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FOR LOVE AND MONEY:
BEATRICE GRIMSHAW'S PASSAGE TO PAPUA
THESIS

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Requirements for the Degree of

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by

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FOR MY GRANDMOTHER

ELSIE MAY SCHAEFER GARDNER

BORN MAY 5, 1887, DIED SEPT. 12, 1985

BACHELOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PH. B.), GRINNELL COLLEGE, IOWA, 1910

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ANOTHER THEODORA

IN FULFILMENT OF A PROMISE

and occult animal rites
 Your mother wore corsets
 to choke her spirit
 which if you refuse
 you are jeered for refusing
 you have heard many sermons
 and have carried
 your own interpretations
 locked in your heart
 You are a woman
 strong in health
 through a collection
 of circumstances
 soon to be known
 as class privilege
 which if you break
 the social compact
 you lose outright
 When you open your mouth in public
 human excrement
 is flung at
 you
 you are exceptional
 in personal circumstance
 in indignation
 you give up believing
 in protection
 in Scripture
 in man-made laws
 respectable as you look
 you are an outlaw
 Your mind burns
 not like the harbour beacon
 but like a fire
 of fiercer origin
 you begin speaking out
 and a great gust of freedom
 rushes in your words
 yet still you speak
 in the shattered language
 of a partial
 vision
 You draw your long skirts
 deviant
 across the nineteenth century
 registering injustice
 failing to make it whole
 How can I fail to love
 your clarity and fury
 how can I give you

all your due
take courage from your courage
honor your exact
legacy as it is
recognizing
as well
that it is not enough?

(Adrienne Rich, "Heroines" 1980)

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If I wanted to put my
life into a single
sentence, I should
choose Kipling's
lines:--"Something lost
behind the ranges--
something waiting for
you--go".

Beatrice Grimshaw,
"About Myself" ¹

Apprenticeship of an Achievement

When Beatrice Grimshaw died in July 1953, obituaries in cities as far flung as Belfast (near where she was born in 1870), London, Manchester, New York, Bathurst (New South Wales, where she died), and Sydney testified to the aptness of her self-description; a wanderer, whose multi-faceted career encompassed large portions of the British Empire, from its oldest colony (Ireland) to its newest (British New Guinea).

Exaggerated and romanticised tributes ("Ulsterwoman who braved head-hunters: her life was story of courage" (*Telegraph* [Belfast], 1 July 1953: 415); "A Woman...among Sharks, Alligators, and Hostile Natives" (*Daily News and Leader* [London], 3 Sept. 1912, 9); "Explorer, Tobacco Grower, Novelist. Beatrice Grimshaw's Remarkable Career" (*Sydney Morning Herald Women's Supplement* 13 Feb. 1939); and even James A. Michener's slighting of her as "Queen of Gush" (*Return to Paradise*, qtd. by the Laracys, "Beatrice Grimshaw" 154)--all indicate her once widespread popularity. To give only one example of contemporary

reception of her fiction, Grimshaw's first Papuan novel, *When the Red Gods Call* (1911), was issued in a dozen various editions, half-a-dozen translations and nearly as many serialisations over a period of two decades.

Yet little is known about her now. All of her books are out of print (except, ironically, the Black Heritage Library's facsimile reprint of *In the Strange South Seas*). Her four weighty travel books, over two dozen novels and ten volumes of short stories (to mention only her books; she produced innumerable articles when a salaried journalist and then as a free lance) are no longer read for enjoyment. Rather, they are remembered and quarried for historical or ideological "evidence" by students of race relations.

Moreover, even the most basic literary and biographical compendia are incomplete or incorrect. Henry Boylan's *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (1978) gives her birthdate as 1880. It sends her to Papua a year before *The Times* and the *Sydney Morning Herald* despatched her there, and claims *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* was the result of a commission by the Australian Government when none of these islands was ever under Australian political control. Further, it gives *When the Red Gods Call* an incorrect date (1910) which is when *The New Guinea* was published, *Red Gods* appearing a year later. The Victoria College [Belfast] *Centenary Book* (1959), besides altering Pacific geography with the thoroughness of an earthquake or tidal wave (Pearl Harbour becoming Papua's

capital), adds 10 novels to her bibliography, mistakenly dates several, and invents one more. Francis West's biographical entry for the *Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea* is slight and represents only cursory research.

Brian Cleeve's *Dictionary of Irish Writers--Fiction* (1966), in addition to the incorrect birth date (one of the easier matters to verify in a biography studded with tantalising gaps) reiterates an oft-repeated, but nonetheless misleading, claim that Grimshaw was the first white woman to penetrate several areas of Borneo and New Guinea. This feat may have its source in the 1922 Australian or the 1928 British *Who's Who* ("the first white woman to ascend the notorious Sepik and the Fly River" 1242). Such claims presumably emanate in part from authors themselves, or from their agents. Grimshaw's quasi-autobiographical *Isles of Adventure* (1930), the last travel book she wrote, lends partial credence to these claims, although she makes it clear, for instance, that she was the first white woman to *accompany* parties of missionaries and Government officials or Papuan police to these remote areas.

Already, then, we are faced with problems of documenting the life, and understanding the work, of an accomplished practitioner of fiction and Empire-building rhetoric. When time, length, and medium allowed, as in the following statement, she could (to borrow a term from her family's motto) be more *candid*:

I have no new ranges or rivers to my credit, though I have mapped a few odd corners here and there, and often met natives who had never seen a white person--that is easy in Papua. I have a very strong dislike for this foolish use of the term 'explorer' by women....(E)very advertising female who goes for a trek in any part of Africa wants to rank herself with Burton and Stanley (C.O.S., "Where the Red Gods Call" 21).²

But such media distortion, and Grimshaw's own recognition that her career would benefit by propagating a legend about herself, pose particular problems of authenticity and verification. Grimshaw's roving hardly require the verbal heightening she seldom discouraged. Even discounting the hyperbole of self-advertisement, *Evening News* type interviews, and obituaries, her writing career demonstrates a flexible, energetic and influential talent.

Grimshaw's earliest-known journalistic effort ("In the Far North", *Bedford College Magazine* 1891) is description for potential tourists of Portrush, an Atlantic resort on the Antrim coast of Ireland. It shows her trying her hand at a genre which financed her early travels throughout the Pacific. There, following the footsteps of two of her favourite authors, Louis Becke and Robert Louis Stevenson, she described the "beach and port" communities of Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, the Cook Islands and Tahiti for passengers of the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand.

But her intensive writing apprenticeship began years before in the circles of social and sporting journalism in Dublin from 1891-99. Beginning as an occasional contributor to the *Irish Cyclist* in 1891, she eventually became its sub-editor, while also working as a staff writer (from October 1893) and editor (1895-99) of its sister publication, the *Social Review*.

Apart from occasional devotional poetry (e.g., "To Myself", *Irish Monthly* 1893: 654) the *Irish Cyclist* and the *Social Review* were the forcing bed of her talent. Under a variety of pseudonyms, and almost single-handedly from week to week, she churned out imitations of Kipling's poetry and the florid prose of "decadents" such as Richard Le Gallienne, short stories, topical comment, book reviews, dramatic criticism, "dialogues up to date" and "telephone talks", career advice for women, interviews, bicycling tours, and two serialised novels, one of which I rediscovered in the course of my research in Ireland.

For four years after 1899, Grimshaw combined free-lance journalism with work as a tour organiser and emigration promoter for Irish and British steamship companies, catering for English pleasures while profiting from Irish distress. Armed with free steamship passes and newspaper and magazine commissions, Grimshaw first reached the Pacific in 1903. In addition to the tourist description mentioned above (and continually citing Kipling), she began to contribute political journalism to the [London] *Daily Graphic*. In 1907 she published her third novel, *Vaiti of the Islands*, as well as her first book-length

travelogues, *In the Strange South Seas* and *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands*.

The latter's covert promotion of European interests in Fiji, and anti-English, pro-Australian argument concerning the New Hebrides, attracted the attention of the Australian Liberal Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin. In 1908, overriding objections in the Australian Federal Parliament that she might not be the only or the best person, he commissioned Grimshaw to write settlement and investment pamphlets for Australia's recently acquired territory of Papua (formerly British New Guinea). A flood of leaflets and nearly two dozen articles culminated in the officially sponsored *The New New Guinea* (1910).

Her agent's prediction that short stories with Papuan settings would enjoy considerable success in the U.S. and English markets, however, prompted Grimshaw to return to fiction.³ *When the Red Gods Call* (1911, and still quoting Kipling!) inaugurated a series of novels, sixteen taking place in Papua or the Mandated Territory of New Guinea and nine in the Pacific Islands, with a further ten volumes of short stories and occasional non-fiction, including Catholic mission promotion pamphlets. In 1928 "The Adorable Outcast" ("Australia's second colossal motion picture" (*Film Weekly* [Sydney] 21 June 1928: 4, which is to say, the second produced by Australasian Films, Ltd.) was tenuously based on her 1922 novel, *Conn of the Coral Seas*.

Grimshaw's output, then, was prolific and varied. From 1907-34 she lived in Papua, interrupting her isolation with several round-the-world tours and visits to her London publishers: both were opportunities for public lectures and radio broadcasts.

Following a final trip to England in 1934-35, Grimshaw retired in 1936 to Bathurst, New South Wales. Although nearly 70, she taught journalism by correspondence and continued to write, although her originally somewhat innovative forms degenerated. Reportage, no longer based on experience, became rehash, to the amusing but also pathetic extent that one neighbour in Bathurst, reading one of Grimshaw's Papuan stories in a women's magazine, exclaimed, "It's almost as if she had been there!" Adventure romances initially inspired by the pioneering frontier lapsed into wartime thrillers. Grimshaw's serials, mechanically repeating the picaresque exploits of her first Pacific hero, the half-caste Vaiti, appeared in the *Australian Women's Weekly*.

Grimshaw's career thus described a narrowing spiral. Once her writings were favourably compared with the work of her contemporaries such as Joseph Conrad, Bret Harte, Mary Kingsley and Robert Louis Stevenson.⁴ But today her work (actually only a misleading portion, usually her three early travel books and selective portions of her fiction, most often *Red Gods* or the blatantly racist *White Savage Simon*) is ignored.

For social and psychologically minded historians, however, fiction, especially in mass-popular forms, has long been a

necessary resort. Thus Lois Whitney, in *Primitivism and the Idea of Progress in English Popular Literature of the Eighteenth Century* [1934] investigated:

the popular literature of the period--the fictional best-sellers, the cheap tracts, the popular poems--with the purpose of getting some conception of what the people who read these books must have thought about the issues which were occupying the leaders of thought at the time....I wanted to see what the history of ideas...would look like if it were written, not in terms of what...philosophers actually said, but...of what the public thought they said--a far different matter, but equally important...since it is only after ideas reach the public that they become a real social force (1965 reprint, 2).

Raymond Evans, Kay Saunders and Kathryn Cronin, in *Exclusion, Exploitation, Extermination: Race Relations in Colonial Queensland* (1975) have noted the "key interpretive role" of "the daily newspaper and weekly or monthly journal, as well as the pamphlet, the colonial travel-book or novel, and the political speech"--all of them genres which Grimshaw utilised as a spokeswoman for a number of imperialist and settler interests. They suggest that:

[P]opular colonial writings formed an intermediate intellectual stage and forum between imported European theories about race relations and the colonists' actual interaction with these 'lower forms' of man. A two-way process may be seen...between the popularisation and consequently simplification of scientific theories by the journalist and politician, and the mental expectations and responses of the reading and listening audience who received such impressions....Sophisticated theories

supported rougher stereotypes with very little apparent contradiction (15).

It is from such a standpoint, then, that Grimshaw's work is usually read. But the historical discussions have been descriptive rather than analytical, and have tended to ignore the important differences among Grimshaw's genres. Not surprisingly, historians have relied on such public documentation as colonial government archives. One result has been to emphasise such noticeable aspects of Grimshaw's career as her association with "great men:" her long relationship with the Lieutenant-Governor of Papua, Sir John Hubert Plunkett Murray, and the advice which she showered upon the Australian Premier Alfred Deakin during a time of administrative upheaval in Papua.

When Grimshaw's *prose fiction* has been discussed, a common assumption (typical of notions of the cultural worker as passive transcriber) has been that her fiction is a straightforward and vivid reflection or expression of the racial prejudices in what is deemed to be her class: Anglo-Papuan settlers between the wars.

But every interview, and indirect evidence in most of her work, indicates the opposite; she identified with the early generations of settlers.

When approached about her career as a writer, Miss Grimshaw said at once that she considered the work of a pioneer of greater importance than that of an author... (Sandery, "Red Gods; and New Guinea" 6).

There is one thing I have done, of which I am proud. I have helped... in the opening up of the torrid lands to white races, and in making these places better known and understood. For this little scrap of pioneering work I am thankful ("About Myself").

Her writing's "more enduring significance" is thus as an "historical source" (Laracy, "Beatrice Grimshaw" 154). A related implication is that, as "Papua's Kipling" or "laureate" Grimshaw's primary and most significant readership was Papuan or Australian; in fact, it was overwhelmingly British and American.

Her readership was also, Grimshaw thought, a predominantly lower middle-class audience whose cravings for exotic experience far surpassed their opportunities to indulge in it. Grimshaw justified her method and envisaged her implied audience in *Isles of Adventure*.

There is little to be gained by touching up one's first impression, so I have altered nothing, and added little. I have written as a traveller, to whom new and strange things are the chief happiness of life; a dreamer who has had near 25 years of realised dream, and is not yet satisfied.... (M)y writings, such as they are, are dedicated to the Man-who-could-not-go [a motif which occurs as early as her first travel book, *In the Strange South Seas*]. I know that he (and she) finds pleasure in them.... [In comparison with the accounts of Papuan explorers] one is almost ashamed to mention ordinary travels. Still, the business of these young men is to map new districts and pacify wild, strange peoples, while mine is to

observe, enjoy, and describe for those who are less fortunate. Seeing and doing less, one may, therefore, have more to say (34-36).

I am briefly alluding to Grimshaw's self-concept as a writer not only because it remained consistent, but because I think it essential, when assessing the ideological significance of her work, not to under-estimate her own intentions and aspirations, her notional audience, and her usually well-informed reading of her contemporaries in similar genres. These contexts are fully as important for an assessment as our latter-day assumptions and criteria. Similarly, I shall stress contemporary reception of her work because its discrepancies with current evaluations are a typical example of problems encountered in reception aesthetics.

Historical criticism of Grimshaw's early work rarely specifies the status of fiction as historical evidence (primary? supporting? something special? any or all of these at times?). Presumably it is something other than confirmation, or there would be no need to read Grimshaw or any other once-popular colonial writer; the social reality or social unconsciousness represented in their fiction would be otherwise verifiable. Moreover, comment to date, using only Grimshaw's work most readily available in Australian libraries, has necessarily based its conclusions on her propaganda and formula fiction--that is, on her most superficial or obviously ideological work. Such readings, moreover, by isolating a body of work from the social history of its origin and reception, as well as from its

literary-generic contexts, will ultimately be a historical. Explanations of the significance of Grimshaw's work have been confined to what may be called the "textual surface". These have included opinions voiced by an implied author in both Grimshaw's fiction and non-fiction. But the first person singular, in Grimshaw's work, is often an elaborate construct, not necessarily identifiable with the biographical personality.

Other evaluations have been marred by plot retellings full of errors of fact and detail (Laracy, 168-69; Inglis, '*Not a White Woman Safe*' 13 and 15). Inglis contends that "The two themes of [Grimshaw's] adventure novels are race pride and race purity"; "Her heroes never besmirch themselves by sexual relations with Papuan women" (13). But these statements are flatly contradicted by Grimshaw's first Papuan novel, *When the Red Gods Call*, in which the hero is first married to a Papuan woman. Similarly, Eugénie and Hugh Laracy, aware that in Grimshaw's Pacific reportage and fiction inter-racial marriage does take place, nonetheless reiterate that "No such countenancing of a breach of the code of white supremacy occurs in Beatrice's Melanesian novels" (167). Finally, pinpointing themes such as "racial superiority" is at a very loose level of generality risking tautology, anachronistic projection of present values, and downright misreading.

Moreover, by amalgamating Grimshaw's "fiction" and "non-fiction," previous commentators have ignored differences in intention, composition, genre, medium, and effect, as well as

change over time: they have thus imputed a misleading uniformity to Grimshaw's overall production. Such terms as "fiction" and "non-fiction" are more a convenient shorthand than a meaningful critical distinction when applied to Grimshaw's work. Her most "factual" reportage contains seeds of future stories, and many of the latter are barely transposed "fact".

For example, Grimshaw's racial beliefs did alter over the years, due in some part to the influence of her friend and mentor, the Lieutenant-Governor Murray. Her 1922 address to the Royal Colonial Institute in London, and interviews granted to various English newspapers at that time (again, addressed to different audiences, with corresponding variations in tone), without questioning European evolutionary superiority, nonetheless recognise the political and human imperative to share Papua and its resources.

It is in the last degree unfair and incorrect to represent the Papuan native as a howling fiend, intent only on devouring the white settler, or driving him out of the country....[A]n intelligent people, with considerable strength of character, and much ability in a mechanical direction, are going to go on living, side by side with a gradually growing population of whites....[T]he Papuan is going to have time and opportunity to develop his possibilities, and become as competent a craftsman and as able a planter as he has it in him to be....It will be a long time before he develops executive ability of any kind. But he is already a trader of no small keenness, and his mechanical tastes surprise everyone who has had to do with him as a workman....[A]fter all, the Papuan was not created to charm us, or to keep his country as a perpetual museum of Stone Age weapons and customs for our amusement....I

have said little of what may be the ultimate future of this strange, hard-charactered race, with its destiny in the melting-pot and its brain still undeveloped, though developing at a rate that seems almost miraculous to those who know the earlier days of the country. ...But whatever it may be, the destinies of the coloured and the white in Papua must run side-by-side ("Papua and the Western Pacific" 522, 524-25).

Given such pitfalls as await forays into Grimshaw's work for historical purposes alone, my aim is to modify such interpretations by applying a more encompassing methodology. Two omissions in critical discussions so far are crucial: the consequences for her work that Grimshaw was originally an "Irish" writer, and always a female one.

The first factor, the significance of her ambiguous but strongly-held national identification, was sensed by Murray in December 1907. Then Acting Lieutenant-Governor of the Territory of Papua, he met Grimshaw in one of her many capacities: investigative reporter. With uncharacteristic enthusiasm, this lonely, scholarly, monkish man wrote to his brother, the renowned Classics scholar Gilbert Murray, later staunch supporter of the League of Nations:

I have staying with me Miss Beatrice Grimshaw, a lady journalist...for the London Times and the Sydney Morning Herald. She is an extremely nice woman, clever and interesting and not a bit superior; also she is Irish, Catholic and Fenian--if she were also Australian, there would be nothing more to be desired (West, ed., *Letters* 47).

Ironies abound, for neither Murray nor Grimshaw was originally or wholly "Irish, Catholic and Fenian." But their encounter, however replete with paradoxes or misrepresentations, was decisive for them both: nothing less, for Grimshaw, than the moment marking her passage between a talented but aimless past and a future that would be professionally secure and purposeful: a woman writer of popular colonial fiction. She, at 37, was enjoying some literary success after a series of false starts. But her income remained a free lance's--precarious and episodic, with no small amount spent on frantic cables requesting payment for articles published many months before, or unsuccessfully soliciting commissions as a foreign correspondent. In 1907 she had published two substantial travel volumes--*From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* and *In the Strange South Seas*--and her first novel in a Pacific setting, *Vaiti of the Islands*, her first novel after a decade.

Murray at this time was a dissatisfied, unhappily married middle-aged barrister yet to be appointed permanently to the position which eventually was the making of him, and which also made him the longest-serving colonial governor in the English-speaking world. Grimshaw played no small part in bringing this about.

Murray's description intimates that Grimshaw's contradictory loyalties had been resolved in nationalist and dissident terms. Yet, like him, she was not Irish, nor Anglo-Irish in the sense of being descended from seventeenth-century colonists. Both were

converts to Catholicism, a decision which then (and to this day, in Northern Ireland) could be interpreted politically as class betrayal. During the Second Anglo-Boer War (to which he had been bitterly opposed), Murray nonetheless became commander of the New South Wales Irish Rifles and fought for the Imperial Army. Although Grimshaw was beginning to endorse the claims of Australia and New Zealand to govern their Pacific dependencies without Colonial Office intervention, neither she nor Murray was "Fenian", which designates an Irish republican nationalist advocating overthrow of the British government by force.

Both, in fact, with whatever private reservations, were adopting Imperial affiliations, becoming eloquent and diligent servants of the British Empire while remaining anti-English and pro-Australian. In Grimshaw's case, imperialist loyalties appear during her passage to Papua several months later, when she returned for good, having realised "For me there is no other country in the world" ("Papua and the Western Pacific" 527). Her affiliations are symbolised by the imagery of British forts and coaling stations which she used as land-marks to punctuate the progress of the P & O steamers in a handbook she wrote for passengers taking the new route to Australasia through the Suez Canal.

National and cultural identity, then, did not come easily to either. Both attempted to solve these conflicts by rejecting one aspect of "the oppressor" (England) while adopting others (the Empire, colonial settler nationalism in Australia) within an

over-arching, politically spurious but emotionally-charged "Irish" identification. As I shall show, Grimshaw's "Irishness" pervades her later fiction and non-fiction alike.

But Grimshaw went further, rejecting contemporary norms of female behaviour by rejecting what was then the core of bourgeois female identity: the notion of separate spheres for male and female activity. This separation effectively confined middle-class women to marriage and maternity. Although many of her contemporaries also remained single and opted for achievement in the public domain, most did so for *feminist* reasons: perceiving that women suffered as a group from systematic social injustice because of their sex (that is, their physiological and reproductive differences from men), they organised to overcome institutionalised discrimination. Such initiatives took various forms, such as lay religious orders, suffragette organisations, or philanthropic activities. Other women, less politicised, took to their sofas to become the stereotyped "Victorian virgin with chlorosis", such as William Gladstone's tragic sister Helen.

Still others, not unlike Grimshaw herself eventually, solved their personal "woman question" by emigrating, as did Charlotte Brontë's friend Mary Taylor, who chastised Brontë for not coming to New Zealand herself, to set herself up in a profession or trade.

