

Women, Sex, and Culture in "The Moonlight": Joyce Cary's Response to D. H. Lawrence

JULIE FENWICK

SEVERAL CHARACTERS and incidents in Joyce Cary's *The Moonlight* bear a striking resemblance to those in D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. We do not know precisely when Cary first read Lawrence's novel or if he had access to the unabridged edition.¹ However, internal evidence strongly suggests that Cary is exploiting the reading public's familiarity with the central situation of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in order to refute ideas that Lawrence formulated more explicitly in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*,² a copy of which Cary owned and is known to have read carefully in the 1920s (Bishop 210).

Any discussion of Lawrence's notions must take into account the changes in his thinking. Hilary Simpson suggests that World War I was a watershed for Lawrence;³ before and even during the war, Lawrence embraced a profound sexual dualism that attributed equal importance to both sexes (87-88). At the war's end, he abruptly abandoned a position which had much in common with "pro-feminist sex-psychologists such as Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis" and embraced the notion of a "rigid and deterministic sexual hierarchy" (17), becoming "the prophet of male supremacy" (65). In *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1921), as Simpson points out, this hierarchy has shifted so that sex itself now becomes subordinated to the male creative impulse. Furthermore, Lawrence appropriates for the male traditionally "feminine" qualities such as "instinct . . . intuition . . . sensuality" and "attributes the worst excesses of modern self-consciousness and idealism to (perverted) modern women" (Simpson 94).

Fantasia of the Unconscious insists that the regeneration of society is only possible if women are returned to their "proper"

(subordinate, domestic, sexual, instinctual) role: they must learn to “be” and allow the male to “do,” to control art, education, politics—virtually all aspects of human culture. Similar connections among female supremacy, industrialism, over-self-consciousness, and the death of healthy sexuality are made in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928). The impotent and “perverted” Clifford, who indulges in a form of childish “Madonna-worship” of his nurse, is a successful industrialist: “his very passivity and prostitution to the Magna Mater gave him insight into material business affairs”; his “utter abasement of his manly self” makes him “business-clever” (*Chatterley* 314). Simpson argues that Connie must choose between “new feminine values of cerebration, will, technology” and the “new masculinism” (138) which, having appropriated many traditionally “feminine” values and put women in their proper place, will save the modern world.

The Moonlight, rather than being a systematic exploration of Lawrence’s complex and shifting attitude to sexuality, focusses on his notion that women are largely controlled by instinct, conceptualized as a “life force,” and that they are therefore unsuited to play a prominent role in the creation of culture. To this end, *The Moonlight* simplifies and distorts Lawrence’s notions to a certain extent. Most important, it ignores his depiction of sexual intercourse as a loss of self which leads, paradoxically, to a newer and more fully realized selfhood for both man and woman. So important is this self-creation, says Lawrence, that to the individual man and woman, procreation is secondary, “just a side-show” (*Fantasia* 106).

On the one hand, in revolting against the idea of herself as “a walking womb . . . a servant to her reproductive organs. An animal constructed from top to toe only to continue the species,” Amanda in *The Moonlight* reflects Lawrence’s rejection of such ideas (150).⁴ On the other hand, while *The Moonlight* denies that women are the slaves of their wombs, it does place a high valuation on women’s roles as mothers. In contrast, as Sheila MacLeod observes, Lawrence’s *Fantasia of the Unconscious* depicts the female lust for maternity as a threat to the male, on the grounds that it distracts the mother’s attention from her mate by decreasing sexual desire. Furthermore, motherhood raises the possi-

bility of demonic female self-assertion by giving a woman more power than she is able to cope with (MacLeod 153). This downgrading of maternity is another aspect of Lawrence's thought with which *The Moonlight* takes issue.

