize I can't tell you anything? You have to find out for yourself'" (47-8), which is the implicit message of the closure: "Don't you see? If you have not found a meaning, then your life is meaningless'" (170).

As the novel ends Fergus watches his family leave for the final time knowing that his life is now in his own hands. His final interactions with his apparitions have been positive. The mob at the picnic, which is personified by the many individuals in his past who have helped to create his guilty feelings, and which can therefore be seen to represent his fears, finally stops tormenting him when he realizes that another person, the girl who personifies what in Jungian terminology would be called his "anima," is suffering needlessly: "and suddenly the outrage of this . . . broke into his panic, and he rose up shouting, 'Wait! Stop!' And saw the mob, caught in that one moment of his resistance, go slack, and uncertain, its fury checked"

(158). By forgetting about himself long enough to finally ask for his father, whom he knows and trusts, he is taking another step towards resisting his fear, and the mob forms a tunnel through which he walks "as though in a trance." Such an image is often evoked as a person's entry into the next world, but can also be inverted to become an image of a one's return to his home at the centre of the Self. Fergus' family "had been waiting" (158) for him to arrive at this point of acting on behalf of another, and in a gesture reminiscent of their solicitations on his behalf when he was a child - as is this "staged" picnic on the shore of his crumbling self-hood - they now try to help him remember, through playing the old game of "Twenty Questions," that this is not the first time he has helped this girl who the mob have been terrorizing (161). It is only after he overtly interacts with her, however, by taking her in his arms and trying to kiss her (164), that he finally begins to remember who she is and how she was connected to him. Freed of his panic, for he is no longer guilty as accused - or as he imagined he was being accused - Fergus becomes extremely angry at the misconceptions of the mob, which, by this time, is disappearing into the phantomed distance of its own unimportance, like "a dark swarm of insects . . . disappearing around the headland of Point Dume" (166).

After he has a simulated (?) heart attack, a dramatic enactment which may be seen to represent the death of his old self, his father comes to stand over him. "' Ah,' said Dr. Fadden. 'There you are. I wondered where you got to?'" (167) as if to imply that Fergus has reached some level of awareness which he had not previously experi-

enced. Because he is becoming attuned to his own ability to heal himself spiritually and psychologically, Fergus understands this implication. He "wills" himself to get up and walk and the death pain subsides (168). It is then that his father tells him an old home truth of his own: "'The world is a matter of life and death. . . . We have to live and die here. Do you follow me?'" Fergus asks if this means that his father is admitting that there is no afterlife. His father, however, suggests that not only must Fergus find his own answer to that question (which he has been asking repeatedly throughout the novel) but also that he must create his own heaven: "'Supposing I were to describe another world to you? Would you believe me? It wouldn't have any reality for you, would it?'" (170)

As Fergus' family is about to drive away "to some other, inconceivable world, a world which, his father said, would have no reality for the likes of him" (170-71), he realizes that it is time for him to release them from any responsibility for his life. They have "played" their roles in helping him to get to the bottom of his tremendous sense of guilt and he has found out what he wanted to know. It is okay for him to discover his own answers and make his own decisions. It is okay for him to be who he is just as it was and is okay for them to be whoever they are. "It was not their move; it was his" (171). He must continue to create his own meaning, just as he had been doing all day while he "acted out" his relationship to his past, particularly to his father.

Kennedy uses the relationship between Stephen and Bloom in Joyce's Ulysses to illustrate "the way the novel characteristically

moves from isolation to relatedness" in order to show that:

the way out of alienation is not to renounce individuality; it is rather to recognise that the common experience of humanity is to be oneself and alone. . . . Stephen, the artist, is individual, particular and isolated. Bloom has about him something of the universal: Man. And yet Bloom is no less of an individual than Stephen. He is perhaps more alone in Dublin than Stephen ever could be. . . . They are complementary opposites, and the point of the story is that they meet. . . . Bloom embodies much that Stephen has yet to learn (73-8).

Fergus' ability to "release" his ghosts has been part of the creation of his own meaning since it is a recognition of the fact that his father's life was not "a sham, a fraud, a complete waste of time!" (170). It was instead the foundation for the life which is now his own. When Fergus asks his father if he was happy in his life, Mr. Fadden, after a long explication of his own accomplishments, indicates that happiness is a "multi-part question" related to a individual's sense of purpose (112-114). Mr. Fadden found a society adequate to his needs, a rock upon which he built his own house. It is now up to Fergus to do the same thing in a new way, for he lives in a world which Mr. Fadden finds "a lost limbo" (111) of uncertainty. It is even possible that Fergus himself will come to see that perhaps Boweri is right, that perhaps the present ending of the novel from which he has been writing the film script is too threatening. "With the ending you gave us, we can't make the picture," said Boweri. "I keep telling

you we need some hope. Some little lift so's the audience can walk out, they don't want to commit suicide" (59).

In Moore's third novel about the artistic process it is the protagonist himself who commits suicide as the novel nears its end, for although The Great Victorian Collection definitely suggests that the protean mind can become all things, this novel also demonstrates that such an ability is not necessarily a creative function if "role playing" is taken in the sense of doing one's duty. As Kennedy reminds us, "the public person who takes his place on a corrupt stage with corrupt directors and producers in charge, cannot but sacrifice his integrity" (93). Anthony (Tony) Maloney is a history professor who has a passion for nineteenth century Victoriana, and his obsessions with the "object-ness" of the external world of artifacts turns his "real" world into a nightmare of fictional superficiality with which he can no longer interact. He becomes, as it were, a puppet of a system which manipulates and controls not only his objectivity, but also his subjectivity.

Although he spontaneously projects the contents of of his dreaming life onto the parking lot of his motel at Carmel-by-the-Sea in a manner similar to the way in which Fergus projected the characters from his past life into his immediate environment, that is, in a manner which defies all logical explanation, Maloney's miraculous manifestation is far more isolating and alienating than Fergus'. As Hallvard Dahlie remarks:

Maloney's dilemma, and by extension, ours, is . . . that his

dream has come true: how does one handle a reality that no one has ever created before? . . . For it is not merely a pleasant dream come true, but rather the emergence of a new and somewhat frightening consciousness for Maloney, with its own irrevocable conditions which ultimately destroy its creator.²

"If the novel has a responsibility to society," and obviously Moore feels that it does, "that responsibility does not lie in a blind loyalty to existing forms" (64), declares Kennedy, and his continual insistence that a Yeatsian Unity of Being is the central concern of the contemporary artist certainly aligns him with Moore. Kennedy points to D. H. Lawrence's work to illustrate that a kind of "excitement" can be aroused "in the reader who has begun to be persuaded by various critics that the novel can be nothing more than social commentary." Lawrence's primary concern was the integrity and the freedom of the individual, and he suggests that "our understanding of 'man alive' must be altered in a revolutionary way . . . in order to admit into that understanding what modern society refuses to admit" (65). Kennedy uses one of Lawrence's philosophical pronouncements to show how "an over-developed 'objective consciousness'," that is, "a rational, scientific cast of mind concerned only with the impersonal facts of the outer world," can be the cause of "personal disaster":

When the human being becomes too much divided between his subjective and objective consciousness, at last something splits in him and he becomes a social being. When he becomes too much aware of objective reality, and of his own

isolation in the face of a universe of objective reality, the core of his identity splits, his nucleus collapses, his innocence of his naivete perishes, and he becomes only a subjective-objective reality, a divided thing hinged together, but not strictly individual (70).³

Kennedy interprets Lawrence's "social being" as one who "no longer acts from a personal centre, but behaves only according to what others think of him" (70). He is vastly different from the continually developing individual who "is recognized as a 'member' [of society] not by his body paint or by his conformity to a prescribed pattern of behavior, but by the extent to which he is only himself" (73), and "the attempt to find a form for the individual which would allow him simultaneously to be himself, and to be for others, is obviously a search, ultimately, for relationships" (69).

Anthony Maloney's miraculous manifestation can certainly be seen as the creation of a visionary who is individualistic in his taste of subject matter. On the other hand, however, Maloney fits perfectly into Lawrence's description of a "social being." His initial intuition that "the sensible thing to do" would be to quickly disappear is only a manifestation of his fear that because this was an "age of instant distrust. . . he would be challenged, cross-examined, probed" (26), and he chooses to protect his unexplainable objet d'art rather than himself because he believes in it more than he does in himself. As the novel opens he is still in the prime of innocence, surprised, yet pleased about the manifestation of his dream, and angry that it was not immediately recognized for what it was:

All his life he had wanted to do something out of the ordinary. And now the subject he had studied, the objects he had seen and read about and remembered had suddenly escaped from his subconscious mind and become real, here in Carmel. Yet nobody seemed to understand just what had happened. All people talked about was whether these miraculous objects were originals or not. As if anything could be more original than one's dream come true! (59)

It is not long, however, before Maloney's "innocence of his naivete perishes." By the third day of his new status as a celebrity artist he is already deeply embroiled in the process that will create the ever-present reality of catering not only to the world of skeptical and non-believing Victoriana experts and suspicious law enforcement agents, but also to the professional demands of psychiatric, scientific and psychic investigators, newspaper and television interviewers, and commercial entrepreneurs. This is also the day on which he discovers that the items in the collection could be destroyed if he leaves it (66-8). Because he cannot separate himself from his creation, but becomes literally a "subject-object thing," Maloney's personal destruction is imminent from the instant of its manifestation as an object, and he actually creates his own hell by choosing to pit himself against a world of other strictly "social beings." He becomes nothing more than a mechanical "surveillance" device who loses all contact with the world of real people. As Dahlie points out: "What this implies is that any artist must surrender to

the world that which by the final relinquishing act of the creative processes properly belongs to it. . ." (114). But the "Collection" is also a concrete metaphor for the nature of Maloney's repressed spiritual, emotional and sexual life, and his inability to relate intimately to his own mother, to his estranged wife and most specifically to Mary Ann McKelvey, speaks loudly of his fear of personal relationships. His eventual suicide is a shocking but emphatically dramatic statement of the unhealthy and narcissistic nature of his dream come true.

The novel's closure leaves the reader not with the possibility of hope, but rather with the cold reality of an antiquated but meaning-laden "collection" of objects where narration meets ideology in the ultimate solipsism of an allegorical but epic simile. Dahlie uses Moore's own comments to justify and clarify what is, to date, his only novel in which the protagonist is definitely and absolutely closed off from the future. "The Great Victorian Collection" seemed to be the metaphor I wanted. . . . In a way I have my own 'Collection' to escape from: if I had not changed and written these new novels," such as I Am Mary Dunne, Fergus, Catholics, "I would be very much like [Maloney]. . . , caught, trapped, forced to dream the same dream. . ." (119).⁴ In the face of his earlier confession of commitment to the contemporary reality of the open-ended structure - "I think death is a cop-out. Another sort of vague theory I have is that ordinary lives do not end: life does not really end in death. . ." (Cameron 75) - Moore has created an unambiguous resolution to a fictional dilemma which he found irrevocable. Once again we are reminded of Kennedy's

insistence that fictions of the self are not lies; "they are one mode of the self in action," and they point to the freedom required "to distinguish between fiction and reality" (35). Because the novel's subject is basically concerned with what it means to be a whole person, its dynamic force is towards the uncovering of newer and more adequate forms of being related. The Great Victorian Collection may be seen as Moore's counterbalancing statement to Fergus. For although the individual must find within himself the creative energy to transform and assimilate his past by recognizing his/her spiritual connection to the rest of humanity, he will not achieve this freedom by idealization of that past.

Moore's open-ended reference to the unpredictable future of the "Collection" is an ironical statement parodying the "duality" of the subjective-objective reality "which it commemorates" (GVC 213). "And here we come upon the ever-recurring revelation of Art, there can be no reality without appearances" because, even though a person is more than the sum total of the roles which he plays, "it would not be possible to know at all what the deep self" of that person is like unless we are able to experience the "artificial transformation of that self" (Kennedy 18). In order to modify and change the fictions (illusions) which surround all of us, the artist must sense the possibility of escape from the conventions which bind or imprison the self. If the novel is to go beyond the epical, which Kennedy defines as the dichotomy of choosing between being "free, romantic, violent and an individual" or being a "socialized automaton" (21), if it is to live up to its name, as Bakhtin suggests, the novel must continually

provide new and different ways of looking at reality. "By limiting itself to copying or analysing 'social reality' the novel limits itself to pathetic documentary and the moral realm of fiction is unapproached," claims Kennedy. "We need not only to know our dilemma, we need to be able to put our knowledge into new actions" (22).

This is exactly what Jamie Mangan, the artist of The Mangan Inheritance, eventually comes to realize, and his story begins where Maloney's ends. He has fallen into the depths of existential despair: he feels as if he's going mad, "except that there's no me to go mad," he tells his father on his first visit home after his marriage has disintegrated. "It's as though I'd ceased to exist. . . . It's as if I - the person I was - your son - the person I used to be - it's as if there's nobody there anymore" (41). Mangan is actually a combination of Tierney, Fergus and Maloney: he is like Tierney in his ambition to be a writer (he wants to be a poet and has had a rather unsatisfying career as a journalist), like Fergus in his exploration of the past (although his quest takes him beyond the confines of memory), and like Maloney in his recognition that the public life of a celebrity can be a lonely and alienating experience (having suffered the direct effects of isolation vicariously through his diminished relationship to his spouse).