Grimshaw, however, deliberately dissociated herself from collective attempts to abolish barriers of gender-divided and stratified labour. "[Women] are not as clever as men--let the equality brigade shriek if they like, 'it's as true as turnips is, is as true as taxes'--but neither are we as stupid. God forbid!" (*In the Strange South Seas* 160). Yet much of her early journalism was devoted to improving the status of "redundant", untrained women, even while her fiction was evolving into popular domestic romance which can be viewed as a means of legitimating social control over women. Her anomalous position as a "man-woman" (a term she frequently used), we shall see, originated in the constellation of relationships in her early family; later, it structured many aspects of her fiction. Thus she often split her narratives along gender lines, giving female and male accounts of the "same" experience.

Grimshaw's work thus provides a fascinating challenge for feminist literary criticism. This proceeds on the hypothesis that gender within a text (of writer, reader and characters) or within the market (ownership or dominance of the publishing, distribution and reception circuit) has crucial, perhaps central, force in interpreting the genesis and fate of a writer's work. One of my tasks is thus to apply feminist insights to the life and work of a woman writer who, when she wasn't non-feminist, was explicitly anti-feminist. Another is to explore how her conception and representation of gender affected her later portrayal of race.

Whether and how white women's racism has differed from white men's has not been thoroughly explored. In Pacific historiography as elsewhere it has usually been assumed that, during transitions from frontier to settlement, the establishment of European family life ended free and easy liaisons between European men and indigenous women (whether such relationships were indeed "free and easy" is another question). The increasing numbers of European women and children are held responsible for social distance, "Black Perils", punitive measures of segregation and other forms of social control.

Such type-casting of white women as either victims or villains in inter-racial sexual dramas has not gone unchallenged, however. Some of the first concerns of the revival of American feminism in the late 1960s were to distinguish the motivations and characteristics of white female racism. Later, as feminist political thinking matured, particularly under pressure from American feminists of colour, a popular and persuasive analogy between sexism and racism began to be prised open. Much of the early 1970s thinking had made the error of equating an analogy with an identity. The literature of the women's liberation movement initially made many a "woman as nigger" comparison to "prove" that discrimination against women (of all races) and blacks (of both sexes) were more than simply alike. Since (the implied argument ran), their social subordination sprang from the same source (white patriarchy), all women and all blacks must also have the same present interests and future objectives.

However, the status of these groups was not structurally identical. Rather, the similarity of rationales for keeping all women and black males in their respective, "inferior" places vis-à-vis white males were significant. These rationales were especially revealing about fantasies concerning power and sex, and the internalisation of such fantasies by people who had suffered them or acted out their consequences.

A major feminist literary-critical appropriation of this analogy was that both Ellen Moers (*Literary Women* 1976) and Tillie Olsen (*Silences* 1978) associate the very beginnings of "women's writing" for the public with "anti-slavery" causes. It must be kept in mind, however, that they discuss the last 300 years or so of writing by white, middle-class women in Western Europe and America.

[O]ne of the most characteristic strains in literature written by women (however dropped out of sight, or derided, *is* conscience, concern with human beings in their time--from the first novel in our language by a woman, Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, that first by anyone against slavery (Olsen, 42; emphasis hers).

This identification of a "tradition" stems from a belief that the pervasive and systematic social oppression of women because of their sexual-reproductive differences from white men predisposes them to sympathy with other groups whose physical visibility also serves as an index for discriminatory treatment. It is certainly the case that some white women (differing by age, nationality, and what, individually, they made of such

preconditions) did perceive similarities between the ways they and colonised people were imagined and treated by white males. Some did translate an emotional/ethical identification with the colonised into political affiliation and action. The bourgeois American women's movements, in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, began with such identification and affiliation. And in various colonial-class societies, white women have prominently contributed to literary dissidence or resistance against racial or cultural oppression. Olsen gives a lengthy grouping of these, but a particularly relevant example, in the late nineteenth-century Irish context, is the assertion by Grimshaw's contemporary, the Irish Nationalist historian Alice Stopford Green:

Of all pilgrims and sojourners in the world, woman remains...the most perplexed and the most alien. From the known order of things she has everything to fear, nothing to hope. ...[H]er eyes are turned only to the Future. There she images ceaselessly another Life...which shall utterly efface old codes and systems. In her need and desire she has allied herself with the poor, the slaves, the publicans and sinners, with all who, like herself, were seeking something different from what they knew...("Woman's Place in the World of Letters" 971).

Yet if white women's socio-structural ambiguity (oppressors by race and class, subordinated by gender) has been conducive to protest, it has also fostered complicity, such as the confused consciousness of the influential South African, Sarah Gertrude Millin, biographer of Rhodes and friend of Smuts. For white women's roles as reproducers and legitimators of the colonial

social order have also been striking: perhaps because colonial societies, depending on women's continuing gender subjection to ensure the biological reproduction and "civilising" socialisation of the next generation, have offered them an inflated, spurious and derivative caste superiority (based on colour). John Buchan's sister "O. Douglas", author of *Olivia in India*, is as vulnerable to post-colonial criticism as he. Or consider how the Society of Authors, at its 1897 annual dinner, celebrated the work of Flora Annie Steele, doyenne of Anglo-Indian romance at the turn of the century. Sir John Lubbock claimed that her books "had done much to increase our understanding of India, *and therefore to promote the maintenance of our rule in that country* (Applause)" [Emphasis mine] (*The Author* 1 Mar. 1897: 258).

Grimshaw's writing challenges stereotypes of "the" colonial woman writer as either friend or enemy of "the" native. It also suggests that, whatever options a specific writer takes, her racial attitudes are inflected by her pre-existing gender consciousness. Grimshaw presents the special interest of a woman initially supporting many of the concerns of an oppressed nationality (Ireland), while later her perceptions and presentation of the "Otherness" of Papuans hardened, becoming more simplistic and polarised. Thus, contrary to previous commentators, I shall maintain that her racial attitudes cannot be fully understood without prior understanding of her experiences of the social consequences of her "Irish" nationality and female gender.

Until she was 30, Grimshaw would have been defined as an Irish woman writer. (Strikingly, nearly all her fictional heroes, male and female, make the choice between art and love, or between home and exile, when aged between 28 and 30.) Apparently she wrote, but never published, an autobiography which she intended calling *Thirty Years in the South Seas*. If so, its focus would apparently have been the consolidation of the reputation she is now remembered for, beginning when she was nearly 40, in the distant part of the world she adopted as "home".⁴ My task is to tell the story she didn't apparently intend: a feminist literary biography of those first 30 years in Ireland, showing how the writer emerged from the daughter and the adolescent.

"You're a writing chap, ain't you?" asked Griscom, with some scorn. "Couldn't your people do any better for you than that?"

"Not their fault if they didn't," the young man answered. "I broke away and kept away, and there you have it." (Grimshaw, *Helen of Man O' War Island* 10)

Although my method--reflected in the achronological structure I have chosen--is explained more fully in the "Coming of Age in 'Bigotsborough'" section, my dominant concerns and guiding principles should be mentioned here. My aim in focusing on what can be known of Grimshaw's biography is not to reconstruct her personality, impossible in any event. Rather, in view of Grimshaw's importance in producing, reflecting and disseminating

colonial ideologies, I am accepting, to a degree, C. Wright Mills' conception of biography as an important methodological tool, even in areas of enquiry such as sociology or history, which, by definition, do not usually consider one individual's experience as sufficient, although they are now beginning to consider life-histories more relevant than they did in the past. If, according to Mills, "The life of an individual cannot be adequately understood without reference to the institutions within which his or her biography is enacted....Much of man's life consists of playing such roles within specific institutions" (*The Sociological Imagination* 161), Mills insists equally that:

By the fact of...living [an individual] contributes, however minutely, to the shaping of...society and to the course of its history, even as he is made by society and by its historical push and shove....

No social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history and of their intersections within a society has completed its intellectual journey (6).

Hence my stress is on the evolution of Grimshaw's *vocation*, on her *work*, rather than attempting to reconstruct her life *per se*. I thus hope to avoid the conflation of literary biography and literary criticism pinpointed by Roland Barthes as the covert but characteristic *modus operandi* of literary study generally:

The author is a modern figure, a product of our society insofar as, emerging from the Middle Ages with English empiricism, French rationalism and the personal faith of the

Reformation, it discovered the prestige of the individual....[I]n literature...this positivism, the epitome and culmination of capitalist ideology...has the greatest importance to the 'person' of the author. The *author* still reigns in histories of literature, biographies of writers, interviews, magazines, in the very consciousness of men of letters anxious to unite their person and their work through diaries and memoirs. The image of literature to be found in ordinary culture is tyrannically centred on the author, his person, his life, his tastes, his passions, while criticism still consists for the most part in saying that Baudelaire's work is the failure of Baudelaire the man, Van Gogh's his madness, Tchaikovsky's his vice. The *explanation* of a work is always sought in the man or woman who produced it....

To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing. Such a conception suits criticism very well, the latter then allotting itself the important task of discovering the Author (or by its hypostases: society, history, psyche, liberty) beneath the work: when the Author has been found, the text is 'explained'--victory to the critic. Hence there is no surprise in the fact that, historically, the reign of the Author has also been that of the Critic... ("The Death of the Author" 142-43).

The question I want to engage--how did *this* woman come to *writing*?--is not as individualistic as it may at first appear; it requires investigation of a host of social and historical factors, what Janet Wolff calls "the structural conditions of artistic practice" (*The Social Production of Art* 118).⁵

But since Grimshaw's vocation was *literary*, the value of literary-biographical theory to the second aspect of my overall project--relating Grimshaw's Irish and female experience to her

later attitudes in the Pacific about race--must be assessed. I have decided that a combination of three modes of literary-biographical practice is most relevant and encompassing. These are Leon Edel's psychological probing of personal mythology as revealed by a kind of "repetition compulsion" in a writer's work; Boris Tomasevskij's formalist concept of a writer's "ideal biographical legend"; and the more mundane pursuit of document hunting and verification.

As will become apparent, I consider and use *all* of Grimshaw's writing and reported speech as a potential "truth-derivative of the subject" (Manganyi, "Psychobiography and the Truth of the Subject" 37) agreeing with Edel that "the work or 'life-style' of [a] subject....How a life has expressed itself is the real subject of the biographer" ("Biography: a Manifesto" 2). Such inclusiveness is not indiscriminate. Origin and context are always identified. Nor am I particularly dismayed by the disappearance of Grimshaw's autobiography, and a rumoured trunk of papers which she purportedly sent from Bathurst to a relative in Port Moresby in the early 1950s. It is a biographical commonplace that self-expression may not be self-disclosure, revelation, or exploration, whereas fiction may tell us more than the author realised or intended about herself. I have thus treated the spectrum of Grimshaw's writings with a combination of acceptance and scepticism.

My sources, therefore, have been what Grimshaw let slip in her writing, especially her obsessive concern with a gender/evolution/race constellation, and how this theme recurs in and shapes her characteristic narrative strategies; what she wanted us to know, her adept image-making; and how available evidence supports the portrait resulting from the other two methods.

On this side of the tapestry
There sits the bearded king,
And round about him stand
His lords and ladies in a ring;
The hunting dogs are there
And armed at command.

On that side of the tapestry
The formal court is gone
The kingdom is unknown;
Nothing but thread to see
Knotted and rooted thread
Spelling a world unsaid.

(Nemerov qtd. by Alexander, *Working Papers* 3 59)

A "poetics" of psychologically-informed literary biography has been Leon Edel's outstanding contribution to criticism. The following "principia biographia" date from an address he gave in 1981. They thus represent a development of his initial hypotheses, published in 1956. Here I have selected only those describing his master-principle, that "A life-myth is hidden within every poet's work..." ("Biography and the Science of Man" 7). This concept of a "life-myth"--also defined by Mark Pachter as "the myth that orders [the biographer's] subject's experience and that offers the key to his nature" ("The Biographer Himself" 14)--derives as much from Yeats as from Freud: "There is some one Myth for every man, which, if we but knew it, would make us understand all that he did and thought" (qtd. by Kaplan 46). As Edel explains the procedures involved in discerning and

rendering this "myth":

[T]he biographer must learn to understand man's ways of dreaming, thinking, and using his fancy. This does not mean that a biographical subject can be psychoanalyzed; a biographical subject is not a patient and not in need of therapy. But there can be found analytic methods applicable to biography in which the subject's fancies, thoughts and dreams are used for the revelations they contain....

I mean the kind of analysis which enables us to see through the rationalizations, the postures, the self-delusions and self-deceptions of our subjects--...the manifestations of the unconscious as they are projected in conscious forms of action within whatever walks of life our subject has chosen. The very choice of a given walk of life is in itself revelatory....

[A] biographer must analyze his materials to discover certain keys to the deeper truths of his subject--keys...to the private mythology of the individual....This is what I mean when I speak constantly of searching for 'the figure under the carpet.' By studying first the figure in the carpet--...the patterns and modes of a man's works, in literature, in politics, in most of his endeavours--we are able then to grasp what lies on the underside of the given tapestry. The public facade is the mask behind which a private mythology is hidden--the private self-concept that guides a given life, the private dreams of the self....The rest usually falls into place once we possess this knowledge....But we must also recognize that, while the mythological configuration is more or less determined, there are cases in which we find ego development and ego change. We are, however, constantly involved with determinism ("Biography and the Science of Man" 8-10).

I disagree with Edel about determinism, a point to which I return in the "'Bigotsborough'" chapter. A deterministic quality may appear to have been characteristic of a life when it is

over, and retrospectively, a pattern of sorts appears. But I have tried throughout my account of Grimshaw's early years to recover both their sense of indeterminacy and evolving purpose *as they happened*.

Edel's methodology has been most useful in identifying one life-myth for Grimshaw--a virginal, warrior queen whose transcendence of "feminine" qualities enabled her to write--although one person may live aspects of several life-myths. It has also helped to discern a fundamental fictional configuration revealed in plots, themes, symbols, narrative structure, cathected images and "central life metaphors" (Hollington, "Between Two Stools" 14). These she had already formulated, and later seldom deviated from, by the time she was leaving Ireland for the Pacific. This pattern, *because* it springs from a personal mythology, is so basic that I contend Grimshaw's Pacific writing cannot be adequately comprehended without a prior understanding of its Irish matrix. The sections concerning Grimshaw's Irish girlhood, and those focusing on her fictional heroes Vaiti and Theodora, are most indebted to Edel's "principia". One can locate Grimshaw's fictional self-portraits and imaginary identifications, and then demonstrate how an initial self-contradiction between the roles of "woman" and "writer" were reconciled by her. While "Coming of Age in 'Bigotsborough'" describes external conditions conditioning Grimshaw's eventual choice to become a writer, the sections concerning Vaiti and Theodora probe *inner* circumstances, conditions, and costs--what the struggle to write professionally exacted from Grimshaw in

terms of commitments and renunciations.

Proust's *Contre Sainte-Beuve*, a collection of essays about Baudelaire, Nerval and Balzac, meta-critical reflections and draft passages for *A la Recherche du temps perdu*, was published in 1954. Like a voice from the tomb, it admonishes Proust's biographers not to confuse the man who wrote with his public personality. Using the examples of men whose life-styles, like his own, were highly eccentric, Proust insisted:

Sainte-Beuve's criticism is hardly profound. That famous method of his consists in conflating the author and the work, insisting that it is important to have, first of all, answered questions which would seem to be entirely irrelevant to his work (how did he behave, etc.), surrounding oneself with any possible kind of information about a writer, collecting his correspondence, asking people who knew him about him, chatting with them if they're still alive, reading what they may have written about him if they are dead... This method "misrecognises" what a bit of self-knowledge teaches us: a book is the product of *another* self than that which we manifest in our habits, in society, in our vices (175; free translation mine, emphasis Proust's). ⁶

Obviously Proust, the capricious recluse and homosexual, was intent upon deflecting concern with his private life to his work, but *Contre Sainte-Beuve* is not simply a covering operation. Proust thought that the aesthetic and the ethical were one; his novel would reveal the truth about him and his work.

As far as his biographer George Painter was concerned, however, the novel is no more than a screen for actual events. Painter's biography of Proust reflects methodological confusion in the very chapter headings: "Les Visites d'Albertine", "Mademoiselle de Saint-Loup", "Le Septuor de Vinteuil", "La Mort de Saint-Loup". These people never existed. The biographer who pursues models for fictional characters, identifying Albertine in "real" life as Marie Finaly, Marie Nordlinger, Albert Le Cuziat, Albert Nahmias, Alfred Agostinelli, or Henri Rochat--singly or in combination--creates fiction as much as Proust, only on supposedly factual terrain.

The separation Proust discerned between the writing and the biographical self may not actually be so rigid and absolute; no one else could have written either *Contre Sainte-Beuve* or *A la Recherche*. This very observation seems to vindicate Edel when he adopts Sainte-Beuve's "Tel arbre, tel fruit" as one of his own biographical maxims. In Grimshaw's case, the tasks of sorting out empirical and implied fictional "evidence" is somewhat facilitated by the fact that most documentation emanating from her is of an image-making kind, and therefore highly artificial and crafted. While this obviously precludes any possibility of knowing her as she "really" was, it says a great deal about her conscious, chosen intentions and motivations.

Boris Tomasevskij, in his historically-bounded essay "Literature and Biography" surveys pre-Romantic times when concepts of authorship, and the relationship of personality to creativity,

were quite different. As a Formalist, and precursor of the Structuralist notion of "the death of the author", one can expect his mode of reading to be text- and reader-oriented, rather than focusing on the author as final authority or sole, original source of meaning. However, *if* a writer has created an "ideal biographical legend" (as distinct from her "curriculum vitae or the investigator's account")--if she has deliberately become "a writer with a biography":

[only] this biographical legend should be important to the literary historian in his attempt to reconstruct the psychological milieu surrounding a literary work....[The] facts of the author's life must be taken into consideration. Indeed, in the works themselves the juxtaposition of the texts and the author's biography plays a structural role.... Thus the biography that is useful to the literary historian...is the biographical legend created by the author himself. Only such a legend is a *literary fact* [Emphasis his] ("Literature and Biography" 52 and 55).

Much of Grimshaw's contemporary literary standing depended precisely on the authority of experience, which literally entitled her to produce authoritative reportage and romantic fiction alike. I explore her ideal biographical self--not the least of her many fictions--in the next section.

The study of the development of one woman writer, by retelling the history of her vocation, must, as Virginia Woolf recognised, take into account many other factors as well:

[I]n dealing with women as writers, as much elasticity as possible is desirable; it is necessary to leave oneself room to deal with other things besides their work, so much has that work been influenced by conditions that have nothing whatever to do with art (*The Forum* 1929, rpt. in Barrett 43).

Nor can the focus on one individual, in principle, give a feminist "answer" about the relationships between women and writing (or failing to write, or writing differently from what might have been expected of someone with such a background, such a talent), for that could only be based on a number of comparable cases. Yet by situating Grimshaw's literary production within the contexts of her family history in Ireland, and the social history of her class, gender and generation, I show that feminist questions make more sense of her work than the discussion hitherto, which has limited itself to considerations of colonialism and race.

Feminist criticism, insisting on gender as a meaningful and problematic "category of reference or interpretation" (Miller, "Women's Autobiography" 267) is sharpening the focus of literary biography by addressing questions Virginia Woolf was among the earliest to raise, especially in *A Room of One's Own* (1929):

[T]owards the end of the eighteenth century a change came about which, if I were rewriting history, I should describe more fully and think of greater importance than the Crusades or the Wars of the Roses. The middle-class woman began to write (63).

What conditions common to most women and few men have inhibited or favoured women's emergence as professional writers? How has women's socio-sexual position affected their choices of subject or style? More recently, few considerations of these questions have excelled the breadth and depth of Olsen's *Silences*, and other investigations into the sources and constraints of female productivity in any domain are proliferating.⁶

Grimshaw often affected not to draw "morals" from her work: "If there is a meaning, or a moral, the reader must find it" (*FCI* 353). Sometimes she dismissed her work as possessing little "literary" merit, and she was usually aware of editorial interference.⁷

But I do not intend to accept her occasional self-deprecation or (what was far more frequent) her strategic down-playing of her own influence. Her life and work represent an intersection (and, on her part, an interpretation) of revolutionary socio-historical forces. Her career began at a particularly important time of flux, the 1890s. Victorian concepts of gender and race, seemingly fixed although, necessarily, poorly understood scientifically, were beginning to come under political and ideological attack. It was a time of increasing literacy, when the three magnates of modern mass journalism--Newnes, Pearson, and Harmsworth/Northcliffe, for all of whom Grimshaw wrote--created and catered for special interest audiences. They encouraged forms such as reader-contributed paragraphs, women's pages or magazines, serialised and syndicated stories, and

exotic adventure novels. From contemporary advertisements and reviews, it appears that Grimshaw's popular colonial fiction--and many other such exotic romances by women--was instrumental in the success of newly established publishers like Mills and Boon and Eveleigh Nash.

Also during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many aspects of writing for publication were professionalised. The Society of Authors, the Institute of Journalists, literary agents and book clubs came into being, as well as net book agreements, the standardisation of copyright, and special editions for colonial export.

The following thesis is based on a larger bibliography of Grimshaw's writing, much of it hitherto unknown, which was located during research in Belfast, Dublin, London, Papua New Guinea and Australia. This material includes a serialised, but not republished, Irish novel *A Fool of Forty*, syndicated (but not collected) short stories and journalism from British and American magazines, schoolgirl sketches, stories and debates, and pamphlets for steamship companies and colonial governments, now dispersed and mouldering in a variety of archives.

My other documentation, more sociological, focuses less on the individual than on her influence: reviews, advertisements, interviews, fan mail, her own theory of popular fiction as expressed in reviews and letters, plagiarism, translations, adaptations for broadcasting and film, sales figures and other

publishers' records such as memoranda of agreement and profit and loss ledgers, syndication, press cuttings books, agents' records, numbers and kinds of reprintings (railway and other bookstall paperbacks, book clubs), remainderings or pulping, library circulation figures...

My main concern in describing Grimshaw's passage from Belfast to Papua is to show the apprenticeship of an achievement, ending at the time when, about to enter the Pacific Island world, she was also on the verge of her successful career as a writer of popular colonial fiction. Within this framework, I take issue with the starting and finishing point of other critics ("Beatrice Grimshaw was a writer of racist fiction") by complicating the racial issue with considerations of nationality and gender, so that her work is no longer "ready to read" (and dismiss).

Notes

¹ Grimshaw was also reported as stating that Thoreau's "I like a broad margin to my life" was "the driving force which sent [her] 'questing and pioneering...in search of romance, adventure, and 'copy'"... (C.O.S., "Where the Red Gods Call" 21). As we shall see, Louis Becke's Pacific romances also had a catalytic effect.

