LONELY PASSION AND OTHER WOES:

THE FEMALE DISCOVERY OF SELF IN THE FICTION OF BRIAN MOORE

by

TIMOTHY CHAMBERLAIN

B.A., University of Victoria, 1980

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

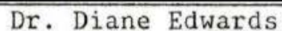
MASTER OF ARTS

in the department

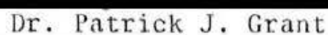
of

English

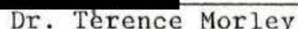
We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard



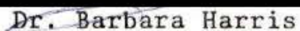
Dr. Diane Edwards



Dr. Patrick J. Grant



Dr. Terence Morley



Dr. Barbara Harris

© TIMOTHY CHAMBERLAIN, 1986

University of Victoria

June 1986

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by mimeograph or other means, without the permission of the author.

PS8526
O6Z6

Supervisor: Professor Diane Edwards

ABSTRACT

The fiction of Brian Moore chronicles the individual's struggle to overcome forces of oppression in both the Old and New World; in particular, it depicts the process by which his female protagonists surmount the patriarchal restraints of Church and marriage. *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne* (1955), *I Am Mary Dunne* (1966), *The Doctor's Wife* (1976) and *Cold Heaven* (1983) illustrate the female discovery of self that eventually results from the struggle to assert an independent sense of personal identity.

The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne depicts the patriarchal hierarchy of a Belfast Church which stresses obedience to its laws and principles, yet lacks any degree of love or compassion. Judith Hearne, an alcoholic spinster who desperately seeks the love of any man, seeks solutions to her troubles from within the rigid structure of the Church. In the absence of the matriarchal qualities of acceptance and unconditional love, the essentially patriarchal Church portrayed in *Judith Hearne* forces the individual to conform to a predetermined mold or pattern; thus, Judith Hearne eventually abdicates any sense of personal responsibility or identity, becoming an indigent patient in a convalescent home.

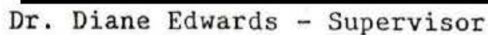
The oppression of the Church is largely absent in _I Am Mary Dunne_ and _The Doctor's Wife_; in its place, the institution of marriage exerts a form of patriarchal oppression upon Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden. Both women reject their authoritarian husbands and find temporary refuge in new relationships based on unconditional love. Yet both women feel threatened by their current partners' fame or social recognition. Having escaped domineering husbands, Sheila Redden and Mary Dunne must spend time alone to develop an independent sense of self; otherwise, they risk fusing their more fragile, developing identities to those of their male partners, thus thwarting their respective drives to establish independent identities.

In _Cold Heaven_ the protagonist, Marie Davenport, associates the patriarchal domination of her father, an experience of her youth, with the male hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Through the understanding of a tolerant Church, a Church in which patriarchal and matriarchal principles are now effectively blended, Marie resolves her personal crisis. The miracle at Carmel, and Marie's reaction to it, force the protagonist to embark upon a journey of self-discovery in which she discovers that the Church is not her enemy, and that she is free to choose between belief and non-belief.

If one seeks a happy reconciliation between God and woman in _Cold Heaven_, then one will ultimately be disappointed, for

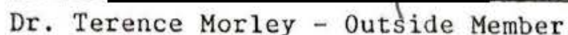
the non-belief encountered by Judith Hearne becomes the essential philosophy of Marie Davenport, miracles notwithstanding. Yet Moore does present a positive philosophy that hinges on the importance of the female discovery of self within a patriarchally determined society. Given the successful integration of matriarchal and patriarchal principles within the institutions of Church and marriage, society will become more tolerant, hence providing the necessary environment that will nuture the continued growth and development of the female identity.

Examiners:



Dr. Diane Edwards - Supervisor

Dr. Patrick Grant - Departmental Member



Dr. Terence Morley - Outside Member

Dr. Barbara Harris - External Examiner

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preliminary Pages

1. Title page.............................. i
2. Abstract................................ ii
3. Table of contents v
4. Acknowledgements........................ vi
5. Dedication.............................. vii

Text

1. Introduction................................ 1
2. Chapter Two: A Search for Love.............. 11
3. Chapter Three: A Search for Identity......... 28
4. Chapter Four: *Cold Heaven*: A Reconciliation. 48
5. Conclusion.................................. 59

Reference Materials

1. Bibliography................ 67

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank Dr. Diane Edwards and Dr. Patrick Grant for their patient guidance and assistance in the supervision of this thesis.

DEDICATION

To Mom and Dad, with love.

Introduction

"I've felt as a writer that man's search for faith, whether it be within the Catholic Church or a belief in God or a belief in something other than merely the materialistic world, is a major theme."[1] Man's search for faith has provided Brian Moore with the impetus for thirty years of writing, during which time he has written fifteen serious novels.[2] Through these novels, Moore traces an evolution of religious faith in which the "old world of Irish Catholicism gives way to a new world where a personal substitute for faith must be found."[3]

Yet Brian Moore does not discard the entire notion of "faith"; indeed, he states that "for most people any faith is better than no faith. It gives them something to live for and with."[4] Moore's characters search for personal substitutes for traditional faith in an ever increasingly secularized world, a world which offers no guarantees of religious certainty; they may abandon the Church, yet remain cognizant of the need for

---

[1]Richard T. Bray, "A Conversation with Brian Moore," Critic: A Catholic Review of Books and the Arts, 35 (Fall 1976), p.44.

[2]Hallvard Dahlie, Brian Moore (Boston: The Twayne Publishers, 1981), pp.11-12.

[3]David Staines, "Observance without Belief," Canadian Literature, 73 (Summer 1977), p.23.

[4]Hallvard Dahlie, "Brian Moore: An Interview," Tamarack Review, 46 (Winter 1968), p.20.

faith in "something other than merely the materialistic world".

Brian Moore has not been a practicing Catholic since his late adolescence, yet he has retained a very strong interest in the theme of Catholicism.[5] In this respect, he follows the literary tradition of James Joyce, another writer who rejected Irish Catholicism only to become, "perhaps paradoxically, the most Catholic of writers."[6] Moore explicitly acknowledges the extent of Joyce's influence upon his writing:

> Joyce was a tremendous influence of course. The first book of his I read was Ulysses and not the Portrait, and it was given to me as a dirty book. I was very young and the book was my cousin's. It was the only book I ever stole - my cousin never got it back. And then I read Portrait, which seems to me, as it does to almost every Irish writer even today, almost the story of one's early life. It's our generation's Catcher in the Rye; our Huck Finn - all those things. [7]

By comparing Joyce's Portrait with two American classics of adolescent revolt, Huckleberry Finn and The Catcher in the Rye, Brian Moore emphasizes his own personal interest in the theme of rebellion against repression; indeed, much of Moore's fiction, especially his early "Belfast novels", constitutes a reaction to the author's experiences with a rigid form of traditional Irish Catholicism. Yet, as stated by Moore, "Who can compete

---

[5] Bray, p.44.

[6] A.A. DeVitis, Graham Greene (New York: The Twayne Publishers, 1964), p.36.

[7] Robert Fulford, "Robert Fulford Interviews Brian Moore, " Tamarack Review, 23 (Spring 1962), p.13.

with Portrait?"[8] Brian Moore's literary success stems largely from his ability to incorporate biographical material, the experiences of an Irish-Catholic childhood and adolescence, into novels that are clearly separate and distinct from Joyce's Portrait, yet nonetheless bear similar traits of defiance and rebellion.

Yet it would be inaccurate to describe Moore's fiction as simply an attack on the rigidity of the traditional Catholic Church. Beyond the parameters of protest lies a "complex and subtle philosophy which Moore, a lapsed Catholic, has proposed as a substitute for religious faith."[9] Within this philosophy, the individual's search for "something other than merely the materialistic world" is more specifically defined as the female struggle to assert a sense of personal identity independent of the traditional patriarchal restraints of the institutions of Church and marriage.

To define Moore's "complex and subtle philosophy" as the female struggle to establish identity independent of the patriarchal institutions of Church and marriage, is not an arbitrary decision. The theme of female revolt against religious and marital oppression is found throughout Moore's fiction; indeed, in this analysis the theme of religious oppression is

---

[8] Richard B. Sale, "An Interview in London with Brian Moore," Studies in the Novel, 1 (Spring 1969), p.72.

[9] Hubert DeSantana, "The Calligraphy of Pain," Macleans,(September 17, 1979), p.45.

a crucial element of The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1955), while the spectre of authoritarian husbands looms large in I Am Mary Dunne (1966) and The Doctor's Wife (1976), and Cold Heaven (1983) combines these themes. Thus, through examining the theme of patriarchal oppression as promulgated by the Church's view of marriage, one discovers that such a concept has intrigued Brian Moore in each decade of his literary career.

Yet Moore does not explicitly condemn religion, nor does he invalidate the institution of marriage. Instead, he criticizes the patriarchal dimensions of the Church and its influence on marriage, illustrating the restrictive nature of each. Moore's female characters seek "unconditional love", mercy, compassion and charity, within the traditional Catholic hierarchy; in a similar manner, they search for unconditional love within the institution of marriage. Failing to find such love from either source, Moore's female characters continue their quest beyond the bounds of traditionally defined religion or marriage, and in doing so, begin to redefine their personal identities.

The concept of "unconditional love" is integral to Moore's philosophy, for it is an essential quality eagerly sought from both the institutions of the Church and marriage by the author's female protagonists; their departure from the Church and marriage is a response to a deficiency of love in these institutions. Yet what exactly are the essential

qualities of "unconditional love"? Erich Fromm, in The Art of Loving, defines this love as "Mother's love . . . all-protective, all-enveloping; because it is unconditional it can also not be controlled or acquired."[10] He further states that within the Catholic religion, "Mother is symbolized by the Church, and by the Virgin."[11] Similarly, in Beyond Power, Marilyn French defines unconditional love as a "non-egoistic love associated with mothering" which does not seem to "discriminate in worldly ways."[12] According to French, the success of early Christianity stems largely from Jesus' teachings that unconditional love, expressed as mercy, compassion and gentleness, was more important than "power and its accessories, wealth and status."[13] Both Fromm and French equate matriarchal love with the concept of unconditional love, and cite symbolic and historic antecedents.

While discussing the differences between matriarchal and patriarchal love, which are essentially the differences between unconditional and conditional love, Fromm states:

> The patriarchal aspect makes me love God like a father; I assume he is just and strict, that he

---

[10] Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), p.65.

[11] Fromm, p.66.

[12] Marilyn French, Beyond Power: On Women, Men and Morals (New York: Summit Books, 1985), p.93.

[13] French, p.114.