Edwin Christian points out that Amanda's relationship with her lover Harry resembles that of Lady Chatterley and the gamekeeper (116). Like Mellors, Harry (a farmer) is intimately associated with nature. Whereas Mellors is usually seen against a woodland background, Harry appears in sheepfolds, meadows, fields, and farmyards. Like the gamekeeper, Harry is an educated man who reassumes his local dialect as it suits him, and he is particularly likely to lapse into broad Devon when wooing middle-class Amanda. However, Harry lacks Mellors's misanthropy, his disgust with the modern world, and his class resentment: Harry is well integrated into his rural community, eagerly adopts modern farm machinery, and deals easily with the middle-class Venns. In making Harry a more fortunate man than Mellors, Cary mutes the reader's sympathy for him; in making Harry less introspective than Lawrence's hero, he puts Amanda's consciousness at the centre of the novel.

As Mellors does, Harry has an upper-class rival for Amanda: her cousin, Robin Sant. Robin manifests many of the symptoms of Lawrence's modern "hollow" man: he is cynical, nervously energetic but without a sense of direction, and relentlessly self-conscious. Like Sir Clifford, he has been seriously injured: a gliding accident broke his back and shoulder, leaving him with one shoulder slightly higher than the other. Amanda herself physically resembles Connie Chatterley; both are solidly built women. For both Amanda and Connie, pregnancy by a lower-class lover precipitates a crisis which changes the course of their lives. Most important, both are very "modern" young women who have been exposed to the latest notions of sex, ideas which, in the course of the novels, they come to see as mistaken. However, Cary exploits these parallels to undermine the "Lawrencian" position: the sexual attitudes which Amanda learns to reject are those of Lawrence himself.

Amanda is that Lawrencian bogey, the intellectual woman, an Oxford-educated anthropologist. "Teach a woman to act from an

idea," says Lawrence, "and you destroy her womanhood forever" (*Fantasia* 85). Ironically, it is at Oxford that Amanda is introduced to Lawrence's ideas (61), notions which serve to reinforce her sense of her own helplessness in the grip of the "life force." Although at times disgusted by the idea of herself as a helpless pawn of nature, at other times Amanda finds in such a deterministic view a consolatory escape from responsibility. She yields to Harry's sexual importunings in a state of passivity that is a recoil from a situation in which she is burdened with responsibility for making an important decision about her future. She finds Harry sexually attractive, and her own mother repeatedly assures her that real fulfilment and happiness lie only in marriage and maternity. Yet Amanda fears (despite Harry's reassurances) that the demanding work of a farmer's wife is incompatible with her career as an anthropologist.

Amanda's will to resist Harry is eroded when he takes her to a country fair, an annual event with a traditional harvest of seductions, pregnancies, and marriages. Here she is confronted with two images of women, the choices to which her understanding of Lawrence's philosophy would limit her. One of these is the worn-out wife of a farm labourer with many children, a woman younger than herself, fat, lame, wearing "an expression of resigned agony" (209). The other is a side-show picture of "a woman's head cut off from the neck, from which pipes full of blood branched into a complicated apparatus" (210). The severed female head with a machine "body" economically evokes the "unnatural" monsters of industrialism and disincarnated self-consciousness which, Simpson states, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* genders as female (138). Given such a choice, the agonized farm wife, who both fascinates and horrifies Amanda, might well seem the lesser of two evils. Yet Amanda remains reluctant. She succumbs to Harry only after physical exhaustion, crowds, noise, and alcohol reduce her to "feverish, bruised shaken flesh" that is "tired not only in body, but will" (214-15).