² But see Grimshaw's indignant telegram to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 Aug. 1928, 17. After her death her negligible achievements as an explorer were disputed in the *Sydney Morning Herald* by old Papua hands. See letters to the editor by J.T. Bensted, 8 and 17 July 1953, and by Lewis Lett, 13 July 1953.

³ On 23 Dec. 1909, Grimshaw wrote to "Dear Judge Murray": "One thing is clear--I shall not go home for a good while. You may like to hear the reason (This is only for yourself as regards figures) as it is a pleasant one. I sent home the first

part of my novel some time ago; and lately received a cable (*the* [sic] cable) offering 250 pounds from Pearson's for the serial rights when ready. A letter arrived also, suggesting better serial prices from America, so it looks as if the serial rights would be at least five hundred pounds....The corollary seems to be that 'The Red Gods' is going to be a money-maker, all around....There is no doubt that the market is ripe for New Guinea literature" (Sir Hubert Murray, Papers, Vol. 1, Addresses, etc. 1909-1934, Vol. A 3138, 224-26. Sydney: Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales).

⁴ *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* was compared in the *Athenaeum* 12 Feb. 1907, to Mary Kingsley's travel writing (133). "Winds of the World," a rev. of *In the Strange South Seas* in the *Daily Chronicle*, made a similar comparison: "[I]n her inexhaustible desire to 'know things,' she recalls dear and daring Mary Kingsley. Indeed, this book...partakes of the spirit of 'West African Travels,' and no praise could be higher. Miss Grimshaw is neither so delicately funny nor as seriously scientific as Miss Kingsley, but she has the same enthusiasm and the same good sense" (10 Oct. 1907, 3). The reviewer also noted, in this generous two-thirds of a column review, what was to become one of the strengths and secrets of Grimshaw's appealing style: referring to *SSS* as a "book with eyes" he or she further commented: "Miss Grimshaw has the happy faculty of making friends with the reader on the very first page [and]...has the invaluable gift of putting the things seen into words"+

The *Morning Leader* (qtd. in a *Daily Telegraph* advertisement, 5 July 1911, 17) wrote of *When the Red Gods Call*: "We have not read for many years--not since Stevenson and Mr Conrad, to be exact, dealt with that vast Australasian welter know as 'The Islands'--a novel in which savagery, adventure, and the fierce romance of both were so cleverly and vividly blended. The *Morning Post* (14 Aug. 1911) agreed that "No recent book of this kind, with the possible exception of Mr. Jack London's... 'Adventure,' leaves behind it so many clear images again almost take one's breath away". This reviewer also pinpointed the key role being played by women in the development of popular colonial fiction when referring, almost in passing, to the fact that "Messrs Mills and Boon seem to have acquired a monopoly in clever first novels by women writers".

The *Spectator*, in a rev. of *Guinea Gold* (23 Nov. 1912: 862) compared the character of Dence to Bret Harte's Deerhurst and the book itself to aspects of Adam Lindsay Gordon's poetry. It, too, discerned that "The romance of adventure on the verge of the Empire...is no longer the monopoly of the male novelist";

the *Pall Mall Gazette* (19 Oct. 1912, 9) was beginning to discern that Grimshaw's evolving formula was an intertwining of romance and adventure, with the narrator apparently preferring the latter but telling "the former in discharge of a supposed duty to the reader". For a similar reason--freedom "from any irrelevant love interest"--the *Spectator* lauded *The Sorcerer's Stone* (20 June 1914: 1040).

The *Publishers' Circular* said of the style of *The Sorcerer's Stone* that it "rather reminds us of...Mr. Jack London...strong, straightforward, and...sometimes positively smashing in its effect" (6 June 1914: 717).

In 1915 the *Spectator* compared *Red Bob of the Bismarcks* with Conrad's handling of "the magic and glamour of the East" (13 Nov. 1915: 670), while again honing in on what was to become a typical Grimshaw technique: creating a personalised landscape functioning as powerfully as the characters, if not more so.

There are, of course, many other indices to a writer's contemporary reputation. These include publishers' announcements, appearance on best-seller lists or in a review along with other well-known (and perhaps still known) writers, featuring in "how to write" manuals, and the incomparable accolade of being said to write like oneself. To give a few, random examples of these:

In the month of its first publication (Oct. 1907), *In the Strange South Seas* was on the non-fiction best-seller list in the *Daily Chronicle* (4 Oct., 3). When the *New York Times Book Review* featured *Nobody's Island* under "Latest Fiction", it began by saying, "Since the author is Beatrice Grimshaw, one opens 'Nobody's Island' with an anticipation akin to shipping for the South Seas" (3 June 1923, 19). Grimshaw's control over the "bisexual" style that had struggled to emerge ever since her first Irish novels--often creating fissures and fault-lines in them, but successfully realised later--received high praise in *The New York Times Book Review's* rev. of *My Lady of the Island* (the American edition of *Red Bob of the Bismarcks*): "Beatrice Grimshaw has done a rather notable thing in this new book. She has written it in the masculine personality without any obtrusion of the underlying feminine. Usually when a woman writes a novel in which a man is supposed to tell the story...her sex will assert itself, especially in feminine modes of feelings and points of view, so much so that the masculine disguise...becomes ridiculous. But Miss Grimshaw's...Paul Corbet...never...fails to be thoroughly young-man-like. It is an achievement of which Miss Grimshaw can be proud and for which her readers will all be grateful" ("Latest Works of Fiction" 2 Apr. 1916, 124). Scarcely a reviewer omits mention of Grimshaw's characteristic "blood-curdling" plots; in short, they were quite aware that she was contributing to a genre which may be described as "tropical Gothic".

Michael Joseph, in Ch. 7 of *The Complete Writing for Profit*, "Local Colour and Some Types of Short Stories," associated Grimshaw's skill with that of O. Henry when contending, "Two great principles, apparently in direct opposition to each other, govern...construction....a rigid condensation to the skeleton of the action, and...the insertion of numerous scraps of matter to create atmosphere, character, and generally to achieve conviction" (132). He cited the opening of one of Grimshaw's East Indian stories as an example of

"clever balance" and "craftsmanship" "to show how local colour is deftly woven into the body of the story".

⁴ The autobiography is referred to in an article, "Miss Beatrice Grimshaw," by Mollie Lett, Grimshaw's neighbour and herself a journalist. The article, however, was rejected by the *American Magazine* in 1935 and may be read today at the National Library of Australia, Ms 2039, Lett Papers. Attempts to trace the autobiography via newspaper appeals and radio interviews in places such as Belfast, Bathurst, and Devon, have not been successful.

⁵ For further rejection of "an arbitrary selection of biographical and character features, imposing an artificial unity on the individual as subject", and advocacy of "Replacing the vocabulary of 'creation', 'artist' and 'work of art' with 'cultural or artistic production', 'cultural producer' and 'artistic product'", see Wolff, Ch. 6 ("The Death of the Author") and her conclusion, "Cultural Producer and Cultural Product." See also "Creation and Production" in Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production*; Catherine Belsey, *Critical Practice*; Jean-Michel Raynaud, "What's What in Biography", *Reading Life Histories: Griffith Papers on Biography*; and David Saunders, "Unities; Differences; Biographic Representations" in the same volume. Barthes was revising his opinions about subjectivity towards the end of his life, however, as is well known, the precipitating factor, significantly enough, being the death of his mother and his attempt to "restore" her.

⁶ Proust's original text is as follows:

L'oeuvre de Sainte-Beuve n'est pas une oeuvre profonde. La fameuse méthode...qui consiste à ne pas séparer l'homme et l'oeuvre, à considérer qu'il n'est pas indifférent d'avoir d'abord répondu aux questions qui paraissent les plus étrangères à son oeuvre (comment se comportait-il, etc.), à s'entourer de tous les renseignements possibles sur un écrivain, à collationner ses correspondances, à interroger les hommes qui l'ont connu, en causant avec eux s'ils vivent encore, en lisant ce qu'ils ont pu écrire sur lui s'ils sont morts, cette méthode méconnaît ce qu'une fréquentation un peu profonde avec nous-mêmes nous apprend: qu'un livre est le produit d'un autre *moi* que celui que nous manifestons dans nos habitudes, dans la société, dans nos vices (175).

⁷ Examples include Judy Chicago's *Through the Flower: My Struggle as a Woman Artist*; Patricia Grimshaw and Lynne Strahan, eds., *The Half-Open Door*; *Anais Nin: a Woman Speaks. The Lectures, Seminars and Interviews of Anais Nin*. Ed. Evelyn Hinz; Sarah Elbert and Marion Glastonbury, *Inspiration and Drudgery: Notes on Literature and Domestic Labour in the Nineteenth*

Century; Sara Ruddick and Pamela Daniels, eds. *Working It Out: 23 Women Writers, Artists, Scientists and Scholars Talk about Their Lives and Work*; Joanna Russ, *How to Suppress Women's Writing*; Lynne Spender, *Intruders on the Rights of Men: Women's Unpublished Heritage*; Janet Sternburg, ed. *The Writer on Her Work: Contemporary Women Writers Reflect on Their Art and Situation*; Michelene Wandor, ed. *On Gender and Writing*.

Important articles on the subject of female creativity include Sue Bellamy, "Form--'We Are the Thing Itself.'" *Third Women & Labour Conference Papers*, and Susan Gubar, "'The Blank Page' and the Issue of Female Creativity," *Critical Inquiry* 8 (1981): 243-63.

Two anthologies providing refreshing differences from the Anglo-American references above are Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, eds., *New French Feminisms* and Gisela Ecker, ed., *Feminist Aesthetics*.

⁸ Thus Grimshaw wrote to Deakin from Samarai on 21 Mar. 1908: "It is most kind of you to say all the pleasant things you do about my literary work, upon which I do not, however, set a very high value. Much of it is only written to amuse, and the more serious parts suffer under handicaps....I must ask you not to take your opinions of Papua from the articles under my signature that have appeared in the 'Sydney Morning Herald,' as they have only been published in a much mutilated form....I think it only fair to let you know that my articles do not represent my impressions in full" (Deakin Papers, Ms. 1540/15/2382-3, Canberra: Natl. Library of Australia).

"Ideal Biographical Legend"

Paradoxically, one of the easier entries into the realm of biographical fact, at least when writers are concerned, is via a kind of fiction: their "ideal biographical legend". This concept, as mentioned earlier, is one of Boris Tomasevskij's contributions to literary study. Tomasevskij observes that the notion of individual authorship, let alone the relevance of personality to creativity, is recent, emerging in Western European literature in the eighteenth century and becoming obligatory for the Romantics. Authors faced the necessity either of living a legendary life-style or making one up, much to the perplexity of biographers fruitlessly searching for non-existent prototypes of characters or attempting to authenticate incidents which never occurred. "Obviously", Tomasevskij comments, "the question of the role of biography in literary history cannot be solved uniformly for all literatures. There are writers with biographies and writers without biographies" (55).

Yet this Formalist critic, writing in the Russian post-Revolutionary epoch when individual subjectivity was politically problematic, if not suspect, claims that, to validate some types of narrative, the construction of a "person-behind-the-work" is imperative: "Indeed, in the works themselves the juxtaposition of the texts and the author's biography plays a structural role" (55).

The creation of a popularised image of herself was particularly necessary in the case of Grimshaw's writing. Her very authority, first as a travel writer and then as a novelist whose reputation depended on the "authenticity" of her local colour from a remote corner of the British Empire, was literally "entitled" by the fact of her "having been there". One often finds, in her fiction, an "Author's Note" giving the source of her story, as with "The Ship That Ran Herself" (*Pieces of Gold* 78). Initially as a journalist with a thorough grasp of photographic techniques, and then as a tourist and investment promoter with a shrewd capacity for advertising rhetoric, and, finally, as a purveyor of popular colonial fiction, she was constantly aware of her audiences. Hence the necessity of interviews, profiles, frontispiece portraits, mentions in personality or gossip columns, and entries in biographical dictionaries.¹ She overcame Hubert Murray's distaste for using his own portrait (in the uniform of the New South Wales Irish Rifles) as the frontispiece for the officially-sponsored *The New New Guinea* by stressing the *imprimatur* that his image would give.²

A more subtle component of this idealised *persona* is a fictionalised self-portrait. Psychologically this functions as a phantasy and hence as a clue to an individual's life-myths. Grimshaw produced several of these, which I discuss below.

The *final* components of a biographical legend, of course, are the obituary and the will, although they need be no more accurate than any other sources. Grimshaw's will simply and

definitively characterises her: "I, Beatrice Grimshaw, novelist..."

Closely related to, but more encompassing than Tomasevskij's account of the post-Romantic, "creative" personality, is Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz' exploration of "the legend about the artist" (*Legend, Myth and Magic in the Image of the Artist: a Historical Experiment* 1979). Like Tomasevskij, they regard verifiable data about the life of an artist as secondary--indeed, in many circumstances unnecessary--because "the biography of the artist in the true sense of the word" is "how the artist was judged by contemporaries and posterity" (2).

"Artist-biographies", as a *literary* form, emerged in Hellenistic times. Conventions and motifs from epic and folklore made them so compelling that they could over-ride and even replace fact:

Their importance was soon so great that the enduring fame of several Greek artists--Zeuxis and Apelles, to name but two--rests on these biographies alone, without there having been any possibility of later forming an impression of their actual works. That the fame of an artist can thus outlive any of his productions is...a striking affirmation of the potent influence of the Greek biography of the artist (5).

Limiting themselves to graphic artists, Kurz and Kris posit that "from the moment when the artist made his appearance in historical records, certain stereotyped notions were linked with his work and his person--preconceptions that have never

entirely lost their significance and that still influence our view of what an artist is" (4). Moreover, "Despite all modifications and transformations, [such recurrences] have retained some of their meaning right up to the most recent past; only their origin has been lost to sight and must be painstakingly recovered" (3).

The relevance of their approach here is that the persistent, pervasive cluster of motifs typical of stories concerning artists' discovery of their vocation--and the implications (mysterious, powerful, even menacing) of that gift--also characterise Grimshaw's "ideal biographical legend." She, her critics and interviewers alike shared in Western culture's myth-making about "the" artist, one consequence of which is that females are much more often venerated as muses rather than creators in their own right. This immediately posed a problem: seeming to conform to the conventionalised, accepted legend whilst also discreetly departing from it. Before more detailed examination of Grimshaw's self-presentation in interviews and photographs, I shall show how aspects of the mythical artist-figure surface in a broad spectrum of her writings.

The constant motifs discerned by Kris and Kurz are as follows. Artists are precocious children, whose gift reveals itself spontaneously, often despite their parents' wishes. Embryonic artists are self-taught until a mentor, astonished by such children's gifts, takes their education in hand. The artist's real family, often of humble origins, fades into obscurity as

family romance takes over: "[I]n the motifs of mythology the relation of the hero to his parental home is dominated by the tendency to deny the real father...and to substitute a more exalted, royal parent; indeed, as far as possible, all mortal taint is removed from the hero's origin" (35).

At their fullest development, artists' gifts have a magical, almost demonic quality. Like the craftsmen-gods Daedalus and Hephaestus, artists can form lifelike effigies, virtually animate beings, or erect buildings [symbolising any human construction] that reach into the sky or that rival the dwellings of the gods in size and grandeur. "[E]very building is an affront to the deity who must therefore be appeased by a sacrifice" (84-5).

Grimshaw thought highly enough of herself and other artists or "thought-artisans", as she termed intellectuals, to share this fear that retribution might follow creation. The hero of "Lost Wings" crashes with the primitive, pioneering airplane he invents. The narrator of *The Terrible Island* is lame, paying for his capacity for observation and intuition:

But I was not as others, and the trouble dated
from my birth. I happened so, lame and askew.
Not very much--no, the trouble was
 'Not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a
 church door,
 But 'twas enough.'

Enough to place me outside; to make me walk a
stranger among my contemporaries and equals; to
render me nervous and reserved, and throw me in
upon myself for amusement (21).

Many of Grimshaw's poets and singers--Deirdre Rose, Frank Bevan, Star Oliver--are tense and over-wrought. Poetry and sorcery are linked. The imagery of Browning's "Devil's Smithy" recurs in titles of individual stories (e.g., in *Pieces of Gold*), epigraphs, and quotations within stories. The significantly named character Smith in *My Lady Far-Away* has achieved what many Grimshaw characters seek and then abandon as too dangerous--"the use of a lost sense" (153). Initially presented as clairvoyant, he eventually goes mad.

With patience--oh, but infinite patience!--and long research, and the study of native languages, one gets near the central secrets. And then--then the wilderness blossoms. The glass through which we see darkly is lit up like a coloured window when you see it from inside; it shows lights--forms--...I can't expect you to understand. Civilisation means the forgetting of all these things; allowing the roads that lead to them to become overgrown (154-55).

He had caged this knowledge only by ways of extreme difficulty; and when once the fine poise of his mind was overthrown, destroyed...he knew himself divested of all that occult power (228).

"The Black Venus of Rubiana" is Grimshaw's most explicit rendering of artistic creation as evil. Originally the Black Venus was hewn from wood by a sorcerer. No ordinary person can sculpt her, or even fashion a replica, without dire consequences.

On a more anecdotal than mythical level, according to Kurz and Kris, artists are famed for their virtuosity and versatility.

They work fast, and excel at witty repartee and deception. Most of these characteristics show up in Grimshaw's "enacted biography". She was an inveterate scribbler in the schoolroom, but she hated sewing. The only use her parents could imagine for her verbal facility was for her to train as a lecturer in classics for a ladies' college. She would obey them only up to a point:

I, being aged seventeen, naturally knew everything. I explained, as patiently as I could, that colleges were cramping to the higher development of the ego.... After which I went home--to Belfast--and put in a year of classical study at Queen's, just to show--something that I have forgotten ("About Myself").

Like Justin Grey in "The Long Lagoon", she was rather more athletic than the stereotyped poet and dreamer, starving in an attic:

It was known, as most things are known in a newspaper office, that he spent half his evenings working on a play that was to out-Shakespeare Shakespeare...and the other half boxing at a sporting club where...he could...knock the block off anybody his own weight and off most men a great deal heavier... (*Pieces of Gold* 126).

Grimshaw trained as a singer for awhile but prided herself more on being "chased by a shark when swimming in a coral lagoon; [coming] near being wrecked several times; and [growing] to become quite an accomplished sailor..." ("Adventures in the South Seas" 1906, n.p.). Unwilling to subdue her "cannibal"

labourers with "masculine" swearing or physical violence (although she usually carried a revolver with her in Papua), she invented a meaningless but effective language of intimidation using words from geometry with considerable effect.

Indeed, in Papua one might wonder if this Jane-of-all-trades-- "Novelist, Planter, Bushwoman, Economist and Traveller"--ever *did* write.

I have taken my team of cannibal labourers out into the virgin forests, and with them cleared and planted new land....I have run my cutter about Sariba and Samarai and China Straits. ... I have built two houses--so far as design and overseeing goes--learned to cook, and wash, and drive bullocks...and keep my clothes and goods dry fording flooded rivers, and kill black snakes before they bite ("About Myself").

And her life *was* fabulous. Of her missing autobiography, her neighbour and sister journalist Mollie Lett, who indicated that she had read it, wrote that it "surpasses in graphic and colourful description even the best of her well-known novels of romance and adventure" ("Miss Beatrice Grimshaw" 1). Publishers customarily framed Grimshaw's non-fiction in terms such as "An amazing chronicle...The real-life nightmares and hairbreadth escapes of a famous author whose experiences rival her own fiction" (editorial preface to "A White Woman Among Cannibals..." *Liberty* 1936, 44).

Integral to this "stranger than fiction" kind of life is, of course, the family romance, symbolised by Cloona (or Cloonagh) House, Grimshaw's birthplace, a photograph of which accompanied her everywhere. As we shall see in "'Bigotsborough,'" Grimshaw spent only the first seven years of her life there. Everything known about the houses she herself designed indicates that typically over-stuffed Victorian interiors stifled her: "[A]ll choked and cluttered with things, and things--I can't express it--" (*White Savage Simon*, hereafter referred to as *WSS*, 74). Her addresses in later life are indicative enough: "Rona Falls Cottage, via Sapphire Creek", "Coral Sands", "Wayside".

But the enacted biography transforms penury into privilege. Reading about the author's "old country home" (Lett, 1), conjures up a picture of an affluent and aristocratic childhood. Cloona sounds like Phil Amory's family estate in *Black Sheep's Gold*:

[I] would dream that I was back in the spacious days of Home and riches; the years when my father owned a fine country house, and a smallish town house, and...life and society and 'the right people', and what one was going to do...after Harrow and the 'Varsity, had all been changeless, solid as fixed stars (9).

Nothing solidier than that house, the long avenue with the firs and the crackling gravel, the cottages and farms that were ours....I saw in one thousand-faceted vision the world my people had owned and lost; its myriad reserves, defences, shibboleths, its fierce prides and pitiless scorns; its solid pedestal of property, lifting all who belonged to it far, very far above the mud and dust in which we others must go (9 and 46).

The significance of Cloona for that generation of Grimshaws was to legitimate social roots that they liked to think dated back to Edward Ist of England and Margaret of France (similarly, Harry England in *My South Sea Sweetheart*, descends from Prince Hal, "Direct line, but wrong side of the--" 42).⁴ "Helen of Man O' War Island", "with her wavy red hair" is "every inch an Elizabeth--and indeed, this was her second name" (8). Like the three generations of socially ascendant Irish Grimshaws, Helen's family have "ruled" Man O'War Island for three generations. And, typical of the rejection of ordinary parents and siblings discerned by Kurz and Kris, Helen rejects an uncle's suggestion that she seems like her mother in character, identifying with the "royal" side of the family, her father's, "the wild, buccaneering branch such as Queen Elizabeth herself would have loved" (8). "I'm a Pentecost, blood and bone!" (39). She pursues her adventures with an "unfortunate half-brother" who "represents a worse and a different strain" (39). The pointed rejection of the mother appears in too many Grimshaw books to be coincidental, and I shall discuss it further in the chapters concerning Grimshaw's Irish fiction.