> punishes and rewards; and eventually he will elect me as his favourite son . . . In the matriarchal aspect of religion, I love God as an all-embracing mother. I have faith in her love, that no matter whether I have sinned, she will love me, she will not prefer any other of her children to me: whatever happens to me, she will rescue me, will save me, will forgive me. [14]

Conditional love is associated with the patriarchal values of conformity and obedience: the individual can "procure father's love by obedience and by fulfilling his demands."[15] Unlike matriarchal love which cannot be "controlled or acquired", patriarchal love is conditional on observing established "principles and laws."[16] Hence, while matriarchal love forgives trangressions, or sins, by extending unconditional love towards the individual, patriarchal love punishes those who break the rules, and rewards conformity.

Brian Mocre's first serious novel, The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1955), portrays a female protagonist who does not observe all the "principles and laws" of a patriarchal Belfast Church, and thus becomes an outcast of her society. Yet more importantly, Moore's first novel illustrates the futility of seeking unconditional love from a patriarchal institution which stresses the principles of conditional love. Judith Hearne is a damning indictment of an indifferent Church,

---

[14] Fromm, p.67.

[15] Fromm, p.66.

[16] Fromm, p.65.

largely devoid of love and compassion, that cannot accommodate the needs of a desperate woman suffering the anguish of a spiritual crisis. In addition, the need to integrate matriarchal aspects of love into the patriarchal institution of the Belfast Church is emphasized in Moore's novel. Thus, "A Search for Love", Chapter Two of this thesis, explores the futility of Judith Hearne's quest for love, and examines the necessity of including unconditional love as an essential element of religious faith.

In several ways, the thematic position occupied by Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden, protagonists of I Am Mary Dunne (1966) and The Doctor's Wife (1976), represents an antithesis to that occupied by Judith Hearne. These women have discarded the patriarchal authority of both the Catholic Church and their previous marriages. In addition, they each receive unconditional love as a result of adulterous sexual unions.

Therefore, Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden should be happy, yet neither woman is completely satisfied with her life; Chapter Three, "A Search for Identity", explores the reasons for their dissatisfaction. In particular, the process by which Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden attempt to establish their respective new identities is analyzed, especially in regard to the role played by unconditional love; it will be demonstrated that such love can be detrimental when extended to an individual who does not possess a clear sense of personal identity.

In such cases, the unconditional love of the "mother" can impede the development of an independent sense of identity, for the "all-embracing" nature of such love tends to fuse the personality and identity of the woman to the man, effectively creating one unit; the more fragile, developing identities of the female protagonists suffer through this process.

Chapter Four, "Cold Heaven - A Reconciliation", indicates an integration of the matriarchal and patriarchal elements of both the Catholic Church and the institution of marriage; unconditional love is shown to be the essential quality that facilitates the reconciliation of these elements. Cold Heaven (1983) portrays a self-confessed adultress, Marie Davenport, who receives a vision of the Virgin Mary at Carmel, California. Symbolically, this miracle represents an increased sense of tolerance from within the Catholic Church: the sinner receives unconditional love from a figure, who as stated by Eric Fromm, represents the pinnacle of matriarchal values within the Church. It is important to note that Marie Davenport completely defies the patriarchal authority of both the Church and her husband, yet ultimately she is not punished: she is allowed to pursue an independent life. At the end of Cold Heaven Marie Davenport emerges with a clear sense of personal identity, a good relationship with a non-authoritarian male, and an increased sense of tolerance for the Catholic Church, towards which she previously

expressed hostility. In addition, the Catholic Church is shown as an institution that integrates both the patriarchal and matriarchal elements of spirituality and love: the tolerance extended to Marie Davenport is emblematic of this successful integration of the previously opposing forces.

The following abbreviations have been used for textual citations in this thesis:

The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1955)	JH
I Am Mary Dunne (1966)	MD
The Doctor's Wife (1976)	DW
Cold Heaven (1983)	CH

Chapter Two: A Search for Love

The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne, Brian Moore's first serious novel[17], graphically depicts one woman's descent into religious doubt and disbelief. Judith Hearne, the protagonist, is not an intellectual woman predisposed to the questioning of religious values; on the contrary, she is a rather ordinary woman, raised in a Catholic environment and imbued with its values. Moore's choice of an ordinary woman is deliberate, for when questioned why he wrote Judith Hearne, the author states that "Joyce and other people have written about loss of faith in intellectuals; no one has written about loss of faith in a very ordinary person."[18] As for writing his first novel from the point of view of a middle-aged woman, Moore says:

> Writing from the point of view of a woman has a

---

[17]Prior to the publication of The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1955), Brian Moore wrote three "pulp" novels. The Executioners (1951) and Wreath for a Redhead (1951) were published under his own name, but French for Murder (1954) was written under the pseudonym Bernard Mara. As stated by Hallvard Dahlie in Brian Moore (Boston: The Twayne Publishers, 1981), p.22, "Moore wanted very much to keep his escape fiction and his serious fiction separate."

[18]Hallvard Dahlie, "Brian Moore: An Interview," Tamarack Review, 46 (1968), p.14.

> terrific strength which most male writers perhaps never consider, in that you are at one remove from yourself, so the danger of disguised autobiography creeping into it is lessened. 19

Despite Moore's assertion that Judith Hearne is a "very ordinary person", one could not accurately state that she represents a female norm of Belfast society. Plain, unmarried in her forties, and penurious, Judith Hearne leads a dreary existence. Moore's protagonist is orphaned at an early age and is left in the care of her Aunt D'Arcy; eventually, Judith becomes nursemaid and sole companion to the increasingly senile and demanding woman. When Aunt D'Arcy dies, Judith, at age thirty-six, is left with an annuity of one hundred pounds (JH,108-112). Physical unattractiveness, a youth spent in servitude to her aunt, and an inadequate inheritance all serve to decrease Judith Hearne's social opportunities, especially in regard to marriage; she faces the danger of being "left on the shelf" (JH,199). Through circumstances beyond her control, Judith Hearne enters spinsterhood involuntarily.

Thus, Judith Hearne is clearly not an "ordinary woman"; "unfortunate" would be a better adjective by which to describe the protagonist of Moore's first novel. Extraordinary circumstances of fate deny her the opportunity to enjoy a

---

[19] Donald Cameron, Conversations with Canadian Novelists (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1973), p.69.

completely normal life; hence, she lives a cloistered, asexual existence devoid of love. While Moore states that Judith Hearne is a story of "loss of faith in a very ordinary person", one could also maintain that the novel is an analysis of one victim of a patriarchal institution, in this case, the Belfast Church. It is a lack of unconditional love that precipitates Judith Hearne's religious crisis and subsequent loss of faith.

Judith Hearne seeks two varieties of love: the spiritual love of God, and the sexual love of man. Yet most importantly, from both Church and man, Judith seeks unconditional love; unfortunately, Judith seeks such love from within the cultural confines of a Church that traditionally, as part of its system of patriarchal values, extends conditional rather than unconditional love. Much of the poignancy of Judith Hearne derives from the futility of the protagonist's search for compassion and charity, the qualities of unconditional love, from a Belfast society that has lost, to a large extent, most of those essential attributes of Christianity.

In The Art of Loving, Erich Fromm states that one can procure the love of God, "Father's love", by "obedience and by fulfilling his demands."[20] Inherent in the concept of "obedience" is the format of a hierarchy: in Fromm's analogy, man and God perform the function of son and father, the former, of course, being subservient to the latter. Yet this hierarchy extends much

---

[20] Fromm, p.66.

further than the divine father-son relationship, for the Catholic Church, as a religious institution, is based on a clearly defined theological hierarchy:

> For Christians, Christ is still more definitely a man of flesh and blood, with a long blond beard. Angels have no sex, according to the theologians; but they have masculine names and appear as good-looking young men. God's representatives on earth: the Pope, the bishop (whose ring one kisses), the priest who says Mass, he who preaches, he before whom one kneels in the secrecy of the confessional - all these are men. For a pious little girl, her relations with the everlasting Father are analogous to those she has with the earthly father. 21

Simone de Beauvoir stresses the essentially patriarchal nature of the Church, for in the divine realm, or down on earth, men form the religious "chain of command". Thus, it is not surprising that a "poor pious little girl", perhaps a youthful Judith Hearne, would naturally associate the patriarchal values of the Church with those of her own father. Moreover, because, as an orphan, she has lived bereft of a father's attentions, it would be natural also for Judith to substitute the patriarchal authority of the Church for the authority of a father she never really knew.

At the bottom of the Belfast Church's hierarchy, as perceived by Judith Hearne, is James Madden, an Irish-born hotel doorman from New York, who initially expresses an interest in

---

[21] Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), p.289-290.

the protagonist. A religious frame of reference permeates the protagonist's association with Madden: their two dates include attending Mass at St. Finbar's together, and viewing a film depicting the story of Samson and Delilah:

> 'Ooooh!' sighed the one and ninepennies. The screen, technicoloured bright, sent new wonders into the darkness. Samson Mature put forth his hand, took the jawbone of an ass and slew a thousand extras. Courts, princely men, the pomp of the Philistines, blonde woman Semadar (Angela Lansbury, she's lovely) and dark Delilah in two-piece silver sarong (Hedy Lamarr, she's lovely). A scentless splendour, a flat magnificence, the Bible in American nasals. (JH,85)

This biblical epic, a product of Hollywood, is mocked by Moore, for the film's potential magnificence falls "flat", while its splendour is "scentless": the movie lacks soul. The majesty of Samson's victory crumbles, for instead of real enemies, he has only slain a thousand "extras"; hence, the illusion of film is destroyed. In a similar fashion, Moore derides the Belfast audience that buys into the illusion of the "Bible in American nasals", robbing them of their identity by describing them as "one and ninepennies", the price of their admission. Yet the author does not stray too far from the point of view of the protagonist, returning to the consciousness of Judith Hearne who comments on the respective beauty of both Angela Lansbury and Hedy Lamarr.

Judith transforms the Hollywood illusion into her own per-

sonal fantasy:

> [She] saw Samson Madden stride into the halls, dazzling all with the proud flex of his mighty biceps, the white flash of his smile. Saw Delilah, the woman who would destroy him, a beauty, irresistible. Blinded, chained to the wheel, Samson toiled, robbed of his virility, his great power, by her woman's whim. Then, ah, for all women have a soft spot, she, the temptress, is stricken by her deed. Raging, he seizes her, breaks the chains that bind him, goes forth to avenge himself on his enemies. He loves her still, he will always love her. And she went up unto the Temple of Dagon, her heart filled with love and longing. Through jeering hordes she leads him to the great columns, playing his secret game. He implores her, Delilah Judith, to leave for her own safety. She speaks to him of eternal love, but does not leave. She watches from the shadows, welcoming death. And Samson spoke with Madden's voice, unfolding the final stupendous spectacle.
>
> Beside her Mr. Madden ate jujubes and thought of California. Bible stuff was okay but there was too much talk in it. (JH,85)

Judith creates a romantic vision of her relationship with Madden, a vision ridden with clichéd language and sentimentality. Having lived a life devoid of excitement and adventure, she must borrow the imagery of a biblical epic to express her feelings in regard to the New York doorman. In fantasizing that "Samson Madden" will eventually bring down the temple on everyone including "Delilah Judith", the protagonist illustrates the punitive dimensions of her conceptualization of a relationship with a man: within a religious frame of reference, "Samson" Madden punishes a disobedient "Delilah

Judith" by bringing down the temple, thus reinforcing the notion of stern, patriarchal authority. In sharp contrast to Judith Hearne's psychological drama, Moore portrays Madden as an unimaginative man, untouched by the Hollywood spectacle and firmly rooted in mundane reality.