Although Mangan never reaches the level of artistic achievement experienced by Moore's other artistic selves, his dramatic personal experiences provide him with a satisfactory way to "unitary being" in a manner which is compatible with Kennedy's observation that we all

live by drama and fiction and Moore's insistence that the artist, especially the aspiring writer, must not lose sight of the "real" world in which his parents live. Consequently, Mangan's moral development is the most artistically defined in terms of self-fulfillment, and it is from this prospective that the closure of The Mangan Inheritance can be seen to reflect the moment when the highly subjective, imaginative and creative individual finds himself capable of dramatic but formalized action. As he comes to his father's death bed Mangan is no longer just "welcomed in his father house" as "a son come home" (16) after a broken marriage which carried him into one of his possible futures, he is a son returned to the centre of the Self from a journey into his ancestral and mythological past. As he promises his father that he will look after the "real" inheritance that is about to become his, Mangan is just beginning to create a marriage between his inner and outer realities. Having discovered that "blind action" does not resolve the crippling paradox that exists between the Self and Society, he is just beginning to function in the realm of what Kennedy calls "conscious and controlled action which originates in the self and is 'figured' or 'determined' as it is acted out, having its origin and continuance in the knowing subjective self" (20).

Not only is Mangan a three-fold reflection of Moore's other artistic selves, his progressive psychological growth also follows a tripartite pattern that suggests an alternative solution to the self imposed limitations which his counterparts have experienced. Because they are younger in terms of fictional chronology and therefore in

terms of their "inherited" fictional abilities to dramatically act out their delusions, they are unable to openly express their internal subjectivity. Mangan, however, comes quickly to the point where he can say of his estranged wife, who has humiliated him by rejecting him for another man who emulates the success and masculinity he believes he has lost: "There is no point in pretending to be fair anymore. I hate her. I hate her" (26). He thereby placates himself by giving concrete veracity to his bereaved sense of being a nonentity as the novel opens. Part of the process of becoming fully human is the ability to act upon one's impulses, and despite the fact that he is still at the stage where he is obsessed with blaming his successful wife for his failure as a poet and as a man, by giving vent to his honest, if self-pitying, feelings, Mangan opens himself to the healing process that begins, as Dahlie notes, "literally overnight" (145).

In The Protean Self Kennedy comes to the conclusion that:

The subject matter of the Novel is social in that the achievement of Unity of Being means primarily the recognition of the reality of the other person. It is not enough for this recognition to be merely perception, or conscious cognition although that is an important first step. It is equally necessary for consciousness to be realized in action; that is, to be actualised. . . . Acts can of course be good or bad, in the ethical sense. . . . [But] bad acts can lead to better ones, whereas unexpressed subjectivity, refusing to submit itself to the world of experience or to bind its theoretically limitless potential

to mere definitive actuality tends . . . to be destructive either of self, or other or both. . . . There is no blind devotion to the cult of activity in the modern novel . . . [and] there is a clear recognition that individual acts can be evil in effect. [However], sins of commission are preferable to those of omission. . . (284).

If we relate this conclusion to the nature of Tierney's, Fergus' and Maloney's dilemmas, it is easy to understand why Kennedy feels that even though "to be" can be either "cannibalistic or narcissistic" (and his study of Muriel Spark shows the direct relationship), "the denial of others is suicidal." As Mangan "actualises" the truth of this observation regarding the primitive impulses of his ego in the second stage of his personal quest to discover his ancestral identity, and therefore his poetic legacy, he also experiences the truth of Kennedy's insistence that "realised action leaves open the possibility of human improvement" (284). For upon meeting his Irish look-alike he quickly realizes that his inherited poetic impulse may never amount to more than "cannabilistic narcissism" if he does not correct his "own mediocrity, and his recognition that Michael's verse is both derivative and immoral reflects his own suddenly realized aesthetic and moral achievement" (Dahlie 148). As the novel ends he is just beginning the third phase of the new self-awareness that has resulted from his impulsive activity, and he is more than happy to set a future goal for himself which will fulfill Kennedy's conditions for becoming a poet "whose Art is also his Act" (285).

Although this closure strongly suggests the specific and objective form that Mangan's new marriage will take (see page 22 of Chapter

1), the subjective nature of that new reality is not inevitable and it bears within itself many possibilities. Such is the nature of the open-ended endlessness of the novelization process which posits a self that can make drama and fiction in a human universe whose creative function is to transcend both nature and society by exploring new ways of escaping the dysfunctional a priori reflexes of systems which are themselves only imaginary constructions. As Mangan sits at his father's side "watching him labor to breathe, watching him die," he is experiencing the universal phenomenon of the individual's human condition, knowing that the fleeting language of the epoch of The Mangan Inheritance as it is expressed through his father's life will continue to evolve through his own expression of that life in a future which exists because he exists.

CHAPTER 3: The Problem of Faith in the Modern World

The word "catholic" reflects for Moore what Bakhtin calls "dialogized heteroglossia" (see quotation on page 8 of Chapter 1), and the contradiction-ridden, tension-filled condition of belonging to the world of catholicism is the central issue in the struggles of the protagonists in Judith Hearne, Catholics, Cold Heaven and Black Robe. All of these individuals bear within themselves the centrifugal forces and tendencies of their contemporary realities as well as the centripetal forces of the unitary language provided by the closed and well defined structures of the religion which has conditioned them from birth. Like Moore himself, who in the Cameron interview defined his writing as a "substitute for faith" (80), his religiously dramatic selves find it necessary to define the meaning of faith in a manner consistent with their personal needs by breaking through the reified and imaginary constructions of their contemporaneous situations. Having established that freedom for the individual, at least for the artist, is dramatic self-realization (or fulfillment) in a field of other selves, I will attempt to show how the protean self creates roles for the other selves with which he/she interacts through his/her active knowledge of what it means to be human. At the same time I hope to show how Moore uses closure to resolve the problem of faith in the world of post-modern fiction.

Dramatic action is formalized action because it belongs to the world of artistic but artificial metaphors which can amplify the action of the everyday life of humanity. As we have seen by studying the process of artistic activity in Moore's novels dealing specifically with that problem, dramatic action is thought out and

intentional, especially when viewed from the perspectives of the open-ended closure. In the four novels that will be discussed in this chapter, Moore writes what I will call "ritualized drama" in order to direct the imagination of his readers towards the possibility of freedom for the ordinary individual by considering the value of faith (which can be seen as co-equal with consciousness), thought, spontaneity, ritualized activity and fiction itself. Fictionalized dramatic metaphors demand the expansion of moral consciousness by refusing to accept the denial of the reality of the individual. At the same time, the "person" is incapable of action until he/she discovers a way of communicating with the external reality (or fiction) of the dominant social constructions of his time. That is why the open-ended closure is so important to the twentieth century reader: it provides the possibility for reading beyond the ending and allows for the reconstruction of fictional selves who have the creative ability to consciously activate their own dialogic imaginations.

In the Cameron interview Moore says that Judith Hearne is a novel about a "very ordinary person who lost her faith," and that "this absolutely shattering thing, this complete loss of her beliefs and illusions" is "absolutely in the kingly Greek tragic vein, even if it is about a silly spinster, because the loss of illusion is a great loss." He then quotes Yeats who said that "one cannot enjoy life until one realizes it's tragic." In other words, although he feels that "one can be Stoic, and really in that sense, God-like in facing up to the ultimate meaninglessness of life," Moore believes that "very few people are" stoic or God-like. "Ordinariness," he claims, "is one

of my main concerns in writing"; ordinary people "have to have illusions, because if you finally lose your illusions about yourself you lose the motive force or whatever it is that keeps us going." Furthermore, says Moore, "I'm terribly anxious to preserve those strong links with the real world where, when people go mad, they may have a little bad turn, but most of the time they just sit and look at television." When the interviewer asked Moore "Are there no endings, then?" he was, of course, referring to the closure of Moore's novels. Moore replied: "There are endings, yes, but they're harder to achieve. They're emotional endings, perhaps a change of thought, or a slight turn of direction. They're what happens when you lose your illusion or your illusion changes" (75).

When we look at the structure of Judith Hearne, we see that this is exactly how the novel ends, with what appears to be only a very slight turn in the direction of protagonist's thought. Because the novel opens with Miss Hearne doing much the same thing that she is doing in the final scene of the novel - talking to her personal icons as she fusses over their arrangement in the new room she has just moved into - we are tempted to conclude that the disturbing flux of personal experience which brought her to this end has left her entirely unchanged. As a matter of fact, the novel's ending is so carefully constructed to mirror its opening that the final sentence is identical to the last sentence of the first chapter: "When they're with me, watching over me, a new place becomes home" (18, 184). This mirroring process conforms perfectly to the function of closure according to current basic definitions: such as Kermode's reminder

that "endings must make 'sense' of beginnings and middles" (139), Torgovnick's insistence that the test of effective closure depends upon "the honesty and the appropriateness of the ending's relationship to beginning and middle, not the degree of finality or resolution achieved by the ending" (6), and Barbara Herrnstein Smith's concept of "retrospective patterning," according to which closure may and should connect and illuminate "certain thematic elements from various earlier parts" of the novel by bringing them into "alignment." As a consequence "the reader perceives that seemingly gratuitous or random events, details, and juxtapositions have been selected in accord with certain principles" (119).

However, although it appears on the surface level that there has been no resolution, we know that Judith Hearne has definitely changed emotionally and spiritually. No longer is she the innocent who dreamed in front of her mirror, imagining through her "womanish glass image" that she could change "a plain woman" into a "delightful. . . gypsy girl on a chocolate box" (20). No longer does she believe that she will someday be supported and sustained by a strong, fearless and totally masculine Irish god who will love her enough to "guide" her and help her "conquer her weakness and wickedness" (57). And it seems almost definite that it will be a long time before she will again bow her head and give thanks to the "light of God" for revealing to her the "sacred mystery of the Mass" (57). She knows now, if only at a deeply subliminal level of consciousness, that the door on the "Holy of Holies" hides a very different truth from the one she has been taught to believe in; the truth she did not discover until she defied

the priest and desecrated the sacred altar; the truth that she has always created her own image of God, and always will.

Although Miss Hearne's dramatic impulses have been defined for her according to socially acceptable roles since the day of her birth, she has also created her own metaphors for defining her sense of self. The power of the emotions behind her deep desires and fervent prayers are all expressions of her experience of a lack in her life. In Critical Practice Catherine Belsey writes that: "Desire, the experience of lack, is the effect in the subject of the condition imposed by the division between conscious and unconscious, separated by the signifying splitting. Unfixed, unsatisfied, the human being is not a unity, not autonomous, but a process, perpetually contradictory, perpetually open to change" (132). Miss Hearne's inability to transform the self that she is into the self that she thinks she should be is undoubtedly the most reasonable explanation for her alcoholism. As she tells Moira O'Neill, when "you've got no hopes left . . . you've got daydreams instead and you want to hold onto them. And you can't. So you take a drink to help them along, to cheer you up" (164). Her drinking is her only means of escape from the pressure of needing to conform to what she thinks others expect of her, her only free (if momentary) connection to the spontaneous and fictional reality of her inner self. When she is finally rejected by James Madden, she believes she has lost her last chance of obtaining a husband, and one of her fictional selves is destroyed. But the real person who yearns for a husband because she believes that is the only way she will ever achieve the warmth and intimacy that are totally

lacking in her life, instinctively withdraws from this "death pain" by escaping into her only refuge, her own subjectivity. Released from her inhibitions through alcohol, she is able to express her anger, her sense of having been treated unfairly by the world, her indignation at the cruel way life had cheated her.

The desperate actions which constitute the climax of the novel are so emotionally charged with Judith Hearne's passionate suffering that she collapses. With the advent of this terrifying mental breakdown, however, she finally experiences the truth of her spiritual reality. For one brief illuminating instant before she passes into the blessed relief of "all darkness" and "all forgetting" (174) both Miss Hearne and the reader recognize how her desires were intertwined with her illusions of faith. This cathartic and creative act of exorcism (her physical attack on the tabernacle) provides the novel's central dramatic metaphor and stimulates our critical imagination. Miss Hearne is no longer just a silly spinster whose alcoholism arouses our condescending sympathy. Instead, she has now become the courageous "hero" of a tragic situation by which she refuses to be intimidated, and the power of the dramatic action which exposes the subjective reality of her fictional life produces our desire to read into the novel's closure more than the signified hopelessness of the surface narrative.

In the final scene of the novel Judith Hearne is recovering from a deep depression, a period of mental and emotional inactivity caused by her stunned recognition of the fact that, like Moore's artistic selves, she will always be herself and alone. She does not yet

realize, however, that this is the common experience of humanity, and she is afraid of this new awareness. The priest's warning that the unbeliever is condemned to eternal loneliness creates her impetus to return to the world of the living: "And I am alone. Like those unbelievers, no friends I would have. No help. Oh no, . . . Help me to pray" (177). She imagines Sister Mary Annunciation crying "Atheist" if she confessed the truth. This thought frightens her into a paradoxical confession to the elusive but personal reality of her own humanness: "I am no Atheist. I do not believe, Oh Lord, help my unbelief." She then hears the Angelus bell tolling the commemoration of the incarnation, and she spontaneously combines her need to understand her new state of consciousness with its old familiar meaning: "An angel of the Lord declared - pour forth we beseech Thee - help me, do not leave me." This internalized combination of thought, spontaneity and ritual reactivates her dramatic sensibility, and she begins to respond to her new surroundings. She notices that this new "place" she inhabits is "white, stripped, still. . . . No noise anywhere" (183). Fearing that perhaps she really is in heaven (or hell?), she calls for help and asks to have her icons unpacked. Their presence will prove that she still lives in the real world. As the novel ends she is just beginning to accept the new spiritual reality of a self that she cannot understand, and she begins once again to reconstruct the "fictional" self that will carry her into the future. "She closed her eyes. Funny about those two. When they're with me, a new place becomes home" (18, 184).

The retrospective patterning of this closure not only demonstrates the superficial and inflexible nature of Miss Hearne's limited external vision, it also illustrates the dynamics of her spiritual evolution. For just as the final sentence of the novel mirrors the last sentence of Chapter I, the opening sentences of Chapter II suggest the nature of her movement into the next stage of her personal evolution:

Her eyes, opening, saw the ceiling, the frozen light of what day? Sight, preceding comprehension, mercifully recorded familiar objects in the strangeness of the whole. Led the blind mind to memory: to this awakening (18).