Grimshaw family trees refer to "Nicholas Grimshaw of Cloona" as if the house were an hereditary seat rather than a merchant's acquisition which the by then downwardly mobile Grimshaws left in 1877. It had passed to a competitor in textile manufacturing--Otto Jaffé, Belfast's only Jewish Lord Mayor--by 1890. Decades later Nichola Grimshaw, the family's youngest daughter, named her home in Devon for Cloona, while Grimshaw, we

have seen, repeatedly used the photo to enhance her social status as a time when her decline as a writer was underway. A particularly condensed version of this self-promotion appears in an article, "'Southward Ho! -- Adventurous Career.-- MISS BEATRICE GRIMSHAW", laid out so that a photograph of Cloona ("An Irish Country House"), with another of Grimshaw herself inset, precedes the article (*Sydney Morning Herald* 21 Feb. 1935, n.p.g.). As achievement faltered, she came to rely on "birthright".

But as a symbol of prosperous, dynastic succession, Cloona House is a "front". It was not a "Big House"--a seat of Protestant landlords descended from seventeenth-century English colonists--so characteristic of Irish fiction in Somerville and Ross, for instance. The Grimshaw family, "big and muscular, undistinguished, straight-living, straight-riding folk" ("About Myself"), conforming to a proverb from their native Lancashire ("From clogs to clogs in three generations") was past its prime. There are no direct descendants of the Grimshaws in Northern Ireland today; indeed, there are none anywhere.

Nor is anyone "at home" in Cloona House nowadays. A property of the Public Works Department, it has become the residence of the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in Northern Ireland. The nearest socially-equivalent residence, Suffolk House, was the target of an IRA economic bombing several years ago. The visiting researcher must undergo a security check to visit it, and visitors are accompanied by British Army staff. Part of the grounds is now a helicopter pad. From the road, surrounded by

fences and hedges, the house is invisible; from inside, the *barriers* are invisible, with an illusory view of carefully tended gardens and fields beyond. When the visitor leaves, troops in camouflage, bayonets to the ready, dart into the wilderness before the car. But Cloona's relative inaccessibility will soon be over. Preparations for an estate to rehouse the population of Catholic West Belfast were apparent in road-works when I visited the area with the local councillor, a member of the Alliance Party, in 1979.

The fate of Cloona and its environs thus symbolises Grimshaw's family's role as "Uitlanders"-going-native, in the triumph and decay of a society torn by the contradictions of patriarchal, colonial, and capitalist domination. In her person, she was to incarnate, evade, and struggle with these conflicts. It is precisely this kind of discrepancy between socio-historical accuracy and personal-psychological phantasy which interests the biographer. An immediately apparent paradox is that Grimshaw, although forced by circumstances as well, *left* Cloona; it served her better in legend than in reality, for, as she told Lett, "The South Sea world is infinite. To know it you must make your home in it; 'forget your own people and your father's house'.... (6)".

Artists in Grimshaw's work include landscape painters like her sister Emma (Marion in "By Carlingford Bay", Terry in *Broken Away*), singers (Deirdre Rose in *Conn of the Coral Seas*; Star Oliver in "The Island Grave"), Harold Page in *Nobody's Island*,

whose "gift of song", the Papuans think, is "sorcery of the highest order" (261), and poets. Her own early pen-name, "Graphis", connotes the uncanny ability to replicate external reality mentioned by Kris and Kurz. One interviewer, Francis Grierson, exclaimed, "There is no need to illustrate her books; her own words conjure up pictures as accurate as they are enchanting..." (*Bookman* 1922, 123). Most people noted her shrewd, penetrating glance (which, magnified by her spectacles, could have a terrifying effect, according to one woman who knew her when she was herself a little girl), a characteristic which Grimshaw transposed to some of her favoured artist characters, magnifying a capacity for observation into vision. Willis Rothery in *White Savage Simon* (whose name recalls the blind and proud Irish poet--"I am Raftery!"), like his creator, has "blue seer eyes" (50): "[I]f he is not the Laureate of the South Sea world, then the Pacific regions have none"(10). (Cf. Thomas McMahon about Grimshaw herself: "No one knows Papua as does Miss Grimshaw" ("The Home of Miss Beatrice Grimshaw" 34). Rothery can see through and beyond when others are oblivious: "The poet soul in him raised its head--you could see it looking through the momentarily obscured windows of those wonderful blue eyes" (74). Rothery then composes a verse reminiscent of a poem from Stevenson's *Underwoods*--"but it was much better" (74).

Grimshaw's own claims were more modestly stated, but similar: "What I have done in the short story, if I have done anything, is to tell the tale of the South Seas with truth to local colour" (Lett, 5). Lett herself noted, "[Grimshaw's] short

stories bring almost the highest prices paid for any South Seas fiction. She has specialised in this type of story and made it her own" (4).

It is noteworthy, however, that Grimshaw never pictured herself, nor most of her "creative" characters, as demonic. Rather, they are *demotic*, "tribal poets", composers of love-songs like Deirdre, or performers of old-fashioned love songs like Lenore in *Rita Regina*, who plays "commonplace verses set to banal music--commonplace, yet heart-stirring and heart-breaking" (45). Quotations from the quintessential Australian poet Adam Lindsay Gordon live anew in Grimshaw's pages; *Lieder* echo through them; the author impudently ransacks her heroes' swags and discovers that they prefer Shakespeare's "story plays" (i.e., his romances) to his histories.

From beginning to end of her career, Grimshaw believed in the duty of a mass-popular writer to satisfy her audience's wish-fulfillments, even if she didn't necessarily share them. Thus she advised Gilbert Munro Turnbull, a Port Moresby neighbour and aspirant writer:

The best teacher you can have will be G. Turnbull and after him, the public. They'll give you your lesson clearly enough (Ltr., 8 Dec. 1928).

If you don't write to please yourself, you are flat and uninteresting. If you write chiefly to please yourself, you may have a limited and appreciative audience, or you may have none. Sooner or later, those of us who aren't above considering the money side of it, find

ourselves obliged...to please the man who pays. It's not a bad fate; the man who pays is a decent fellow on the whole, but naturally, he wants what *he* wants, and if he does not get it, he says, 'Very nice' to your book, and goes off to Edgar Wallace or Ethel Dell....

It is not enough to write well...to have a good style, and a vivid way of putting things....You must also remember how your masters, the public, wish you to use these things. It's well to study popular books, and learn something from each; and then make the team of your talents pull along the right road....

Things the reading public does not--much--care for, are details about natives and their lives (You and I are passionately interested, but they are not) stories about plantations, stories that introduce commercial questions. They want love, and money, and murder, and if that sounds poor stuff, think of Shakespeare and Scott! (Ltr., 28 June 1930; emphasis hers).

Grimshaw's "pact" with her readers ("[O]ne may owe the entire debt of one's personal comfort and happiness [to them]; it is better to take trouble when trouble is necessary, and give the world what, on the whole, it wants" (Lett, 5]) is consistent from at least 1898:

I do not find fault with the 'realistic' novel for its indecency, nor for its depressingly sordid atmosphere....One can conceive of a great work of art that might possess both faults; indeed, the entire writings of Fielding [and] Smollett...are tarred with the brush of unnecessary nastiness, and Tolstoi is relentlessly grey. But such blemishes must be excused by great virtues; they are by no means their own excuse....

If a book have no real healthy humanity in it, decent or the reverse, no 'eternal verity' (the phrase is trite, but has never yet been bettered), above all, no love of human kind,

it will die, and speedily....George Eliot was gloomy and grey enough at times to satisfy the most unreally realistic of modern scribblers, but she loved her kind, and so did all the masters of fiction from Euripides down to Charles Reade. None of them sat apart upon a pinnacle, and serenely snap-shotted the fainting wayfarer below with a detective camera; none of them bathed their dainty hands in the blood and sweat of agonising humanity, to hold up their finger-tips afterwards...and cry--'How nasty!' It was, 'You and I, my brothers...[Y]ou and I, the miserable sinful souls who are walking side by side on a rough and dreary road-- how hard we find it, and how often we slip and fall! I, who am no better than any of you, have a little cunning with the hand, a little trick of the pencil; and I exercise it so far as I can, to show you your own likenesses, and to preserve your features for those than come after.' So it comes about that, when a generation has passed away, the faithful paintings of those who lived and loved hang on the wall of Time's great gallery of thought for ever; while the incisive sketches of those who merely copied, are lying in the lumber-room of forgetfulness (unsigned rev. of several Bodley Head books, *Social Review* 1898: 513).

Nonetheless, while Grimshaw proclaimed her common humanity and sympathy with her readers, she did withdraw to write.

Interviewers frequently stressed her longing, like Rothery and White Savage Simon's, for "privacy and peace above everything" (*WSS* 107). The poet and his "savage" companion (a descendant of the archetypal "green man" of romance) share a house in Port Moresby that is a virtual description of Grimshaw's own first dwelling there:

An old carpenter, some years before, had amused himself by linking three long war-canoes together, coppering them, and building the oddest and pleasantest of homes on top. There was only a single room, but the little

verandahs at bow and stern kept the place cool in the hottest weather, and the ease with which this novel house-boat could be towed from place to place made it particularly attractive to folk...like the poet and myself...(WSS 107).

A late fictional avatar/self-portrait, "Mary Greene" (*Murder in Paradise*) is a "cold-natured woman, contentedly unwedded, [who], like many others of her kind, sublimated her affections into an almost excessive delight in natural beauty" (164). Although Simon dates from 20 years before, his character is similar: "My love is the Earth, and I shall never fail her, nor will she fail me" (33).

Thomas McMahon described Grimshaw's Samarai home as "right on the edge, without actually leaning over it, of the end of a high spur"--one way to minimise the number of callers, and in fact Grimshaw was away when he visited!

The female heroes of a number of Grimshaw's romances-- characterised as Oreads or Dryads--stumble into Paradise via shipwreck, heartbreak, attempted suicide (whatever formulaic conventions stipulate) only to make the subversive discovery that they are quite happy by themselves; that is, *without men*. After seeming abandonment by her lover and attempted suicide, the castaway Dara of *My South Sea Sweetheart* washes up on an island which "seemed to [her] most lovely":

I liked the way the forest ran right down to the strand...[W]hen you stood in one of these

enclosed green glades, with dark forest to left and right, and sea and white, white sand before you, you felt as if you had found the lost Garden of Eden, and as if you were Eve, with no serpent and no Adam and no Fall.

And you did not want Adam--even if you were, as I was--a girl who had lost her lover but two days before. There is much more than meets the eye in the old Diana myth.... You will note that the satyrs and the fauns wanted drink and love-making, even in their forests; not so the followers of the silver crescent, or the maids of forest and hill. I don't know what there is in a girl that so loves the empty woods, the lonely seas, without thought of anything or anyone beyond. But I know that, whatever it is, it exists (109-10)⁴

Grimshaw significantly admitted to Turnbull, "I have always been much taken, personally, by the strange places where one finds deserted palaces or great houses; Banda with its empty marble halls; that place of the Jardines over on the Cape York mainland; a Tongan island where there is a king's palace that was never used. These places are humming with untold tales" (Ltr. 11 July 1930). Untold no longer, one may add, for *Conn of the Coral Seas, My South Sea Sweetheart*, and innumerable Grimshaw short stories are situated in secret places like these.

Such houses, however--as well as the caves and tree houses that are Simon's and others' hiding places and retreats, usually located right "at the edge of the world"--can take on an ominous quality in the various stories where "a lodge in the wilderness" or "a house in the clearing" have become refuges from civilisation itself, hide-outs of madmen or outlaws who have gone *beyond* Thoreau's margin to evade punishment.

One aspect of Grimshaw's "image of the artist" was that of an intrepid denizen of far-away places, as independent as one of her more *risquée* heroines, Jinny Treacher in *Black Sheep's Gold*: "[S]he danced, marched, moved, to music of her own; ruled her days--so far as they were ruled--by laws not made of man" 27). But Grimshaw seemed also to have realised that a public image of self-sufficiency, especially when practised by a single woman, can be interpreted as eccentricity. Thus, while wishing to stress her *singularity*, she had no desire to be patronised and type-cast as "odd", as so many colonial women travellers had been.⁵ A single, "professional woman" (a term with connotations of prostitution)--let alone an "adventuress"--in the colonies was almost inevitably regarded as anomalous, as the anthropologists Margaret Mead and Hortense Powdermaker soon discovered. In successful mid-career, Grimshaw negotiated the tensions of continuing to be single, practising her career, and remaining "feminine". Only in later life did the negative implications--being regarded as dotty, frightening, suspect, a pariah--attach themselves to her reclusive life-style. Her last years were very lonely, perhaps the only true exile this incorrigible wanderer ever endured.

Grimshaw's "ideal biographical legend", then, emphasised the special qualities of her vocation, just as so many artists' biographies had done before. But how was her biographical legend constructed?

Tomasevskij, we have seen, concluded that "What the literary historian really needs is the biographical legend created by the author himself. Only such a legend is a *literary fact*" (55). As far as her own image was concerned, it is probably no accident that very few snapshots of Grimshaw exist, whereas a number of posed and signed studio portraits do.⁶ Similarly, while there is a dearth of private records, there is a plethora of interviews. These usually coincided with a round-the-world tour, itself often coinciding with a visit to Grimshaw's British and American publishers and public, tying-in with the release of a new book. To supplement my preceding rather sober bio-bibliographical account of Grimshaw, below is a sketch of her personality as she *chose* to reveal (and conceal) it. An author deliberately constructing such a legend seeks to establish a readily recognisable niche for herself and her work: a kind of fictionalised, mass-scale c.v. The rest of this thesis, therefore, grapples with the disjunction between what she wanted her readers to believe and what we want to know.

I believe most people do imagine me to be a wild woman brandishing an axe and cursing and singing. (Grimshaw qtd. by Sandery, "Red Gods" 6)

To take interviews and brief first-person accounts first, it should be noted that they originally appeared in a variety of contexts: publishers' introductions to serialisations (sometimes in important, attention-getting Christmas numbers), women's magazines, Sunday papers, and, as Grimshaw's writing became more acknowledged and professional, biographical compendia such as

the British and Australian *Who's Who?*, the *Dictionary of Australian Authors*, and *Dictionary of Catholic Authors*. Many press cuttings were collected by the Australian Department of External Affairs (later, the Department of Home and Territories) which was monitoring the impressions Grimshaw gave of Papua--a showpiece territory--to the outer world. Thus variations in tone, channel and intention are homogenised if one first encounters a press clipping in an official file rather than its original context. Nonetheless, a recognisable image of Grimshaw over the years can be discerned.

What are the characteristics of this image or legend? A gradation from sensationalism to an almost funereal respectability appears, although this only represents changes in emphasis: Grimshaw never presented herself as anything other than respectable. The picture that emerges from the *Daily News and Leader's* "Woman among the Alligators" (the introduction to the serialisation of *Guinea Gold* in 1912)⁷ is of a cheerful, self-sufficient woman alone on a remote Pacific island with a tent, typewriter, tea-kettle and mirror--both the writer and the woman are accentuated. Grimshaw herself, in an early account of this first Pacific voyage for the weekly cycling journal she had worked for in Dublin for eight years, stresses two themes that later predominated in both her own writing and the writings of others about her: her compulsion to wander in strange places, and the consequent novelty of her adventures.

They say that if one sleeps as a child on a pillow in which there is a single sea-bird's feather one will assuredly grow up like the gulls and the fulmars--wandering, loving the sea, loving the strange countries....There must have been a whole handful of sea-bird's feathers in my nursery pillow, for I have always wandered, and the call of the strange lands is never still for me....

If I were to tell all the adventures I have had I should certainly be labelled a second de Rougemont....[H]ere in quiet Ireland I can hardly believe some of my own recollections... ("Adventures in the South Seas" 1906, n.p.g.).

The personality projected in interviews between 1910 and 1921 is of a practical, even courageous traveller who possesses considerable feminine charm but voices a guarded "feminism". This was the period when Grimshaw first visited Papua and left after a few months' stay, only to return to live there for decades. 1921 was the time of a triumphant visit to England in mid-career.

Typical references to Grimshaw during the early period were "the capacity for fear has been left out of Miss Grimshaw's composition" (*Lady's Realm* Nov. 1913, 8); "Poor guileless Papuan belle--even for her marriage has its disillusionment" was a comment of Grimshaw's in an interview entitled "In Darkest Papua: White Girl's Adventures among the Cannibals" (*The Sun* [Sydney] Nov. 1910).

The legend gathers intensity in 1921-22, when headlines and captions stress that the single ("Miss"), but hardly spinsterish, author has expanded into "novelist, planter,

bushwoman, economist and traveller" ("Sunday Sun", Sydney, Nov. 1921). Her own accounts are, usually, professional and somewhat impersonal:

Nowadays...there is nothing I like so much as a quiet home in the Papuan forests, with my own labourers at work clearing and gardening, and myself looking after my own house. I do a great deal of cooking, as I am fond of it, and sometimes, when the mysterious calls, I get carriers, tent and stores, and go away, for some weeks over 'the edge of the world' (C.O.S., "Where the Red Gods Call" 96)

It gives one a novel sense, this writing to order, but I have a wide field for material....(B)eing a 'popular' novelist of course keeps me busy. I find that I can make all the time I need to keep up with the pleasurable arbitrary demands of my publishers. And I still say the tropics offer the novelist all the material that he or she can ever need, for him written down, though it becomes fiction, it is still truth--the only medium that will serve with writers who take their craft quite seriously ("Sunday Sun" Nov. 1921, 17).

But one senses that an "Irish" love for a good story could overcome her self-protectiveness, as when "The Times" recounted her behaviour when once threatened by one of her Papuan labourers: "She struck up his arm with a knife and, rushing into the house, secured her revolver, the sight of which calmed the native. That they have not tried to eat her she attributed to the fact that they have no quarrel with her" ("LAND OF CANNIBALS./A WOMAN NOVELIST IN NEW GUINEA". "The Times" 6 May 1922, 18c). And a notable lapse of taste appeared in a series of articles ("My Life among South Sea Cannibals") for Northcliffe's

story-mongering *Evening News*. To an audience of several millions Grimshaw broadcast a mysterious "romance in eleven lines" (this at the age of 50) with a sometime government tax collector and miner, William Little.

Little was less romantically described by the anthropologist Malinowski (*A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term* 183) as "the governor's pimp"--a rather caustic version of an enduring, triangular friendship among Grimshaw, Little and Murray, who was not above favouring his friends with government posts, perks or stipends.⁷ Lewis Lett and Grimshaw were also among his beneficiaries, and resented by others who found their post delayed or horses missing because Grimshaw had commandeered government transport.

In any event, Little died of an undiagnosed tropical ailment on the eve of his putative wedding, and was thus in no position to confirm or deny this part of the legend. The story mushroomed and, one assumes, became increasingly useful over the years, validating Grimshaw's "femininity" while allowing her to remain single. *This* legend, true or not, could hardly hinder Grimshaw's reputation as a writer of popular romance. Like other folk-tales, it became altered in the telling and retelling; in one variant Little is an officer in India killed by a fall from a horse, and I heard other versions as late as 1978 in Bathurst. This is Grimshaw's original version:

The miners...were a strange, hard, lonely race of men, who ran surprising risks without apparently being aware of the fact, and who became in the end utterly callous to death or danger. To myself they were always most courteous and kind and the soul of hospitality. All classes were represented among them, and many nations, Australians predominating.

They were, and are, perhaps the bravest class of men in the world. I have reason to know, for only the death that ever 'stalks at noonday' throughout the wonderful, heart-holding hand of Papua, and carries away her very best and bravest, prevented me from joining those mining camps for life as the wife of the finest man and most daring miner-explorer Papua has ever known, the late 'Billy' Little. Papua is still my country, and will be to the end ("In a South Sea Goldrush" 17 May 1922, n.p.g.).

A photo of Little, "a great New Guinea explorer", accompanied this revelation. It was Grimshaw who raised enough money by public subscription to provide Little's handsome headstone which is still in the Port Moresby cemetery, dilapidated. Whatever the relationship between Little and Grimshaw, he provided her with a prototype for several of her most attractive male characters-- Mark Plummer of *The Sands of Oro* and Ben Slade of *Nobody's Island*--who, in a fascinating inversion of the land-as-woman motif so emblematic in colonial fiction, are adored by women because they seem to incarnate the sensuous appeal of the landscape. Thus Edith muses, as she watches her husband Slade superintending a cooking fire out-of-doors:

He was more than ever the son of Earth to-night, skin burned as brown as the trunks of the forest trees, hair and beard grown furry as brown moss, eyes brown-yellow like the eyes

of beasts and birds. He was handsome, as always, and, as always, seemed not to know, or if he knew, not to care. Edith, who knew every line of her own beauty, ...was always impressed by this unconsciousness of her 'brown man's.' It seemed, now, almost as if a piece of the landscape had got up and sat itself down beside her (202).

Several papers, preferring Gothic horror to romantic tragedy, relished cannibal tales.

The daily press greeted Miss Grimshaw's arrival...with typical newspaper enthusiasm: had she not actually lived, moved, and had her being in the neighbourhood of genuine cannibals...? Cinema stars and even professional boxers had to take a back seat for the moment. It was handsomely admitted that she had written some stories, but cannibals, my dear friend, cannibals! ... Every drawing-room in London would have opened its doors to her, and if she had chosen to appear in a (discreet) native costume, with perhaps a piece of raw meat in her hand to enhance the effect, why, so much the better (Grierson, "Beatrice Grimshaw" 123).

The *Adelaide Register* (4 July 1922) reprinted some of the highlights of Grimshaw's alleged statements: "AMONG CANNIBALS. MISS GRIMSHAW'S STORY. WHERE HUSBANDS EAT THEIR WIVES. 'NOT AN EXPLORER.' CANNIBALISM RAMPANT. TORTURED PRISONERS. TEN THOUSAND IN UNKNOWN VALLEY. UNHAPPY WOMEN".

The Australian Prime Minister demanded an explanation. The Government Secretary in Port Moresby (H. Leonard Murray, Hubert Murray's step-brother's son and a person friendlier to Grimshaw than some earlier officials), replied enclosing a personal

letter from Grimshaw. It was rather naive extenuation from a professional journalist of nearly three decades' standing.

I hope the new articles, one for the "London" [? illegible in original] and one for the *Wide World*, added to the lecture for the Royal Colonial Institute, will correct the impressions in some degree; but I cannot say how troubled I have been, to be made the actual means of deprecating your government. It is true that, acting on the entreaty of my agent, I saw all of these interviewers at first, and gave them answers to their questions about 'Savages' and 'Cannibals' (also giving them other matter which was not used). It is also true that this sensationalism...resulted in the putting up of the prices for my work. But I have had enough of it; it is selling one's self-respect, and nothing now would make me lecture as they have asked, all over America, on the cannibals and all the rest of that nonsense. I suppose I should make a lot of money--they mention thousands made by other people--but I do not care what I should make... (Ltr. to Papuan Administration, 1922).