In another daydream that departs from a biblical frame of reference, Judith imagines a scene in which Madden, now her husband, strikes her because of "some silly thing she had done" (JH,29). Apart from serving to illustrate Judith's masochistic notions of romantic love, this vision indicates that even in a blissful state of matrimony, Judith would require, and expect, a harsh form of domination. The protagonist of Judith Hearne seeks stern, punitive, patriarchal figures from both the Church and her personal relationships.

Yet above all, Judith Hearne seeks unconditional love from James Madden, a happy relationship that culminates in marriage, but the reality of their proposed "partnership" departs widely from the substance of the protagonist's daydreams:

> 'I need a partner for this hamburg joint I got in mind. I thought you were on the level. Well - are you? If you've got a couple of thousand pounds we can talk business.' He stopped walking, took her roughly by the arm. 'Well, how about it? You want to be partners with me?' (JH,136)

A relationship with Madden depends completely on Judith's ability to invest in a "hamburg joint"; social contact, much

less romantic love, is conditional upon the individual's ability to buy affection, much in the same manner as Madden himself must "buy" drinking partners in the Belfast pubs by paying for most of the drinks (JH,43-49).

At the second level of the Belfast Church's hierarchy, as portrayed in Judith Hearne, is Father Quigley, the parish priest at St. Finbar's. Moore states that at the time he wrote Judith Hearne, there were a "number of priests who were overworked, not very sensitive, and in fact, administrators rather than men of God, and that is what Father Quigley is in the book."[22] Within the hierarchy of the Church, Father Quigley functions as a rather stern bureaucrat, generally showing more concern in regard to the efficient running of St. Finbar's than the spiritual concerns of his congregation. For example, rather than indicate the religious value of staying to hear the entire Mass, Father Quigley instead embarks upon a punitive tirade directed against his entire congregation:

> Beginning next Sunday, I'm going to order the ushers to close the doors at the Offertory and not open them until Mass is over. If anybody is sick or has some good reason, he or she will be let out. Otherwise, not. Because Mass is the whole Mass and not a football match with people running in and out of the church as if it was a cinema. (JH,65)

Father Quigley, who treats his parishioners like children, functions as a stern, patriarchal figure of authority. It

---

[22] Bray, p.43-44.

is understandable that he wishes the congregation to remain until the Mass is completely finished, yet his tirade is punitive, indicating his lack of sensitivity. As a bureaucrat of the Church, the easiest solution to his problem of "early leavers" is to lock the doors, thus mechanically enforcing obedience amongst his congregation.

This bureaucratic image of Father Quigley, Church administrator, is further reinforced through his dealings with Judith Hearne. When the protagonist inadvertently arrives for confession at the wrong time, the priest wastes no time informing her of the correct procedure:

> '...don't you know this confession period is for the children? For the children. The grown-ups' confession is at six and eight. Not now. Now, what's the meaning of this, coming here with the children, with the children?' (JH,170)

Quigley castigates Judith for arriving at the wrong time, stressing the schedule of his church rather than determining the reasons for her faux-pas. Again, a concern for rules and regulations rather than human problems is expressed by the priest; as a bureaucrat, Quigley stresses the value of conformity.

At the height of her religious doubt, Judith again seeks out Father Quigley, declaring: "I need a sign from God" (JH,205); the priest merely states that the proper time for confessions, once again, is from six to eight (JH,206). As stated by Hallvard

Dahlie, this is the first time in Judith's life that she is "sufficiently shaken to go to the priest for genuine answers rather than for stock responses"[23]; at this point she basically asks Quigley if he is sure that God actually exists. Beyond the realm of rules and regulations, Father Quigley is at a loss for words:

> Shepherd, he looked at his sheep. What ails her? Father, he did not comprehend what his child was saying. Priest, he could not communicate with his parishioner. "No," Father Quigley said. "I don't know what you're talking about." (JH,206)

Quigley understands rules more than people, and lacks the sensitivity necessary for dealing with an actual religious crisis. Yet his is not an evil character; he simply does not function as a sympathetic priest.

Unlike Madden, who is associated with the physically punitive dimensions of patriarchal authority, Quigley represents the bureaucratic element of the Belfast Church, and is associated with administrative, rather than physical, force. However, his love, like Madden's, is indeed conditional, for it depends on an adherence to correct procedure. One might say that Judith cannot receive Quigley's love, for she does not follow the correct procedure for confession; she loses his love when she cannot conform to his closely regulated schedule.

---

[23] Hallvard Dahlie, Brian Moore (Boston: The Twayne Publishers, 1981), p.50.

Whereas Judith "loses" Madden because of a lack of money, she "loses" Quigley's attention because she cannot time her religious crisis to coincide with Quigley's administrative timetable.

At the top of the religious hierarchy, as portrayed in Judith Hearne, is the Sacred Heart, an icon signifying Jesus' love for mankind.[24] As a patriarchal figure, this icon becomes Judith Hearne's "guide and comforter" but also acts as "her terrible judge" (JH,58-59); in fact, the first words of the novel describing the Sacred Heart depict Jesus with "His fingers raised in benediction, His eyes kindly yet accusing" (JH,7). Jesus, as represented by this icon, is not a source of unconditional love for Judith. The benediction of the Sacred Heart involves a duality of functions, for as the novel progresses, the icon becomes increasingly more like an accusing judge than a kindly father:

> He looked at her, stern now, warning that this might be her last chance ever and that He might become the Stern Judge before morning came, summoning her to that terrible final accounting. No awakening to see James Madden, to walk ever in the city, to ever see him again. Tonight I may cast you down, He said. My patience will not last forever. (JH,98)

The element of unconditional love, which the Sacred Heart might suggest, is conspicuously missing in this passage.

---

[24] Jean Bainvel, "Heart of Jesus", The New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, (1967).

The icon admonishes Judith not to drink, employing punitive phrases such as "last chance", "terrible final accounting" and "I may cast you down": none of these words offers hope through redemptive and unconditional love. Indeed, the Sacred Heart is given the formal title of "Stern Judge", thus formalizing His function referred to earlier in the novel through the phrase "her terrible judge" (JH,58-59).

Judith Hearne distorts Christian doctrine when she states that Jesus' "patience will not last forever", for the concepts of eternal forgiveness and unconditional love are fundamental elements of New Testament theology. It would be more accurate to say that Judith cannot forgive herself for the sin of excessive drinking; hence, she visualizes Jesus as a stern, patriarchal figure of divine authority who will not forgive her. Judith actively seeks patriarchal figures who will punish her, as indicated through her fantasies concerning Madden, her preference for Father Quigley over the more tolerant Father Farrelly (JH,167), and her conceptualization of the Sacred Heart as an agent of divine retribution.

Judith Hearne, an impoverished, aging woman who lives an ascetic existence tempered with sexual celibacy, feels she deserves punishment for the sin of drinking. However, Judith does not seek punishment solely for the sin of drinking, for subconsciously, she associates the consumption of alcohol with the free expression of sexuality. After attending church following

a drinking binge, Judith indulges in a sexual fantasy involving anonymous males:

> Whiteness hers, he seized, revelled in. Virile he, his dark flashing eyes, they lifted beakers of wine and quaffed them, losing themselves in the intoxication of love, homage to Bacchus, lusts of the flesh. That handsome boy bathing that day at Greystones, standing up in his tight bathing trunks, his bump of virility sticking out, he would enfold me, he would run gracefully with me up the strand to the dunes. No sin in it . . . But - tearing at my dress, ripping it away, his toga thrown aside, his huge hands feel me, press me close, his body muscled, hard. And drunken, that wonderful cheerfulness, gay laughter, quaffing the wine, forgetfulness. Sweet oblivion. O Thou. A loaf of bread, a jug of wine and Thou beside me in the wilderness. Paradise enow. (JH,125-126)

Alcohol is the essential ingredient that unleashes passion in this passage; the key phrase linking the consumption of alcohol to sexuality is "intoxication of love". Beginning with a "homage to Bacchus", the Roman god of drink and revelry, Judith explores the erotic possibilities of imagined situations, and ends with a quotation from the sensuous Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam; alcohol consumption becomes a substitute for her thwarted sexual drive. As stated by John Wilson Foster, "unable to commit those sins of the flesh she dearly wishes to commit, Miss Hearne turns to drink, a sin not of pride or wantonness but of despair and deprivation . . . the longer she is deprived sexually, the more sinful she wishes to become."[25] Yet within

---

[24] John Wilson Foster, Forces and Themes in Ulster Fiction (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1974), p.162.

Judith's world, sins must be duly punished; hence, she seeks punishment from both Father Quigley and the Sacred Heart for imagined sins of the flesh, as well as the reality of her sin of excessive drinking.

Judith does receive punishment for her pagan sexual fantasy. Amidst her daydreams, she is nearly struck down by a car as she leaves St. Finbar's. Her reaction to this near accident is predictable:

> O Sacred Heart, forgive me. You gave me a sign, a warning. Your patience will not last for ever. O dear Jesus, the drink, the sin that led to another sin. Hallucinations I had, and shaking like this. O my God, I am heartily sorry. I thank Thee. (JH,126)

Through her prayer, and act of contrition, Judith again emphasizes the connection between alcohol consumption and sexuality, for she indulges in bacchanalian daydreams just prior to the near fatality, the "sign" from God. Yet drinking, the "sin that led to another sin", ultimately leads Judith to a far graver transgression: she begins to doubt the validity of the Eucharist.

Drinking and religious doubt would at first appear completely unrelated, yet these "sins" are connected. Judith's drinking leads her to contemplation of the physical realm; she vividly imagines scenes of fornication. Yet Judith's drinking is also a subconscious parody of the Eucharist, the

central rite of the Catholic Church. According to Church doctrine, the bread and wine of the Eucharist become the flesh and blood of Christ; Judith's drinking is a crassly physical, subconscious imitation of this sacred rite. While drinking represents a route by which the protagonist can imagine the sexual love of man, it is also a route by which she contemplates and seeks the love of Christ. Thus, Judith's parody of the Eucharist represents her desire to reach God, commingling spiritual and sexual desire.