The closure of Catholics deals specifically with what the "faithful" would call the "blind mind" of one of the church's shepherds, but, as I will demonstrate, retrospective patterning proves that this is not necessarily so. The Abbot of Muck is no longer an "old parish priest"; nor is he a good shepherd who still believes in the "certainties" that his monks believe in (17). Instead, he is a father-figure so aware of his children's illusions that he can no longer pray without entering "null." Because he will not allow his awareness to hinder him in the propitiation of his responsibilities to the monks who depend upon him to make a decision which he believes could cast them all into the terrifying agony of the void, it appears that he is making a very personal sacrifice as he leads them in prayer at the novel's end. But, according to the conditions established at the beginning of this chapter, there is a possibility that this is not

the case, either. Because this closure reflects the flowing and transitory consciousness of the everyday life as it is depicted in Moore's other novels, it is necessary to study it very carefully by quoting at length in order to emphasize the underlying importance of language in the creation of the personal fictions which provide the subjective meaning that continually renews life:

A miracle," he told them, "is when God is there in the tabernacle."

"But you said the opposite, you said that the sacrifice of the Mass is just ritual, that bread and wine remain bread and wine, that there are no miracles!"

Matthew, thundering: righteous, wronged. The Abbot, his back to all of them, heard their stiff intake of breath, the fear of their lives at these words, said in this place. He stared at the golden doors of the tabernacle. His fear came. "Prayer is the only miracle," he said. "We pray. If our words become prayer, God will come."

Slowly, with the painful stiffness of age, he went down heavily on one knee, then on both. . . . He trembled. He shut his eyes. "Let us pray" (106).

He bent his head. "Our Father, Who art in Heaven," he said. His trembling began. He entered null. He would never come back. In null."

He heard them kneel. "Our Father, Who Art in Heaven."

Relieved, their voices echoed his.

"Hallowed be Thy name," the Abbot said.

"Hallowed by Thy name" (107).

On the surface level this closure very definitely indicates that the Abbot has indeed entered the void forever. We know that whenever he tries to pray he enters "null," and must remain there "from day to day, weeks becoming months. . . . He had not prayed now for . . . years. . . . If one did not risk invoking God, one did not risk one's peace of mind." But we also know that by the time he leads his monks in the novel's closing prayer he no longer has any other choice. If he does not at least try to be "God's Abbot," Father Matthew, a "Master of Novices with no novices to master, an authoritarian figure denied the command he might have graced" (82-3), might take control and deprive him of the only place he feels at home, as well as his right to become the fifty second Father Abbot to be buried in the Muck Abbey (56-57). As he faces his fear and kneels to pray he is, ironically, protecting his "simple life" (97) from the "unyielding scruples" and "militant devotions" of his zealous companion-adversary. For, although the "thundering, righteous, wronged" Matthew speaks the truth about what the Abbot said, he does not understand that the Abbot is afraid of miracles, or at least of what they represent. Ever since his visit to Lourdes, "that sad and dreadful place" with its "tawdry religious supermarkets" and its "long lines of stretchers and wheel-chairs on which lay the desperate and the ill" waiting to enter "the stinking waters of the 'miraculous' bathing pool" (80-81) he had been

sickened and terrified by the hopelessness of those less fortunate than himself, and he had ceased to believe in miracles. Father Matthew does not understand that for the Abbot it would indeed be "a miracle" if God were actually in the tabernacle, a false kind of miracle that kept everyone from seeing themselves.

Although he thinks of his loss of faith in the educated language of one who possesses a Doctorate of Philosophy in Latin (18) and sees himself as ironically but aptly titled "prelatus nullius, nobody's prelate," having long ago recognized and accepted the knowledge of his human condition, Tomás O'Malley, the Abbot of Muck, is like Judith Hearne in his feeling of "belonging to nobody," and in his belief that the "table called an altar on which there is a box called a tabernacle" inside of which "there is a chalice with a lid" containing "twelve round wafers of unleavened bread . . . is all that is there" (81). He does not believe, as do the faithful, that the wafers are the body of Christ, or that the wine which fills the chalice for the sacred mass is the blood of Christ. As he leads his monks in this prayer which he hopes will sustain their faith, he is also hoping that he will prove to himself that "prayer is the only miracle." In that sense he is also like Judith Hearne as she prayed for help to pray.

But even though he sees himself as an unholy and "very secular man" (96), the Abbot still believes it is his "duty" to obey his superiors in Rome and he insists that his monks do the same thing. He also believes that "insubordination" and "setting oneself up as the ultimate authority" (86) is "the opposite of every vow" a man takes when he becomes a monk (85, 104). That is why he is leading his monks

in this prayer. That is why he believes prayer is the only miracle that will sustain their faith through what they consider is the "blasphemous" implementation of the new Catholic Order of Vatican IV. Not only has the new Order banned private confessions in favor of "public confessions" (15), the Latin Mass in favor of "English, or German or Chinese or whatever language the people in the church happen to speak" (51), it was currently working on an "apertura," which the letter Father James Kinsella has personally delivered to the Abbot claims as "possibly the most significant historical event of our century, when interpenetration between Christian and Buddhist faiths is on the verge of reality" (47). When Kinsella, with his "Order Plenipotentiary, signed in Amsterdam by the four current members of the World Ecumen Council" (21) and giving him the same power as the Father General at Rome (18), asked the Abbot why he had retained the old Mass until now, he replied: "I don't want you to think it was from an excess of zeal. On the contrary, it was, rather, from a lack of it" (96).

This comment places the Abbot squarely in the middle of the conflict depicted in Catholics. The word "zeal" denotes the struggle between the centripetal and centrifugal forces of the social and historical evolutionary processes which have their roots in the individual, such as the church's concept of "the spirit of aggiornamento" (47), the "Changes of Doctrine" (86) that precipitate the dialogue between the old and the new. At the same time we know that for the Abbot the word "zeal" infers a condition that eliminates the doubts and fears of those caught in the midst of the struggle.

The Abbot understands how hard it is for his monks to even think of changing some of their religious practices, those habitual rituals which have filled their lives with personal meaning and a sense of self-fulfillment while providing them with the unitary language of peaceful co-existence. "Years ago, he [too] had felt a certainty about so many things," just as his zealous visitor does, just as Martin Luther, "that righteous prig at Wittenberg" had done centuries ago when he nailed "his defiance to the church door. . ." (86). For the Abbot, the loss of faith means the loss of belief in the certainties defined by the old church in which he has molded and shaped his very being.

Despite the fact that the Abbot does not possess what he considers is the "missionary spirit" (44) of the new Catholic Order of Vatican IV, which promulgates "the combination of Holy Orders and revolutionary theory" (25), he nevertheless realizes that he can no longer maintain his comfortable position in the middle. As he tells Kinsella, "We're like a bunch of children, we pass the days as if we had an endless supply of them. It's only when someone like yourself comes along that we ask ourselves what are we here for. What good do we do?" (97) After Kinsella leaves Muck Abbey with the Abbot's promise that the conditions of the Father General's letter will be fulfilled, the Abbot is forced to take a stand. "What he feared most to do must be done" (105). As he turned to face the altar "his fear came," but this time he did not back away from it. He entered his fear. He commanded his mind to "obey," the way Father Kinsella commanded his mind to wake him at seven (77), the way Father Hartmann

had waited "in the rain forest until he had sapped the Bishop's powers" (48). He began to lead his monks in prayer for the first time since his experience at Lourdes.

Although the reader is tempted to conclude that the ultimate end has arrived as the novel ends, that the Abbot has lost all hope forever, or that he is eternally condemned to "the hell of no feeling, that null, that void"(81), we are also aware that the events leading to this ending have counterbalanced the dramatic connotation of the words which describe Tomás O'Malley's private perception of the reality of fear. Psychologically speaking, his first inception of the void can be seen to mirror his avoidance of the guilt he felt at Lourdes when he discovered that he was unable to cope with the deplorable suffering of his fellow humans, as well as his avoidance of the suffering he had himself experienced during those "two days in that room, trying not to think of what he had seen, trying to say his prayers." But Kinsella has informed him that "Lourdes is no longer in operation" (81). With the advent of the new Catholic Order of Vatican IV there is new hope for those who no longer believe in the "miracle" of the mass.

As the Abbot finds himself in the void which represents the image of a God that he cannot believe in, he knows he can "never come back" to that comfortable position where he "could pretend to a preference for private devotions" (82). He has committed himself to active participation in the new Catholic Order, and whether he likes it or not, he will be forced to lead his monks in prayer until they, too,

are able to accept the conditions of that Order. They are already following his new leadership, and as he observes from his unbiased and non-judgmental position in "null," they are grateful for his diplomatic arbitration in the space between themselves and the unfolding future. "He heard" the monks "kneel. Relieved, their voices echoed his." He has discovered that he can master enough zeal to be a missionary. He, too, can conquer the power of his own fear and continue to live in the void of not knowing all the answers. "Hallowed be Thy name," the Father Abbot said, like a Buddhist monk meditating upon nirvana, the blissful state of the emptiness of desire, or the zero of infinity. "Hallowed be Thy name," his children answered.

Because of the open-ended abruptness of this closure the reader is forced to consider the thematic elements which are illuminated by its retrospective patterning. Otherwise, our expectations of a hopeful future are thwarted in favor of a "complacent security" which denies individual freedom by suggesting that subjective solipsism is preferable to a zest for new and more meaningful ways of living. In light of the evolving moral conscience that Moore has been developing in his previous novels, the Abbot must confront the attendant dangers and responsibilities required of him not only to prove to Father Matthew that neither of them is a "greater theologian than the Pope or the Vatican Council" (104), but also to emphasize the nature of the expanding future which the novel suggests:

"I don't know what God's truth is," the Abbot said. "Do any of us? If we did, there would be no arguments between us" (52).

Kinsella smiled. "Perhaps not." He had been about to add that today's best thinking saw the disappearance of the church building as a place of worship in favor of a more generalized community concept, a group gathered in a meeting to celebrate God-in-others. But decided that, perhaps, the Abbot was not ready for that step (71).

A quotation from the tenets of Buddhism is particularly relevant for our understanding of the relationship between Catholics and Cold Heaven, which deals with the illusions that those outside the church have regarding those on the inside:

"Since, for each one of us, our own self is the most important, respect the self of your fellow man as you respect your own," said Siddhartha Gautama. "Seek in the impersonal for the eternal man, and having sought him out, look inward - thou art Buddha."¹

The problem exposed in Cold Heaven is the lack of dialogue between the so-called believer and the supposedly liberated, self-styled modernist who rejects religion totally: the non-believer. Marie Davenport, the individual caught in the gap between the two sides, declares herself one of the unbelievers, but is tormented by her idea of what it means to be a believer. It is not until the novel ends that she realizes it is possible for her to assert her own "free will" without censorship

from what she considers is "the other world," the world she does not want to live in, the world of which both Judith Hearne and Tomás O'Malley were automatically a part from the moment of their birth and from which neither could ever be totally separated. In Cold Heaven Moore has brilliantly provoked the obvious connection between superstition and religion by employing the form of the modern Gothic romance, as the title suggests, and this "dazzling tale of almost unbearable suspense"² explores the psychology of a modern woman's struggle to become self determining while living in the midst of a series of uncanny, macabre events which can be seen as dramatic metaphors for the tremendous problems involved in discovering the true nature of the self. The novel also suggests that those who live in the protected world of Catholicism are far more secure and less prone to illusions than the unbelieving, or lapsed Catholic, who is forced to work out his own salvation. None of the Catholics represented here have problems with their faith, and they are presented as warm, well rounded people whose ordinariness is accentuated by their misunderstanding of Marie's lonely delusions.

By looking at the ideas contained in the novel's two paragraph ending we can discover, through retrospective patterning, how Moore uses closure to resolve its various issues. This closure summarizes and reflects the universal dynamics of dramatic metaphor at the same time that it affirms the morality of the dramatic moment when what is merely potential in the mind or consciousness is actualized in the ordinary open-ended reality of daily life:

She looked up at the sky. No guns were trained from on high, ready to shoot her down. There were only dull gray clouds. Like an old battlefield, once cacophonous with the clash of steel, the roar of cannon, the screams of wounded and dying men, the headland, grassy and quiet, gave no hint of what had happened here. Like a battle field it had become its history, its truths altered to fit the legend of those who had survived. She thought of Daniel, who would never know about this, of Alex, who had been a part of it without knowing the part he played. She and she alone would remember it in silence for the rest of her life.

She thought of that life, that ordinary, muddled life of falling in love and leaving her husband and starting over again: that known and imperfect existence that she had fought to regain against ineluctable forces, inexplicable odds. The priests were gone. It was over. She had been returned to ordinary life, to its burdens, its consequences. She looked up toward the Point Lobos Motor Inn. She began to walk toward Alex's unit, rehearsing what she would say to him" (264-5).