Occasional references to 'breakdowns in health' and mysterious fevers occur, although these, suffered by someone resident in a tropical and under-developed country like Papua, may or may not be biographically significant. Thirty years later Grimshaw did die of what seems to have been a diabetic coma, and sad stories survive in Bathurst of venomous behaviour, especially with reference to other women, in her extreme old age. Possibly, too, as anyone who has lived in New Guinea can attest, malaria with its attendant depressions caught up with her from time to time. Most accounts, however, emphasized Grimshaw's preferred image of physical stamina and courage: her love for swimming and diving and her ready hand at the revolver should a Papuan labourer

disobey or threaten her.

In retirement and seclusion (post-1936), the legend acquired a religiosity personally but not so publicly expressed before: "In all my travels, young and old, the Church has always been my shield and safeguard, and my greatest happiness" (Grimshaw, in *Catholic Authors* 294). Moreover, "As a Catholic, I am glad to say that I have been able to make a literary success without using the easy lures of sensual plot and coarse treatment". Her origins in a "well-known Northern Ireland family...largely instrumental in starting the spinning and weaving industries of Belfast...[and] noted for their philanthropic treatment of their workers in a day when such treatment was almost unknown" (293) were stressed, perhaps again functionally--that is, once more to lay claim to "superior" social status.

The significance of Grimshaw's conversion to Catholicism is discussed in "Coming of Age in 'Bigotsborough'"; here I wish simply to note that Grimshaw, by invoking her family's history in this way (especially that of her more remote ancestors), was behaving in a typically late-Victorian manner also exhibited by Darwin, Butler, and Henry Adams among many others: "[D]isruptive social and intellectual changes of the...nineteenth century could heighten the appeal of family solidarity..., especially as variants on Darwinism added to the meaning of such concepts as family identity, heredity, and inheritance" (Mintz, 172). Suggestively, it was often the renegades of "the family" who came to legitimate themselves in this way; contradictory as it

may appear, this tactic was one way of acquiring or keeping status while escaping from family responsibilities.

But a picture is worth a thousand words, and the ideal biographical legend is rich in stereotyped and posed photographs and drawings. Roland Barthes, in "Election Photography", describes how photographs function ideologically by their very suppression of language.

Insofar as photography elides language and condenses an entire "ineffable" social realm, it is an anti-intellectual means, tending to conjure away "political" issues (a body of problems and solutions) in favour of a "way of being," a social and ethical status.... Photographic conventions are, moreover, full of signs. The facial pose accentuates the realism of the candidate, above all if he is wearing scrutinising spectacles. Everything expresses penetration, seriousness, frankness: the future deputy will take care of any enemy, obstacle, "problem." The three-quarter pose, occurring more frequently, suggests a tyrannical idealism: the person's gaze becomes nobly lost in the future; it doesn't confront anything, it simply dominates.... Almost all three-quarter poses are in the ascendant, the face lifted towards a supernatural light...and the candidate attains an Olympus of elevated sentiments, where any political contradiction is completely resolved.... (free translation of "Photogénie électorale", *Mythologies* 161-62).⁸

Again, as with the print media quoted above, the original context can be as important as the image itself. Some of the photographs of Grimshaw are frontispieces, a few illustrate travel narratives, most accompany interviews, and *all* are masks, roles, and guises. The importance of context can be judged by

its absence. The photographs of Grimshaw in the Mitchell Library's picture file, for instance, may have been intended to illustrate a biographical dictionary of Australian authors. But since there are no captions, and no indication of an implied audience, connotations are absent.

Before focusing on the most startling and striking photographs, some common features over the years should be described. The usefulness of such photos (for *authenticating* experience rather than replicating it, for of course no photograph is a bland, objective "copy") can hardly be over-stated for an author whose reputation depended on her tales' being "founded on fact". Barthes suggests in "Rhetoric of the Image" that photographs present the viewer not so much with supposedly unimpeachable documentation, as with a revolutionary conception of *narrative time*:

The type of consciousness the photograph involves is indeed truly unprecedented, since it establishes, not a consciousness of the *being-there* of the thing (which any copy could provoke) but an awareness of its *having-been-there*. What we have is a new space-time category: spatial immediacy and temporal anteriority, the photograph being an illogical conjunction between the *here-now* and the *there-then* (*Image/Music/Text* 44).

Intellect and femininity, independence and professionalism, are frequently stressed. Grimshaw is usually alone, dressed in either black or white throughout her career, almost always confronting the spectator or occasionally staring into a remote

distance through glasses magnifying her eyes and suggesting both far-sightedness and second-sight. While books and typewriters signify her access to knowledge as well as her craft, ever-present jewels, elaborate white gowns (implying virginal integrity and purity), roses and other flowers and mantillas suggest a touch of the exotic while assuring us of her essential, respectable womanliness. The symbolism of the colour red--conspicuous by its absence in her own apparel and decor--is allotted to her fictive anti-selves and other selves, her "shadows" in Jungian terms: heroes with more than a touch of the out-law, illegitimate or *déclassé* in them.

A closer look at several categories of photographs from after her first stay in Papua or depicting "the author at home" in mid- or late career reveal the legend at its most full-blown. In 1910 the *Sun* [Sydney] and in 1911 the *Telegraph* [also Sydney] published glamorous, full-length photographs of a white-clad, ballroom-dressed figure. Attractive in themselves, their effects are enhanced and controlled by manipulative framing devices and directive captions. The unassuming *débutante*-like figure in the *Sun* (Grimshaw was 40 when the article appeared, but there is no indication of her age in the photograph or article) is surrounded by cartoons of cannibals licking their chops, stirring a steaming cooking pot and using human skulls as footstools, thus assimilating Papuans to stereotypes of grotesquerie and barbarism while counterposing these to the female hero's vulnerability *and* impregnability. Her imperiousness is contrasted with their risible, negro-minstrel appearance.

"'Vice-Royalty' at Government House" shows Grimshaw, again attired as if for a court presentation, seated outside at the vice-regal lawn in Port Moresby. She is the only woman with two white men (one of them the Lieutenant-Governor) and eight Papuan policemen and attendants. Although her status seems obvious, it is not: for she was not the Lieutenant-Governor's wife (he had one, but she was estranged and lived elsewhere) and had no official position in the colonial administration, for which she had been working on a one-time, free-lance basis. One former Anglo-Papuan resident told researcher Hank Nelson that Grimshaw would have made a better vice-reine than either of the women that Hubert Murray married, but their friendship, as I view it, depended on maintaining their own separateness.

Signed studio portraits can be particularly significant, especially if the subject could choose her backdrop and thus elaborate a phantasy. In one of them Grimshaw is aristocratic, if not regal--tiara, train and fan all symbolise this--and her small foot (always, in her stories, a sign of fine breeding), perched on a dead leopard's head, announces what later illustrations also seek to convey: this white-clad white woman, usually alone but, if accompanied, only by senior colonial officials, is undaunted by savages, bestial leers, threats, force and nakedness, towering over and dominating every incident. Lady Victoria Jenkyns, one of Vaiti's foils in Grimshaw's fiction, knows the value of a Lafayette photo: if she gets eaten by New Hebrideans, one of her last requests is for a Lafayette photo to be included with her obituary! (*Vaiti of the*

Islands 251). Her creator was equally aware of the importance of a signed and posed photograph: a Lafayette photo of Grimshaw accompanies a *Daily Graphic* item about her.

The "interiors", finally, hammer the message that this woman can domesticate savagery and bring it all back home. She is surrounded by trophies and (implied) tributes: weapons, skins, tapa cloth, batik, shells, cane, male servants in uniform (surprisingly, since regulations forbade Papuans to wear clothing above the waist) and "idols". Apparently, according to Lett (8), Grimshaw only spared *one* of her "preserved human heads" for the British Museum! Like the remote and lovely Irish country estate she had to relinquish so early, her Papuan dwellings are also presented as imposing and nearly inaccessible: at the top of precarious steps on a high island or looking out onto precipices, waterfalls, rapids, gorges and ravines. Normality is still evident--a certain coziness is signified by framed family photos and a complete set of Dickens in cane book shelves--but the exoticism conveyed by the curios is the dominant impression.

But the overwhelming message is that this woman *herself* cannot really be domesticated, confined to a house or the "domestic duties" of a wife. *Isles of Adventure* has a chapter about Grimshaw's "dream houses", most of which she designed herself, usually with materials "immediately procurable from the bush" (208). This interface between nature and culture also conveys Grimshaw's psychological need for "the open door into [the]

'outback....The outdoor life is the typical life; to use an Irishism, it extends to indoor life as well..." (24-25). Grimshaw was indeed what is called "bush-happy": she could be comfortable in a tent, taking refuge for the night in a prison cell, or sleeping on the bottom boards of a rowboat. One of "G.'s" funniest early pieces ("The Drawing Room of My Wife," *Social Review* Aug. 1897: 177-79) is a pointed rejection of the bourgeois lifestyle she had known as a child, as well as of the "select hotels" where she, a single middle-class woman, had to lodge in Dublin.

I sat there with my hat on my head, and my dusty boots firmly planted on the carpet, and surveyed the room, trying to regard it as an impartial stranger from Mars or the moon might have done, as considering it...in the light of a possible residence for a human being....I don't often come into the drawing-room; therefore, following one of those natural instincts...that lie so close underneath our shallow veneer of civilisation, I look heedfully around for landmarks, so that there may be no difficulty in finding my way out again....I think to myself, as I sit there gazing upon the wreck of a sensible home, the holocaust of household common sense, that there is a suggestive amount of (feminine) human nature about most of these irrelevant 'frills.'....I might ask the use of brackets that hold something no one uses or wants, and the common sense of putting a score of photographs representing people one rather dislikes than otherwise, in an expensive brocade screen that is meant to keep off the fire, and would be hopelessly faded by anything like close proximity to heat....I might, I say...No, not at all, I have only just come in, my dear; I was wondering where you were.

If in *Isles of Adventure* Grimshaw claimed rather speciously that she would be at ease living in a prison cell, any form of enclosure or restriction of mobility was anathema to her. Houses are one of Grimshaw's most emblematic indices of their owners' character, fully as much as such traditional devices as characters examining themselves in a mirror or a detailed description by an implied narrator.

Thus the "ideal biographical legend". As Miles Franklin remarked in a chapter heading of *My Career Goes Bung*, "IT WAS ALL REAL, BUT WAS IT TRUE?" What has been obscured, omitted, or conveniently 'forgotten'?

Because I have quoted only sources originating with or licensed by Grimshaw herself, I have obviously omitted much biographical material which will presently become essential. The moment verification enters the picture, the legend's contradictions, conflicts, and concealments will become obvious also.

But there is another character difficult to identify because it is deliberately evasive. This is the first-person narrator of *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* and *In the Strange South Seas*. This "I" is a linguistic fabrication which aims to give little away, but which nonetheless does. It would be naive to equate the narrative first person with a transparent or spontaneous autobiographical personality; but the first person in both books does have a crucial literary-biographical influence outweighing their original purpose as commissioned, but artfully disguised,

settlement and investment propaganda. The fact that, also in 1907, Grimshaw published her first novel in nine years, *Vaiti of the Islands*, and that the three books are all based on the same voyages and encounters, suggest that the writer (not just the journalist and propagandist) in Grimshaw was beginning to find her voice, a story to tell and retell, and the appropriate genres to encompass and inform these. The *persona* is annoyingly reticent about herself: as one contemporary reviewer noted, *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* whisks the fellow traveller (that is, the reader) from London to Fiji in three pages, but there is no indication why Grimshaw was going there.

The implied author is nonetheless so garrulous about obsessively repeated themes and motifs that one senses a crystallising of meaning and direction. At last, one might add, for this writer had over 15 years of prolific, promising false starts behind her. The fascination of the Pacific non-fiction is that the voice still stammers, the pattern of the story crying to be told is discernible but not completely visible. Taken together, the two books could be termed "pre-generic". I shall decode them rather than reading them as a historian would (relating events in the books to politics in the Pacific at that time, such as the vexed New Hebrides "question" following the "secret" Anglo-French convention of 1906 and the 1907 London Imperial conference where the British government rejected the principle of imperial reciprocity). Nor am I interested in conventional biography, retracing every footstep of the subject (which, in this case, would cover half the globe and innumerable island

groups). Rather, I shall reread *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* and *In the Strange South Seas* for the information they yield about a writer in quest of her vocation.

Paradise, and groves
Elysian, Fortunate Fields--like those of old
Sought in the Atlantic Main--why should they be
A history only of departed things,
Or a mere fiction of what never was?
(Wordsworth, quoted by Frye, *Fables* 35)

So, like the fairy tales, 'it all came true,' and one bright winter afternoon a Cunard liner bore me away....There were thousands of people on the quay...for it was Saturday afternoon....They had a few hours of freedom before them--then, the airless office room, the stuffy shop, the ledger and the copying-press, and the clattering typewriter, the grim window giving on the dark, wet street, for six long days again. Next year, and the year after, just the office, the frowsy lodging, the tram car, the pen in the strong young fingers, the desk to stoop the broad young shoulders, the life foreseen, eventless, grey for ever and for ever. And I was going round the world (Grimshaw, *In the Strange South Seas* 5).

Notes

¹ The interview itself was evolving at the very time when Grimshaw was serving her apprenticeship in journalism. It branched into many forms, from lengthy, familiar, purportedly "at home" discussions to interviews by correspondence and breathless answers shouted to questions at the quay-side. In her *Social Review* and *Irish Cyclist* days, Grimshaw conducted or sub-edited a number of interviews, e.g., with Mrs. Byers of Victoria College, Belfast, and Harvey du Cros (the Dunlop Tyre magnate). She could hardly have been better trained to manipulate interviewers when she herself later became the subject.

² Other officially-sanctioned portraits appear in her work: Sir Everard im Thurn in *From Fiji to the Cannibal*

Islands, the Administrator of Norfolk Island and his wife in the same book, and a New Zealand official in her series for the *Daily Graphic*. These can have the unfortunate effect of strengthening the impression that Grimshaw's achievement were a parasitic growth on those of others, particularly of "great men". In some cases the association was just the opposite: Grimshaw's writing made the officials concerned *appear* great.

³ The themes of *legitimacy* (often inherited, but also acquired through exceptional talent) and *entitlement* to superior status (the romantic convention of losing and regaining one's birthright) haunt Grimshaw's fiction, which is littered with various kinds of pedigrees (several heroes are descendants of kings, but illegitimate, like Harry England in *My South Sea Sweetheart* and Conn in *Conn of the Coral Seas*), castles, mottoes (including the most imperial of all, "What I have, I hold" in *Vaiti of the Islands* 126), royal standards, epitaphs referring to aristocratic "race", and, again in *Vaiti of the Islands*, the legitimating importance of ship's papers (98).

⁴ Cf. Robert Louis Stevenson:

[A]fter a well-married couple, there is nothing so beautiful in the world as the myth of the divine huntress....[T]here is this about some women...that they suffice themselves, and can walk in a high and cold zone without the countenance of any trousered being....There is nothing so engaging as the spectacle of self-sufficiency. And when I think of the slim and lovely maidens, running the woods all night to the note of Diana's horn; moving among the old oaks, as fancy-free as they; things of the forest and the starlight, not touched by the commotion of man's hot and turbid life--although there are plenty other ideals that I should prefer--I find my heart beat at the thought of this one. 'Tis to fail in life, but to fail with such a grace! That is not lost which is not regretted (*The Pocket R.L.S.* 1925, 161-62).

⁵ In many cases, one feels that, with the biographers they got, such women hardly needed enemies. Thus Olwen Campbell describes his "anomalous" subject, *Mary Kingsley, a Victorian in the Jungle*: "We may feel for a moment as the countryman did who saw his first giraffe at the zoo and remarked, 'Them things don't exist'. A deeply-felt cultural bias is at work here: to be a spinster, according to this folk-reasoning, is by definition to be eccentric, and only an eccentric woman would be a spinster. These women are automatically viewed as occupying a social periphery, so there is nothing they can do to be truly "acceptable".

⁶ I have located *no* childhood photographs, and only one snapshot (itself obviously posed) of Grimshaw (in the Ohne Hast cycling club photograph album). The earliest photograph that can be attributed is already a professional image: Grimshaw in her early 20's, a Dublin journalist and "career woman".

⁷ For an obituary concerning Little, see the *Papuan Courier* [Pt Moresby], 29 Oct. 1920. The contributed "appreciation" in the adjoining column sounds very like Grimshaw. Malinowski also provides a graphic description of the probable prototype of Rupert Dence in Grimshaw's *Guinea Gold*:

[The Honorable Richard De Moleyns, known as 'Dirty Dick' was the son of a Protestant Irish lord, a thoroughbred, noble figure. Drunk as a sponge, so long as there is any whiskey to be had. After sobering up...[he was] fairly reserved and cultured with strikingly good manners and very decent (39)...[He was] completely uncivilized--unshaven, always wearing pyjamas, live[d] in extraordinary filth--in a house without walls--three verandahs separated by screens--and he like[d] it. Much better than life at the Mission House. Better lubrication (40).

⁸ Barthes' original text reads as follows:

Dans la mesure où la photographie est ellipse du langage et condensation de tout un 'ineffable' social, elle constitue une arme anti-intellectuelle, tend à escamoter la 'politique' (c'est-à-dire un corps de problèmes et de solutions) au profit d'une 'manière d'être', d'un statut social-moral....

La convention photographique est d'ailleurs elle-même pleine de signes. La pose de face accentue le réalisme du candidat, surtout s'il est pourvu de lunettes scrutatrices. Tout y exprime la pénétration, la gravité, la franchise: le futur député fixe l'ennemi, l'obstacle, le 'problème.' La pose de trois quarts, plus fréquente, suggère la tyrannie d'un idéal: le regard se perd noblement dans l'avenir.... Presque tous les trois quarts sont ascensionnels, ...le candidat atteint à l'olympie des sentiments élevés, où toute contradiction politique est résolue... (*Mythologies* 161-62).

"Amazon Odyssey" ¹

Yes, one may safely tell it all, for most of what one says will not be believed--are not travellers proverbial fiction-mongers...? (Grimshaw, *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* 351).

In "Beatrice Grimshaw" Eugenie and Hugh Laracy summarise Grimshaw's early Pacific career as propaganda for commercial and settler interests. In her non-fiction, indeed, Grimshaw could speak with many tongues. She could be the voice of church, state and business; a "capitalist hireling", self-styled "unofficial publicity officer", mouthpiece, echo, recorder, "roving commissioner", teller of tales... ² The Laracys quote from *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* and *In the Strange South Seas* as if the books had *only* "two clear-cut objectives" 161; emphasis mine).

The first was to entertain and divert armchair travellers. The second was to promote European enterprise: tourism in Polynesia and settlement in Melanesia. Underlying these, however, is another theme, a racialist one....Her attitudes towards the islanders, ranging from patronizing to disgusted, was one the present age would damn, but which a school of thought fashionable earlier in the century rationalized in terms of...'social Darwinism' (161).

In short, Grimshaw's work is, as usual, being used as ideological evidence, and there is some justification for doing so, since it exercised considerable influence. These two books

cannot be so easily amalgamated, however. In modulation (hence in implied and/or actual readership) these books differ considerably. Grimshaw herself seems to have recognised some fundamental division when regathering and recombining her material. FROM FIJI TO THE CANNIBAL ISLANDS and IN THE STRANGE SOUTH SEAS are the result of the same journey (the two books being first published in January and October of 1907 respectively). But she published them in reverse order; FROM FIJI TO THE CANNIBAL ISLANDS records and re-orders material from the second half of her trip. (From now onwards I shall refer to these texts as FCI and SSS.)

The two books differ markedly in tone, purpose and attitude. If one examines the portrayals of race relations, for instance, the depiction of Pacific Islanders is far more benign in SSS (although relying on evolutionary theory to account for social divisions and hierarchy) than it would be for a long time in Grimshaw's work again. The reasons for this discrepancy are readily understandable once one knows each book's publishing history, however; each is an elaboration of articles originally commissioned for different purposes.

Grimshaw's first Pacific years (1904-1907), in addition to the three books published in 1907, saw the production of nearly 30 articles: these included a nine-part series in the "Daily Graphic" (Jan. 1905) and a nine-part series about the New Hebrides in the "Sydney Morning Herald" (from 25 Nov. 1905 to 3 Mar. 1905). VAITI OF THE ISLANDS was serialised in both PEARSON'S MAGAZINE and the

Sydney Morning Herald (2 June 1906-28 July 1906).³

Yet Grimshaw probably wrote even more than this at this time. A sequel to the first Vaiti stories, *Queen Vaiti*, was serialised at this time, but was not released in book form until 1908, when *Pearson's* published it; and not till 1920 in Australia when the New South Wales Bookstall series issued it as a paperback. If one trusts internal evidence, many parts of *Conn of the Coral Seas* were probably written at this time as well (although the serialisation did not appear in the *Grand Magazine* until Oct. 1921--Apr. 1922), for certain passages hardly differ from the New Hebridean chapters of *FCI*.

In these three pivotal years, Grimshaw worked harder than ever at journalism and advertising, and never relinquished factual modes when they paid. But the creation of the regal half-caste Vaiti--loyal *but* willful daughter of a dissolute father, herself pirate, mariner, discoverer and loser of untold fortunes, witch, murderer, unbound by restrictions of gender--is more than a fictive projection or analogue of aspects of Grimshaw's own forceful personality. The picaresque narrative of Vaiti's adventures announces the release of a long-stifled preference for fiction which was soon to dominate Grimshaw's writing. A Pacific Islands tour that might have seemed to be a vacation in fact enabled Grimshaw to secure her *vocation*. It remains to explain how this came about, and to ask what categories and criteria are most useful, from literary-biographical and feminist viewpoints, for comprehending Grimshaw's Pacific

output.

Whenever referring to Grimshaw's "fiction" and "non-fiction", I have contended that a simple fiction/non-fiction dichotomy is not particularly useful for discussing Grimshaw's work. This is not only because her non-fiction fed so obviously into her fiction. Rather, a close reading of Grimshaw's most sober-seeming reportage reveals that many elements of what is presented as an eye-witness, "objective" account reads far more like a story. From the start of her Pacific writing she was producing not only entertaining travel narratives, or useful information for potential settlers, but working with styles and modes more usually associated with fiction. The first paragraph of her first *Daily Graphic* article hints at what was to come.