The commingling of spiritual and sexual desire is not a new concept. In the Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir remarks on the similarities linking these qualities:

> "My God, my adored one, my lord and master" - the same words fall from the lips of the saint on her knees and the loving woman on her bed; the one offers her flesh to the thunderbolt of Christ, she stretches out her hands to receive the stigmata of the Cross, she calls for the burning presence of divine Love; the other, also, offers and waits: thunderbolt, dart, arrow, are incarnated in the male sex organ. In both women there is the same dream, the childhood dream, the mystic dream, the dream of love: to attain supreme existence through losing oneself in the other. 26

Thus, when Judith waits for a thunderbolt to "[strike her] down, white and terrible from the vaulted roof" (JH,209-210), there exists a sexual dimension in her expectations of divine punishment. For her religious doubts, Judith expects the

---

[26] Simone de Beauvoir, p.649.

patriarchal figure of Christ to punish her; as an object of her desire for love, she hopes that Christ will physically pierce her, perhaps in the same manner as that experienced by St. Theresa who was pierced by a golden dart.[27] Later, Judith's attempt to open the tabernacle door, symbolic of her desire to form a union with Christ, is "like her passion, both spiritual and sexual [for] her esctasy is the esctasy of spiritual onanism in which she becomes both female supplicant and the male redeemer she so imperiously seeks."[28] In a final act of desperation, in a futile attempt to find unconditional love, Judith tries to become one with Christ.

The attack on the altar represents a very brief consummation of Judith Hearne's spiritual and sexual desires, her need for sacred and profane love; moreover, it is emblematic of her unsuccessful search for unconditional love. In a terrible hallucination, Christ emerges from the assaulted tabernacle:

> He came out, terrible, breathing fire, His face hollow-checked, His eyes devouring her . . . His bleeding heart red against His white tunic. Lifted her in His arms and His face was close to hers.
> "Why did you do this?" He said. (JH,211)

---

[27] St. Theresa, cited in <u>The Second Sex</u>: "The angel held a long dart in his hands. From time to time he plunged it into my heart and forced it into my entrails. When he withdrew the dart, it was as if he were going to tear out my entrails, and it left me all inflamed with love divine." pp.672-673.

[28] Foster, p.161.

The image of Christ portrayed in this scene is hardly a symbol of unconditional love and forgiveness. As he emerges from the tabernacle, he appears "terrible, breathing fire"; as He looks at Judith, asking "Why did you do this?" he is similar, through a shared lack of sensitivity, to Father Quigley. Yet he is the only male figure who physically contacts Judith, "lifting her in His arms" with "His face close to hers": patriarchal authority and a subtle dimension of sexuality are blended in this scene.

Yet in reality, Judith Hearne is left a broken woman, lying in the arms of Father Quigley. Because of her poverty, she is rejected by James Madden; because of her inability to conform to his schedule, she is dismissed by her parish priest; and finally, because she doubts God, she believes she incurs the wrath of Jesus Christ. Judith Hearne is unable to procure the love of any level of the Belfast Church's religious hierarchy; therefore, she lapses into religious disbelief. Brian Moore's first novel depicts a search for the impossible, for unconditional love, the all-protective, all-encompassing love of a mother, cannot be found within the patriarchal hierarchy portrayed in The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne.

Chapter Three: A Search for Identity

In The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne, Moore portrays a woman who "suffers for her sexual deprivation precisely in proportion to her piety."[29] Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden, protagonists of I Am Mary Dunne (1966) and The Doctor's Wife (1976), are women who could best be described as "lapsed Catholics"; in many ways, Chapter Three presents a situation which is the antithesis to that found in Chapter Two. While the protagonist of Judith Hearne is unattractive, poor and celibate, the protagonists of I Am Mary Dunne and The Doctor's Wife are attractive, financially secure, sexually active women. In addition, while Judith Hearne was so "completely subordinated to the dictates of various institutionalized forces that the question of identity never really arose"[30], Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden feel compelled to establish their independent identities. Recipients each of unconditional approval from their current partners, Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden are driven not by a need for love as much as a need to create separate identities; without a clear sense of self, neither woman is able to accept the unconditional love offered by her lover.

---

[29]Foster, p.160.

[30]Dahlie, p.120.

Both Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden enter adulterous relationships with younger men: Mary leaves her husband, Hat Bell, for Terence Lavery, while Sheila Redden leaves her husband, Kevin Redden, for Tom Lowry, a young American eleven years her junior. As noted by Jeanne Flood, the circumstances surrounding each liason are remarkably similar:

> Both books present a romance between the major female character and her idealized son-lover. In this romance, the woman's husband is either sexually incompetent or brutal; she is wooed and rescued from the misery of his domination by a literary younger man, in one case a writer, in the other a student of literature, in both a perfect lover. [31]

Adulterous circumstances do link these two heroines, yet in a larger sense, both Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden represent what George Woodcock has described as Moore's "procession of poor bitches, caught in regressive patterns of living, who are the most uncomfortably haunting of Moore's characters."[32] Indeed, a sense of physical and psychic isolation permeates the existence of each protagonist, for both I Am Mary Dunne and The Doctor's Wife begin and end on a lonely note; Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden, like the protagonist of Judith Hearne, ultimately end their respective days in a state of existential limbo, psychologically, if not physically, detached from society.

---

[31] Jeanne A. Flood, "The Doctor's Wife: Brian Moore and the Failure of Realism," Eire, 18 (Summer, 1983), p.83.

[32] George Woodcock, "Moore's Poor Bitches", Tamarack Review, 48 (Summer 1968), p.63.

Yet Woodcock's phrase "regressive patterns of living" could best be applied to Mary Dunne. While Moore states that "Mary Dunne is a woman who is beautiful, who isn't a loser in the Judith Hearne sense"[33], it is also true that three successive marriages, to Jimmy Phelan, Hat Bell and Terence Lavery, have not brought her complete or lasting happiness. On the contrary, these rapid changes in marital status have caused Mary to question the true nature of her personal identity:

> I remember thinking for the first time what I have thought many times since. I am no longer Mary Dunne, or Mary Phelan or Mary Bell, or even Mary Lavery. I am a changeling who has changed too often, and there are moments when I cannot find my way back. (MD,109)

To "find [one's] way back", to discover the essential qualities of one's self as it existed prior to marriage, is the task facing both Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden.

The first stage in rediscovering the qualities of self, as encountered by Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden, is a separation from the patriarchal values inherent in their respective marriages to Hat Bell and Kevin Redden; patriarchal restraints, both psychological and physical, fetter the development of the identities of these women.

Physical domination, a brutal form of sexual brutality, is an integral feature of Kevin Redden's patriarchal authority; this

---

[33]Sale, p.71.

is portrayed when he rapes his wife:

> Suddenly he hit her. He did not know he was going to do it until he had knocked her back with a slap on the jaw. Her raincoat fell open and he saw her panty hose and her bare breasts . . . But now that unpredictable person inside of him saw a strange woman who had been in bed screwing some young Yank for the past two weeks, a woman he did not know any more, a woman who wanted sex, and a good bloody beating into the bargain . . . He stared moonstruck at her long white thighs and belly and the dark pubic hair as he pulled down her panty hose, struggling with her, tearing the panty hose, staring at her white, milky skin, which used to make him think of sin. (DW,240)

Ostensibly, Kevin Redden rapes his wife to punish her for her adulterous affair with the "young Yank"; he also punishes her because she is a "woman who wanted sex". Sheila Redden's open expression of her sexuality, outside the parameters of marriage, threatens his sense of male authority; thus, he inflicts a "good bloody beating into the bargain" as part of his act of sexual aggression. Kevin Redden's actions indicate his desire to restore dominion over his wife's blossoming sexuality; by exerting a brutal form of sexual control, in this case the rape of his wife, Kevin hopes to regain social control of his wayward spouse.

Kevin Redden's patriarchal attitudes can also be detected just prior to the rape. Before the assault, Kevin sarcastically describes Sheila as a "Child of Mary" (DW,239); moments later, he describes her as a "bloody whore" (DW,240). Whereas Kevin

Redden is not, as is the case with Father Quigley in Judith Hearne, an ascetic Christian deploring the lack of women at the "Children of Mary devotions" (JH,63), he does, like Father Quigley, wish to bring women under the control of essentially patriarchal institutions: Quigley uses the power of the Church, while Redden attempts to use the authority invested in the institution of marriage. If a woman is not a "Child of the Church", or psychologically, a child within the bounds of marriage, then she is by necessity a "bloody whore". Hence, Redden's sarcasm in describing Sheila as a "Child of Mary" reveals his strong desire to restore a paternalistic dimension to his marriage; he wants to deny the sexual component of his wife's identity.

The prototype for the rape scene depicted in The Doctor's Wife exists in Moore's first novel: James Madden's rape of Mary, the serving girl in Judith Hearne, resembles Kevin Redden's attack on his wife. Like Redden, Madden is inflamed by the "white nakedness of [Mary's] body"; eventually, he "fondle[s] her in rage" and "flail[s] her buttocks" (JH,51-52). Madden, like Kevin Redden, combines physical aggression with sexual attraction, culminating in his rape of Mary several days later. Yet the strongest evidence connecting Madden's conduct with that of Redden is found when one examines the motivation for the former character's attack on the serving girl. When indignantly viewing Mary's nakedness, Madden sees himself as an "old brawler, old underdog authoritarian" (JH,51); clearly,

he views himself as a paternal figure of authority. This viewpoint, a position at odds with the reality of his social status, stems from the fact that Madden's own daughter, a girl not much older than Mary, disobeyed her father, engaging in sexual intercourse without his expressed consent. Failing to exert his authority in that situation, Madden over-compensates by punishing Mary. Kevin Redden also desperately wants to exert paternal authority; like Madden, he wishes to punish his sexually disobedient "child". Redden's wife, like Madden's wayward daughter, is also called Sheila; hence, similarities of situation, motivation, and appellation all combine to link the earlier actions of Madden with those of Kevin Redden. The consciousness of both men is formed by patriarchal values that culminate in the physical domination of women.

Whereas Kevin Redden exerts a physical form of punitive patriarchal authority, Hat Bell, Mary Dunne's second husband in _I Am Mary Dunne_, wields a subtle form of psychological authority that extends from beyond his grave. Mary Dunne leaves Hat Bell, even though she has been warned that to do so might lead him to suicide; therefore, much of the guilt experienced by Mary results from her decision to leave her husband for the younger Terence Lavery. This guilt manifests itself within the protagonist's subconscious; at night she dreams of "nameless strangers, tall, small, blond, dark", yet when she goes to lie down with these "nameless" men, "[they are] no longer

nameless, nor [are they] Terence. [They are] Hat" (MD,64). Even though dead and buried, Hat Bell influences Mary Dunne's life, marring her current relationship with Terence Lavery; the protagonist's thoughts persistently return to the theme of Hat Bell's death.