By centering this closure within the personal subjectivity of the protagonist's mind, Moore captures the triumph of the individual's ability to persevere in spite of seemingly "inexplicable odds," and proves, once more, that the form of the post-modern novel is one in which the individual is ultimately responsible for his/her own future. As we arrive at this ending Marie is rejoicing because "she had

refused and she had won." What she has refused, of course, is the issue central to the novel: the mystery about why someone like herself, who had never even been confirmed in the church of the religion into which she had been baptized (55), should have a vision of the Virgin Mary, whom she doesn't even believe in. The apparition had told her that the rock on which it stood "must be a place of pilgrimage" and commanded her to "tell the priests" (114). It took Marie a long time, however, to get around to obeying this command because she did not want to tell anyone about what she had seen for two reasons: first, she fears the publicity that she thinks will be the result of such a confession; secondly, she fears that unreligious "ordinary" people, like Alex and Daniel, will think she is crazy. When Marie finally musters the courage to tell a priest about her vision, she emphasizes the two-fold nature of her dilemma by first stressing the fact that she didn't think he was "going to believe" her, and that she "didn't blame him" because she "wouldn't believe if it were told to" her. "Yet, it's the truth," she asserted. Secondly, she ironically points out the difference between herself and the Monsignor by making sure he understands that she was "not a Catholic," and that she did not "believe in an afterlife or religion or any of that." Consequently, Monsignor Cassidy decided even before she began her description of the vision that she was "educated" and "upset" enough to seem "almost hostile," but "not crazy" (112). The novel's closure confirms the Monsignor's observations:

"The church teaches that we're none of us obliged to believe in miracles or miraculous apparitions. You've chosen not

to. So I'm going to leave you out of my report altogether. Remember, if you say you saw nothing, nobody can prove otherwise. Except, of course, God. And I think God has let you go. I think you're right. It's Sister Anna's vision now" (263-4).

Not only has Marie refused to accept the vision as her own, she has won the right to a free conscience. "She looked up at the sky. No guns were trained from on high, ready to shoot her down. There were only dull gray clouds." She is now free of the delusions of persecution which had plagued her ever since she had her vision; "a feeling that guns were trained on her from the vastness" of the sky, guns "ready to shoot her down" (6) because she refused to testify about what she saw. Whenever she thought about the apparition she has had migraine headaches which were accompanied with lightning flashes and the "rumble of thunder, like old malicious laughter" (43). She has also been tormented by nightmarish dreams of "the girl figure, its arms outstretched, looking up at her from the shelf of cliff, calling out the words of command" (151). On the ominous day which provides the dramatic opening of the novel - "one year . . . to the day" (8) after she had seen the apparition - Marie's husband, Alex, has the nearly fatal accident which turns him into the zombie who Marie "knew was not alive, as she was alive." She comes to believe that he has "been granted . . . a simulated life, a life in limbo (121) by "Something Evil," something which "we call God but it may not be God at all" (91), because she has not reported her vision. Alex's accident is the dramatic metaphor which connects her physical and spiritual realities to the "Point Lobos Motor Inn" at Carmel, the

place that is her "battlefield" for the spiritual and psychological warfare that she must wage against the "ineluctable forces" of history which have molded her superstitions. It is also the place where she first saw the vision of her spiritual self on the cliff below the Carmel "headland."

Although Marie does not understand the implied analogy, especially since she had her vision immediately after a secret reunion with Daniel (113), she is drawn to the Carmelite Convent of the "Sisters Of Mary Immaculate" (63) like a magnet to its opposite pole, and Moore very carefully points out the similarities between Marie and the Sisters. The Reverend Mother sees in Marie's face "not the face of any nun" she "had ever known," but "rather, the face of a nun as it might be depicted in a religious painting: pale, beautiful, suffering - a holy face" (110). She is recognized by the very old contemplative nun who never spoke or looked directly at anyone (78) until Marie came along. Mother St. Jude knows Marie only as "God's messenger" (222) come in answer to her prayers, for she has been having unexplainable dreams about the same apparition. The young Sister Anna eagerly accepts the responsibilities of the apparition's commands because she represents the childlike innocence of the apparition's appearance (114, 229-30), as well as of Marie's superstitions. Because Marie unselfishly gives up her own free will (91, 222) and allows herself to become involved with her metaphorical and religious counterparts in order to save the life of a man she no longer loves, she is released from the two fold nature of her personal burden by the paradoxical fact that her own free will is something from which she cannot be

separated. As she forces herself back to the edge of the cliff, believing that this "will be the end of the life I knew, the defeat of my will" (219), she discovers that she is wrong. Her will has grown too strong to be defeated. But until this point Marie has been deeply troubled by her lack of understanding. She has even bought a couple of books in a secondhand shop, the only place where she could find books on a "subject "no longer in vogue" (54), but they didn't help to explain the "irony" of what had happened to her; all they did was describe the experiences of others who had similar visions, people who had lived in remote times and places; experiences to which she could not relate because she did not want to be committed to her own experience in the same way. Now, it seems, she will no longer worry about why she saw the apparition, she will simply "remember it in silence for the rest of her life." She has won that right.

As the novel ends the reader has no doubt that Marie will indeed continue to experience the trials and tribulations of "that ordinary, muddled life of falling in love and leaving her husband and starting over again" because she has now become completely herself and nobody else. She has seized her "right" to name and create her own reality by courageously taking the chances required: "I was in love with Daniel, I am in love with him, and because of that I was able to rebel against them" (58). Through her life and death battle with the agents that represented her fear of being forced to live in somebody else's idea of heaven, she has also fulfilled the requirements of "holiness" as expressed through her ancient alter ego, Mother St. Jude:

"I know nothing of God's intentions. But I can tell you what St. John of the Cross has written. 'I am not made or unmade by the things which happen to me but by my reaction to them.' That is all God cares about. Do you understand, Marie?" (222)

Black Robe, Moore's latest novel, deals with the problems involved when a person who has never been estranged from his faith, a person, who, like Mother St. Jude, sees the world on the other side of his protective "wall of silent, intense prayer" (226) as a "great desert" (224), is forced into personal isolation within a totally alien environment where there is no opportunity for contact with fellow believers. As he read the "voluminous letters" of the Relations, "the only real record of the early Indians of North America" written by the Jesuit Fathers who came to Canada "not for furs or conquest, but to save souls," Moore discovered "in their deeply moving reports . . . an unknown and unpredictable world" (Intro. viii). Combining this discovery with his knowledge of "the works of anthropologists and historians who have established many facts about Indian behavior not known to the early Jesuits," Moore has used his dialogic imagination to delve into "the strange and gripping tragedy that occurred when the Indian belief in a world of night and in the power of dreams clashed with the Jesuit's preachments of Christianity and a paradise after death." He has, as he had hoped to do, produced a novel which shows "that each of these beliefs inspired in the other fear, hostility, and despair." These feelings, here

produced as dialogized heteroglossia, "would result in the destruction and abandonment of the Jesuit missions, and the conquest of the Huron people by the Iroquois, their deadly enemies" (Intro. ix).

In Black Robe Moore has not only plumbed the archetypal depths of the North American psyche, he has also provided a psychological metaphor for the spiritual dilemma of individuals involved in the quest for autonomous selfhood, a model which might be summed up in the last words of Siddhartha Gautama before he died of food poisoning at the age of eighty: "Decay is inherent in all things, [therefore] work out your own salvation with diligence" (Kitagawa 95). "The purpose of endings," writes Frank Kermode in an article entitled "Sensing Endings" and written for a collection of essays on narrative endings in 1978,

is to create an effect not of 'repletion' but of pleroma, that literary fulfillment represented by the completion of Old Testament types in the New Testament, itself an image of a divine plenitude . . . [of] many small typological completions, little ends in themselves (155).

As Father Paul Laforgue, the protagonist of Black Robe, performs the baptism which provides the final dramatic metaphor of the novel, he finally hears in the silence of his own heart the only answer to his dilemma. "And a true prayer came to him, a true prayer at last. Spare them, spare them, O Lord" (246). Through the terror and agony of his journey into the vast wilderness outside of his small world of illusions he has discovered the real meaning of the word "mercy"

(180), and he is just beginning to fulfill the conditions required of a true member of the Society of Jesus as the novel ends.

No longer is he the man who once dreamed of martyrdom, "of some greater danger in a lonely place." On the day that his journey began he had rejoiced because he believed that his prayers had already been answered: "Today he set out for that place where martyrdom was more than just a pious hope. This is my hour. This is my beginning" (34). Now that his prayers have been truly answered, now that he has arrived at that lonely place from which there is no hope of ever turning back, he is aware of how his illusions have betrayed him. He has also discovered his own humanness, and he knows now that he fears death as much as do the vulnerable Savages who have become his sole responsibility: "God did not choose me to be a martyr. He knows I am unworthy of that fate" (225). Although this realization is couched in the terms of his inherited language, the reader senses the underlying feeling of relief implicit in Laforgue's expression of the fact that his spiritual burden has been lightened.

When Laforgue finally arrives at the Ithonatiria mission physically, emotionally, and spiritually beaten because of the suffering he has endured in order to get there - and alone, in order to fulfill the Savage prophecy (204) - he discovers that the head of one of the resident Jesuits has already been "split by an ax" (212), for he has arrived just in time to be involved in the native dispute about whether or not the Priests were "sorcerers," and therefore men of power, or "witches," and therefore "evil spirits" (216). As the council members discuss the method that will be used to get rid of the

priests, they disclose the reason for the brutal method used to kill their enemies:

We will caress them until they scream and are filled with fear. We will tell them how many of our people they have killed with their sorcerer's sickness and why we must pay them with death. We will cut our necks and let their warm blood flow into our veins, so that we gain their powers. We will eat the fuckers' hearts as soon as they have died. We will cut off their heads, hands and feet (217).

Although the two priests are now spared from these tortures by "an act of God - an eclipse of the sun" (223) which the Savages interpret as a sign of the power of these "sorcerers of death" who wish to use the "water sorcery" to kill them and lead them into "some fucking Norman place of the dead as their captives" (227) - Father Laforgue is no longer as certain as Father Jerome that this is God's "grace" and an opportunity for "warning" the Savages that they must not "dare" to harm "God's servants" (223). He has learned to doubt and question his former simple minded acceptance of a belief in miracles which has caused the Savages to consider him as one equal to, or perhaps more powerful than their own sorcerers:

Why have I ceased to pray? What error has come upon me so that, today, that eclipse of the sun seemed a phenomenon which, were I to believe in it as the hand of God, would leave me in the same murk of superstition as the Savages themselves? (224)

When Father Jerome is also killed with a hatchet (240), as if in fulfillment of the Jesuit Superior's prophecies in the letter already written as the reason for his journey to this place (13), Laforgue is instantly made aware of the extent to which he really is alone and as full of fear as the Savages themselves.

Chomina, the courageous Algonkian chief who had saved his life, had also helped to change his perceptions about himself and his pious beliefs. "You have no sense," Chomina told Laforgue, as he was dying. "No man should welcome death. . . . This world is a cruel place but it is the sunlight. And I grieve now because I am leaving it" (184-5). Because Laforgue, along with Daniel, Chomina and Annuka, has already been through the most excruciating tortures in an Iroquois camp, tortures which left him without a finger and Chomina without his wife and young son, tortures from which the four of them had barely escaped before they were "killed slowly, day after day" (167), Laforgue has come to respect and admire Chomina's wisdom even though Chomina refused to be baptized. Chomina could so clearly see and understand the psychological truth about human nature even while lying wounded and bound on the floor of an enemy habitation waiting to be subjected to further torture:

Your God shits on me and mine. My wife is dead because of you. My son is in the stomachs of the Iroquois. . . . They are not wolves. They are men who are afraid of each other. . . . It is you Normans, not the Iroquois, who have destroyed me, you with your greed, you who do not share what you have. . . . And I have become as greedy as you, greedy

for things. And that is why I am here and why we will die together" (165).

Laforge's love for Chomina has forced him to question his faith:

"what mercy will He show to these Savages who will never look on His face in paradise, these He has cast into outer darkness, in this land which is the donjon of the devil and all his kind?" (180)

After this spiritually shattering experience Laforge finds himself in the void of existential anguish: "it was as though . . . the pain, degradation and horror" had numbed his sense of "moral judgment. He saw Daniel lie in the arms of a Savage girl and felt no anger, no sense of sin" (182). He is beginning to understand how the young fur traders could so easily "forget the civilization they had left behind and, with no fear of eternal damnation, embrace the ways of ignorance and filth in which these barbarians lived" (96). A few weeks ago while he was still travelling with the Algonkians he had himself arrived at a point where he no longer believed "gluttony is the Savages' highest form of happiness" (38). "After ten days of eating only the foul-tasting sagamite," the Savages' "half-cooked meat now seemed to him as fine as any beef he had eaten in Normandy" (98). He had even come to the point where, instead of burying "his face in the boughs" of his bed of spruce, "hoping that the smell of the needles would dull the sickly odor of unwashed bodies" and wondering "How can I sleep in a place like this?" (39-40), he could hardly wait for "the time when, their feasting over, the Savages would crawl into their habitation and he could at last, amid warm bodies, find surcease from his fever and pain in long weary sleep," knowing that "tomorrow

he must rise and travel with the others. Tomorrow they must [all] journey on" (104). He is also beginning to accept the fact that perhaps Daniel was right, perhaps he would "never truly convert them to his teachings" (103).

As the novel ends, the Huron chief who favors baptism because he fears death more than he fears "the water sorcery," asks the questions which finally convince Laforgue that he is needed: "Are you our enemy?. . . . Do you love us?" In a sudden moment of epiphany he realizes that even though "Taretandé's promise to do God's will" probably has no more meaning than his own mechanical mumblings to the "silence" of the tabernacle (245), the only thing he can be certain about is his own answer to those two questions. As he performs the final dramatic ritual of baptizing the sick, he no longer knows whether he is performing a miracle or a mockery. His final word is a "yes" spoken to the silent meaning of the question "Do you love us?", a "yes" that commits him to a life time of loving contact with the unknown and unpredictable world of the Savages who "are dying of a fever against which they have no defense" (225). He has learned through his active participation in the terrifying reality of the new world which has now become his home that he must find his spiritual strength from within. Only now does he finally understand the meaning of the prayer he said to himself as he set out on his journey to this place: "This is my hour. This is my beginning" (34). He has also discovered that what lies beyond the individual is another individual, and another.