The very name of the South Seas reeks of *adventure* and *romance*. Every boy at school has dreams of coral islands and rakish schooners, sharks and pearls; most men retain a shame-faced fancy for stories of peril and adventure in that magical South Sea world, of whose charm and beauty everyone has heard, although very few are fortunate enough to see it with their own bodily eyes ("Gems of the Southern Seas", pt.1, Jan. 1905, n.p. Emphases mine).

By the time her first Pacific journey was over, Grimshaw had discovered not only adventure, romance, and Arcadias, but also, she thought, the very locations of hell on earth; Western Fiji and above all the island of Malekula in the New Hebrides. One result is that *FCI*, her most blatantly political work, is also one of the most horrific. Although the book was political in

intention, some of its most remarkable passages have less to do with political intrigue than with Grimshaw's later blend of tropical and Gothic romance.

Even if one idly turns the pages of *FCI* and *SSS* (or, for that matter, the later *New New Guinea*), it soon becomes apparent that they are neither the armchair travel nor the amateur ethnology where booksellers today classify them, misled by the books' bulk, gold lettering, and attractive "native" women portrayed on the covers. My own copy of *The New New Guinea* was purchased from a leading Dublin antiquarian bookseller unaware that Grimshaw had been "Irish". The text had been taken apart by previous owners (to decorate their house with its many photographs, the bookseller suggested) and then carefully reassembled. But it was no longer the "same" book, since comments had also been scrawled in it. This may serve as an emblem of my method here, which will be to deconstruct the apparently compact unity of these books; to disentangle their threads of biographical significance, materialist factors, and fictive elements.

Moreover, before a body of inter-related but quite varied writings can be accurately evaluated, a literary historian must consider such factors as how style and attitude may have been shaped by the different "channels" in which the articles preceding and feeding into the books appeared; Grimshaw's own well-informed understanding of editorial policies; the socio-historical interests to which these books responded (indeed, by which they were commissioned); the place of Grimshaw's Pacific

work in a personal constellation of values which preceded and survived her Pacific themes; and her typically *female* appropriation of previously male-dominated and -defined forms. In short, I am using the formula for understanding communication first evolved by Harold Lasswell: Who? Says What? In Which Channel? In What Way? To Whom? I am also using Raymond Williams' addition to the model: With What Purpose? Yet none of these normally adequate criteria can capture the elusiveness of Grimshaw's style. "Who?" for instance, shifts in Grimshaw's "non-fiction" from context to context; a protean linguistic construct, it is sometimes male, sometimes female, sometimes a British Imperialist, sometimes Irish, sometimes beginning to sound Australian.

The captions and chapter headings reveal a rather unexpected amalgamation of romanticism and practicality, sometimes in one term. "An Imperial Wonderland" yokes politics and idyll. Thus "How It All Came True", "Days in Dreamland", "The Land of Tír-an-Oge", "The Fairy Islets" and a "Chance for Robinson Crusoe" co-exist in *SSS* with "Emigrating to the South Seas", "Servant Problem Again", "Food and Fruits of the Country", "The Lands That Lie Waste", "What about the Missionary?" and "All about Guano", the latter as down to earth as one can descend.

FCI similarly oscillates between, on the one hand, conventions of gothic romanticism ("Garden of the Swiss Family Robinson", "The City of a Dream", "The Fairy Fortress", "A Native Princess", "At the Back of Beyond", "The Mysterious Islands",

"The Unknown Country", "A Stronghold of Savagery", "The Bluebeard Chamber", and "Tale of Arcady") and, on the other hand, advice for settlers and investors: "How the Colony is Governed", "Trade of the Islands", "Where Are the Settlers?", "A Splendid Timber Country", "Truth about Tropical Forests", "On a Coffee Plantation", and "The Returned Labour Trouble".

Messages of two different orders are thus encapsulated: an Eden requiring little labour (by whites) can both yield profit *and* satisfy every childhood dream. As one reviewer aptly put it, Grimshaw's Utopias have a mint. The overarching purpose of both books *is* colonial propaganda (for different class interests in each, however). But both contain a core of realised dream or nightmare; a core which later becomes the source of Grimshaw's fictional worlds. The symbolism of gratification or appalled, almost literal loss of identity in the face of horror, suffuses the most mundane recital of facts.

Such paradoxes are only apparent, however, according to Henri Baudet (*Paradise on Earth* 1965). Such expressions should be understood as complex images, *typically* Western, attempting to unify the irreconcilable, like two harmonic progressions, with parallel but separate themes (emphasis mine).

Two relations, separate but indivisible, are always apparent in the European consciousness. One is in the realm of political life in its broadest sense...This...relationship...freely employs political, military, socio-economic and sometimes missionary terminology....The other relationship...is that of the

imagination, of all sorts of images of non-Western people and worlds...images derived not from observation, experience and perceptible reality but from a psychological urge. That urge creates its own realities which are totally different from the political realities of the first category. But they are in no way subordinate in either strength or clarity since they have always possessed that absolute reality value so characteristic of the rule of the myth (6).

The strands of myth and political reality that cross and recross are too closely interwoven ever to be disentangled. They represent...two separate truths, each of which claims an absolute right to sole supremacy...The myth covered the distant earthly paradises with a veil of enchantment through which they were seen as the home of the blessed and the elect, but they formed no hindrance to their intensive and ruthless economic exploitation (54).

If *FCI* and *SSS* belong to any genre then, it should be as inclusive and extensive as possible: something like "travel writing for the popular colonial press". But it is impossible, I believe, to assign them to any internally consistent category since they continually strain at such limitations. An approach via their combining of modes--romance, pastoral, Gothic, a wide range of imperative forms serving colonialist propaganda, and a specifically "literary-feminist" appropriation of these--is more fruitful.

Not only is there no hard and fast "fact"/fiction dichotomy in Grimshaw's first three Pacific books; the oscillation and vacillation among modes reflect Grimshaw's constant and increasing dilemma, typical of the contradiction described by Baudet. Her duties (to obtain information and disseminate

documentation) and her desires (to claim her new environment for fiction) were at odds. *All* of her South Seas writing--articles, non-fictional monographs, short stories, novels--is fabulous narrative (in the technical sense of story-telling) and ideological (since much of it is "untrue" and "inaccurate"--mostly by design rather than accident--although containing elements of "fact").⁴

Where, then, should generic or modal dividing lines be drawn? Not, I have intimated, in the obvious place--between separate works--but *within* them. Rather than regarding Grimshaw's first three Pacific works as discontinuous, it is more illuminating to watch traces of her preferred modes running like zig-zagging fault-lines through different works.

There are, of course, broad and general distinctions between the "travel books" and *Vaiti of the Islands* (and possibly, as I have suggested, *Conn*). But to say that *Vaiti* (herself modelled after Queen Emma and Queen Makea) is a fictional personage does not account for the fictive elements already present in the "documentary" works. Passages of these seem as contrived and constructed as Grimshaw's fictions, with their fabricated dialogues (between "natives"), "native oratorios", set-scenes, and many another of the story-teller's displacements, distortions and enchantments.

Because of the elements of fiction traversing and colouring these putative travelogues, they cannot be judged by standards

of accuracy or objectivity. A literary-critical understanding of forms, conventions and expectations is essential in order to read these books properly. Such an understanding enables readers to understand *why* seemingly exaggerated or discordant features appear, while other "data" seem strangely missing.

Like many other writers, Grimshaw's fiction was rarely inventive, nor was she very imaginative. It was almost always closely based on (if departing in some degree from) otherwise verifiable people and events. If there is a great deal of Queen Emma and Queen Makea in Vaiti, and, much later, in South Sea Sarah, for instance, Sir Hubert Murray obviously contributes to the colonial governor Stephen Hammond in *When the Red Gods Call* and Resident Drummond of the "New Cyclades"; Mac Pidgin, "biggest man and hardest case in Papua" ("The Woman in the Cage" 178) is a play on words for Papua's veteran miner, Matt Crowe. The slippage from Grimshaw's "It was once said, and that very truly..." in her reportage to the "Once upon a time..." of story is present in most of her narratives from very early on. Grimshaw also appears to have written fiction and non-fiction simultaneously, not successively. There is thus little use in regarding the "non-fiction" as pre-existent, raw, unmediated source material for her "fiction".

At one stage I thought of referring to Grimshaw's non-fiction as predominantly ideological work, hoping in that way to make a useful distinction from the fiction. But *all* of her work is ideological, in that it imposes, articulates, and represents a

world-view allied to specific social interests. Her romances as imperatively as anything else she wrote can be viewed as a means of social control, reinforcing the domestication and subordination of women in a process described by Joan Rockwell in *Fact and Fiction*: wringing or wresting consent to the status quo while allowing the indulgence of fantasy.

FCI was handsomely published and liberally advertised by its first publisher, Eveleigh Nash, who paid forty pounds advance on 15% royalties for British book rights. It went into an American edition in the same year, as well as Bell's Colonial Editions of Standard Works. A popular edition at about one shilling was published by Nelson in 1916, with rights for the United Kingdom, the British Islands, Colonies and Dependencies excluding Canada, and an advance for Grimshaw of 30 pounds. A school edition may also have been published, although I have located no copy of it. Nelson acquired the rights to publish one in 1918 for an outright fee of 30 pounds which was paid to Grimshaw on 3 October 1919. Perhaps the book's chauvinism had kept its appeal alive during World War I; the political interests it served may have led to its being deemed suitable as a set-book.

Later in the year *SSS* was published by Hutchinson, whose interest in colonial editions was so great that he travelled around the world three times himself and met "every" book-seller in the "Colonies" ("A Chat with Mr. G. Thompson Hutchinson", *Publishers' Circular* 1905, 51-52). It became a best-seller immediately, according to a list in the *Daily*

Chronicle ("Best-sellers" Oct. 1907, 3). By December 1911 the *Spectator* advertised it in a one shilling Net Library of Standard Copyright Books ("a new series of reprints of popular standard books...[with] clear type, on good paper, and tastefully bound in art cloth, with gilt top and photogravure frontispiece" 16 Dec. 1911: 1094). It was also issued in Nelson's "Popular Libraries for the Holidays. The Most Famous Books of Biography and Travel", now at one shilling (*Publishers' Circular* July 1911). Hutchinson then published a "cheaper edition" (i.e., omitting the photographs), also for one shilling. *SSS* was also published in an American edition by Lippincott, costing \$3.50 net.

FCI and *SSS* do have some common features, the most obvious being the themes for which they are criticised today; both are, to a limited extent, *about* Pacific Islanders, but not *for* them. Grimshaw (and many others) believed, at the time, that Polynesians and Melanesians were not only dying out but, unlikely as it seems, accepted their supersession by a "fitter" race. Even though Grimshaw dwelt briefly among the various Island communities she describes, she remained capable of ethnocentric statements of extraordinary insensitivity; e.g., the assertion (astonishing from someone who actually adored "singsings" and dancing, and never hesitated to desecrate an indigenous place of worship to carry off idols, if she could get away with it) that Polynesians lacked poetry. It is symptomatic, too, that Grimshaw so often compared Islanders to figures in a pantomime, who, of course are silent. Her advice to intending

travellers that they should "snapshot" "the" native, if at all possible, suggests that some Islanders, true to their traditional beliefs, didn't wish to be photographed at all.

But if both books tell us less about the Pacific Islands than they promise, they also tell us more about the author than she may have known. Both contain sustained ruminations on the possibilities of enlarging, if not necessarily deepening, individual identity south of "the Line". As for earlier Victorian woman travellers, a voyage out was also a voyage in: an introspective or at least mildly self-reflective journey.

Cross the Line, and now you may take the brush, and indulge your vagrant fancy to the full, for nothing that you can paint will be too bright or too strange....here anything may happen, for here the new and the wild and the untried countries lie, and here, moreover, you shall come upon unknown tracts and places in yourself on which, if you had stayed within sound of the roaring throat of Piccadilly, no sun had ever shone (*FCI* 2).

Later in this chapter I shall discuss to what extent *FCI* and *SSS* may be considered autobiographical narratives, and how they fit into the conventions of the quest motif in journey literature. But since Grimshaw did not intend these books to be read in that way, I shall first focus on materialist and aesthetic factors affecting both texts. For Grimshaw suppressed as much of herself as possible, writing as she was to serve propaganda, not to enlarge her personality as such. On several occasions she depicts herself *refusing* experiences that could lead to greater

self-actualisation and knowledge: she fled the terrifying volcano of Tanna and regretted it ever afterwards; she quailed before plumbing depths as a diver. It may have become clear to her only after her first voyage was over that she was, indeed, embarked on a quest for self and work.

FCI and *SSS* both lament "the poor art of the mere word-painter" (*FCI* 171) in a new world where sensory experience of an apparently different, certainly more intense order explodes former perceptions of taste, colour and light. (The New Hebridean who told Grimshaw that she could "hear 'um smoke", referring to a volcano, was unwittingly using one of her own aesthetic devices--"scrambling" normal sensory perception.) *SSS* is particularly rich in aesthetic ponderings, usually in connection with Grimshaw's predecessors in the literature of travel, with which work she was familiar, and against which she wished to situate herself. Its title recalls Stevenson's *In the South Seas*. But the addition of "strange", sometimes hardening into "savage", indicates that she never identified so closely with the Islanders as he did. ⁵

Stylistically, she took over wholesale Kipling's practise of parenthetical or italicised evocations and invocations.

*Cold rain on the miry road; faint gold sunset
fading to stormy grey; wet leaves a-shiver in
the dusk--and the long, long way before the
tired feet. A day of toil, a comfortless
night. A handful of coppers in the pocket;
food and fire that must be bought with silver;
freedom, rest, enjoyment, that cost*

unattainable gold. The sacred right of labour; a white man's freedom. O, brown, half-naked islanders, playing at sand-castles on your sun-bathed shore, with unbought food lying among the unpurchased fruits beside you, what would you give to be one of the master race? (SSS 171).

She reproached Coleridge, who never saw the South Sea Islands (except, she might have conceded, in dreams), for having "talked beautiful nonsense and misled countless travellers of all ages who did see, but who have refused to look, save through your illustrious spectacles, ever since" (8). Clark Russell was chided for implying that all South Sea schooners were shipshape, rather than the evil-smelling, insect-ridden tubs she endured and even slightly enjoyed for weeks on end. Louis Becke she had always liked for his debunking of the conventionally romantic, Tennysonian "sunny Isles of Eden". Years before she had reviewed *Pacific Tales*:

[W]e hardly miss our old ideas of the South Seas Paradise, in the enjoyment of the novel and brilliant pictures drawn for us by his able pen.

A sense of the greatness of the world, of the smallness of our own little corner, of the futility of our cut and dried ideas concerning the 'days of romance,' which we discover as if they had died out from all the countries of the globe when they deserted civilised little Britain--these are the feelings aroused by 'Pacific Tales.' Somewhere on the other side of the earth...there are lands where men live in the old, old way, that knows no interest save love and battle and death...[w]here no one knows or cares what the Stock Exchange is, or what it does, or who rules the newest literary clique, or what the difference may be between the woman with a past and the woman with a future. The white man of the Pacific

and the brown woman of the Islands are his hero and heroine; he tells of what he knows, and lets the rest go. And that, after all, is the way of the true artist ("Maev", *Social Review* 1897: 125).

Although spoofing some of her predecessors, Grimshaw was articulating a serious, deeply-held artistic credo when she praised Keats and Byron, neither of whom saw the South Seas. But their imaginations had more than adequately captured the appearance and meaning of strange places than any government report or statistical compilation possibly could. Grimshaw believed that heightened senses and intuition, indeed an abandonment of conceptual thinking, yield greater understanding of the foreign (or of the mundane) than scrupulous documentation and reporting. Frank Bevan, journalist-poet, hero (and self-projection) in her novel, *A Fool of Forty* serialised nine years before, was one of the earliest of many subsequent Grimshaw characters whose thought processes are associative rather than linear; who think in images and experience sudden, incongruous revelations and epiphanies which they themselves can scarcely understand or convey, but which they trust. Indeed, as Grimshaw was writing *SSS* she was also producing in Vaiti a character whose mind worked in this way. Few of Grimshaw's characters "reason"--when experiencing their moments of "truth", they become dizzy, struck by visions.

Such qualities of imagination and perception pose formidable stylistic challenges to the writer, confined to print and attempting to communicate an ineffable, not readily discernible

"reality". One of Grimshaw's tasks (perhaps influenced by her sister Emma, an art student in Paris and a contemporary of the Impressionists and the Post-Impressionists) became how to convey in words the elusive effects of unnamed colours and unaccustomed light for which even graphic techniques seemed too clumsy and gross. Grimshaw/"Graphis" was extremely near-sighted. But physiological defect may have been the artist's gain, as she glimpsed outlines, forms, shadows and colours with sharp intensity. A consistent theme from the opening pages of her early travel books is the difficulty, if not impossibility, of rendering what she perceived, a task complicated by her almost hyperaesthetic responsiveness.

Paint! what combination of coloured grease that ever came out of a box could hope to suggest the pale green fire of these pale-tree plumes, the jewel-blaze of the lagoon, the sapphire flame of the sea, the aching, blinding whitenesses of spray and sand? Who could paint the sun that is literally flashing back from the light dresses of the passengers, making of every separate person a distinct conflagration, and darting lightning rays out of the officers' gold shoulder-straps and buttons? Does any dweller in the dim grey North really know what light and colour are? (*SSS* 7-8).⁶

Her success in transforming reading into the equivalent of watching a magic lantern (or, to use a simile of hers, a "cinematograph") was, we shall see, confirmed by a number of reviewers.

Ideologically, both *FCI* and *SSS* legitimate "protection"/control

over the Islanders, alienation of land, incentives to settlers, and importing indentured labour, while deploring protective tariffs against Island products. Both, therefore, seek to facilitate the development of intensive capitalist agriculture in a heretofore subsistence economy. Both are thus striking examples of class pleading, but cast into a form that conceals class interests, as statistics alternate with idyllic descriptions. Grimshaw simultaneously celebrates unspoiled nature and encourages its despoliation: Arcadia would necessarily be devastated by the globe-trotters, investors, speculators and settlers who heed her advice. ⁷

Finally, both narratives are transitional forms because they show the emergence of a colonial Scheherazade. Grimshaw, listening eagerly to the fund of white oral tradition during nights of yarn-spinning on island schooners, was beginning to dream the stories that would form part of her own cycle, as when she visited Natuatuathoko in Fiji and exclaimed that no one could be "practical and statistical" (*FCI* 71) while there:

Little enchanted town....[h]ow often I think
of you like a fairy town in an old-world
story-book! The tale seemed to tell itself, as
[her horse] Tanewa plodded steadily
along in the yellow sunset.

"And they travelled all day long, through the
black woods where the goblins live, and over
the mountains of No-man's-land....Then they
saw the road that led to the magic city...and
the most lovely fruits grew...and dropped on
the path, with no one to pick them up. And the
magic city stood up in the clouds, and there
was a wall all around it, but if one stood at
the gate, and pronounced...'Open, Sesame!' it

opened immediately...."

[H]ere was a place for the young and happy: for Romeo and Juliet...for wonderful princesses, eloped from gloomy palaces to the wilderness, and a cottage, and love....And there, in the middle of the village, was... a cottage *ornée*, fit for a princess who had not yet learned to do without her high-heeled satin shoes and her *necéssaire*, quaint beyond description, with a European verandah, and an enormous high-pitched Fijian roof....An odd, delightful spot; a hothouse for strange fancies and fantastic fairy imaginings, born of long days' solitary travel and long hours' moonlight thought.... (*FCI* 75-79).^a

Yet, as contemporary reviewers also noted, these books are not as alike as they might seem. *FCI* was touted as a "book of the week" in the *Publisher and Bookseller* (2 Feb., 1907). The *Athenaeum* (12 Feb. 1907, 133), while praising Grimshaw's "power of lively narrative and...real ability to describe", dismissed her as "not a safe guide" to the New Hebrides because of her "prehistoric", "amazing, cock-and-bull attitudes". The *Yorkshire Post* [Leeds] (16 Mar. 1907, 4) and the *Pall Mall Gazette* (15 July 1907, 4) noted the book's topicality given the Anglo-French Convention. The *Outlook* (3 Aug. 1907, 150) proclaimed that Grimshaw was "neither original nor profound" about the New Hebrides, concluding that "After reading Mrs. [sic] Grimshaw we can think of Fiji as a possible place to settle in, and of the New Hebrides as just the home for all those members of European society who would never be missed". The *Saturday Review* (24 Aug. 1907, 240-41) honed in on *FCI's* unabashed racism: "[T]he author might speak with more discrimination; indeed, her cheerful attitude [about violating 'native' taboos]...is typical of the

worst type of British globe-trotter" (241). Wittingly or not, the *New York Times Saturday Review of Books* (11 Jan. 1908, 21) discerned Grimshaw's covert intentions:

If the Fiji Islands were in the hands of promoters; if they were being exploited by a land company; or if a steamship line were booming its tourist patronage, no better prospectus could be obtained. ... According to the author, Fiji is a land of unlimited possibilities, as well as a kind of earthly paradise. From a commercial standpoint it should be a mint; aesthetically considered, a Utopia.

The instrumentality of *FCI* was, then, noticed, but not always understood; Grimshaw's covering tactics were serving her purposes well.

But the personal import of *In the Strange South Seas* for Grimshaw gave the book such drawing power that reviewers tumbled over each other in virtual emulation of her own enchanting, enchanted style. It is small wonder that, seeking a similar commission to attract investment and settlement to the North of Australia, Grimshaw later loaned a copy of the book to Alfred Deakin, and promised him a scrapbook with about 100 favourable reviews in it (a practise she also used with publishers to improve the terms of her memoranda of agreement). For here the needs of writer and readers for release into a timeless paradise were matched: implicitly *SSS* was saying, *Et ego in Arcadia...* and Grimshaw's oft-repeated, cryptic motto, "Can a man be more than happy?" Archetypal yearnings were being touched, meeting

an almost hypnotised response. One of the differences between the books is precisely that *FCI* is effective, *SSS* affective. Nor is it insignificant that most of *FCI* is a land journey, and *SSS* a sea voyage. According to Martin S. Day:

The land journey may seem the basic pattern, certainly to conscious man, but actually the deeper and more affective pattern is...the sea voyage. To a land creature such as man the sea journey most vividly suggests perils, wonders, unknowns....Logical, therefore, is the sea voyage as the compelling theme of the first topnotch travel literature in Western culture--the *Odyssey* ("Travel Literature and the Journey Theme" 45).