Psychologically, Hat Bell represents a patriarchal figure to Mary Dunne, for he had been a war correspondent with the Canadian Army in the Second World war, at which time Mary was five years old (MD,33); in fact, Mary considers this conflict to have been her "father's war" (MD,33), thus chronologically associating Hat Bell with her father. Even in death, Hat is linked to Dan Dunne, Mary's late father:

> Will the real Hatfield Bell please stand up? But oh, Hat, you can't stand up any more, you're six feet under. Show's over.
> Hat in Kingston under a stone. My father's grave in the snow in the military cemetery in Halifax, the little stone cross so packed around with soft wet snow that it no longer was a cross but a phallus. (MD,35)

Thus, Mary Dunne associates the deaths of her husband and father with sexuality; the "semi-impotent Hat"[34] cannot "stand up any more", while her father's stone cross becomes a phallus sheathed with "soft wet snow". Throughout I Am Mary Dunne, the protagonist imagines cemeteries in which her husband and father lie buried; she "collapses the two graves into one, particularly when she thinks of the phallic shape

---

[34] Dahlie, p.128.

of the snow-covered grave stones."[35]

Mary Dunne's association of sexuality with death is derived from two sources. She hates her father because he died of a cerebral hemorrhage while in bed with a prostitute (MD,15). So vehement are her feelings on this subject that she recites: "Our father who art in hell, cursed be thy name" (MD,16); the sexual circumstances surrounding Mr. Dunne's death prevent Mary from forgiving her father. Sexuality also plays a role in the death of Hat Bell. Mary's sudden desertion of Hat, her decision to continue her adulterous liason with Terence Lavery, precipitates Hat's eventual suicide; hence, sex has indirectly caused death. Hat's death is foreshadowed in this final exchange between Bell and Mary:

> "Terence is my savior, I shall not want, he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he restoreth my soul. Yes, that's right. He's my new religion. He's life after death."
> "And to complete the analogy," Hat said, "I am death, right?"
> "Right," I said. (MD,103)

Sexually speaking, Hat Bell does symbolize death to Mary, yet the physical reality of her husband's actual death, and that of her father continue to plague the protagonist's guilty conscience. Thus, a psychological form of authority, emanating from two patriarchal figures, continues to influence the

---

[35] Jeanne A. Flood, Brian Moore (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press and London: Associated University Press, 1974), p.78.

life of Mary Dunne, despite her apparent happiness experienced with Terence Lavery.

Yet Mary desperately wants to escape these associations of death with sexuality, and views Terence Lavery as her new "savior"; she considers intercourse with her third husband as a "Mass of the senses" (MD,160). Furthermore, she again parodies the twenty-third psalm within a sexual frame of reference:

> You are my resurrection and my life and out of the depths I cry to you, and now Terence maketh me lie down in green pastures, he restoreth me by his fingers inside me as he kisses my breasts and neck, and I take his prick in my hand and come up with him to joy, all shaking stilled, to that joining. (MD,160)

This religious frame of reference, a metaphor used to describe the ecstasy of sexual fulfillment, is also employed in The Doctor's Wife:

> Yet tonight, in the quiet of this moonlit room, that feeling came back to her, that pure Sunday communion peace. It filled her, shocking her, for wasn't this sin, here in this room, committing adultery with this boy, how could this be that same state, that pure feeling of peace? Yet it filled her, it possessed her totally. (DW,101)

It has been maintained that "the poverty of language compels the mystic to borrow [an] erotic vocabulary"[36], but one might conversely posit that the woman in love must borrow the

---

[36]Simone de Beauvoir, p.673.

language of a mystic to describe erotic pleasure: both situations, the love of God and the love of man, transcend the finite ability of language to define experience. Considering that both Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden are not active in their religion, it is surprising that they employ the metaphors of the Twenty-third Psalm, a "Mass of the senses", or "communion peace" to describe their respective states of sexual ecstasy.

Both passages conclude with the notion of joining; each protagonist is filled and possessed by her current lover. Through a commingling of a spiritual and sexual form of consciousness, Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden achieve the type of union so desperately sought by the protagonist of Judith Hearne. While Judith's union with her object of devotion, the Sacred Heart, was only a hallucination, Mary and Sheila do in fact achieve momentary states of blissful "oneness" with their own "objects" of devotion, Terence Lavery and Tom Lowry.

Yet this bliss is only temporary. As stated by Jeanne Flood, though both women "are in relationships of mutual love with very desirable men", they each "think of the same method of self-destruction; both associate a graveyard with the scene they see from the heights from which they intend to hurl themselves."[37] Mary Dunne imagines committing suicide by leaping into a cleared building that superficially resembles a cemetery (MD,216), while Sheila Redden contemplates jumping off the Arc de Triomphe, stating that the view from the monument looks

---

[37] Jeanne A. Flood, "The Doctor's Wife: Brian Moore and the Failure of Realism," Eire, 18 (Summer 1983), p.94.

"like a cemetery [with] buildings like gravestones" (DW,199). These thoughts of self-destruction are clearly at odds with their previously expressed notions of "communion peace" and a "Mass of the senses"; sexual bliss has not brought either Mary Dunne or Sheila Redden a permanent state of happiness.

The association of death with sex, a traditional theme in English literature, is a constant theme in I Am Mary Dunne, and to a lesser extent is present in The Doctor's Wife. The graveyard/suicide sequences portrayed in these novels combine a traditional literary theme with Freudian imagery, the somewhat phallic stone crosses (MD,35) and gravestones (DW,199), to produce a compelling portrait of despair. In a grim parody of the "oneness" achieved through the ecstasy of sexual union, these graveyard/suicide sequences portray a potentially terminal form of union in which the protagonists of I Am Mary Dunne and The Doctor's Wife imagine hurling themselves upon phallic objects that signify death.

Yet these sequences do not primarily foreshadow physical death as much as psychological destruction: the death of identity. The stone crosses and gravestones are immutable, while the protagonists' bodies, potentially hurled upon these objects, are fragile. Similarly, both Terence Lavery and Tom Lowery, the lovers of Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden, have well established senses of identity; like stone crosses or tombstones, they are solid. In contrast, the identities of Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden are still in the process of being defined; like bodies

hurled upon objects, they are vunerable and easily damaged. Since neither woman has fully established a complete sense of personal identity, the sexual bliss or oneness each seeks through personal relationships may in fact be detrimental to her ultimate ambition of defining an independent sense of self. In short, sexual satisfaction may be an end in itself, rather than a route to heightened self awareness.[38]

Sheila Redden ends her affair with Tom Lowry and decides not to follow him to America; at this point, her suicidal impulses end. She no longer wishes to start a new life with her young lover and instead of physically following him, only sends a suitcase full of clothes on the next plane (DW,252). In essence, this action signifies the death of her previous identity, for she sheds the clothes that were part of her life with Kevin Redden in Belfast, and Tom Lowry in France. Hence, Tom Lowry receives only baggage, rather than the woman he loves; he is left with only the secondary characteristics of identity rather than Sheila herself. In a similar manner, Kevin Redden retains Sheila's library, volumes of Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, and Pope (DW,205), yet loses his wife. Both men possess superficial elements of Sheila Redden's identity, yet Sheila remains elusive; without a clear sense of identity she will be neither the "doctor's wife" nor Tom Lowry's consort.

---

[38]In the absence of a fully developed sense of identity, sexual satisfaction may simply signal the satiation of basic carnal appetites; the transcendent element of the sex act will be absent. Erich Fromm in Psychoanalysis and Religion (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1950), p.28., states: "If a person has not succeeded in integrating his energies in the direction of his higher self, he canalizes them in the direction of lower goals."

Jeanne Flood states that nothing in The Doctor's Wife explains why Sheila Redden's relationship with Tom Lowry makes her suicidal[39], yet an explanation does exist. The ultimate goal of this relationship, a new life with Tom Lowry in America, would but continue the process by which Sheila Redden's identity is subordinated to her male partner: in America she might possibly become "the English Professor's Wife". To avoid psychological destruction, the death of her fledgling identity, Sheila Redden must reject both the punitive patriarchal oppression of her husband, and the benign patriarchal values that are integral to becoming the future wife of Tom Lowry; thus, she must go to "cosmopolitan London, a kind of universal metropolis where she can both submerge herself and start an entirely new life."[40]

This change in Sheila Redden's societal status is reflected by the text itself, for at this point in the novel the protagonist is no longer described as "the doctor's wife":

> The reader in a sense 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; from this perspective the narrator clearly reflects the collective voice of a society that is incapable of comprehending any compulsion that would lead her to reject this respectable

[39] Flood, p.93.

[40] Dahlie, p.138.

> identity. Only in the very last segment of the novel's final section, as Sheila disappears into the void of London, is that identity dropped and replaced by the impersonal "she". 41

The protagonist's crisis of identity cannot be solved by entering a new marriage to escape the last. She must opt for the limbo of London, adopt the anonymous nomenclature of "she", before she can hope to establish an independent identity, separate from patriarchal control: her London sojourn represents a psychological resting period. In taking the time to rediscover her personal identity, Sheila Redden may avoid the cycle of marriage and remarriage encountered by the protagonist of I Am Mary Dunne.

I Am Mary Dunne was originally entitled A Woman of No Identity[42]. At first, this would seem a shift from anonymity to a strong statement of naming, yet these titles do not represent polarities. In an effort to counteract a patriarchal system of marital nomenclature, the protagonist, on two separate occasions, resorts to thrice repeating the phrase, "I am Mary Dunne" (MD,109,217); like a drowning person, she clings to this scrap of her previous identity, repeating the phrase as if it were a charm. That Mary Dunne would have have trouble remembering her name is not surprising, for she

---

[41]Dahlie, p.133.

[42]Dahlie, p.122.

has been Mrs. Phelan, Mrs. Bell, and is presently addressed as Mrs. Terence Lavery:

> Perhaps part of my uncertainty about who I am these days is because, living with Terence, I am introduced to everybody as Mrs. Terence Lavery. "You mean _the_ Terence Lavery, the British playwright, that one?" Yes, that one. 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. Oh, I suppose men still look at me, but with this difference: 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. (MD,113)

Like Sheila Redden, Mary Dunne's identity has become subordinate to that of her husband: instead of the doctor's wife, she has effectively become "the British playwright's wife". It is important to note that Terence does not consciously superimpose his identity over that of his wife; this is a benign form of patriarchal domination, facilitated by the social forces of the Canadian cultural milieu of the 1960's rather than any deliberate desire to oppress. The protagonist rejects a patriarchal matrix that is beyond the direct control of her husband; despite the fact that Terence Lavery quite obviously loves her, Mary Dunne expresses dissatisfaction in regard to the subordinate role assigned to her by society. Unconditional love, as expressed within the institution of marriage, cannot by itself solve problems of identity.