Chapter 4: Changing Perspectives

In order to discover the person he has become through his deep involvement with the nature of his fictional selves, Moore has descended to what Bakhtin would call the deep folkloric core of North American life in his latest novel. What that novel overtly stresses, I believe, is the importance of the individual's ability to preserve his subjective life in the unrelenting face to face encounter with the ever-present real external life which contains real other people. Through its unflinching commitment to personal metamorphosis Black Robe is an impassioned demonstration of the ability of the human spirit to transcend its inherent "death-wish." Freud "came to see the human race languishing in the grip of a terrifying death drive, a primary masochism which the ego unleashes on itself. The final goal of life is death," according to this theory, "a return to that blissful inanimate state where the ego cannot be injured." Freud had unending compassion for the ego, which he saw as "a pitiable, precarious entity, battered by the external world, scourged by cruel upbraidings of the superego, plagued by the greedy, insatiable demands of the id," but he was also "scornful of all utopian proposals to correct this condition" because "he was convinced that modern society had become tyrannical in its repressiveness."¹ It seems that Moore's latest novel might be seen as the beginning of a new understanding that proposes a solution to both of the problems suggested by Freud, for although the surface movement of Black Robe extends outwards from the centre of a brand new world in the barest stages of its artistic development, it still contains within itself the mythological roots of the European establishment similiar to that which was later

responsible for molding Moore's youthful selves. By combining the old, stable forms with a new, unstable reality Father Laforgue manages to move beyond the limits of human endurance to open his life to new meaning and a new sense of creative fulfillment.

The "folkloric image of man is intimately bound up with transformation and identity," claims Bakhtin,² and metamorphosis, or askesis,³ which he describes as "purification through suffering" or "a struggle with oneself" (116), is always a part of that process. Bakhtin uses the The Golden Ass of Apuleius⁴ as a demonstration of one of his types of ancient novels - "the adventure novel of everyday life" (111) - to show that metamorphosis is coincident with the subconscious death wish, and consequently with the desire for rebirth. "Metamorphosis" claims Bakhtin, "serves as the basis for a method of portraying the whole of an individual's life in its more important moments of crisis: for showing how an individual becomes other than what he was". Lucius, the hero of The Golden Ass, may be seen as "Lucius before his transformation into an ass, Lucius the Ass and Lucius mysteriously purified and renewed" (115). What Bakhtin emphasizes, however, is the fact that it was Lucius' "'individual guilt' which delivered him over to the power of chance ['blind fate']". Otherwise Lucius would never have discovered, through suffering, his "seeing fate" (118), which changed his self image. "Guilt is a function of individual personality itself; so is retribution, which is just as essential a force for purifying and improving the individual" (119). For without this shifting of appearance there is no means for grounding the internal sequence of

guilt, suffering, purification and enlightenment within the realm of individual responsibility. In this ancient type of novel, however, everyday life is, so to speak, spread out along the edge of the road itself, and along the sideroads. . . . It is always the case that the hero cannot, by his very nature, be a part of everyday life; he passes through such life as would a man from another world. . . . The time spent by Lucius in everyday life coincides with his presumed death (his family considers him dead), and his leaving that life is his resurrection. The ancient folkloric core of Lucius' metamorphosis is in fact precisely death: the passage to the nether regions and resurrection. . . . At the end of the novel he casts off the appearance of an ass and in a triumphant ceremony re-enters the highest, most privileged spheres of life [as a rhetorician and a priest], a life outside ordinary events (Bakhtin 121).

What has happened in the development of the novel since the inception of the folkloric tale of The Golden Ass is, of course, evident from the contents of Moore's Black Robe. Father Laforque has grown far beyond the status of "hero" in the sense described above: he has descended from the "highest, most privileged spheres" to become a permanent part of the "new" but "unknown and unpredictable world" still in the process of becoming. As the novel ends he has willingly and lovingly committed himself to active participation in the irreversible historical sequence of creation. This is the world from which Lucius must liberate himself, and with which he will never

internally fuse himself, even though he must follow the metaphorical "path of life" through its territory in order to discover the "real, living meaning" of his "relationship to his fate" (Bakhtin 119). The connection between his fate and his world is therefore external, uncreative and unproductive: even though he has changed his "self image" his resurrected life "is nevertheless a closed circuit. It is isolated and "not localized in historical time" because "the novel does not yet know such a sequence" (Bakhtin 120).

The correspondence between closed time and open time is an integral part of the evolution of changing fictional perspectives in Moore's works from Judith Hearne through to Black Robe. In order to study this process of change more closely I will in this chapter look briefly at the closures of The Feast of Lupercal, The Luck of Ginger Coffey, The Emperor of Ice-Cream, I Am Mary Dunne, The Doctor's Wife, and The Temptation of Eileen Hughes. Each of these novels deals specifically with the problems of growing (not necessarily upward but definitely outward and forward) into a new world of changing values where the old, stable ego is being replaced by a younger, less stable ego which has the flexibility to cope with the open-ended flux of experience.

As The Feast of Lupercal ends Diarmuid Devine watches Una Clarke leave his life forever, knowing that "he would never see her again" (239) because he cannot change: he cannot descend from the highest, most privileged spheres of life because he is too impotently virginal to cope with ordinary life. As he stands in the middle of the avenue watching Una "turn the corner" and disappear into the everyday world

spread out on either side of the road upon which he will never walk, he has become like the dumb, blinkered animal who watches with him, harnessed to the stasis of his consistent unfulfillment:

Beside him, in the avenue, a horse and cart waited idle.

. . . The horse's head moved like a mine detector along the gutter, reins slack over the strong back. Mr. Devine, watching as Una turned the corner, absently put out his hand and fondled the horse's neck. The powerful muscles fluttered at his unexpected touch and the horse swung his head up, looking wildly down the avenue in the narrow focus of its blinkers. Horse and man looked down the avenue, and there was no one there. The horse, harnessed, dumb, lowered its head once more. The man went back into the house (240).

Although Moore is obviously making this juxtaposition in order to emphasize the similarities between the horse and the man, he is also pointing out the difference between the two. The horse, like the ass that Lucius became when he descended into the nether regions of the "gutter," is perfectly at home in the ordinary world which is forbidden to Devine. For even though he does not play an internal role in that life, he is in a perfect position with his "mine detector head" to observe the secrets of that life. When Lucius' was accidentally changed into an ass instead of a bird by the witch Fortis, he was consoled in his "pathetic transformation in this fact alone, that thanks to my huge ears, I could hear excellently, even those things which happened far away." Lucius' transformation into a dumb animal provides him with his only opportunity to study and understand human

beings. It also provides him with the opportunity to act out the passion of his youthful years without subjecting him to the dangers of "ruinous chance":

"I myself," says Lucius, "remember my sojourn as an ass with great gratitude, for having suffered the turns of fate under cover of the animal skin I have become, if not wiser, at least more experienced. . . . And in my oppressive life only one consolation remained to me: to indulge that curiosity which is my native bent, since people never took my presence into consideration and talked and acted as freely as they wished" (Bakhtin 122).⁵

The presence of a horse (or an ass) embarrasses no one, and all feel free to open up completely. Even Mr. Devine, the man who cannot "touch or fondle" any other person, "automatically" relaxes in the horse's presence, and he instinctively reaches out to the animal for the physical and emotional reassurance he needs, subconsciously knowing that he will never get it from another person. Una "was right. For the rest of his life he would go on telling people what they wanted to hear him say" (239). Compared to the kind of imprisonment the man suffers, "the reins" on the horse's "strong back" are loose and "slack."

On his one brief excursion into his own version of the nether regions of life Devine also becomes an ass, figuratively speaking, not only because his attempt to seduce Una is gist for the public scandal which causes a great turbulence in the stifling atmosphere of Ardath's closed circuit, but also because he cannot fulfill what is considered

to be his normal sexual role as an adult male. When he is finally persuaded through personal guilt to confess his attempt to seduce Una, he stresses his abnormality: "I'm not normal, Tim, I had no feelings, I didn't want to do it." Like an adolescent discovering sex for the first time, he was driven to indulge his curiosity. "I wanted to know, don't you see? I wanted to know if I could!" Tim Heron's incredulous disbelief at this honest but embarrassing revelation is compounded by his anger that Devine would "try it on" (217) his niece and he therefore administers the merciless flogging (219) that connects the novel's theme to its title. Like the "barren women" who "placed themselves in the path of the flogging priests, believing that by means of the strokes, the reproach of barrenness would be taken from them" (211), Devine places himself in the path of his own punishment, hoping to atone for his sins of omission. "To fail to sin, perhaps that is my sin" (213) he tells himself in a moment of epiphany.

His expiation is, however, a private "joke" (238). Although he has become purified and enlightened, his triumphant re-entry into the sanctified world is a hollow victory, and his inability to initiate creative action leaves him permanently barren. For he cannot, like Lucius, cast off his ass-like appearance. "A Master who had human failings was a master to be mocked" (212). "He would never live it down" (235) because he still blames the world instead of himself for his impotency: "He had not even been allowed to disgrace himself, to run off to Australia or Canada or some place, and never be heard of

again, a man to be gossiped about, a man who ruined himself" (235).

As Alan Friedman remarks in The Turn of the Novel:

Those who would criticize Lawrence for failure to organize his fiction toward an inevitable close, ought in fairness to recall his harsh judgment in Women in Love of Gerald Crich, whose strength, readers will recall, was "hollow": "Only let him grip hold of a situation, and he would bring to pass an inevitable conclusion" (139).⁶

Perhaps this comment denotes a much stronger and more forceful personality than Mr. Devine possesses, but it certainly sums up the deterministic attitude which has conditioned his particular brand of weakness, as well as the "donkey-like" stubbornness with which he declares that it would be impossible for him to change. His final "yes" commits him to a living death:

As he passed the parlour door, Mrs. Dempsey straightened up and the gas fire died behind her with a sudden cough. Una's lipsticked butt lay like a small sin in the palm of her hand.

'Mr. Devine? You've finished in here, I suppose.'

'Yes,' he said (240).

After watching Una "turn the corner" that will take her into a new life beyond the confines of his "blinkered" imprisonment, Mr. Devine returns to the house in which he will continue to be "a permanent boarder" (236) because he does not have the strength of character to stand up for his rights as a human being and become (figuratively speaking) "the master of his own house." Although Una

is many years younger than he, and although it is obvious that she has also been raised in an inhibiting and tightly closed atmosphere, she has the fortitude and maturity to take her own destiny in hand. "I want to fight against what life is doing to me, and you're afraid to" (189) she tells him. As she disappears beyond the limited vision of the man and the horse, Una courageously enters the invisible realm (the void) of Devine's desires, thereby carrying with her the right to her namesake. In medieval literature Una was the female name meaning oneness or wholeness, and in Spenser's Faerie Queen she represents the Truth to which she eventually leads the Red Cross Knight. In The Golden Ass it is Isis who is Lucius' "seeing fate" and it is she who leads him to redemption. Like Una, she cannot tolerate slavery of any kind, and she therefore conveniently arranges the "fateful retribution" which provides the learning experiences required for his spiritual growth. The modern Una is no goddess, however. Nor is she committed to the closed circle of perfection that the ancient goddesses symbolize. She is a human being in her own right, and she must leave the mythological world of gossip and fantasy behind in order to move forward into the future.

The Luck of Ginger Coffey picks up the theme of "personal disgrace" and carries it to its open-ended resolution. As if to disprove the inevitability and conclusiveness of Devine's sense of futility, as well as his pessimistic self-propheying, Ginger Coffey actually does "run off to Canada" in quest of freedom. Coffey begins his odyssey gripped by the same horror of Irish bigotry and hatred

which kept Devine frozen in perpetual suspension, but his delusions of becoming the "Dublin Squire" who will fulfill the "rags to riches rise the New World was famous for" (12) are a part of his optimistic nature, and they actually aid him in those circumstances from which the traditional hero always tries to liberate himself. His "stint as galley slave, his diaper delivery job, his assignation with the call-girl, his arrest and trial - spell out shock, guilt, and mortification" and constitute the "obligatory ritual through which he moves from near oblivion to self-recognition" (Dahlie 74). Once again we are reminded of Moore's adage that "ordinary" people have to have illusions because they provide the determination necessary to overcome the futility and meaninglessness prevalent in the human condition. Had Devine been less aware of the reality of his contemporary situation and more aware of the life giving energy within himself, he might, like Coffey, have followed his dreams instead of his head. Dahlie points out that:

One of the minor ironies involved in the fictional journey from "Diarmuid Devine, B. A." to "James Francis Coffey, failed B. A." is the supremacy of the failure: Devine's academic achievement traps him forever in the role it has prepared him for, while Ginger's bluffing sustains him, and, indeed improves his chances, from crisis to crisis (71).

One of the major ironies involved in the triumphant marriage between Coffey's subjective and objective realities, however, is the fact that his acceptance of life as the ultimate prize is coupled with the return of his estranged wife, his "Una" returned from a freedom

seeking odyssey of her own. Although this fact is accepted by most commentators as if it were par for the course, Veronica's story runs parallel to Ginger's, and unlike situations in the traditional novel, provides a new way of looking at the whole.⁷ Coffey's role as a comic hero certainly provides the dramatic action required for the creation of those fictional selves by which he defines himself, but it is Veronica's coincident departure from the Coffey marriage which creates the metaphorical projection of the "picaresque" psyche. For just as the "rogue" and the "adventurer" replaced the position of Lucius the ass in the later history of the novel, the "prostitute" and the "courtesan" played the female role in the development of the "third person" consciousness necessary "for spying and eavesdropping on private life with its secrets and intimacies" (Bakhtin 125). This is exactly the image that Veronica conveys to Coffey when she decides to strike out on her own. After their separation he sees her as "a beauty he would have envied any man's possessing," and realizes "with shame . . . that he would preen and think of flirting with her. . . if she were not his wife" (142-3). In his feverish nightmares he argues and torments himself: "No, that's not Vera, that's some stranger with a beautiful body, a whore in black stockings, abasing herself with that man . . . telling how . . . because of her husband's foolishness she was forced to leave him" (149). When he actually tries to rape her (157) he finally sees himself for the "Sad Impostor" (160) that he really is, and he begins to wonder "why he had never really looked at her all these years?" (184)

As the novel ends and he goes to "join her . . . outside" the idealized "closed circuit" represented by the Executive & Professional sign in the unemployment office (7), he is just beginning to understand that she is a person in her own right; a real person like himself, with hopes and passions and loyalties of her own. He is no longer able to treat her as the lawful possession that the "perfect circle" of her wedding ring symbolizes. Because she is already willing and able to stand on her own two feet outside that circle, she has proved to him that she does not have to "stick by him" regardless of the circumstances. It is in this sense, then, that Coffey's final recognition of the victory of life is also his wife's victory:

He had tried: he had not won. But oh! what did it matter? He would die in humble circs: it did not matter. There would be no victory for Ginger Coffey, no victory big or little, for there, on the courthouse steps, he had learned the truth. Life was the victory, wasn't it? Going on was the victory. For better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health. . . till . . .