As a result of her sexual surrender, Amanda soon finds that she is pregnant and becomes engaged to Harry. She feels that her pregnancy has taken her decision concerning her future out of her hands. Seduced not only by Harry but by relief from the

burden of conscious choice, she reflects that after all, it may be best "to trust in the flesh, or nature, or the life force, whatever that is, and it will simply mould one into a wife—like dough" (260). In this passive mood, Amanda "patiently [lies] down" when Harry decides to allot to sex "five minutes" of a busy working day (225). When they quarrel because Harry keeps delaying their wedding, Amanda pleads "please, Harry, forgive me. Stay with me. I don't mind what happens to my waist, or my reputation, or anything. I've got no pride any more, no brains, nothing. You're all I have, so stay with me, use me, beat me if you like" (227). Mellors would doubtless applaud Harry's ability to break down Amanda's "female will" and to make a "real woman" out of her. He asserts that "When a woman gets absolutely possessed by her own will . . . she should be shot" (*Chatterley* 300). Connie Chatterley, after abandoning her "tormented modern-woman's brain" (137) and "endless assertion of her own will" (113), learns to be what Lawrence elsewhere describes as "wife-submissive" to her lover, displaying "that beautiful and glamorous submission which is truly the wife-submission" (*Fantasia* 126-27).

In contrast, *The Moonlight* invites the reader to interpret Amanda's self-abandonment to the life force and her abject submission to Harry as abrogations of responsibility, an improper response to what Cary describes, in "The Way a Novel Gets Written," as "the woman's special dilemma. . . . the fundamental quality of a woman's life, imposed upon her by her sex, her natural powers, and her natural place in a society which contains, like herself, both primary elements from nature and a secondary social and political form" (*Essays* 118-19). The repeated use of the words "natural" and "nature" is important. *The Moonlight* contrasts Victorian and early twentieth-century attitudes to the place of women in society, a debate in which the "natural" destiny of women figures largely. Cary notes that, whatever its shortcomings,

the Victorian's answer to the eternal problem of sex will always have greatness and dignity. . . . [because it] concentrated . . . on woman's central importance to family life; and it saw that the family is a fundamental character of civilization, not a construction, but from

nature itself; that it is to all civilization . . . the original state of affairs from which, should every idea of existing civilization be abolished, a new one will instantly begin to grow. (Prefatory Essay 6)

That this expresses a view with which Cary sympathizes is made clear by an incident from an earlier novel, *Castle Corner*, in which a brutal gang of slave raiders destroys an entire African village, murdering infants and the elderly and carrying off the rest of the inhabitants into slavery. A few of the villagers escape by taking refuge in the forest, but these survivors exist in a state of shock, living separately and barely managing to feed themselves. Only a few people, the mothers of young children, behave purposefully and sensibly. Each woman and her children live in the forest as an isolated household. But these families quickly acquire adequate shelter, cooking pots, larders, family hearths, and even household gods.

This contrasts sharply with the cultural role assigned to women by Lawrence in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, in which women are denied a significant part in the enculturation of their own children. Proper motherhood is purely instinctive (32) and the father is "the final authority" in the education of children, by virtue of "powerful father-love . . . which is beyond mother-love" (49). This is an example not only of the male appropriation of a traditionally "feminine" attribute ("mother-love"), but also of *Fantasia of the Unconscious's* consistent gendering of nature and culture (instinctive, maternal nurture versus "volitional" paternal education).⁵ Furthermore, this gendered dichotomy, despite Lawrence's insistence that both men and women must abandon over-intellectualized self-consciousness and re-establish connections with their own bodies and with the natural world, has become a hierarchy of male over female and of culture over nature. In *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, Lawrence insists that it is men alone who can move beyond the sexual fulfilment of lovers such as Connie and Mellors into the sphere of male/male interaction. And it is in this male-only realm that genuine creativity is possible; a woman must find her highest fulfilment in serving a creative male. For, whereas women are limited to the realm of unredeemed nature ("blood consciousness"; the "life force"),

men create culture and thereby transform and complete the natural creation (*St. Mawr* 151-60).⁶

Harry, of *The Moonlight*, is intimately engaged in the transformation of nature, devoting most of his time and energy to the creation of a successful farm. And Harry believes in keeping sex and women in their "proper" (secondary) place. His off-and-on engagement to Amanda depends on whether or not she will inherit enough money to prevent him losing his land, and he repeatedly puts off his wedding day until he can fit it into his busy schedule, that is, "after lambing and before the hay" (*The Moonlight* 30). Harry displays unjustified resentment toward Nelly, the village girl who bears his child, when she asks for a few shillings in child-support, because he views her very reasonable request as a dangerous drain of cash from the farm. Nelly is presented sympathetically, as a young woman of principle who, like Amanda, was not easily seduced, and as a good mother. Harry's treatment of her, and his complete lack of interest in or concern for their child, appear both irresponsible and callous. There are hints in the text that, when Amanda deserts Harry, he will marry Nelly to avoid paying child-support and to acquire an unpaid dairy-maid.