Indeed, the problems faced by women attempting to define

their identities within a patriarchal culture are analagous to the question posed in the epigraph of I Am Mary Dunne: "How can we know the dancer from the dance?" This question, a line from Yeats' "Among School Children", illustrates Mary Dunne's fundamental dilemma. In Terence Lavery, the protagonist has discovered unconditional love, yet she also relinquishes much of her developing sense of identity, essentially becoming Mrs. Terence Lavery. Hence, Mary "assumes the permanently protean form of all dancers"[43], becoming a mere accessory in her husband's larger world: she is the "dancer", modelling herself to the "dance" as defined by a patriarchal culture. In I Am Mary Dunne there exists a constant tension between the protagonist's real love for her present husband, and the dissatisfaction she feels in regard to her passive role in his society:

> 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. I sweat with shame when I think of the uncounted hours of poking about in dress shops, the Narcissus hours in front of mirrors, the bovine hours under hair driers, and for what? (MD,31)

Society demands that Mary Dunne play the role of "pander and whore"; in a patriarchal society, the physical appearance of women is of utmost importance. At a more specific level, each

---

[43] Dahlie, p.130.

of Mary's husbands has demanded that she play a certain role:

> For Jimmy I had to be a tomboy; for Hat I must look like a model: he admired elegance. Terence wants to see me as Irish: sulky, laughing, wild. And me, how do I see me, who is that me I create in mirrors, the dressing-table me, the self I cannot put a name to in the Golden Door Beauty Salon? (MD,31)

Again, it is demonstrated that the male figures in Mary Dunne's life control the style of her "dance", for the protagonist has conformed to an identity predetermined by each of her successive husbands. Through playing each of these roles, the tomboy, model, or Irishwoman, Mary Dunne fears she has lost her identity.

A matriarchal figure, Mary Dunne's mother, attempts to reassure the protagonist in regard to the question of her identity. When Mary asks her mother,"Do you think I've changed much in these last years?", she replies, "You're my daughter, you'll always be the same to me" (MD,214). While Mary's mother extends a form of unconditional acceptance towards her daughter, she, too, "fixes" the protagonist in an unchanging, predetermined role. In stating the phrase "you'll always be the same to me", Mary's mother,in effect,implies that she views her daughter as a child, a static image from the past, instead of recognizing her adult, independent status as a member of society.

The essential problem facing Mary Dunne is encapsulated in

the initial paragraph of the novel:

> Cogito ergo sum. I close my eyes and go back seventeen years. Mother Marie-Therese writes it on the blackboard. Her arm is bare to the elbow: the sleeve of her habit is rolled up to avoid chalk dust. "I think, therefore I am," she says. Where the Latin was just something to translate, the English jumps and my hand is up (unlike me, that) and when Mother sees me I ask wouldn't it have been more correct for him to have said "Memento ergo sum"?
>
> "Memento?" - with that winter frost smile of hers.
>
> "Yes, Mother. I remember, therefore I am." (MD,3)

The phrase "memento ergo sum" opens and closes I Am Mary Dunne; it serves the same function as Judith Hearne's unpacking of the Sacred Heart at the start and finish of The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne, for as much as the Catholic icon symbolized the lack of love in Judith's life, the Latin phrase is emblematic of the vital importance of memory in defining identity.

Indeed, memory of the past is also crucial to the process by which Sheila Redden rediscovers her identity:

> Villefranche was just as she remembered it. In those sixteen years, it was Ireland that had changed. Belfast bombed and barricaded, while in Dublin new flats and American banks had spoiled the Georgian calm around St. Stephen's Green. And all over the country, in the smaller towns and villages, new housing estates and motor hotels. Cars everywhere: every farmer had his own car now, horses and donkeys were becoming a thing of the past; even in the villages of the west, the arrival of the morning bus was no longer the big moment of the day. Yet paradoxically, here on the Riviera nothing had changed. It was as though, long ago, when this part of the coast had been built, house on house, terrace on terrace, winding street on winding street, nothing futher could be

> added. Belfast, with its ruined houses and rubbled streets, was now, to her, the alien place. (DW,50)

To Sheila Redden, Villefranche, a little town on the French Riviera, represents the idyllic period of her life before the real onset of married life with Kevin: they spent their honeymoon, sixteen years ago, in this French town. Harsh images are juxtaposed in this passage: American banks clash with the "Georgian calm of St. Stephen's Green", while the incessant brutality of a Belfast under siege is contrasted with the village on the Riviera where "nothing had changed". In fact, Sheila laments the effect of technology on Ireland, for now "every farmer had his own car",and in the west, the coming of the "morning bus was no longer the big moment of the day". The protagonist of The Doctor's Wife yearns for the calm and simplicity of an earlier age, a time devoid of brutality and relentless change; the violence of Belfast is a metaphor for Sheila's troubled marriage, while the appearance of technology, as symbolized by the American banks and the age of the automobile, is a metaphor for the changes in the protagonist's previously calm life, caused by her involvement with the young American, Tom Lowry. In short, this passage foreshadows the eventual turbulent events that form the plot of the novel: Villefranche, an idyllic interlude, represents the calm before the storm.

The unconditional love extended to Mary Dunne and Sheila

Redden by Terence Lavery and Tom Lowry represents a psychological "calm" before the "storm" of the crisis of rediscovering identity. While both women enter relationships with loving men, men that offer love and understanding, such liasons do not provide an effective route to a clear definition of self. On the contrary, Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden feel overshadowed by their partners' respective social standing. In the absence of a well defined sense of self, even unconditional love cannot solve the problem of a troubled sense of identity.

Chapter Four: Cold Heaven - A Reconciliation

Cold Heaven (1983) represents a reconciliation of matriarchal and patriarchal principles in Moore's fiction, and also marks the point at which his female protagonists' search for unconditional love is integrated with their quest to establish independent identities. Marie Davenport, the protagonist of Cold Heaven, witnesses a miracle at Carmel, California, that causes her to reappraise her system of beliefs and confront the conflicts of her past.

In several ways, Marie Davenport is an amalgam of Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden. Like the protagonist of I Am Mary Dunne, Marie Davenport is openly hostile towards her father, and like Sheila Redden, the protagonist of Cold Heaven is also married to a stern, autocratic husband who effectively thwarts her academic career: Dr. Alex Davenport, like Kevin Redden, is a man of science who has little time for the liberal arts. Thus, shortly after her wedding, Marie Davenport abandons the graduate work necessary to complete her doctorate in English literature (CH,79). In response to her unsatisfactory relationship, Marie Davenport determines to leave her marriage; like Marie Dunne and Sheila Redden, the protagonist of Cold Heaven is an adultress. In addition, like Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden,

Marie Davenport was raised as a Catholic, yet is no longer active in her religion.

While many similarities link Marie Davenport to the protagonists of I Am Mary Dunne and The Doctor's Wife, the protagonist of Cold Heaven is the polar opposite of the heroine of Judith Hearne. Judith is piously devout, while Marie is an avowed non-believer; furthermore, Judith receives an ersatz manifestation of the male symbol of Christianity, Jesus Christ, while Marie is witness to the female symbol of Christianity, the Virgin Mary. Whereas the weltanschauung of Judith Hearne is largely formed by the influence of a patriarchal, Catholic hierarchy, the world view of Marie Davenport includes considerable evidence of a matriarchal influence.

One example of this matriarchal influence is demonstrated through the protagonist's choice of a new mate. Whereas Alex Davenport fits the same patriarchal mode as did Kevin Redden in The Doctor's Wife, Dr. Daniel Bailey, Marie Davenport's new lover, is clearly different:

> He [Daniel] was attractive, but did not know it, rumpled, untidy, not tall and handsome like Alex. In fact, he was Alex's opposite. He did not try to impress her with his knowledge or his importance. Unlike other doctors he did not seem accustomed to laying down the law. (CH,142-143)

The key phrase in this description of Daniel Bailey is "he

did not seem accustomed to laying down the law"; Daniel Bailey, unlike Alex Davenport or Kevin Redden, is not a figure of authority who "makes demands [or] establishes principles and laws."[44] Like Tom Lowry and Terence Lavery, the sympathetic lovers of the respective protagonists of I Am Mary Dunne and The Doctor's Wife, Bailey represents an alternative to patriarchal figures of authority.

Yet unlike Lowry and Lavery, there is no indication that Bailey wishes Marie to fit any predetermined role or pattern: she does not need to play the role of "pander and whore" evident in Mary Dunne's world, nor does she have to play the part of "the doctor's wife" as seen in the marriage between Kevin and Sheila Redden. Instead, Marie Davenport can enjoy her relationship with Bailey yet remain independent, rather than become a mere appendage to her husband or mate. In addition, the all-consuming sexuality that appears in I Am Mary Dunne and The Doctor's Wife, a passion so complete it swallowed the identities of Mary Dunne and Sheila Redden, is not as prominent in Cold Heaven. Sexuality is still an integral feature of the male/female relationship in Cold Heaven, yet is not a central theme of the novel; indeed, this is reflected in the text which in fact contains no explicit descriptions of lovemaking. Furthermore, there is no attempt to create a religious frame of reference by which to describe sexual ecstasy, as was clearly evident in I Am Mary Dunne and The Doctor's Wife. In Cold Heaven, sexuality

[44] Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), p.65.

becomes an assumed component of a healthy relationship between compatible partners, rather than a route to salvation, or a means to define identity.

Yet the central theme of Cold Heaven is indeed religious. Alex Davenport falls victim to a boating accident while vacationing in the south of France. Presumed dead by French medical experts, Alex miraculously appears, Lazarus-like, in Marie Davenport's motel room in Carmel, California. At this point in the novel Marie perceives her husband's recovery as being contingent with obedience to the wishes of the apparition of the Virgin Mary at Carmel, who requests that Mary go forth and make the spot a place of pilgrimage (CH,120). Mary construes this request as a direct command; moreover, she sees the potential death of Alex as a possible punishment for non-compliance with this request.

Yet in contrast to the situation portrayed in Judith Hearne, in which the protagonist views the Sacred Heart as her "Stern Judge" and imagines that Christ will punish her, Marie Davenport receives her instructions from the Virgin Mary: while the Christian God, or Christ, is "full of the rigors of justice, the Virgin is full of the gentleness of charity."[45] Since Marie receives her instructions from the charitable Virgin, it is unlikely that disobedience of her wishes will be punished by death, for such a reaction violates

---

[45] Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1976), p.181.

the principles of matriarchal, or unconditional love, of which the Virgin is emblematic.

In Cold Heaven, the "fatherly conscience", or patriarchal principle, is associated with Marie Davenport's perception of God as a force who may allow her husband to die; in addition, the protagonist also links the patriarchal principle to the male hierarchy, the priests, who run the Church. Yet it is the matriarchal principle, the Virgin Mary, that speaks to Marie; furthermore, it is the female component of the Church, the nuns of the Sisters of Mary Immaculate convent, that provides the route by which the protagonist can effectively cope with the miracle at Carmel.