He heard her step outside. He went to join her (243).

Veronica's emergence as the female emancipation which began when Una disappeared into the invisible future at the end of The Feast of Lupercal provides the aesthetic as well as the moral justification for her liaison with Gerry Grosvenor. The fact that her disgust with Coffey's assumed poses and valiant lies causes her to take up with his cartoonist buddy is a paradoxical but subconscious protest against her husband's "old dream" of "travelling over the world, meeting beautiful

girls, living life's adventures" (111). Not only does Grosvenor represent Coffey's opposite because he appears to be successful and affluent, he also embodies what Veronica believes is unselfish devotion, for her idea of what constitutes "a man" has nothing to do with Ginger's macho ideals (192-3). Although her sense of self worth is still basically defined by how well she is loved, for she is just beginning to discover her own independence, Veronica's transformation does not occur because of her need to be fulfilled sexually. She leaves her marriage in order to find relief from her own sense of frustration, her own sense of being trapped in the limbo of her husband's shadow. As she tells Coffey herself, the reason she was going to look for a job was to escape from the futility of their life together: "I'm sick of your lies and dreams and schemes that founder as soon as you put your hand to them. I'm sick of your selfishness and your alibis" (59).

There is a double irony in Veronica's compulsion to take positive action when her husband is unable to do so because she is the one who at first wants to return to the stifling security of the gossip-ridden social structure of the past. It is not until Ginger squanders their passage money that she is forced to look forward into the future. If she had not had the strength to step beyond the confines of her marriage in order to experience a wider range of possible alternatives to the financial and moral problems controlling her stream of consciousness, and therefore her ability to continue coping with the ethical form of the new vision of existence which her husband has achieved

by the novel's end, she would have destroyed both herself and her marriage because she would never have experienced the truth of her husband's basic integrity or the shallowness of her lover. As the novel ends and she returns to the kitchen to put on Ginger's eggs, she does so with the eagerness of one who is no longer confined to the sole occupation of chief drudge and household slave. Through her own initiative she has gained the same freedom that her husband now has: she has moved beyond the confines of the closed circles which defined the shape of the traditional novel to join her family in the creation of a new and better world that exists, as Dahlie puts it, "only in a kind of unlimited pragmatism and compromise deriving from one's needs and capabilities" (79).

As The Emperor of Ice-Cream ends the confluence of Moore's developing sensibility is given concrete but fictional veracity in the metaphorical birth of a brand new world about to arise from the ashes of the old. As Gavin Burke sits in his father's "condemned house," holding the hand of his weeping parent who has lost everything that a lifetime of hard work and apparent success has brought him, he is a direct representative of the less stable but more flexible ego that Ginger Coffey has learned to accept as his own. At the youthful age of seventeen this adolescent protagonist has transcended his inherent death wish and developed his own grown-up voice:

He heeded that voice, heeded it as he had never heeded the childish voices of his angels. Black Angel, White Angel: they had gone forever. His father was crying. The voice

would tell him what to do. From now on, he would know these things.

His father seemed aware of this change. He leaned his untidy, gray head on Gavin's shoulder, nodding, weeping, confirming. "Oh, Gavin," his father said. "I've been a fool. Such a fool."

The new voice counseled silence. He took his father's hand (250).

Not only does this conclusion join the father and the son in a transcendent moment of mutual understanding which creates the conditions for a continuing relationship, it also suggests that the old assumptions about character and society have already given place to newer ones. The World War II bombing of Belfast that has destroyed the old "closed circuit" of bigotry and prejudice has also provided the ineluctable and historical opening necessary for the values which represent the restructuring of self and world, sequence and consequence in the fictional world of Brian Moore. As Dahlie has informed us,

according to his own admission . . . Moore's youngest protagonist . . . is his most autobiographical one, but the fact that he waited until his fifth novel to write his Bildungsroman allowed him to apply a chronological and aesthetic distancing to offset the risk of pure autobiography. Moore's use of a twenty-five-year-old event to illuminate Gavin's situation is both historically accurate and aesthetically convincing: the bombing of Belfast suddenly made manifest the supremacy of the carpe diem

philosophy which Gavin's fumbling rebellion against the confining forces of that dead city had already anticipated (61).

The emotional direction of the newly developing ego which is spelled out by the Stevens poem underlying the novel's title, especially the fragment which Gavin liked - "Let be be finale of seem./ The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream." - because "it seemed to sum things up" (8), is very appropriately interpreted by Dahlie as "the overriding priority of the moment, and the realization that everything is in a state of flux" (69). As the novel ends and Gavin's "cold grown-up voice" tells him that "his father was the child now" because he did not know that "everything had changed, that things would never be the same again," he aligns both himself and Moore with the "flux of experience" which is the most basic and primitive process creating the "inexorable" and "ethical implications" of the modern novel. According to Friedman, it is the "organization" and deliberate "design of experience" that transcribes what he calls the "stream of conscience - the flux of moral experience" - underlying the "interaction in time between the self and the world" in the open-ended novel. For, as he insists:

Time here is of the essence. It is the narrative interaction - that is, in time, in the storyteller's own good time - between the subjective and the objective worlds that creates what we call the novel . . . the interaction in time between the self and the world . . . at precisely the forward-moving point of their intersection (Intro. xiv).

Gavin's ability to act "decisively when he has to dissolve all the fears and doubts which had previously immobilized him" (Dahlie 68), and provides the symbolic and psychological "summing up" required for participation in the creation of the new and unknown world where he would be free "to be" himself without "the pretenses and compromises which had helped keep him becalmed in indecision between adolescent and adult life" (225). He welcomed the holocaust with "an extraordinary elation, a tumult of joy. He felt like dancing a Cherokee war dance on the edge of the parapet" (199) because he intuitively recognized it as his opportunity to participate in the creation of the new world prophesied by the his poet allies. By way of contrast, his father's paradoxical fear of life has kept him chained to the dead social forms which give the illusory appearance of protection, and his inability to give up authoritative control of his world manifests itself in blatant immorality.

The newly born ego which Gavin's grown-up voice represents as the novel ends is one that counsels forgiveness as well as "silence": "He looked at the wireless set, remembering his father, ear cocked for England's troubles, pleased at news of other, faraway disasters. Forget that, the grown up voice said." Instead, "he took his father's hand" (250) in order to lead him safely into the unstable, unfixed future that he will now define on his own terms, thereby demonstrating the morality of his ability to continually open himself up to more life, as well as his ability to create his own way through the multitudinous variety of the world's manifestations. He is now free to create his own life because "the voice would tell him what to do.

From now on, he would know these things." He has combined the voice of Black Angel, "who seemed more intelligent, more his sort," with the voice of White Angel, who "advised the decent thing" (10) to produce a wisdom that transcends both.

Although there are many similarities between Ginger Coffey and Gavin Burke, a fact which Dahlie alludes to by pointing out that both are comic heroes who go through the "tripartite pattern of rebellion that began with repudiation and moved into isolation" (69), Coffey's reconciliation with himself depends to a large degree upon his knowledge that he need never return to the old world and face the arrogant laughter of his fellow Irishmen. It is apparent, however, that for Moore Coffey's marriage to Canada - "he knew that, sink or swim, Canada was home now, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, until death" (133) - was insufficient freedom for the deeper and broader structural pattern of moral experience which has by now emerged. Coffey escaped to Canada with his cultural biases still firmly entrenched. Gavin, on the other hand, never did succumb to those biases, and his final ability to transcend them without running away indicates the nature of Moore's profound commitment to the structural flow of moral outcomes. Indeed, Gavin Burke's new maturity contains not only the poetic understanding that propels Moore's artistic growth, as well as the primitive spontaneity that is indicated in his impulse to do what the average European would probably call a "Savage" dance at the advent of the holocaust (as if he is anticipating the spiritual depth and breadth of Moore's latest novel), his life affirming psyche has also renounced the imprisoning

and artificial social constructions which have confined the projection of his spontaneous sexual drives. After the bombing of Belfast he recognizes that Sally (225), the girl he once believed could make him into "a pure boy" (139), is truly nothing more than "a little Catholic bourgeois prig whose main interest in life" (55) is the promotion of the false ideals from which he has finally escaped. Sally Shannon represents the stifling repression underlying the closed-in perfection that Veronica Coffey would probably have been forced to emulate had she been successful in her attempt to get her husband to return to Ireland.

As if to deliberately offset and compensate for Sally's self-righteous prudery, especially in the face of the promises demonstrated by Una Clarke and Veronica Coffey, in the remaining three novels whose closures I am about to discuss, Moore presents a progressively expansive view of the changing perspectives of the modern women. The protagonists of I Am Mary Dunne, The Doctor's Wife and The Temptation of Eileen Hughes, are, by extension, all portraits of the continuing process of the stream of moral conscience that began to manifest itself in Una and Veronica. In her book Writing Beyond the Ending Rachel Blau DuPlessis presents a study of twentieth century women writers who have deliberately set out to tell "the untold story, the other side of a well-known tale, the elements of woman's existence that have never been told." For we are all well aware of the fact that, as DuPlessis points out, "in nineteenth-century fiction dealing with woman, authors went to a great deal of trouble and even some awkwardness to see to it that Bildung and romance could not coexist

and be integrated for the heroine at the resolution" (3), but rather, their closures became the place where, once "sincerely repentant of her assumed powers, she is marriageable, and is therefore proposed to. Her proper negotiation with class and gender makes the heroine from an improper hero" (7). DuPlessis offers the following definition for "writing beyond the ending":

One of the great moments of ideological negotiation in any work occurs in the choice of a resolution for the various services it provides. Narrative outcome is one place where transindividual assumptions and values are most clearly visible, and where the word "convention" is found resonating between its literary and its social meanings. . . . It is the project of twentieth century women writers to resolve the contradiction between love and quest and to replace the alternate ending in marriage and death that are their cultural legacy from nineteenth-century life and letters by offering a different set of choices . . . [and] psychosocial meanings. . . (3-4).

It is befitting that I Am Mary Dunne should be the book to follow immediately upon the heels of Emperor for, in a manner entirely consistent with DuPlessis' concept of writing beyond the ending, that is, "by not repeating his words and following his former methods," Moore "produces a narrative that denies or reconstructs seductive patterns of feeling that are culturally mandated, internally policed, hegemonically poised" (5). And yet, this novel also brings its female

protagonist to the conclusion that to "Let be be finale of seem" is the most practical means of asserting her true identity, as well as the most logical means for summing up things when one lives in a state of perpetual flux. As Mary Dunne repeats to herself the novel's final incantation, - "I will remember what Mama told me, I am her daughter, I have not changed, I remember who I am and I say it over and over and over, I am Mary Dunne, I am Mary Dunne, I am Mary Dunne" (217) - she is creating, in her unique and specifically "female" fashion, an awareness similar to that contained in Gavin Burke's final summing up. Not only is she reconnecting herself to the physical reality of her gender, for her maiden name transcends all the artificial assumptions and "hegemonically poised" conventions of her three married names, she is also recalling to the reader's attention the fact that she has just gone through a tremendous psychosocial battle in order to reaffirm that she is who she is: "And so, here in the dark, I closed my eyes and went back seventeen years. They were waiting: Mother Marie-Thérèse and the class. She wrote on the blackboard. Cogito ergo sum. My hand went up. Memento ergo sum" (217).

Besides resonating with the literary and social meanings that Moore has been working out in the five novels which preceded this one, this closure also catapults the reader into Moore's present reality at the time of writing, and vividly demonstrates that the future world which Gavin Burke anticipated is one peopled with women who are no longer defined by the same kind of inhibitions that Sally Shannon displayed. Moore has indicated that Mary Dunne's story is an

extension of his own fictional autobiography, his own deliberate attempt to expand his self awareness:

I am Mary Dunne because I have taken my own life and transmogrified it into hers. I have taken my years of wandering from country to country, my changes of nationality, my forgettings, rememberings, my feelings of being lost and a stranger and have, I hope, made them hers. . . . [Although this is] Mary Dunne's autobiography, not my novel . . . I became Mary Dunne. And, if I have found her voice, then I have found my own (Dahlie 122).⁸

Moore's compassionate awareness of the "other side of the story," that is, his understanding of the real psychosocial problems of women, has, of course, been evident since the publication of Judith Hearne, and his ability to actually "become" Mary Dunne demonstrates his commitment to the never ending variety of the modern novel.