Harry's selfishness in the single-minded pursuit of his own creativity is Cary's reaction to Lawrence's depiction of sexual responsibility as "secondary" to "the desire of the human male to build a world" (*Fantasia* 18). According to Lawrence, man's highest duty is to himself and to his own creative potential: "his supreme responsibility [is] to fulfil his own profoundest impulses, with reference to none but God or his own soul, not taking woman into count at all" (*Fantasia* 100). Taken at face value, these notions support Harry's willingness to sacrifice Nelly and their child to the farm as justified, even admirable. One could argue that Cary is being reductive here, literalizing notions Lawrence plays with in a deliberately hyperbolic work described as a "fantasy." Conversely, one could point out that Harry's behaviour is simply an illustration of the consequences of acting in accordance with an idea Lawrence passionately defends: the exclusive right of the male to pursue his creation of culture without hindrance from his mate, who is unable to transcend her involvement in natural processes.⁷

In contrast, in *The Moonlight*, the gendering of culture and nature is both qualified and complicated by the assumption that nature facilitates the creation of culture through the biological constraints of female experience. In the Prefatory Essay to *The Moonlight*, Cary suggests that because the female is “necessary . . . in [the] creation of society,” nature ensures that most women find personal fulfilment in creating a family and in educating small children in the mores of their culture. He depicts nature holding women in a firm “grip” because they are “born to deal, generation after generation, with great issues, the primal issues of creation, love and birth, the first education” (10). The woman, like Amanda of *The Moonlight*, who rebels against the way in which biology conditions her life, “is taught to conform, for her own good” (11); that is, she is forced to face the fact that she belongs to the sex which bears children and thereby incurs a very heavy responsibility toward both them and society: “the burden of inescapable duty, the constriction of power” (10).

The “grip” of nature, Cary says in the Prefatory Essay, leads “the majority” (8) of modern women to have children even though they have the ability to reject motherhood. But the woman who can to some extent control her own fertility feels a greater sense of responsibility than ever before toward her children: “it lies upon her honour to make a success both as housewife and mother. The anxious sense of duty, of a typical modern wife, not only towards her family but often towards society, is very noticeable” (7). Cary depicts such anxiety as a part of the heavy price women pay for “having it all.” A woman who chooses both to have a family and to pursue a career incurs “a life of extremely hard work and great self-sacrifice” (7). But he describes such a choice as both dignified and rewarding. Twentieth-century women take on “a life infinitely more difficult and complex for them, more responsible, than that of the average Victorian girl,” and their greater freedom “means work and suffering, insecurity and the endless anxiety of moral choice . . . yet it is the most precious thing they have. It is the soul of their dignity as modern women” (9).

And although Cary suggests that most women find their greatest fulfilment in the creation of a family, he appreciates that the

power to choose means that some women will decide not to marry or to have children. Amanda's cousin, Iris, a natural celibate and a gifted teacher, finds complete self-fulfilment in teaching "clever girls" like Amanda (268). She is driven to tears of frustrated rage by the bigotry and obtuseness of her shallow married sister, who insists on pitying her. The complacent and supercilious Dorothy, significantly, is herself an irresponsible mother. Of the two, Iris is the more admirable person; while Dorothy is materialistic and selfish, Iris has such virtues as "her courage, her intellectual honesty, her chastity of soul, her love of freedom" (273).