Marie Davenport sees herself a victim of patriarchal oppression because she places the apparition within the framework of the patriarchal principle; thus, the Virgin's request to have a shrine built at Carmel is transformed, by Marie, into a command which demands obedience. The source for Marie's patriarchal perceptions, however, lies beyond the institution of the Catholic Church. The protagonist of Cold Heaven has not completely resolved her feelings of resentment directed towards her own father; she views him as a source of patriarchal oppression:

> Her father was not even nominally Catholic and so when her mother died Marie asked him to let her change schools. But her father did not grant her request. He listened instead to the nuns, who recommended she now be enrolled as a boarder

> because without a mother's guidance, she would need a firm hand. Marie wept and pleaded but her father did not give in. It was convenient for him to enroll her as a boarder. She knew that then. She had not forgiven him then. She had not forgiven him since. (CH,24)

This analysis of one segment of the protagonist's childhood provides partial clues that explain her current attitude towards the Church. At a crucial time during her adolescence, Marie Davenport's wishes were made subordinate to her father's arbitrary decision; she views this action as a betrayal, and can never forgive her father. In the absence of her father's physical presence, Marie Davenport transfers her feelings of resentment from a particular source of patriarchal oppression, her father, to a more generalized target: the male hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

Yet Cold Heaven portrays its priests in a positive light. The figure of the ascetic, authoritarian priest, as epitomized by Father Quigley in Judith Hearne, is absent in this novel. Both Monsignor Cassidy and Father Niles, the two priests who learn of Marie Davenport's experience with the apparition, extend hospitality, patience and understanding towards the protagonist: at no point does her state of lapsed Catholicism, or her sin of adultery, become an issue.[46]

---

[46]While Moore does portray a more tolerant priesthood in Cold Heaven, he cannot resist showing its human foibles. In The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1955), when the protagonist declares her intention to make a general confession, Father Quigley thinks of his appointment "to see Father Feeny for golf at half-past one" (JH,170). Cold Heaven (1983) indicates a similar clerical preoccupation with golf. When Marie Davenport begins to relate the tale of her miraculous experience, Monsignor Cassidy thinks of his intention to be "on the golf course by two-thirty, a little ahead of those who would be lunching at the lodge" (CH,117).

It is in this spirit that Father Niles reassures Marie Davenport that "miraculous appearances are only signs which solicit belief" (CH,182), yet Marie's experiences indicate that her husband's recovery is connected to obedience to the Virgin's request. Ultimately, the nuns at the Sisters of Mary Immaculate convent resolve Marie Davenport's crisis. In contrast to the minor role played by the sisters who run Earnscliffe Home in Judith Hearne, the nuns portrayed in Cold Heaven are dynamic characters; it is Mother St. Jude and Sister Anna, not Monsignor Cassidy and Father Niles, who free Marie Davenport from what she perceives as oppression.

In addition, while Cassidy and Niles demonstrate tolerance towards Marie Davenport, a passive form of acceptance, the nuns, especially Mother St. Jude, extend unconditional love towards the protagonist. When Mother St. Jude first sees Marie, the protagonist notices an "overwhelming reverence joined to a complete and enveloping love" (CH,83); on the occasion of her second meeting with the nun, Marie again notices herself being "enveloped by a look of love mixed with reverence, a look she had never known from any other human being" (CH,225-226). This is a clear example of the matriarchal principle in action: despite the fact that Marie Davenport explicitly states that she is both a non-believer and an adultress, she still receives unconditional love from the nuns. Moreover, Mother St. Jude views the protagonist not as a sinner, but as "God's messenger"

(CH,228); Marie Davenport, the non-believing witness to the apparition at Carmel[47], acts as a catalyst that enables Mother St. Jude and Sister Anna to each view for themselves the miracle of Our Lady.

The point at which Monsignor Cassidy, Father Niles, Mother St. Jude, Sister Anna and Marie Davenport congregate at the site of the miracle, the moment at which the apparition becomes Sister Anna's vision, marks a reconciliation of patriarchal and matriarchal principles in Cold Heaven. In the tradition of female mysticism within the Church, Sister Anna ultimately receives the vision of the Virgin Mary. In the tradition of patriarchal values within the Church, Father Niles and Monsignor Cassidy worry about bureaucratic details that will result from building a shrine at Carmel: Niles wonders about the suitability of leaving the rock as a natural floor for the shrine, while Monsignor Cassidy ponders on the correct hierarchical channels by which to report the miracle to his bishop, and eventually the Vatican (CH,265-269). Yet most importantly, at this moment in Cold Heaven Marie Davenport recognizes the fact that as previously stated by Father Niles, no one, not even God, can compel belief. In addition, she discovers that

[47] In Cold Heaven, Carmel, California is clearly linked to Mt. Carmel in Israel, a site that has been regarded since antiquity as a holy mountain due in large part to the appearance there of the Virgin Mary in the form of a vision. In Cold Heaven, Father Niles makes allusion to this association: "Well, first of all it was Carmelite friars who landed here in 1602 and named this place, the Bay of Carmel. And then the Carmelite Order, as you know, is the Order which is linked to the tradition of mysticism and the great mystic saints, St. Theresa and St. John of the Cross" (CH,245). This tradition of mysticism has its origins in the Old World, and was brought to Carmel, California by the Spanish explorers and missionaries.

no punishment lies waiting for those who choose not to believe; the patriarchal notion of God, an Old Testament theology of a jealous, avenging God, has been discarded in favour of a more tolerant philosophy in which the Church does not summarily condemn a woman such as the protagonist of Cold Heaven.

This climate of increased tolerance within the Catholic Church, the product of blending patriarchal and matriarchal principles, is noted by Erich Fromm in a discussion of the development of Catholicism:

> The most important change from the standpoint of this discussion is that of a shifting of emphasis from a purely patriarchal to a blending between matriarchal and patriarchal elements. The Jewish God of the Old Testament had been a strictly patriarchal god; in the Catholic development, the idea of the all-loving and all-forgiving mother is re-introduced. The Catholic Church herself - the all-embracing mother - and the Virgin Mother, symbolize the maternal spirit of forgiveness and love, while God, the father, represented in the hierarchal principle the authority to which man had to submit without complaining or rebelling. No doubt this blending of fatherly and motherly elements was one of the main factors to which the Church owed its tremendous attraction and influence over the minds of the people. The masses, oppressed by patriarchal authorities, could turn to the loving mother who would comfort them and intercede for them. [48]

At the end of Cold Heaven Marie Davenport realizes that the type of God that punishes disobedience with death, the God of the Old Testament, is not part of the Church she perceives at Carmel. On the contrary, she is able to return to "ordinary

---

[48] Erich Fromm, The Sane Society (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications Inc., 1955), p.57.

life, to its burdens, its consequences" (CH,271); while the protagonist does not return to Catholicism, she no longer feels oppressed by the Church:

> 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 battlefield it had become its history, its truths altered to fit the legend of those who had survived. (CH,270)

Essentially, Marie Davenport describes a psychological battlefield on which she has fought, for many years, various sources of patriarchal domination. Since adolescence she has engaged in a private battle with her father in regard to her schooling; her feelings of resentment are transformed into a mild form of paranoia concerning the relative power of the Church's male hierarchy. In addition, she has suffered the domination of a patriarchal husband, and only by the novel's end has she completely resolved to leave him for the more "balanced" figure of Daniel Bailey.

Cold Heaven describes the process by which Marie Davenport fights patriarchal oppression, yet it also illustrates the strength, and necessity, of matriarchal influences in society. It is Mother St. Jude and Sister Anna who ultimately free Marie Davenport from the vision at Carmel; similarly, it is the

more "matriarchal" figure of Daniel Bailey who frees the protagonist from her failing marriage. Yet the psychological battle which forms Marie Davenport's consciousness in Cold Heaven is necessary in order that she establish a stronger, more independent, sense of identity. By casting off the years of resentment resulting from the patriarchal oppression of her childhood, Marie Davenport effectively buries the psychic trauma of an unhappy youth, and is able to regard the Church without antagonism, living in peaceful co-existence with that particular institution.

If one seeks a happy reconciliation between God and woman in Cold Heaven, then one will be ultimately disappointed, for the non-belief encountered by Judith Hearne in Moore's first novel becomes the essential philosophy of Marie Davenport, apparitions notwithstanding. Yet Moore does present a positive philosophy that hinges on the necessity of merging matriarchal and patriarchal principles within the institutions of Church and marriage. Given the successful union of these principles, society cannot help but become more tolerant, providing the necessary environment that will nurture the personal growth and development of the female identity.

Conclusion

Brian Moore states that "it is more difficult to live without a faith than with one."[49] Thirty years of writing that have produced fifteen serious novels, all of which illustrate some facet of a search for faith, demonstrate the truth of the author's statement. Yet after reading The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1955), one might find Moore's assertion regarding the importance of faith somewhat contradictory, for surely the author's first novel must be regarded as an indictment of the Catholic Church as found in Belfast. Yet faith, for Moore, exists beyond the parameters of organized religion, for while he states that it can be found "within the Catholic Church", he also maintains that it exists in "a belief in something other than merely the materialistic world."[50]

Moore substitutes his writing for religious faith, yet is well aware of the limitations of such a creed:

> I'd say my writing is my illusion. I'm aware that it's an illusion and I'm aware that it's a substitute for faith . . . I know writing is *my* illusion and that it's as nonsensical as any other religion. When I have a bad moment at night,

---

[49] Rochell Girson, "Rochelle Girson Interviews Brian Moore," *Saturday Review*, October 13, 1962, p.20.

[50] Richard T. Bray, "A Conversation with Brian Moore," *Critic: A Catholic Review of Books and the Arts*, 35 (Fall 1976), p.44.

> or wake up in the morning and don't know where my next penny's coming from, I do hope that somebody is going to be reading my stuff when I'm dead. I have a very Catholic attitude toward that. I want more, much more, to be read ten years or fifty years after I'm dead than to have a large audience now. [51]

This concern for posterity is explored in Fergus (1970), in which Moore's concept of substituting writing for religious faith is articulated in a conversation which occurs between the protagonist and the apparition of his sister, Maeve: "As a Catholic, you were brought up to believe in a life after death. But you can't believe it. So you invent a substitute. You start worrying about your reputation outliving you" (F,55).

Fergus notwithstanding, Moore's substitution of his writing for religious faith cannot be considered the controlling theme of the bulk of his works. Of much greater concern to the author is the concept of "presenting the moment in a person's life, the crucial weeks or months, when [one] suddenly confronts the reality or unreality of one's illusions, because that, to me, is what the drama of a novel is."[52] This concept is most powerfully portrayed in Moore's first novel, The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1955), in which the protagonist examines the unreality of her personal illusions, and consequently suffers a nervous breakdown.

---

[51] Donald Cameron, Conversations with Canadian Novelists (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1973), p.80.

[52] Cameron, p.66.