In the introduction to this thesis (see page 14-17) I indicated that I Am Mary Dunne is a portrayal of the meta-fictional reality by which we all transcend our sense of limitations, and therefore our means of defining our spiritual selves. I also indicated that the metaphysical reality of Mary's autobiography is enhanced by the multi-dimensional portrayal of the various levels of her consciousness so that the present moment becomes coexistent with her birth. Consequently, her connection to her mother is the all important realization for grounding herself in her own being, and the deliberate action of her own will becomes the moral conscience that guides her through the maze of memory to this discovery. Her summing up includes the whole

of everything at once at the same time that it exemplifies the reality of the oppositions between the warp of convention and the woof of desire which create the activity of personal identity. For the scenic and emotional textures that are portrayed through Mary's introspective analysis of her two divorces and the reasons for those marriage failures in comparison to the apparent success of her third marriage have not, as Dahlie points out (129), overcome her sense of being a "nonentity" in the presence of her well known husband:

When Terence and I meet new people, eyes go to him. If I start talking to a stranger at a party and Terence comes up, I find I may as well forget whatever it was I was saying. . . . When they hear who I am they at once ask if Terence is with me and what he's doing these days. Then we talk about Terence (113).

Mary's experience of being "reborn" and "resurrected" after sexual intercourse with Terence is only a momentary fulfillment, as well as an affirmation that she is neither frigid nor promiscuous; the sexual act does not eliminate her deeply felt longing to transcend her inherent sense that she is a second-class citizen. "I hate being a woman, I hate this sickening female role-playing. I mean the silly degradation of playing pander and whore in the presentation of my face and figure in a man's world" (31). Although this attitude may be seen as a residue of the struggle presented by twentieth century women writers to overcome the tempering conditions imposed upon nineteenth century female heroism, it is also a direct and explicit manifesto of Mary's real need to express and understand her complex situation in a

world where female power is no longer contained only in the temporary repository of the courtship. It is therefore significant that while Mary lies by the side of her husband as the novel ends, he knows nothing of her mental turmoil, her fantastic fears of madness and eventual obliteration, or of her serious contemplation of suicide while he was lying "half asleep, a book lax in his hand" (216) in the next room. Nor is he aware of her heroic attempt at self-mastery, at defining herself as a free-agent whose individual will depends upon her physical and spiritual connection to her maiden name:

And see, when I put my mind to it, I did manage to remember most of the thoughts, words, and deeds of today, and now I will not panic, these dooms may just be premenstrual, I will not overdramatize my problems, I am not losing my memory, I know who I am, my mother said tonight that I am her daughter and while she lives I will be that, I will not change, I am the daughter of Daniel Malone Dunne and Eileen Martha Dunne, I am Mary Patricia Dunne, I was christened that and there is nothing wrong with my heart or with my mind: in a few hours I will begin to bleed, and until then I will hold on (217).

Once again we are reminded of the round, consummate moon that is continually shattered by the ongoing "wave which cannot halt," as Friedman calls his analysis of the unfinished tide that runs through the constantly expanding open-ended structure of D. H. Lawrence's novels. For just as the female menstrual cycles are associated with the lunar cycles, so are Mary's "Juarez dooms," named for the lonely isolation she experienced while going through her divorces. Seen

from this perspective, her determination to keep on fighting the "frightening, unreal play going on in my head" is truly heroic. As Dahlie puts it: "Just as there cannot be a dance without a dancer, or vice versa, for they totally define each other, so Mary assumes the permanently protean form of all dancers. . ." (130).

In the last sentence of The Doctor's Wife Sheila Redden "went through the gates" of the park representing the circle of perfection, which the gate keeper locked behind her, "and walked off down the street like an ordinary woman on her way to the corner to buy cigarettes" (217) to become a startling and evidently relevant representative of the twentieth century myth of openness. Without so much as a "look back" (216) she left behind her husband, her home, and her male child. As she moves forward from "a situation where she has a permanent and specific status to one where she blends totally into an undifferentiated world" (Dahlie 133), her resolution conforms perfectly to the conditions set down in this thesis as the requirements for Bakhtin's definition of the novel and Friedman's definition of open-ended endlessness. It also fulfills Duplessis' definition for "writing beyond the ending," beyond the ending which postulates "the telos of 'normal femininity' as the proper resolution of the oedipal crises" and the "avoidance of the traits of the female hero in narrative: defiance, activity, selfishness, heroic action and identification with other women." For as DuPlessis points out, Freudian theory put a high premium on "female passivity and narcissism and on the end of husband, home, and male child." Furthermore, "as for

quest, or individual aspiration, Freud poignantly realizes that the achievement of femininity has left 'no paths open to [a woman] for further development'" because it seems "'as though, in fact, the difficult development which leads to femininity had exhausted all the possibilities of the individual'" (35).⁹

Sheila Redden also leaves behind her brother, the novel's only confused representative of oedipal kinship:

Fifteen years ago people like me read Freud as if we had found an answer. He seemed a genius. Yet today, I'm not so sure. Yet when I spoke to Sheila this morning my mouth was full of phrases from psychoanalytic textbooks, comfortable, because they offer an explanation which fits my prejudice (147).

She even abandons her lover, who has taken her absent husband's place on her "second honeymoon" in the same manner that her husband took their first: as a sign that she has become his personal possession. Tom Lowry has taught her that she is still young enough to fall in love - that after sixteen years of wifely submissiveness and narcissistic femininity (as seen in her propensity towards flirtation) she is still capable of a fulfilling sexual relationship - and has played the instrumental role in helping her to reconnect herself to her inherent spirituality. But he has also been the major instrument responsible for reconstructing her awareness that what was once called "penis envy" has now become "the delivery of knowledge well beyond the perception of sheer genital difference, the shock of learning a whole array of psychosocial rules and order valorizing maleness" (DuPlessis

36). Moore clearly illustrates this fact by the way in which he organizes and deliberately designs the scene in which Sheila's enraged husband brutally rapes her, orders her to come home with him, and ultimately blackmails her when she refuses to comply with his demands (187-190).

As the novel ends "Mrs. Redden's" actions definitely indicate that she has made a deliberate and emphatically moral decision to leave behind her "normal feminine identity," a fact alluded to by Dahlie as he notes that:

The reader . . . is never permitted to forget this conventional role and identity given to Sheila by the world which has nurtured and shaped her: throughout the entire novel, except for the initial mention of her in section one, she is identified by the omniscient narrator as Mrs. Redden, that is, as the doctor's wife. . . . Only in the very last segment of the novel's final section . . . is that identity dropped and replaced by the impersonal "she" (133).

Dahlie finds Sheila Redden's "resolution far more disturbing" than Mary Dunne's, and there can be no doubt that Moore intended the abruptness of this novel's closure to be taken as an objective correlative for the novels which DuPlessis discusses in Writing Beyond the Ending, novels where female heroism and individualistic questing are purposefully invoked as a means of changing the antiquated perspectives regarding the rights of women. In a very real sense, until Sheila Redden fell in love with the world of freedom represented by her lover, an occurrence which happened largely because of her

husband's habitual neglect, as well as his propensity to take her permanent presence and her feminine submissiveness for granted, she was still caught in the social horrors of the nineteenth century Belfast world that kept Judith Hearne and Diarmuid Devine locked within its frigid restraints. Once she discovered that her moral conscience would not allow her to return to a world where "people put up with their lives" and "don't try to change them" (119), a world where everyone is always dull and "practical" (149) so they won't appear to be selfish or sinful or happy, or for that matter, mentally ill, she has no alternative but to walk away from it all with "no look back," despite the fact that she will "have to pay" in order to transcend her own death wish, the nature of which she describes to her brother:

. . . the other night I woke up feeling suicidal. I think I know why. It was because I was still unwilling to face up to what's happened to me. I was still looking for some way out. Some way I could go on feeling like this but not having to pay for it. Now I know that's not possible. I'll have to pay. I've accepted that (141).

As she leaves the world that turned Lot's wife to a pillar of salt because she did look regretfully and indecisively backwards, Sheila Redden's disturbance, and hopefully, the nature of her quest, becomes the reader's also. For, as Friedman insists:

The internal force that rises through the twentieth-century novels leads the reader to a powerful ebb tide of the narrative, which carries the central experience - his[/her]

own - not back to a resting place (there is no resting place for conscience), but inexorably farther out. The current, the movement, is strenuous, even frightening. Readers who are carried, some willingly, some very unwillingly, along that sort of a bend in the stream of conscience, have themselves been subjected to the bending of the myth. As they turn the last page, "The End" turns out to be another opening (182).

By the end of The Temptation of Eileen Hughes the novel's female protagonist has achieved individual independence to a greater degree than any of Moore's other fictional females, with the exception, perhaps, of Marie Davenport in Cold Heaven. It is even possible to see Eileen and Marie as symbolic representatives for the complete "summing up" of all of Moore's female characters, with Eileen combining all the strengths of her European counterparts and transcending all of their weaknesses, and Marie performing a similar assimilation for her North American counterparts. This, of course, is an extremely simplistic analogy, for both women have inherited, in varying degrees, the qualities displayed in the constant expansion of moral conscience and the progressive flux of experience that characterizes Moore's changing perspectives throughout all fourteen of his novels. The closure of The Temptation of Eileen Hughes does, however, juxtapose the most clearly visible metaphor for "freedom" with the most dramatic and tragic demonstration of human vulnerability seen in any of Moore's endings. In a strictly structural sense, his combination of the closed traditional form of the epilogue, in typical

nineteenth-century fashion, with the open-ended endlessness of the new twentieth-century paradigm, certainly demonstrates and emphasizes Bakhtin's theory that the novel's progressive development depends upon the successful hybridization of the so-called "higher" literary forms with the unfinished evolution of contemporary reality.

By the time that The Temptation of Eileen Hughes ends, the reader realizes that the antithetical ambiguity denoted by the novel's title can only be resolved by the juxtaposition of its metonymous nature in a manner which privileges the surface meaning because that meaning aligns itself with the predominating quest for personal freedom. As Eileen Hughes climbs through the "Ramble" to the "top of the hill" where the "playground railings" (209) enclose the circle of perfection that represents the fulfilled and idealistic image of normal femininity, she is forced to walk through a barrage of mental images that reflect, in modern Freudian-like synecdoches, the phantom-like appearance of her rejected suitor, and she is momentarily frightened:

She called to Timmy and made him take her hand. As she did, the man coming toward her seemed to hesitate, then come on more slowly. She saw why. It was Bernard McAuley. His face was puffy, and the first thing she thought was that he was getting fat, Bernard who had always been a fanatic about his weight. His hair was wet and his overcoat was soaked through, as though he had been walking all afternoon in the rain (208).

Eileen's impulse to protect the small boy from possible danger is immediately turned into a false alarm by her recognition of the

slovenly stranger who could have been one of the sexual perverts whom she had just been fearfully imagining, and the reader's sense of pathos at McAuley's dishevelled appearance is counterbalanced by Eileen's ironical reflections upon the reality of McAuley's incurable narcissism, and by our knowledge of the fact that McAuley has, in his own perverted way, already been overpowered by Eileen through her rejection of his self indulgent love. Because he has not been able to control and possess Eileen with the external symbols of his patriarchal power, his ownership of "acres of farmland and a building firm and four pubs and the biggest department store in three towns," nor with the "big house" he had "secretly bought with her in mind" (69), his petulant dejection reminds us of Anthony Maloney's need to see Mary Ann McKelvey as "a live Victorian girl" (91) in the midst of his Victorian Collection. Furthermore, McAuley's suicide, as depicted in the novel's epilogue, confirms the fact that Moore has deliberately designed the Temptation of Eileen Hughes as a graphic and overt demonstration of the perverse destructiveness of masculine chauvinism (169-175), thereby revealing not only the reason for the failure of both the Maloney and the McAuley marriages, but also the perceptiveness of both Mary Ann and Eileen in their refusal to continue the respective relationships.

As Eileen safely reaches "the top of the hill" which symbolizes the typological fulfillment of her climb to this particular victory, she has, at the tender age of twenty, achieved the maturity required to guarantee that she will never again confuse romance, adventure and luxurious ostentation with love. "The romance plot in narrative,"

writes DuPlessis, "may be seen as the necessary extension of the process of gendering, and the critique of romance that we find in twentieth-century female authors . . . [is] part of the oppositional protest lodged against both literary culture and a psychosexual norm" (38). Because of his intense willingness to identify with the modern feminist movement in order to develop his own expanding moral conscience, Moore has herein produced a profound literary drama illustrating more than the other side of the untold story; as the title ambiguously suggests, he has compassionately and realistically delineated both sides of the untold story.

In A Room of One's Own Virginia Woolf writes:

It [the mind] can think back through its fathers or through its mothers, as I have said that a women writing thinks back through her mothers. Again if one is a woman one is often surprised by a sudden splitting off of consciousness, say in walking down White hall, when from being the natural inheritor of that civilization, she becomes, on the contrary, out-side of it, alien and critical (101).

Moore's ability to think back through both his mind's mothers and fathers has provided his readers with an oscillating experience of shifting and alternative perspectives that have progressed well beyond the confines of the oedipal-preoedipal division indicated here. The alien and critical awareness through which Eileen Hughes transcends the sociocultural agreements suggested by Woolf's use of London's Whitehall street reconnects her to the preoedipal world of her own mother in a manner which distinctly implies that the external world

has little to do with freedom and individuation. At the same time Bernard McAuley's inability to disconnect himself from the obsessive nature of his oedipus complex, or his introverted "death wish," results in suicide. Moore has resolved the paradoxical ambiguity of the word "temptation" by breaking the masculine hero sequence of the European (and by extension, North American) epical tradition to replace it with a feminine hero who moves, with confident self-awareness, into the "unrealized potential and unrealized demand" of the new world delineated by Bakhtin.

CONCLUSION: Open-Ended Endlessness

In the light of tradition . . . [the] turn of the novel to an open form was a formal insult, but it was more: it was a calculated assault on the "ends" of experience . . . [so] that, in short, we have been witnessing a mutation in the form of the novel which corresponds to a mutation in the ends of culture. . . . And that play on words is legitimate: life, culture, and the novel are processes; their ethical goals are revealed in the process which is their form. When, in the created experience we call the novel, "The End" consistently turns out to be another opening in experience, endlessness has become an end. . . . And when it does that most uncompromisingly, it gives us our special sense that in its vision of life something is intangibly but forcefully modern (Friedman xii-xiii).