So, although women are "mark[ed]" (Prefatory Essay 10) by nature in a way that men are not, Cary's use of the word "nature" does not imply that women are completely at the mercy of unconscious biological drives. For example, the character in *Castle Corner* who exemplifies the mothers of civilization is a teenage girl, Bandy; her own baby has been killed and she adopts a pair of children who are no kin to her. Bandy's creation of a family out of two orphans is not merely the consequence of a biological imperative, but an imaginative response to her desire for order in the face of complete social chaos (266). Although, in *The Moonlight*, Robin attributes to Bessie a sort of sensual satisfaction as a motive for her numerous pregnancies, the reader is aware that Bessie is frequently ill and ages prematurely as a result of too many difficult pregnancies, miscarriages, and agonizing labours. As one of her pregnancies nears term, she is filled with dread and an almost hysterical passion of self-indulgence, as if attempting to experience life to the full before she faces her next encounter with pain and the possibility of death. Bessie's flight from her bridal bed and her return, at her father's insistence, to James Groom (who demands his conjugal "rights" even when Bessie is clearly loath to fulfil them) suggest that at least some of her pregnancies are forced on her by her husband's sexual selfishness.

In Cary's world, the female urge to create and to nurture families is conditioned by intellectual, social, and imaginative factors. Above all, Cary's women are free to shape their response to their own biological destiny. Critics of Cary's works have re-

peatedly emphasized that the freedom of individuals, both male and female, and their responsibility to choose creatively, are his most insistent themes.⁸ It is Amanda's realization of her own freedom and responsibility that leads her to reject her "Lawrencian" notions. This insight occurs when Robin tries to persuade Amanda to break her engagement to Harry because she is fundamentally unsuited to the life of "a tribal mammy": "unfortunately for you, you've got some brains" (264). Robin here voices Amanda's own fear, that assuming the role of a farmer's wife will entail the sacrifice of her career. When Amanda explains to Robin that the decision has been taken out of her hands by her pregnancy, he expresses envy. Women, he says, by putting themselves "in a jam," that is, by becoming pregnant, find a purpose and meaning for their lives. Robin, who can commit himself to nothing, exclaims: "you're lucky, you girls. You're born to be caught and racketeered—it's in your blood—and when you're caught you have to fight for your lives and so your lives are worth something, and you are worth something" (265). There can be little doubt, given Cary's notion of nature's "grip" on women, that Robin here expresses a point of view with which he is, to a certain extent, in sympathy.

Robin goes on to denounce Amanda for embracing "real primitive religion, women's religion, the oldest in the world. . . . And Harry Dawbarn will be your household priest" (266). Amanda responds angrily, and a few minutes later breaks her engagement to Harry. She explains her action to Robin by saying that "it struck me that you might be right" when he accused her of participating in "the woman's racket—the biggest bloody swindle of the lot. Just to keep the old ant-heap going—the old squirrel-cage turning" (267). What is going on here? It seems that although a woman's biology offers her the opportunity to fulfil herself in commitment to her family, and although such commitment is admirable, it is a mistake to elevate it to a species of religion in which the woman sees herself as a helpless pawn of the life force and as the slavish adorer of her sexual partner. Amanda realizes that although Harry excites her sexually, she is not emotionally committed to him, that the careers of farm wife and anthropologist are mutually exclusive, that she prefers the

academic life, and that she has the power, and the responsibility, of choice. She takes a research job in London and becomes "a woman of the world, at grips with its lonely and mortal necessity" (314).

Thus, while Cary accepts the notion that women are more firmly in the grip of nature than men, he differs from Lawrence in two important ways. First, rather than gendering culture as exclusively male, he makes women's special relationship with nature the indispensable foundation of human society. Furthermore, Cary does not limit women's cultural contribution to their role as primary educators of young children. Amanda combines motherhood with a scholarly career. In rejecting marriage to Harry, Amanda has chosen to make her own cultural contribution both as a mother and scholar, rather than to play a subordinate role in his creative transformation of the natural world.