The process of confronting one's illusions may be devastating, yet it is an integral part of honestly defining one's sense of identity. Another component of establishing personal identity is the whole notion of analyzing one's past. Moore is ambivalent on this topic, for although he states that "there is always a moment in one's past which decides one's present"[53], he also ponders on "how little hold the past has on the present."[54] While the author's views on the relative importance of one's past history appear somewhat contradictory, his statements are not mutually exclusive. For example, in I Am Mary Dunne (1966), the protagonist remembers a scene that occurred when she was a young girl, in which a nun wrote Cogito Ergo Sum on a blackboard. Mary Dunne questions the nun, stating,"Shouldn't it be Memento Ergo Sum?": this memory opens and closes the novel. While Mary Dunne has lost her Catholic faith long ago, illustrating Moore's notion of "how little hold the past has on the present", her memory of a philosophical interlude in a parochial school provides the major theme that dominates I Am Mary Dunne: in a world largely formed by patriarchal values, remembering one's original female identity *is* everything.

The process of confronting illusions and defining identity is a major theme of Judith Hearne and I Am Mary Dunne; one might

---

[53] Hallvard Dahlie, "Brian Moore: An Interview," Tamarack Review, 46 (Winter 1968), p.18.

[54] Richard B. Sale, "An Interview in London with Brian Moore," Studies in the Novel, 1 (Spring 1969), p.73.

wonder how Moore, a male author, can so completely plumb the depths of the female psyche. He offers the following explanation:

> Then I discovered - and I've found out since it that is very true - that for me to write about a woman is easier than for me to write about a man because there is no fear of its being autobiographical; yet in a way it is partly autobiographical because emotionally I can empathize with a woman. Yet I didn't want to become known as a person who just wrote about women, so in my next novels I avoided women as main characters. You know, I've always wanted to avoid repeating myself. 55

The success of Judith Hearne, a work that John Wilson Foster has described as "perhaps the best novel to come out of Northern Ireland"[56], stems largely from the fact that Moore writes from the point of view of the female protagonist. Yet the novel was written for both male and female readers:

> It is also a book about a woman, presenting certain problems of living peculiar to women. I write it with all the sympathy and understanding I am capable of and I think it is a book for women to read because they understand the viewpoint, and for my own sex, it is an effort to help men gain a greater understanding of women like Miss Hearne. 56

Women will understand the viewpoint of Judith Hearne, for as participants in a sometimes oppressive patriarchal society, they

---

[55] Sale, p.72.

[56] Details from a letter written to Andre Deutsch from Brian Moore, June 12, 1954, cited in Brian Moore (Boston: The Twayne Publishers, 1981), p.26.

experience the dimensions of male authority exerted by the institutions of Church and marriage; at the same time, they may feel "slightly superior to her."[57]

Yet as stated previously, Moore wanted to avoid repeating himself; hence, his next four novels, The Feast of Lupercal (1957), The Luck of Ginger Coffey (1960), An Answer from Limbo (1962) and The Emperor of Ice-Cream (1965), all have males for protagonists. Nevertheless, the problem of defining and asserting personal identity remains a constant theme in these novels. In Lupercal, Diarmuid Devine, the protagonist of the novel, fails to effectively rebel against the oppressive, patriarchal system of a parochial boys' school; Moore states that the headmaster of this school is "the very spirit of authoritarianism and Catholicism at its worst."[58] In failing to rebel, Devine remains a pawn in the system, a perpetual schoolboy in the eyes of the school's bureaucratic hierarchy.

Ginger Coffey, protagonist of The Luck of Ginger Coffey, must grapple with reality; eventually, he discards the unrealistic illusions he holds in regard to his identity. By honestly evaluating his true abilities, he comes to realize that a romantic notion of one's self- image is no substitute for realistic self-awareness in the economic environment of

---

[57] Sale, p.75. Moore relates the following anecdote: "I think I got more than a hundred letters, nearly all from women. They all said they knew somebody like that. Very few said they were that person. Often you could tell it was lies; they themselves were Judith Hearnes and it was something they wrote in an effort to make contact with me because they had been moved by this woman."

[58] Dahlie, p.18.

Montreal. Coffey is not so much a victim of a patriarchal system than a victim of his own lack of self awareness. This same lack of self-awareness is encountered in An Answer from Limbo, for the protagonist, Brendan Tierney, wonders "if the old writer he will be will ever know the young boy he was"[59]; it is only at the end of the novel, when Brendan is able to view his mother's funeral without emotion, that he realizes that he has "altered beyond all self-recognition" (AL,322). Whereas Ginger becomes self-aware in time to salvage his marriage, Brendan Tierney's identity undergoes such a complete transformation that no amount of self-awareness can possibly return him to the fold of compassionate society.

The Emperor of Ice-Cream is Moore's bildungsroman.[60] This thinly disguised autobiographical work portrays the adolescent revolt of the protagonist, Gavin Burke, against the patriarchal forces of Church and family, for as "reflected in the two earlier Belfast novels, these two institutions characteristically [try] to keep their subjects in a state of childlike dependency."[61] Two events in this novel are symbolic of Gavin's rebellion against authority: he refuses to kneel during a recitation of the Lord's Prayer amidst the bombing of Belfast, and he also refuses to heed his father's command to desert their home for the safety of Dublin (EIC,224, 216).

---

[59] Dahlie, p.21

[60] Hallvard Dahlie, Brian Moore (Boston: The Twayne Publishers,1981), p.61.

[61] Dahlie, p.66.

The image of the patriarchal father, a source of paternalistic authority as epitomized in the character of Mr. Burke in Emperor, is very much like Moore's actual father:

> My father was a surgeon. He was quite a remarkable man in his way - a difficult man to live up to. He was a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and a well-known surgeon in Belfast. He was head of the local Catholic hospital and was a university examiner and one of the very few Catholics to become a member of the university's board of governors. And so, he did not understand failure of any kind: he considered that all of his children should do as well as he had done - and of course, I was unable to live up to that. [62]

This image of the "stern surgeon" emerges in several of Moore's works: Dr. Charles Grattan Tierney in An Answer from Limbo; Dr. Fadden in Fergus; Dr. Kevin Redden in The Doctor's Wife; and Dr. Alex Davenport in Cold Heaven. What one sees is a composite character, a pastiche of doctors from several works, each of whom shares similar traits of moral rectitude and a low tolerance for disobedience; Moore's doctors are models of patriarchal authority.

Moore's doctors are also married to women; the patriarchal domination experienced by Gavin Burke is also felt by Sheila Redden and Marie Davenport. The effect of this domination is, as it was for Gavin, to deny each woman a completely adult status in society, thwarting their ambitions. Both Kevin Redden and Alex Davenport subordinate their wives' career goals to those of their own.

---

[62] Hallvard Dahlie, "Brian Moore: An Interview," Tamarack Review, 46 (Winter 1968), p.7.

Sheila Redden and Marie Davenport are ultimately disappointed in their experiences with marriage; such marital disillusionment is common in Moore's fiction. Yet from a female perspective, given the nature of the authoritarian husbands previously described, such a reaction is not surprising; marriage represents yet another form of repression within society. While both male and female characters can experience the repression of the traditional Church, only women, at least within Moore's fictional world, are restrained within the patriarchally determined institution of marriage.[63] Thus, the twin sources of repression, Church and marriage, represent a psychological crucible from whence the female identity, doubly tempered by two forms of adversity, can emerge with a new, independent sense of awareness. It is not only desirable but essential that Brian Moore, a man who can "empathize with a woman", choose female characters to illustrate the dimensions of patriarchal oppression in modern society.

---

[63] One exception to this rule is Jamie Mangan, protagonist of The Mangan Inheritance (1979). As stated by Hallvard Dahlie in Brian Moore (Boston: The Twayne Publishers, 1981), p.141, "For in much the same way that Mary's identity began to erode the moment she was introduced as Mrs. Terence Lavery, Jamie, too, became little more than an appendage of Beatrice Abbot, and, indeed, even after her death, their former doorman kept calling him Mr. Abbot.

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne. Boston, Toronto: Little Brown & Co., 1955.

I Am Mary Dunne New York: The Viking Press, 1966.

Fergus Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1970.

The Doctor's Wife Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1976.

Cold Heaven London: Jonathan Cape, 1983.

Secondary Sources:

Bainvel, Jean. "Heart of Jesus", The New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7 (1967).

Beauvoir, Simone de. The Second Sex. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976.

Bray, Richard T. "A Conversation with Brian Moore." Critic: A Catholic Review of Books and the Arts, 35 (Fall 1976), pp.42-48.

Cameron, Donald. "Brian Moore." Conversations with Canadian Novelists. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1973, pp.64-85.

Dahlie, Hallvard. "Brian Moore: An Interview." Tamarack Review, 46 (Winter 1968), pp.67-74.

Dahlie, Hallvard. Brian Moore. Boston: The Twayne Publishers, 1981.

DeSantana, Hubert. "The Calligraphy of Pain." Macleans, September 17, 1979, pp.44-46.

Devitis, A.A. Graham Greene. New York: The Twayne Publishers, 1964.

Flood, Jeanne A. Brian Moore. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press and London: Associated University Press, 1974.

Flood, Jeanne A. "The Doctor's Wife: Brian Moore and the Failure of Realism." Eire, 18 (Summer 1983), p.94.

Foster, John Wilson. Forces and Themes in Ulster Fiction. Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1974.

French, Marilyn. Beyond Power: On Women, Men and Morals. New York: Summit Books, 1985.

Fromm, Erich. The Art of Loving. New York: Harper and Row, 1956.

Fromm, Erich. Psychoanalysis and Religion. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1950.

Fromm, Erich. The Sane Society. Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1955.

Fulford, Robert. "Robert Fulford Interviews Brian Moore." Tamarack Review, 23 (1962), pp.5-18.

Girson, Rochelle. "Rochelle Girson Interviews Brian Moore." Saturday Review, (October 13, 1962), p.20.

Sale, Richard B. "An Interview in London with Brian Moore." Studies in the Novel, 1 (Spring 1969), pp.79-88.

Staines, David. "Observance without Belief." Canadian Literature, 73 (Summer 1977), pp.8-24.

VITA

Surname: CHAMBERLAIN Given Names: TIMOTHY

Place of Birth: Welwyn Garden City, England Date of Birth: June 15, 1957

Educational Institutions Attended, with Dates of Entering and Leaving:

Institution	Entering	Leaving
University of Victoria	1975	1980
University of Victoria	1980	1981
University of Victoria	1984	1986

Degrees, Diplomas, Etc., Awarded, with Dates and Names of Institutions:

Degree	Date	Institution
B.A.	1980	University of Victoria
Secondary Teaching Certificate	1981	University of Victoria

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant the right to lend my thesis or dissertation (the title of which is shown below) to users of the University of Victoria Library, and to make single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the Library of any other university, or similar institution, on its behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or a member of the University designated by me. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission

Title of Thesis:

LONELY PASSION AND OTHER WOES: THE FEMALE DISCOVERY OF SELF IN THE FICTION OF BRIAN MOORE

Author

TIMOTHY CHAMBERLAIN