In order to work on behalf of the prevailing order, that order which Bakhtin defines as being synonymous with the word "new," as well as the name for whatever force is at work within a given literary system to reveal the limits and artificial constraints of that system, Moore has committed himself to developing fictions that will encourage individual freedom, and therefore more life. As we have seen, all of Moore's characters are involved in the debate between archetypal mythic quest on the one hand and prototypical historical research on the other, and their fictional activity invokes deliberate contemplation upon the difference between gesture and language. For just as Judith Hearne finds that the world beyond her time and specific status

in life would be too taxing to confront face on, Father Laforque finds in his direct but iconically symbolical meeting with the historical annihilations of time his own specific and personal salvation. The deeper Moore descends into the mythic roots of humanity, the further outward and beyond the confinement of closed, immemorial narrative patterns he moves in order to develop new, "open" patterns which rupture the conventionalized correlations between words and things to reveal underlying feelings and invisible spiritual realities.

According to the publisher's advertisements on the cover of my copy of Eileen Hughes, Graham Greene has said that Moore is his "favorite living novelist" because "each new book of his is unpredictable, dangerous, and amusing. He treats the novel as a tamer treats a wild beast." And Christopher Ricks says basically the same thing using more formal language: "He [Moore] writes transparently in a style which differs from ordinary speech only in being more tellingly economical, less muddled and less afraid. . . . The words do not half reveal and half conceal the soul within - they altogether reveal it." These comments by "avid readers" add credibility to Friedman's insistence that the evolution of "meaning in a novel - that gradual elaboration which asks for our imagination and receives our compassion, smiles, concern - is accomplished through . . . the total ethical process implicit in the novel - and hence in the reader." Because the underlying "stream of conscience" does not imply simply "a flow of moral judgment," or "a stream of choices between good and bad," or, for that matter, refer strictly "to the moral process of behavior and awareness within characters" (xvii), the open-ended

paradigm has become a modern myth that allows readers to interpret "ends" according to their own evaluations of cultural ends. For, as Friedman reminds us, a myth can be an epic-like solemn narrative or an "instrument by which we struggle to make our experience intelligible to ourselves" (footnote 190).

The critical controversy between those who wish to retain the more established fictional patterns of the old, closed forms and those who willingly accept the newer, less established possibilities of the open form (see Appendix A), exemplifies, finally, the exact nature of the struggles of Moore's characters to formulate their own definitions and their own myths. For the open-ended resolution implies, as this thesis has demonstrated, that characters and readers alike require unrelieved openings in the emotional and moral processes delineated by the modern novel in order to change the inhibiting conditions which stifle creative participation in the developing future. This does not mean, of course, that there are no final episodes, or no reorganization of experiences. Ultimately, all of Moore's characters resolve their own problems, or are forced through the nature of their prevailing circumstances to accept the conditions forced upon them. But in the overall design, in the underlying and carefully deliberated structural flux of moral experience, even characters like Anthony Maloney and Bernard McAuley add to the ethical meaning underlining their respective suicides, for the new form exposes both heroes and antiheroes, as well as readers, to the unlimited and never-ending experience of ordinary, everyday life.

We can finally say, then, that Moore's novels, through the multiplicity of their expanding development, deeply, essentially and sensitively reflect "reality in the process of its unfolding" (Bakhtin 7): through their consistent portrayal of a continually evolving moral conscience that is "finally unreduced, finally uncontained, or finally still expanding" (Friedman 30) they are endlessly open-ended.

APPENDIX A

Perhaps the clearest demonstration of the current critical debate might be found in Charles Scruggs' recent article on the two endings of John Fowles' novel The French Lieutenant's Woman. According to Scruggs the first ending of the novel is considered by most critics to reflect "the false sense of closure so typical of Victorian novels in general" and the second ending seems to be a "mirror that reflects the true selves of [Fowles'] protagonists" since it "is the least clichéd, the more open ended (hence the more modern), and the more Fowlesian, because it is the more existential in its implications" (96). Although he lists the names and works of nine critics who hold this opinion, Scruggs does not consider himself to be in the same camp inasmuch as he interprets the meaning of the two endings differently. He even includes an interpretation for a third, imaginary ending which occurs about three-quarters of the way through the novel, thereby aligning himself with another critic who "sensibly argues that we are encouraged by Fowles to choose any one of the three endings we prefer" because all three are "plausible" (footnote 96). Using Kermode's, Torgovnick's and Smith's definitions of the function of closure (see Chapter 3, page 61) Scruggs effectively demonstrates that there are three narrative patterns in The French Lieutenant's Woman.

In the imaginary ending of the novel Charles dreams that he marries the fiancée whom he has jilted in order to pursue Sarah, the novel's female protagonist, thereby eliminating the confusion of the present (Victorian England in 1867) by envisioning himself and Ernestina as "the hero and heroine of an eighteenth-century novel. In this narrative pattern," claims Scruggs, "Sarah, the source of the confusion, is

transformed into a stock figure from eighteenth-century fiction: a silly malcontent or a comic overreacher" (99). In the first of the two endings which actually conclude the novel, Sarah agrees to marry Charles. Scruggs reads this ending as an indication that "Sarah may be a 'remarkable' woman not because she flaunts a Victorian ideal, but because she fulfills it in a new way" (103), after having "matured through experience" (104). In the final ending of the novel Sarah changes her mind about marriage because she "looks forward from the present and sees no future for Charles in her life. She rejects him as a husband for the same reason that she rejected a Victorian society that has classified her as a governess; either role, be it wife or governess, is a betrayal of self" (148) according to Scruggs' reading of the novel, and he rejects this ending by empathizing with Charles, who now perceives Sarah as a

hidden cancer . . . revealed in all its loathsome reality. He sought her eyes for some evidence of the real intention, and found only a spirit prepared to sacrifice everything but itself. . . . He saw his own true superiority to her: which was not of birth or education, not of intelligence, not of sex, but of an ability to give that was also an inability to compromise. She could give only to possess. . . . (109).¹

Failing to perceive what the other critics understand as irony, Scruggs interprets the above passage as proof of Charles' "moral superiority" and Sarah's incapability of transcending an "egotism . . . that gives only to possess." He thereby labels her as "a predator, preying upon others so that she may survive and evolve." From his

advantageous position as a critic in the future Scruggs firmly positions himself as a reader caught "in the midst" of a contemporary controversy by judging Sarah as the "femme fatale" that he thinks "Fowles has been teasing us with" throughout the entire novel (109). Instead of the "Distressed Woman of the Victorian age, we now have the Liberated Woman of the twentieth century" whose image, declares Scruggs with his own brand of moral superiority, "has degenerated into the packaged quests of television heroines" (110).

In his article "The Novel, Illusion and Reality: The Paradox of Omniscience in The French Lieutenant's Woman," Frederick M. Holmes provides a thesis coexistent with that of the critics who prefer the final closure of the novel. Scruggs actually quotes Holmes paraphrasing one of these critics in order to establish what he terms "a general attitude: . . . the final ending is both a logical conclusion of the novel's themes and the only one not vitiated by the narrator's irony" (Scruggs footnote 96). The purpose of Holmes' paper is to establish Fowles' meta-fictional goals: "a context within which the reader becomes aware of the potency of the fiction as a fiction in a world of fictions" (191). He therefore reads Charles' continual attempts "to dispel Sarah's mystery" as a need "to possess her by creating around her an explanatory fiction." For Holmes, "Charles' fantasy of a beautiful marriage which could mitigate the essential loneliness of life corresponds exactly to the happy ending, which is first parodied by means of excessively romantic rhetoric . . . and then revoked . . ." (195). He feels that this ending mirrors "one of the dominant

metaphors" of the novel: "fossilized . . . unambiguous realities . . . fictionalized in bad faith" (191), and therefore destructive:

The intent of the narrator . . . his self-conscious trickery, duplicity, and manipulation of the reader is aimed at leading him to the truth and making him choose to be free. The illusion is fostered that both Charles and the reader, in assuming responsibility for their destinies, become authors of their own lives. Paradoxically, life is most real, then, when art is perfected, not when it is transcended. The view that a reality more real than art can be attained is in this context a delusion created in bad faith (Holmes 196-197).

In Holmes' view, Fowles exposes "the artificiality of the [Victorian] form in the very act of using it," while at the same time he purposely shows that he does not consider this form to be "transparently representational" (185); instead, it is a means "to evoke the Victorian past in a way that lets us see its relevance to the present" (193). To reiterate this statement in terms of its literary importance, Holmes feels that Fowles intentionally "juxtaposes" nineteenth and twentieth century "modes of thought, feeling, and behaviour, enabling each to comment upon and qualify the other" in order "to make them converge for the reader in an intensely alive fictional present" (186). That Fowles achieves this goal is proved by Scruggs' suggestion that "Sarah's acceptance of Charles [in the 'happy ending'] is an indication that life is not art; nor art, life" (104), as well as by his irate and moralistic judgments of Sarah because she leaves Charles in the final ending. Ironically, he further justifies Holmes comments by completely

identifying with Charles, who, he rightly declares, "replaces Sarah as the protagonist of the novel" with the addition of the final ending. The last scene of the novel shows Charles "staring at the Thames as Sarah once stared at the empty sea [in the novel's beginning]. The circularity of this ending gives us a new sense of narrative form" (Scruggs 109).

In Holmes' opinion "the positions of Charles and the reader on the one hand and Sarah and the narrator on the other hand are . . . clearly parallel," and he quotes from an article by Linda Hutcheon in order to delineate the latter half of the parallelism: "Sarah is the narrating novelist's surrogate within the fictional world."² In other words, Holmes feels that Sarah "is aware that the fiction she creates (that she has been seduced by Vargueness [the French Lieutenant]) is a fiction." Like the "narratoring novelist" she "designs a fiction to move herself beyond the pale of Victorian morality. Her purpose in deliberately courting the pains of social ostracism is to claim her uniqueness, to grow as a free individual" (195). According to this interpretation, not only does Sarah force Charles to explore his own human potential, she also demonstrates "the freedom that allows other freedoms to exist" (Holmes 189)³ by leaving him in the final ending. This ending is necessary in order to provide the "retrospective patterning" required to hold the reader's sense of complacent security in abeyance. It "thwarts [his/her] urge to take 'flight from the real reality,' the ever present need to . . . confront the attendant dangers and responsibilities" (191) required to remain a free individual.

END-NOTES

Chapter 1

¹ See Appendix A for further discussion of the current critical debate regarding closure.

² See, for example, Ian Watt's The Rise of the Novel.

³ See the "Introduction" to I Am Mary Dunne.

⁴ See Yeats Selected Poetry 127.

⁵ See Yeats A Vision.

⁶ See Selected Poetry 99.

⁷ See Selected Poetry 62.

⁸ Publisher's advertisement on the cover of Cold Heaven.

Chapter 2

¹ Moore is speaking. See the Cameron Interview 75.

² See Dahlie's Brian Moore 111-12.

³ Kennedy is quoting from D. H. Lawrence's "John Galsworthy," Phoenix (London: n.p., 1967) 541.

⁴ Dahlie is quoting from the interview by Robert Sullivan 67.

Chapter 3

¹ The essence of Buddhism, founded by Siddhartha Gautama, 563-483 B. C. See Kitagawa on "The Eightfold Path To Nirvana" 97.

² Publisher's advertisement.

Chapter 4

¹ See Eagleton 161.

² Bakhtin, "Forms Of Time and Chronotope In the Novel" 112.

³ "Askesis" is Greek for "exercise," and I found it under "Asceticism" in The Universal Standard Encyclopedia, 25 vols. (New York: Standard Ref. Works Pub., 1956) 2: 439. See Barge 55. She uses the word "ascesis" to mean a quest which "spirals inward."

⁴ Lucius Apuleius (Appleius), lived and "flourished" during the second century A. D. He was a Latin artist, born in Madaura, Africa. His father was a wealthy magistrate in that city, and Apuleius' was thus able to travel extensively. Besides The Golden Ass, here defined as "a satire of which the episode of Cupid & Psyche is the most notable section," he wrote "the Apologia, an anthology, a work on the Daemonion (divinities) of . . . Socrates, and one on the doctrines of . . . Plato." The Universal Standard Encyclopedia, 1: 321.

See further references under Apuleius, Griffiths and Purser. An interesting comment by Purser indicates that Madaura is "about twenty miles south of Thagaste," the birth place of St. Augustine; it is also the "Roman Colony" where he received his "good secondary education" before he "proceeded to Carthage to acquire the higher branches of learning." It is assumed that Apuleius acquired "his principal school education in grammar and rhetoric at Carthage" before "he went to Athens for what we should call University education" (Intro. x-xii).

⁵ Editor's footnote indicates that the lines quoted from Apuleius are taken from The Golden Ass, trans. William Adlington, ed. Harry C. Schnur (New York: Collier, 1962) n.p.

⁶ Friedman is quoting from D. H. Lawrence, Women in Love, (New York: Modern Library Edition, n.d.) 475.

⁷ According to Bakhtin, "the adventure-folktale sequence in the parallel subplot" of The Golden Ass, the "novella about Cupid and Psyche," is an allegorical demonstration of Lucius' own guilt, for it actively "encompasses and interprets" the adventure logic of Lucius, "determining (as its first priority) the very metamorphosis itself" (118).

⁸ Dahlie is quoting from "Brian Moore Tells About I Am Mary Dunne," Literary Guild Magazine (July 1968) 5.

⁹ DuPlessis is quoting from Sigmund Freud, "The Psychology of Women," New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, trans. W. J. H. Sprott (New York: Norton, 1933) 184. The same essay is called "Femininity" in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth & Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1964) vol. xxiii.

Appendix A

- ¹ Scruggs quoting from the novel. See Fowles 465-6.
- ² See Hutcheon 84.
- ³ Holmes quoting Fowles 82.

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