Although *The Moonlight* contains a number of women who help to shape contemporary culture publically as well as privately, there are important limitations to these roles. Bessie makes a personal triumph of her unpromising marriage. She creates the persona of the Victorian sage-scientist for her unprepossessing husband and makes him the figurehead of carefully staged social gatherings of which she is the adroit manager. Thanks to her, Groom (whose very name suggests that his public role is defined largely by his relationship to his wife) has a considerable influence upon the development of schools of science and technology during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Bessie's effect on her culture, therefore, is achieved indirectly, through her "creation" of her husband. Amanda's admirably independent cousin, Iris, is a teacher, a traditional career for women and one to which Cary's notion of women as the first educators suggests they are innately suited. Even Amanda's choice of a career in cultural anthropology can be seen as a reflection of women's interest in family structure and social organization.

In mitigation, one could argue that these situations reflect historical reality, that Bessie, Iris, and Amanda represent three generations of women in a time of rapidly changing sexual attitudes: most Victorian women were limited to indirect influ-

ence on their society, the first generation of female university graduates found few careers open to them beyond the traditional ones, and cultural anthropology was one of the first academic disciplines open to women. In any case, while Cary is undeniably a traditionalist in his depiction of the existence of two spheres of cultural creativity, the public and the private, and in regarding the private sphere of family life as primarily important for women, he does not confine them to it.

Second, Cary resists, as Lawrence does not, the conversion of a sense of sexual dualism into a hierarchy of gender. Helen Gardner remembers Cary's indignant reaction when she was passed over for an important post simply (he believed) on the grounds of her gender: "None of his many women friends could possibly feel they were not treated by him as fully equals," although "it was a pleasure to feel, at the same time his recognition that we were different" (xi). The notion of sexual dualism is one with which feminists have historically struggled: responses have ranged from an outright repudiation of any idea of an innate sexual dualism to a celebration of sexual difference and even to the (inverted Lawrencian) assertion that the re-emergence of suppressed "feminine" qualities is the only hope of modern civilization. Cary's "recognition" of sexual dualism and the high value he places on maternity, make him of interest to feminists who argue for equality with men in terms of equitable, rather than identical, treatment which respects the special demands placed on women by childbearing. For example, Cary's portrait of the anxious and exhausted modern mother suggests that he appreciates that traditional motherhood has often placed an unfair burden on women who wish to pursue careers outside the family. It is, therefore, an interesting example of the power of cultural assumptions that Cary accepts such unfairness as necessary if women are to function in both the public and private spheres. Cary's emphasis on women as the "natural" transmitters of cultural heritage implies that the biological constraints of pregnancy, childbirth, and lactation logically and necessarily designate women as sole custodians and educators of young children. It is such unquestioned assumptions that expose him to charges of sexism.⁹

Although, in this respect, Cary's notion of women's "special responsibility" strikes a contemporary sensibility as suspect, *The Moonlight* remains an attempt (however imperfect) to respond to a "philosophy" which limits women to the realm of nature, reserving culture as the male domain. Cary depicts nature's "grip" on women not as their enslavement to the life force that absolutely determines their destiny, but as a set of biological constraints that conditions their social roles. A woman is free to shape her response to her own biology, choosing either the public or the private sphere of cultural engagement or, what is more difficult and more praiseworthy, seeking to combine them. Moreover, a woman who mistakes the conditions of biology for the manifestation of a "natural" principle requiring her abject submission is attempting to evade her responsibility to respond creatively to her own situation.