The *Daily Chronicle* (10 Oct. 1907, 3, in a two-thirds column review) described *SSS* thus:

Whoever reads this book will surely be a little smitten with Miss Grimshaw's passion for the radiant islands...[and share the sentiments of Grimshaw's Cingalese steward on one of her schooners]: 'Oh my god, I plenty wish I stopping there, I no wanting any heaven then!'

W.L. Courtney of the *Daily Telegraph* (20 Nov. 1907, 4) called it "one of the most fascinating books of modern travel that have appeared for many a long day". Long before the end is reached the average reader would be:

wanting to drop the book, rush off to pack his trunks, and start on a journey to this wonderful world.... [Grimshaw's] good humour pervades her style..., which is invariably bright, crisp, and splendidly descriptive. It

is given to few writers to describe vividly on paper the glories of tropical scenery, but Miss Grimshaw succeeds with the best....

The *Globe and Traveller* (25 Nov. 1907, 4) predicted "poor old England will certainly be depopulated" if the many English people reading "our adventurer's" book heeded its advice. But it was the *Manchester Guardian* which understood--perhaps even better than Grimshaw herself--the significance of her writing:

Of course the islands are in their decadence. The warriors have become dying labourers and the women have lost their arts....The tourist, who corrupts a nation more quickly than material wealth by making the inhabitants a generation of flunkeys, insolent and servile at the same time, is now finishing what the merchant seaman and the 'missi' began. In a very few years, especially if many Englishmen obey the call of Miss Grimshaw, who urges them to emigrate, so that we may lie in the sun while the bananas drop into our mouths, the islands, even those Miss Grimshaw saw, will be like Peru after a generation of the Spaniards....The native music...will be tuned to the pitch of the Sydney music-hall. The heroes of old time will be forgotten; and the modern hero, such as Miss Grimshaw saw, will die of guano dust, at 10 shillings a week, on Malden Island....Miss Grimshaw will no doubt get converts. Some of her paragraphs would tempt even the businessman (21 Oct. 1907, 5).

Politically noteworthy also was the serious attention given to *SSS* by the Tory Unionist *Morning Post*. For 13 years, in and out of office as Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin had been "Our Special Correspondent", "Our Sydney Correspondent", and "An Australian Correspondent".⁹ The review (several columns long and warranting attention by itself, as it was not in the usual Thursday review

of new books) is unsigned. But I suspect that Deakin, Richard Jebb (a vociferous exponent of colonial nationalism) or Fabian Ware may well have written it, preferring anonymity to hide their direct intervention as reviewers:

[T]o be barred from the South Sea Islands when they are made to glow as they do in these pages is a punishment which surely there were no crime to fit. The writing is elegant, virility, elegance, conciseness, wit, and not a few touches of pathos contributing to the delight of the reader. What, according to Miss Grimshaw, must inevitably be denied to 'any combination of coloured grease' on canvas is here achieved in print, and there is not a chapter which may be missed without loss. It is difficult to resist the temptation to quote largely...[T]hough [the book] takes the form of the romance of travel, and is picturesque and vastly entertaining from cover to cover, there is conveyed by it a wealth of information, correcting many false impressions given by those who have not seen with their own eyes and yet have written (9 Oct. 1907, 5).

But why is the represented world of *FCI* savage, and that of *SSS* only "strange"? At times one almost feels they are the work of two different authors. Any answer must consider the differing interests the two books served when initially written in article form, and the autobiographical impact of the experiences they describe on Grimshaw herself. In this fusion of external factors and internal needs we will find some of the sources of her fictional universe.

There appears to be no evidence to contradict Grimshaw's own statements about her intentions in the *Daily Graphic* articles,

which underlay *SSS*: "It is the aim of the present series to bring into communication, if possible, the would-be settler and the might-be-settled land" (*Daily Graphic* Jan. 1905); "I have set forth to tell something of Britain of the South Seas, and such as it is, my say has been said" (the last words of *SSS* 377).

SSS is the tale of Grimshaw's first *wanderings*: this term, frequently used by Grimshaw, designates the absence of a fixed course or goal; turning, winding, roaming; a circular tour, as Grimshaw occasionally said. The Kipling quotation on the first page indicates her "objective", for she is like Tennyson's Ulysses, content to push ever onwards, "Till the anchor rattled down on stranger shores" (Kipling, qtd. on 1) with no Ithaca in sight. Since the travels described in this book were confined to the charming Eastern and Central Pacific, and involved collecting information for tourists as well as for settlers, the book is singularly free of the racism disfiguring Grimshaw's later work.

For in *FCI* racist arguments legitimate the alienation of land and the exacting of "native" labour, if necessary, *by force*. In *SSS* Grimshaw was free to take her time (and often had to, preferring the chaotic timing of unpredictable schooners to the schedules steamers). Steamers were for "globe-trotters" and Grimshaw differentiated herself from them: for her, the "real heart of travel pleasure" was "that sense of an individuality enlarged by experience" (*FCI* 169). She spent her almost entirely

free time among peoples whose appearance and social organisation commanded her astonished respect. A sense of release is almost palpable as one reads: release from the burden of Irish history, divided loyalties, industrialised working time, working under pressure. For the first time in years, Grimshaw's writing is relaxed, rather than tiredly haranguing. It is difficult not to like "her", the implied author who delights in climbing cross-trees and photographing from them, taking the wheel, listening to stories....

For the possibility of travelling further acted on Grimshaw like a drug: a "trip", indeed, and addictive. Her personality conformed in many essentials to the *Wanderlust* and *Sehnsucht* described by Henry Remak in "Exoticism and Romanticism":

Exoticism is not only the discovery of a...foreign civilization, it is a state of mind. This state or rather fermentation of mind will not terminate with the experience of a particular culture: it will look for additional satisfaction of these expectations in somewhat analogous but not identical cultures elsewhere, or take off in search of a different set of cultural elements in order to satisfy psychic and/or physical *Wanderlust* (56).

In *SSS*, some of Grimshaw's most personally significant themes appear. Predominant is the motif of "something lost", which eventually becomes sinister: as Elliot Ritchie realises in "Something Lost", if at first it is a "secret delight" (237), it turns into "a thing one ought not to want" (250) because "the

secrets were dark, furtive, tasting of forbidden fruit. Through much loneliness...one might wear a little chink in the wall; might guess, as he had almost guessed. But knowledge was on the other side. Here, in these wilds so full of peril...the secrets seemed near--because, near also, hovering, imminent, was Death" (256). The voyager is impelled, by expulsion or dispossession, to embark upon a search, to recover something personally essential but not known in advance. This convention of quest-romance seems to have had a personal meaning for Grimshaw; but even this accomplished stylist could not describe it in any other way than "just IT" ("About Myself"). *FCI* is even more emphatic about "IT's" difficult accessibility and ineffability.

Yet I...enjoyed even the inconveniences,...since they were richly paid for, in the pure gold coin that Nature mints for sailors, campers, and gipsy wanderers alone. Some need, so exceedingly deep down in the roots of humanity that one cannot even define or name it, seems to be satisfied by wanderings such as these. It is a need not felt by all (though lying latent in very many who never suspect its existence, until sudden changes call it out)...Yet it is one of the strongest forces in the world--hunger, love, the lust of battle, alone can rank with it in power over humanity. The 'Song of the Road'--the 'Call of the Wild'--and other names coined by an analytical generation for this unknown force, leave the kernel of the matter untouched. But those who know what it is to *come home* to Earth, understand the meaning of the call, although at the very coming, she lays a cold finger on their lips for welcome, and says, 'You shall know, you shall enjoy, but you shall never tell...' (101; emphasis hers).

FCI, however, although containing such passages as the above,

makes for tasteless, offensive reading nowadays:

I do not think that the most fervent advocate of the rights of the natural man could uphold the claims of the untamed New Hebridean to the freedom of his forefathers, or sentimentalise in this case over the 'noble wild man' doomed to bow beneath the yoke of an oppressive civilisation. The New Hebridean, in his native state, is neither more nor less than a murderous, filthy, and unhappy brute. Tamed, cleaned, restrained from slaying his acquaintances either wholesale or retail, and allowed to live his life in peace on his own bit of ground, he is a passable poor relation of the Maori or Zulu... (179-80).

[T]he truth, or half the truth, about...these savages can never be told. Any book which depicted them...as they are would be fit for nothing but to be burned at the hands of the common hangman. Darker spots upon the surface of the earth than Malekula there cannot be; worse fiends in or out of it than most of the natives not the wildest imaginations of madhouses could picture. And there description must cease! (222)

Moreover, almost all Islanders have names in *SSS*, whereas they are mainly described by insulting sobriquets--intended to amuse, no doubt--in *FCI*, such as "Mrs. Frizzyhead", "Mrs. Flatface", and "Mrs. Blackleg" (212-13).

To consider the material factors which Grimshaw herself never ignored, it is possible that Grimshaw's claim in her letter of 1 October 1908 to Deakin ("His Excellency Sir Everard im Thurn informed me, when I visited Fiji early in 1907, that I had done much to develop the place, and he had no doubt the recent advance was largely owing to my work") is exaggerated, for the Colonial Secretary's files in the Fiji Archives indicate a

different story. Grimshaw appears to have requested an honorarium of between forty and fifty pounds from the Government to write a book on Fiji as a general advertisement for the colony. She wanted the Government's imprimatur to guarantee her authoritativeness, and this in Thurn refused. On 3 July 1905 he wrote to the Colonial Secretary:

I am fully aware that Miss Grimshaw can write her impressions very cleverly and attractively; but in a handbook to be scattered broadcast with the Government imprimatur to Canadians and others it is absolutely essential that the information...should be something more than the impressions of a traveller however gifted.

10

Grimshaw's application was supported by businessmen from the Suva and Levuka Chambers of Commerce and--most significantly--the Planters' Association. Hugh Laracy suggests that they may have helped to finance her Fijian activities. Certainly both Grimshaw's articles about Fiji and the consequent book are an unambiguous expression of European settler interests, the tone becoming more irritable and strident as the traveller makes her way through rougher country, "wasteland" from a European agricultural point of view.

Grimshaw had arrived in Fiji during socio-economic transition of a type which Caroline Ralston, in *Grass Huts and Warehouses: Pacific Beach Communities of the Nineteenth Century* (1977) describes as a general change affecting five Pacific communities in their change from "beach" to "port".

With the advent of a planter community and the growth of interest in the development of agriculture, many foreigners became vitally concerned in island policies. The planters' prerequisites--security of land tenure, the continued availability of land for sale, and an adequate supply of cheap labour--often brought them, and other foreigners with property interests, into direct conflict with island governments and their rights. Once beach community establishments became involved in exporting commodities for the world markets there was an increasing demand for political stability and governmental efficiency, without which it was impossible to attract capital for investment or to arrange monetary and credit systems (165-66).

One of the results, Ralston comments, was the development of unpleasant settler ideologies concerning land and labour.

While the port towns remained basically trading communities a modicum of stability and co-operation was essential... But new attitudes had infiltrated into the towns and precedents had been set that were to expand into an established expatriate philosophy and outlook when the planters entered the community (193).

However, despite the book's semi-sponsorship by groups who, left to themselves, could write letters to the editor advocating lynching, Grimshaw developed her own ideas about advocating causes, the principal concern being to hide them. As she later outlined her method to Deakin, when proposing to attract settlers to the north of Australia, "It is bad management on someone's part, if a commission does become known. I do not think my Fiji book had any 'commission' flavour" (Letter, 1 Oct. 1908). "I can certainly get settlers for the North of Australia;

the place attracts myself very strongly, which makes it more likely that I shall do my best work in writing about it" (Separate letter of 1 Oct. 1908). The consequent "special interest of adventure" in the book would be "most valuable" because "The practical matter will want all the lightening it can get" (first cited letter of 1 Oct. 1908). Finally, "literary art", which required some leisure would remove any 'commissioned' flavour.

The New Hebrides, however, complicated Grimshaw's purpose, for she was beginning to side with Australian Pacific policy and wanted neither of the interested governments (England or France) to annex them. (*Conn of the Coral Seas* endorses this position concerning a group of islands called the "New Cumberlands". This is one factor which inclines me to suspect that she was writing it much earlier than when it was published.) In 1906 the secret Anglo-French Commission had reached a decision of "divided rule" from which the New Hebrides still suffer--a decision made without consulting Australia. In 1907 the Imperial Premiers' Conference in London rejected the proposed formation of an Imperial Secretariat composed of representatives from the self-governing Dominions (seen by Britain as an attempt to wrest control from the Colonial Office).

When Grimshaw first wrote to Alfred Deakin on 25 January 1908, she was offering her services to *Australian* political interests.

Concerning the New Hebrides and New Caledonia she wrote:

I believe...it is your desire to see the interests of Australia fully safe-guarded in this matter, and I know that you have the reputation of seeing further ahead than most--indeed, than many of your contemporaries.

Having seen something like the beginning of the contest over these islands, and heard practically all that has gone on since, I am most anxious to be of use to the Australian side in any way that I can. It is possible that Captain D'Oyly may have told you of the small ways in which I have been of use already.

I should, however, be very glad of any advice that you can give me as to the points...of importance to impress on the public mind. I am acting as occasional correspondent (by special arrangement) for *The Times*, and I have active and intelligent agents in London, also in Sydney, who place anything I may send them in the most effective manner. In fact, when I need it, I have a very satisfactory system of disseminating any desired information or impression widely through the press of the world, not necessarily under my own signature..

If you can give me your view about the present aspect of the New Hebrides question, and what you most wish to see done, I will do my best to assist the end that may seem to the best for Australian interests (Letter, 25 Jan. 1908).¹¹

FCI is, nonetheless, Grimshaw's most "English" book (even referring to her "English skin"). Her shift from an Imperial to a colonial loyalty was only beginning when it was written, and it could have been awkward to dissociate herself from her unqualified admiration for Sir Everard im Thurn's policies. But the anomalous status of the New Hebrides (described by Grimshaw as a combination of Alsatia and Arcadia), which belonged to "no

one" (Grimshaw would not have considered the New Hebrideans owners of their own land) demanded a strong case for annexation by *some* government. The relative cultural pluralism of *SSS* had hardened into a more rigid polarisation by the time Grimshaw's New Hebridean travels were over.

Thus the book most influenced by political interests, *FCI*, was published first and voiced ideologies far more blatant and less pleasant than those in the following book. It was entirely in Grimshaw's interest, for example, especially after *FCI* had been published, to reiterate: "So the tangle drags on, and the reign of terror continues unabated", with copious examples of such terrors. Legitimation of foreign control required debasement of the New Hebrideans.

So one may account for the more obviously political and ideological aspects of *FCI*. But this book also had important implications for Grimshaw's future fiction. The stage was well set for her perception and representation of New Guinea, although she had yet to travel there, for the New Hebrides had already provided her with more stock-in-trade. If the first elements had been the materials of romance and pastoral, now Grimshaw had glimpsed the blood-stained, demonic horrors of Gothic possibilities.

Travel books can hardly but exert an archetypal appeal (if subliminally, all the more powerfully because unconscious) because their very structure contains such motifs as journeys,

odysseys, quests. By now it will be obvious that *FCI* and *SSS* resist (but, I contend, cannot prevent) interpretation in a personally-significant, literary-biographical sense. The reasons for their resistance to such interpretation are inter-related: their origins as political or commercial propaganda, and the coy narrator's intent to disguise these commissions by presenting her travels as "a quest after information spiced with amusement" (*FCI* 29), this search for information itself depicted as generalised altruism ("to the Man Who Could Not Go") rather than speaking for an alliance of specialised State and class interests, and the conclusion almost nil: "[Y]ou do not draw morals in the South Seas--they are not plentiful enough" (*SSS* 28).

Yet it seems to me that an "autobiographical narrator" *is* present. This is not simply the linguistic construct, "Beatrice Grimshaw" (the counterpart of the phatic "you" in most of her books). In contradistinction to the subject of the "ideal biographical legend" (which is self-conscious, exaggerated and distorted) this more shadowy figure is present, but less palpable. Its contours and characteristics can be glimpsed by a process Edel described in a reading of T.S. Eliot's poetry, a decoding which was not facilitated by any other knowledge of Eliot himself, or of his work:

[T]he biographer enters into the heart of each piece of writing as if it were the only work ever written;... He discovers recurrent images and recurrent modes of thought; patterns have a way of repeating themselves, for each writer

has his own images and his own language and his own chain of fantasy; there is no writer, no matter how rich and varied his imagination, who does not possess his individual world of words and his peculiar vision of reality....The inner promptings to which a writer listens cannot remain within; they seek an issue, they must emerge; and they usually do in the form of narratives...tissued out of past experience and formed in a literary tradition (*Literary Biography* 53 and 55).

What, then, are some of the characteristics of this narrator? What fulfillment was she finding in the South Seas, and what problems does this suggest she was evading? (It is remarkable that *not one* rebellious character in Grimshaw's fiction--whether a bored, under-used, dissatisfied wage-labourer or an unhappy woman--stays at home to confront his or her situation.) *SSS* seems to me one of the most "autobiographical" documents of her "non-fiction", since one of its major themes is inheritance of a status, birthright. Elements of her personal mythology and fantasy emerge in her ready acceptance of the role of "chief", "male" forms of address, and the fascination for her of the *taupo*: the virginal, ceremonial, warrior queen of Samoa.

Grimshaw seems to have slammed the two books together in a few months between (more or less) July 1906--by which time she was back in Ireland for the first time since early 1904--and early 1907, when *FCI* (unashamedly assembled in large part from earlier *Sydney Morning Herald* articles about the New Hebrides) appeared. During this time her mother died (6 Nov. 1905), as did her father (16 Mar. 1907). *FCI* is dedicated to him--the only book out of nearly 40 she ever dedicated to anyone. One wonders if

this may have been an act of expiation, for Grimshaw was clearly going to "cross the Line" for good this time--indeed forsaking her people and her father's house, as she told Lett years later. Hammerton comments in *Emigrant Gentlewomen*: "The constricting power of gentility was inseparable from the net of patriarchal security, and it is not fanciful to suggest that the death of a father or the loss of family fortune which forced daughters to leave home might have increased women's scope for independence and action" (192).

A bereavement, in other words, could also be enabling, and by now there were very little in the way of family obligations to hold Grimshaw back. Like many other woman travellers of her time, Grimshaw was freed by death in the family (and a respectable, responsible, stay-at-home married sister).¹² Once again she could heed the compelling motivation of her life--not heterosexual romance, but a craving for strange places. What Dorothy Middleton has observed of "Victorian lady-travellers" in general is also pertinent for Grimshaw's early travels:

The camaraderie of the camp...was not what the women were after....Travel was an individual gesture of the house-bound, man-dominated Victorian woman. Trained from birth to an almost impossible ideal of womanly submission and self-discipline, of obligation to class and devotion to religion, she had need of an emotional as well as of an intellectual outlet. This she found, often late in life, in travel, and...she was able to enjoy a freedom of action unthinkable at home (*Victorian Lady Travellers* 3-4).

If any generalization is possible about such a band, it is that they did not travel to find romance--not the romance, that is, of a love affair....[T]hey loved their relations and friends but they also loved to escape, to be themselves under foreign skies with no personal demands and obligatory duties--heaven forbid that a devoted sister should join them in the South Seas or the affairs of a favourite niece detain them in London! (9-10).

Some years ago Grimshaw had pronounced in "Passions
Unclassified":

[T]here are a great many passions in the world that are almost...as strong as love itself, and certainly more enduring... Among these is...'Wanderlust.' A great many people are never touched by this at all--yes, even the people who have plenty of money...and spend it liberally in running about the Continent sight-seeing, or ransacking Africa and the Rockies for big game. The true passion for travel is very different to the mixture of fashionable conventionality, *ennui*, and restlessness, that sends the typical Briton across the Channel to 'take his pleasures sadly'... Many people feel it who have never travelled at all; but it is perhaps strongest in those who have just tasted the cup of gipsy wanderings, and laid it down unfinished....[H]ow it all comes back with a sense of loss and pain on foggy yellow November nights at home, when the eaves of the houses drop with slimy wet, and the country roads are a sodden waste of mire and gloom! One never loses the 'Wanderlust,' once it has fairly waked to life ("G.", *Social Review* 16 May 1896)

"Passions Unclassified" is repeated almost word for word in the introduction to *SSS*; it is also the kernel of *A Fool of Forty*. Like the author of the 1906 "Irish Cyclist" article, the prodigal announces she wants nothing more than to leave again.

The first three pages of *SSS* are an impassioned evocation of *Wanderlust*, and the word "call" (with its associate, "cry") appears no less than 10 times. The first chapter shows Grimshaw tasting the "fei", a prosaic enough cooking banana, but said to cast a spell, obliging the traveller to return. On page 114 of *SSS* Grimshaw ends a loving, detailed description of a "house by the shore" in Rarotonga--that is, on the margins of sea and land, settlement and wandering, nature and culture, with:

(Windows blurred with beating mud, grey London roaring by in the rain; haggard faces, and murky summer, and the snake of custom clipping stranglingly about the free man's throat--O Island wanderer, back in the weary North, does your sea-bird's heart fly swift from these to those, and sicken for the lands where you must go no more?)

But what was calling, and why did Grimshaw have to go? Part of the answer may be in the Kipling quote with which the book opens.

In desire of many marvels over sea,
When the new made tropic city sweats and roars,
I have sailed with young Ulysses from the quay,
Till the anchor rattled down on stranger shores.

Neither *FCI* nor *SSS* expresses any desire to go home again. Quite unlike Doris Lessing, for example, or the Australian Henry Handel Richardson, there is no *Going Home* in Grimshaw's *oeuvre*. Grimshaw's personality seems to have had an abundant dash of the attributes of Artemis which, according to Jungian schools of

thought, are an aspect (in differing degrees and intensities) of the personality of any woman. According to the feminist Jungian Nor Hall (*The Moon and the Virgin*):

The woman on the Amazon pole is unconventional in any culture....Freedom of movement and the undertaking of the great long walk-about are essential to the wilderness existence of Artemis. ...Artemis is energy...psychic energy, abundant energy, excess energy....Artemis brings certain caged aspects of feminine nature out of exile.... In keeping with the undomesticated nature of her territory, Artemis's way of knowing what goes on is primarily intuitive, unschooled, 'not trained in libraries or fed up in Attic academies and porticoes... [but]...of the road, the street, the workshop.'.... Artemis represents adventure, the tendency for striking out on your own. Following that instinct, which often comes up inconveniently in mid-life, means leaving the security of the city, of the home, family, and possibly even relationship, and finding a lone path that leads over the familiar hill of surroundings into a place where the only company is oneself as reflected in water, animals, and the surface of leaves....The Artemis-Hekate aspect of the feminine encourages independence and departures--leavetakings in time and space and departures from the norm....There are still undiscovered territories, adventures that have not been tried--ventures to the interior of human experience. Sometimes the weight of culture and personal history drive a person to seek meaning in a new direction....Men are brothers as women are her sisters. She wants no man as husband but will join with them in the hunt and feast at the same table. She never seeks their protection--only occasional companionship as long as it is based on outer interests held in common: animals, battle, music, divination, dance (109+).