At the end of *The Moonlight*, Amanda, like Connie Chatterley, is alone and pregnant, but there are important differences in their situations. Connie expects to be reunited with Mellors who, like Harry, plans to use his wife's capital to purchase a farm into which he can pour his creative energies (*Chatterley* 322).¹⁰ Mellors and Connie are each occupied in what Lawrence considers an appropriate manner: he is working hard to acquire a knowledge of farming before they emigrate, while she is gestating their child. In contrast, Amanda is supporting herself by working as a research assistant in London and has refused both Harry and Robin. Exhausted, faced with a mountain of rather boring work, denying herself a cigarette for the sake of her unborn child, Amanda falls prey to "a vast still grief" arising from a sense of "all the loss, the frustration, the waste in the world" (315). The nature of the waste and frustration is not specified, but it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that Amanda is reflecting on the waste of her own sexuality because she lacks a mate. In this situation she resembles the Lawrencian heroine who is forced to live without men because she can find none adequate to her needs (*St. Mawr* 146). But while Lawrence's solution to this waste of female potential is the woman's willing self-submission to a creative, dominating man like Mellors, Amanda has found that

such a man cannot fill her needs, precisely because he threatens her personal autonomy and the public exercise of her creativity.

The final paragraphs of *The Moonlight* are somewhat ambiguous. Amanda remembers a recent conversation with Robin, in which he lamented the isolation and purposelessness of his existence and remarked bitterly that modern people are all “waiting for something, some resurrection, some miracle of the Lord. And miracles don’t happen any more” (314). This echoes Lawrence’s assertion in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* that the ascendancy of the “new” woman who has shaped the modern world so disastrously creates the necessity for the resurrection of a “real” man to redeem woman and the world by subordinating both to his creative vision.¹¹ Amanda, remembering Robin’s words, places her hands over her growing womb: “She [says] to herself, ‘But do miracles happen? It will be interesting to see’” (315). She then turns to her desk and begins to work. It appears that her baby and her career are to be the poles of Amanda’s experience; whether or not she will ever find a suitable mate remains a mystery. Amanda, too, is awaiting a “miracle,” a new man: not Lawrence’s masterful creator, Joyce Cary affirms, but a man secure enough in his own creativity to respect hers, as a mother and as a scholar.

NOTES

- 1 For this reason, all textual references are to the abridged 1932 edition. Bishop notes that Cary “had been reading Lawrence’s novels” at about the time he wrote *The Moonlight* (277).
- 2 Cary’s Prefatory Essay to *The Moonlight* describes the first version of the novel as arising from his indignant response to Tolstoy’s “detestable” unfairness to women, as exemplified in *The Kreutzer Sonata* (10). When, years later, Cary decided to write a book depicting “the different sexual ideas of two or three generations in their relation with . . . the nature of sex itself,” he retrieved the anti-Kreutzer manuscript, only to discover that “it was no good to [him]”; he put it away without reading more than a few pages (11). Nonetheless, in *The Moonlight*, Cary is responding to a literary depiction of women which, although radically different from Tolstoy’s, he considered to be equally biased: that of D. H. Lawrence (Bishop 277).
- 3 See also Nixon’s *Lawrence’s Leadership Politics and the Turn Against Women*, and MacLeod’s *Lawrence’s Men and Women*.
- 4 These ideas are somewhat Shavian. In *Man and Superman*, Shaw depicts the female as an active agent of the life force, bent on entrapping the male into marriage in order to provide for her children (*Man and Superman* 496, 537, 568, 633). The connection between Lawrence and Shaw is that, although they assign radically different priorities to the life force (self-creation versus procreation), both depict

the lure of sex as a female threat to male artistic and intellectual pursuits (*Fantasia* 187; *Man and Superman* 499, 625). Cary's own opinion of the life force is that it is "rubbish, an abstraction, an idea without character" ("Interview," *Selected Essays* 9-10).

- 5 The modern self-conscious mother is a hideous failure whose relationship with her child is "vicious." So perverse is she, so lacking in "instinctive" maternity, that the father is forced to compensate by supplying the child with "some warm, native love from the richer sensual self" (*Fantasia* 144, 50). Once again, the problems of the modern world are attributed to the female, and traditional female roles are appropriated by the male.
- 6 In *St. Maur*, the "natural man" who merges with untransformed nature is little better than a brute, and Lawrence's pity for modern women arises from his perception of their fruitless search for a "real" (creative) male in a world of "sordid" savages and impotent, over-intellectualized "hollow" men (160-65).
- 7 Perhaps Lawrence also felt uneasy about such implications: when, in *Aaron's Rod*, the hero abandons wife and children to fulfil the "higher" needs of his nature, he bestows upon his wife a sum he has conveniently inherited.
- 8 In particular, see Christian's *Joyce Cary's Creative Imagination* (107-21) for a discussion of *The Moonlight*, in which Amanda is depicted as embracing Lawrence's notions because they offer her refuge from the responsibility of her own freedom.
- 9 Although there have been a number of references to Cary's "sexism," very few sustained discussions of his presentation of female characters exist. The charges of sexism are usually made in passing, and the examples are not always well chosen. For example, Roby claims to detect "the mostly unstated view of women that runs throughout Cary's work": that "women have to be kept down by whatever means one has at one's disposal" (Roby 65). Roby's analysis of Judy Coote (in *The African Witch*) as an "anarchist white female intellectual" for whom the narrator has immense "distaste" seems to proceed from this hypothesis rather than from the text (Roby 22). Judy is one of the most sympathetic and appealing characters in the book: intelligent, passionate, honest, and morally courageous.
- 10 Harry may have lost Amanda, but he has gained his farm. Hoping to facilitate their marriage, Amanda's mother has purchased it and leased it to Harry. After her death it remains in his hands.
- 11 The scene between Robin and Amanda takes place in the London tube, a quasi-Lawrencian image of the soulless, machine-like nature of modern society. It is rush-hour, and their conversation is overheard by "a young woman with a thin angular face, and thick, highly-painted lips, and a young man, like a Red Indian" (312). Given that the encounter of a modern white woman and a native American man is a persistent motif in Lawrence's later works, this is suggestive. In "The Woman Who Rode Away," the white woman is actually sacrificed by the males of a native American tribe to restore the "natural" balance of human and non-human nature through the re-establishment of male/female hierarchy. Cary's own ambiguous but non-judgemental ending is thus set against Lawrence's fantastic, even apocalyptic, solution to the sexual tensions of the early twentieth century.

WORKS CITED

- Bishop, Alan. *Gentleman Rider: A Life of Joyce Cary*. London: Michael Joseph, 1988.
- Cary, Joyce. *Castle Corner*. 1938. London: Michael Joseph, 1952.
- . *Joyce Cary: Selected Essays*, ed. A. G. Bishop. London: Michael Joseph, 1976.
- . *The Moonlight*. 1946. Carfax edition. London: Michael Joseph, 1952.
- . Prefatory Essay. Cary, *The Moonlight* 4-11.

- Christian, Edwin Ernest. *Joyce Cary's Creative Imagination*. New York: Peter Lang, 1988.
- Gardner, Helen. Foreword. Cary, *Selected Essays* v-xii.
- Lawrence, D. H. *Aaron's Rod*. 1922. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988.
- . *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. In *Fantasia of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*. 1923. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971. 11-195.
- . *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. 1928. Authorized Abridged Edition. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1932.
- . *St. Mawr*. In *St. Mawr and The Virgin and the Gypsy*. 1925. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1950. 11-165.
- . "The Woman Who Rode Away." 1925. *Selected Short Stories: D. H. Lawrence*. Ed. Brian Finney. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982. 391-423.
- MacLeod, Sheila. *Lawrence's Men and Women*. London: Heinemann, 1985.
- Nixon, Cornelia. *Lawrence's Leadership Politics and the Turn Against Women*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1986.
- Roby, Kinley E. *Joyce Cary*. Boston: Twayne, 1984.
- Shaw, Bernard. *Man and Superman*. *Complete Plays with Prefaces*. Vol. 3. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1963. 485-748.
- Simpson, Hilary. *D. H. Lawrence and Feminism*. London: Croom Helm, 1982.