Thus, describing one of the most idyllic atolls she found, Grimshaw said that she visited it at some inconvenience to herself for people who *would* like to remain in such an

environment ("[I] know that I shall have their thanks"). But she then speculated:

I wonder, will the picture ever body itself out in real, for some tired-out soul, weary of cities and competition, or some pair of lovers, who find the world well lost in each other, here among the far islands of the sweet Southern Seas? I shall never know, for the 'sea-bird's feather' was in the pillow on which I slept my first baby sleep, and I wander always on. But it may be that these words will be read by some to whom they are, or shall be, a part of life's own history (*SSS* 141 and 144).

Travellers' tales have been associated with a spectrum of purposes and effects in their long history, ranging from lies, verification of the story-teller's authority, and a spatial equivalent of probing one's own psyche: a journey into the interior, or to the heart of darkness, in more ways than one. Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg have noted some of the many potentialities of the form:

The traveller's tale is a persistent oral form in all cultures. It is, in a sense, the amateur's answer to the professional rhapsodist, skald, or jongleur. Its form is the simple linear form of voyage by land or sea, and in it fiction, which in its highest sense involves ordering and shaping for an esthetic end, is reduced to its most humble form--the lie.... The prose writers of the Roman Empire developed the first-person journey narrative as an art form and also established the pattern of the inward journey, the autobiography, in its two usual forms--the apology and the confession (*The Nature of Narrative* 73). ¹³

Grimshaw's initial mandate to "investigate" was the outcome of a long, pre-existent urge to travel which she, a woman from a family no longer with means, could best fulfill by allying herself with forces of capitalist and Imperialist expansion. She also, not very originally, found travel to be somewhat mind-broadening: the search for information became a quest for self. Travel certainly gave her "accomplishments" which the finishing schools of her class-and gender-stratified society never allowed her:

There is nothing like travel in rough countries for teaching you your deficiencies... I could write Latin verses, but I couldn't make bread--I could embroider with silk on canvas, but I didn't know how to grease my boots properly... (FCI 66).

Years later, in *Isles of Adventure*, Grimshaw equated enlargement of individual capacity with freedom from (to some degree) class hierarchy and convention. She attributed these possibilities to the remoteness of the Island world.

Last, and perhaps most important, is the chance that the Island world gives to individuality, and to the man or woman who enjoys handling the primitive things of life. There is room to spare in the vast Pacific world for those who find the civilized places too narrow, who like to blaze their own trails...both literally and metaphorically....[But] the Islands...are not for the man who dislikes civilization because it asks too much of him. The Islands will ask for more...that he should...make his own code and stick to it without being forced to do so by anyone else (24-25).

But how, between prospect (the returned traveller and renewed author hoping to set out again) and retrospect (the mature author quoted above, who would retire from the Island world in five years' time) can one recapture the psychological and autobiographical import of the first Island experiences and narratives? I have shown that Grimshaw would own to no purpose (although she had several) and seems to have done her best to suppress any autobiographical character to her first travel books. Nonetheless, by fulfilling her desire to wander she eventually found her work--to write fiction. Reading *FCI* and *SSS* symptomatically is to observe Grimshaw the author poised between being a captive of experience and its controller. Their enduring interest here is as prefigurations of her later fictions. They proliferate with images, "central life metaphors" (Hollington, 14), elements, atmospheres and modes she eventually made typically her own; therefore I have conceptualised the place of these writings within her overall work as "pregeneric":

"Narrative categories...broader than, or logically prior to, the ordinary literary genres...a certain kind of structure and mood, but not necessarily a certain genre" are present, however diffused (Frye, *Anatomy* 162).

Grimshaw herself seems to have recognised the potential of her experiences for "copy", as when she refers to "literature in the rough",--tales recounted by others and the experiences she encountered. These are symbolised by the many "native" "society journals in song" she very likely made up or embroidered upon. If a mass of sources for later stories were the only

significance of *FCI* and *SSS* however, end notes would be more than adequate to demonstrate that Grimshaw seldom let incidents, details or personalities go to waste. Few writers do.¹⁴

A more theoretical interest of reading these two books with Grimshaw's later fiction in mind is to watch the emergence of a significant and signifying contrast which is expressed in an early and particularly clear form on page seven of *FCI*, although this is still a "surface structure", not the more abstract, deeply operative *combinatoire sémantique*--the story-telling mechanism itself.¹⁵

East of Fiji, life is one long lotus-eating dream, stirred only by occasional parties of pleasure, feasting, love-making, dancing, and a very little cultivating work. Music is the soul of the people, beauty of face and movement is more the rule than the exception, and friendliness to strangers is carried almost to excess. Westward of the Fijis lie the dark, wicked cannibal groups of the Solomons, Banks, and New Hebrides, where life is more like a nightmare than a dream, murder stalks openly in broad daylight, the people are nearer to monkeys than to human beings in aspect, and music and dancing are little practiced, and in the rudest possible state (7).

Grimshaw's eventually characteristic style combined romance (with its associates, idyll and pastoral) and Gothic modes in a colonial context. The significance of these modes (present in these books in a virtual, not final form) is multiple: that Grimshaw chose these and not others, that she chose only aspects of these possibilities (on the whole, their conservative rather

than insurgent meanings), and that she adopted and adapted them as other women writers have done. Generic and modal choices, in other words, are both biographical and conventional, individual and institutional, socially pre-given and personally modulated, a response to a specific socio-historic situation.

What features and motifs do *FCI* and *SSS* contain in embryonic form? To single out, provisionally, only a few, let us speculate what they imply for a woman whose class, nationality, and gender status are all anomalous.

One of the most stable and obsessive of Grimshaw's symbols, as we have seen, was her birthplace, Cloona House, with connotations of inheritance, entitlement, and birthright. But by the time she was seven "industry superseded ancestry", to adapt Yeats' phrase, right before her eyes; the family were dispossessed. *SSS* has no less than six photographs and lengthy descriptions of dwellings. Some are Grimshaw's briefly rented habitations: "My Home among the Palms, Niue", "My Tongan Bungalow" (this, perhaps by no coincidence, on the same page as "View of the King's Palace and Chapel, Royal Nukualofa, Tonga"). Equally, if not more, significant are the photographs of royal abodes such as "Queen Makea's Palace" and "Makea's Summer Cottage".

FCI also abounds in items such as "Fijian Interior--Showing Plaited Sinnet Work", "A Mountain House", "House of the Turango Lilewa", "In the Prince's House--Fijian Bed", and two

photographs of Government House on Norfolk Island. They provide potent symbolic backgrounds and interiors as female heroes explore mazes while held in captivity, melancholy heroes preside over sumptuous feasts, and warrior queens ceremoniously prepare the intoxicating kava.

These houses and fastnesses function so powerfully in part because they imply, and are defined by, their opposites--the overstuffed drawing rooms of "civilisation", gaols, leper colonies, convents and caves. In the "travel books", the significance of all these dwellings is as yet unelaborated. When it is, in the later fiction, it almost always has to do with the hero's discovery or resumption of a birthright, a title often of royal blood, if not wholly legitimate.

A theme of inheritance implies identity and status--who am I, how do I fit into a world of relationships and hierarchies? The young woman whose school emblem had been Athene (the intelligent, virginal goddess who had a father and a brother, but no mother or sisters), and whose early pseudonym "Maev" had been that of the warrior queen Mab, was now somewhat older. But she was nonetheless captivated by the virginal and warrior aspects of the *taupo* in Samoa, a figure who recurred in *South Sea Sarah* and many other fictions. ¹⁶

Most Samoan villages possess a *taupo*, or mistress of the ceremonies, who has many duties and many privileges as well. She is always young, pretty, and well-born...usually the daughter of a high chief. She remains

unmarried during her term of office.... Sometimes her train is increased by...a dwarf or a cripple, who seems to act a part similar to...a medieval court fool. Her duties oblige her to receive and entertain all guests or travellers...to make kava...welcome them to the guesthouse...and dance for their amusement. She is treated with royal honours by the villagers, always handsomely clothed...luxuriously fed...and never required to do any hard work....When there is a festival, she takes the principal part in the dances; and when the tribes are at war...the taupo, dressed as a warrior, marches out with the ceremonial parade of the troops, and acts as a *vivandiere* during the fight, carrying water to the soldiers, and bringing ammunition when required. This duty is not one of the safest, for, although no Samoan warrior knowingly fires on any woman, much less on a taupo, stray bullets take no account of persons, and many a beautiful young 'Maid of the Village'...has justified her warrior dress by meeting with a soldier's death (SSS 328-29).

Important for Grimshaw herself, however, was that she no longer seemed to have to *achieve* status. A quasi-'royal' position (due, as she saw it, to physical qualities--race and height--rather than to character qualities) was *ascribed* to her in the Pacific. All she had to *do* was to *be*, at a time when her own family in Ireland was dramatically losing caste.

The inevitable question: "'Where was my husband?" followed by: "Why had I not got one?"--in a tone of reproachful astonishment--was put by almost every new-comer....An unmarried woman who had money of her own, who wandered about alone, who held office in no village, here or at home, this was decidedly a puzzle to...folk, whose own women all marry at about fourteen. They had seen white women travelling with their husbands, but never one who had ventured from Beritania all alone!

There was evidently some difficulty...in

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A theme of inheritance implies identity and status--who am I, how do I fit into a world of relationships and hierarchies? The young woman whose school emblem had been Athene (the intelligent, virginal goddess who had a father and a brother, but no mother or sisters), and whose early pseudonym "Maev" had been that of the warrior queen Mab, was now somewhat older. But she was nonetheless captivated by the virginal and warrior aspects of the *taupo* in Samoa, a figure who recurred in *South Sea Sarah* and many other fictions. ¹⁵

Most Samoan villages possess a *taupo*, or mistress of the ceremonies, who has many duties and many privileges as well. She is always young, pretty, and well-born...usually the daughter of a high chief. She remains

unmarried during her term of office.... Sometimes her train is increased by...a dwarf or a cripple, who seems to act a part similar to...a medieval court fool. Her duties oblige her to receive and entertain all guests or travellers...to make kava...welcome them to the guesthouse...and dance for their amusement. She is treated with royal honours by the villagers, always handsomely clothed...luxuriously fed...and never required to do any hard work...When there is a festival, she takes the principal part in the dances; and when the tribes are at war...the taupo, dressed as a warrior, marches out with the ceremonial parade of the troops, and acts as a *vivandiere* during the fight, carrying water to the soldiers, and bringing ammunition when required. This duty is not one of the safest, for, although no Samoan warrior knowingly fires on any woman, much less on a taupo, stray bullets take no account of persons, and many a beautiful young 'Maid of the Village'...has justified her warrior dress by meeting with a soldier's death (SSS 328-29).

Important for Grimshaw herself, however, was that she no longer seemed to have to *achieve* status. A quasi-'royal' position (due, as she saw it, to physical qualities--race and height--rather than to character qualities) was *ascribed* to her in the Pacific. All she had to *do* was to *be*, at a time when her own family in Ireland was dramatically losing caste.

The inevitable question: "'Where was my husband?" followed by: "Why had I not got one?"--in a tone of reproachful astonishment--was put by almost every new-comer....An unmarried woman who had money of her own, who wandered about alone, who held office in no village, here or at home, this was decidedly a puzzle to...folk, whose own women all marry at about fourteen. They had seen white women travelling with their husbands, but never one who had ventured from Beritania all alone!

There was evidently some difficulty...in

"placing" me according to Samoan etiquette, which is both complex and peculiar. A white woman with her husband presents no difficulty, since the "faa Samoa" always gives the superior honour to the man....In my case, the question was solved...by classing me as a female chief! I was addressed as "Tamaita" (lady), but officially considered as a man; therefore I was always offered kava...(never given to their own women, and not usually to white women), and the young chiefs of the district came almost every evening to call upon me in due form, sitting in formal rows, and conversing...in a well-bred, gracious manner oddly reminiscent of a London drawing-room. The women did not visit me officially... (SSS 310-11). 17

The burden of industrial work--indeed, the Calvinist conviction that failure to work was a sin--was non-existent, it seemed, in Samoa.

Time is simply wiped out. One discovers, all of a sudden, that one has been groaning under an unbearable and unnecessary tyranny all one's life... Why do people rush to catch trains and omnibuses, and hasten to make and keep appointments, and have meals at rigidly fixed times, whether they are hungry or not? These are the things that make life short....At first, one finds it hard to realise...but once realised, the sense of emancipation is exquisite and complete....

The Samoan does what he wants, when he wishes, and if he does not wish a thing, does not do it at all. According to the theology of our youthful days, he ought in consequence to become a fiend in human shape;...but he is the most amiable creature on earth's round ball. Angry voices, loud tones even, are never heard in a Samoan house. Husbands never come home drunk...and ill use their wives; wives never nag at their husbands; no one screams at children, or snaps at house-mates and neighbours. Houses are never dirty; clothes are always kept clean; nothing is untidy, superfluous or ugly. There is therefore no striking ground for ill-temper or peevishness;

and amiability and courtesy reign supreme. The Samoan has his faults...but they are slight indeed compared with the faults of the ordinary European (*SSS* 321).¹⁸

I sense, then, a woman *released*, if not necessarily liberated: for problems have not been solved, only magically abolished. If Grimshaw liked to pontificate that "Happenings are largely a matter of latitude" (as she did on the first page of *FCT*, then all she or anyone had literally to do was to cross the Line. *Trans mare currunt*, but without changing her nature (as Horace would disapprovingly have noted), and the illusion could set in that her flight from Ireland had been a resolution, rather than an evasion, of the original conflicts and dilemmas her society of origin had provided. Emigration, simply, without trial or initiation, was emancipation.

Grimshaw's wanderings *tend* to look like prolonged escapism, for there is no indication that she sought anything more tangible than endless roaming; none that she intended, with renewed insight and vitality, to return as a 'culture-bringer' to her own society, so as to transform it. But in addition to the materialist explanations affecting her work, I now reconsider the point that Grimshaw's travels often seem rather aimless and her themes and voices inconsistent, by asking how conventions (both literary and socio-sexual) exercised their influences as well.

The very titles of travel books and articles at the time (including Grimshaw's own "A Lady in Far Fiji" and many others of that ilk) suggest that the reading public for travel books expected a gender-specific point of view, whether trivial, marginal, or specially privileged. The traditional conventions of male travel literature, as Catherine Barnes Stevenson has noted in *Victorian Women Travel Writers in Africa*, were usually cast in the form of a quest romance; they used (and virtually exhausted) the metaphor of the land-as-woman¹⁹. A quest assumes an objective, and the conventional male emplotment of a hero's journey is linear and purposeful. Thus, although Dan Vogel's categorising (in "A *Lexicon Rhetoricae* for 'Journey' Literature") of the various forms of such literature provides useful discriminations--journey, wandering, quest, pilgrimage, odyssey, and going forth--these categories were not elaborated with female travel narratives in mind. In male quest literature, of course, a far-away princess is often the object of the quest (as in Grimshaw's own novel, *My Lady Far-Away*, and her frequent reference to the "*princesse lointaine*" motif. But when a woman is the author of her own quest, understanding her situation becomes more complicated, for it is less culturally validated.

Contemporary women had many motivations for travel, as Joanna Trollope has noted in *Britannia's Daughters*: these range between the "damned whore" and "God's police" stereotypes and include women such as governesses, nurses, vice-reines, botanists, butterfly-hunters, trail-blazers and explorers, camp-followers, prostitutes, missionaries, actresses, and, as we have seen with

Grimshaw, journalists. But although women had many motivations for travel, they found it difficult to force *their* gender-specific experience of travel into the pre-existing, hegemonic forms. As Susan Greenstein notes, it could not be "adequately described in the adventurer's vocabulary of the central tradition" ("Sarah Lee" 134):

It is a given that the outsider uses Africa for his own purposes...[T]he African pastoral is distinguished by the ease with which any white man can achieve dominance... This fact is reflected in the literature of imperialism, whose central conventions and recurrent motifs interpret as a test of manhood, the encounter between a passive, if often malignant, continent, and the adventurers who penetrate it...In these romances and adventure tales, historical reality and cultural myths about the experiences men have are reinforced by one another... (133)

[But] to suggest a few of [the transformations effected by women]: while women, too, embellish[ed] the myth of Africa as "heart of darkness" or archetypal female principle, they also provide the metaphor of the "garden which must be cultivated," and the figure of the "outsider as guest"...In addition to their unconventional experiences, to be in Africa at all women travellers had to free themselves from their own colonized situations, while female settlers responded to the influence of frontier life, which fostered a kind of independence less acceptable in England. These circumstances contributed strongly to the difference in point of view which distinguishes fiction by women within the larger tradition of an Africa as seen through Western eyes (143).

Women began instead began to try their pens with styles suiting their own uses: in their most primitive forms, these tended to be "loose, accretive and epistolary" (Stevenson 9). Stevenson

further notes why female narratives may *seem* plotless:

[E]ven when they are not in letter form, women's travel narratives tend to be 'generic hybrid[s]...subjective autobiography superimposed on a travelogue.' Because travel writing is a kind of autobiographical narrative, recent studies of the difference between male and female autobiography provide a valuable perspective on the narratives chosen by travellers of the opposite sex. Men...write formal, distilled autobiographies in which the primary concern is an objective evaluation of the significance of the whole life (or journey). Women...produce more private, fragmented and episodic autobiographies...which impose no overarching design on their lives or travels. Women tend to record, to surrender to experience; men to judge, to schematize experience (9-10).

Travel writing, moreover, whether by women or by men, was usually addressed to different audiences simultaneously. Writers have achieved, with varying success, an artful or clumsy first person for their narratives. Mary Kingsley, for instance, "developed a complex, schizophrenic narrative persona" (Stevenson 7) since she was addressing the general public, the scientific community, her friends in Africa, and, ultimately politicians. Grimshaw, as I noted at the beginning of this section, also modulated her voice to suit various interests; at times there was an autobiographical slippage within her narrative voice. The author, "Beatrice Grimshaw", is, then, a cover for a number of people: the biographical Beatrice Grimshaw, who deliberately conceals herself most of the time and the implied "Beatrice Grimshaw", a linguistic/technical construct, the structural hero of the narrative. But if we refuse our role as implied readers as created by the texts,

substituting for it the suspicious reading of a biographer, *FCI* and *SSS* take on more significance than Grimshaw probably intended.

The late Victorian bourgeois women who did "cross the Line" were venturing into a new, creative space within which some could discover and test themselves. Robert Louis Stevenson commented, when setting off on his Pacific voyages, that he had escaped from the shadow of Greece and Rome. Similarly, women were freed from patriarchally-defined space, and also free to ignore male-defined notions of development and direction; as Mary Daly describes "The Third Passage" in *Gyn/Ecology*, "the new physical spaces--like the new semantic/cognitive/symbolic spaces--will be dis-covered/created further out/in the Otherworld Journey.... [S]easoned Spinsters will no longer be seeking the solace of domestication. They will be at home on the road" (342).. Realising such factors, Grimshaw's travel narratives may not be plotless at all; but to understand them properly, we have to acknowledge that a cyclical and spiralling movement is also a valid narrative form.

The experience and writings of women like Grimshaw put many male concepts into question. For instance, they rarely experienced travelling as exile. Hundreds of colonial women writers expressed what Isak Dinesen commented most pithily concerning her farm in Kenya--"Here I am, where I ought to be" (*Out of Africa* 14)--a comment uncannily echoed by Willa Cather, after her family moved to Red Cloud: there she was "where she wanted to

be, where she ought to be" (Howarth, "The Country of Willa Cather" 81). Very often these women, having had the heady experience of determining the course of their own lives, felt like exiles back at home. Like Grimshaw, they immediately began repacking their trunks. At home they might be seen, at best, as eccentric spinsters, "intellectually and experientially excluded from the world of politics", whereas, overseas, they might even discover themselves, as Grimshaw did, "at the center of intense political activity" (Stevenson 11).

Yet many articles on "writers-in-exile" assume, quite unproblematically, that the writer is male. Richard Exner's "*Exul Poeta*" and Claudio Guillén's "On the Literature of Exile and Counter-Exile" operate on this assumption, with only one woman mentioned in Guillén's article. But Grimshaw very quickly became a "counter-exile", defined as a person having "those responses which incorporate the separation from place, class, language or native community, insofar as they triumph over the separation and thus can offer wider dimensions of meaning that transcend the earlier attachment to place or native origin" (Guillén, 272). He also refers to this as the Ulysses theme, whereas the "Ovidian mode" refers to exiles who desperately want to recreate their home society.

Virginia Woolf, in *Three Guineas*, derided the characteristics of "home" which might well spur a woman to leave it:

"Our country" [Woolf's fictive composite of 'the daughters of educated men'] throughout the greater part of its history has treated me as a slave; it has denied me education or any share in its possessions. "Our" country still ceases to be mine if I marry a foreigner. "Our" country denies me the means of protecting myself, forces me to pay others a very large sum annually to protect me, and is so little able, even so, that Air Raid precautions are written on the wall. Therefore if you insist on fighting to protect me, let it be understood...that you are fighting to gratify a sex instinct which I cannot share; to procure benefits which I have not shared and probably will not share; but not to gratify my instincts, or to protect either myself or my country. For...*in fact, as a woman I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world* (125; emphasis mine).

Grimshaw would not have endorsed the more feminist aspects of this statement, but she did possess a genuine concern for woman of all classes, constantly urging emigration. By no coincidence her first novel is entitled *Broken Away*, foreshadowing the escape of many of her characters from industrialisation and urbanisation, including herself.²⁰

In some respects, Grimshaw remained after her first voyage what she had been when she set out; a woman, a woman with an ambiguous relationship to her class and her country, a woman in need of work. The latter she found, not only in the efficiently accomplished "roving commissions" she initially sought, but in the renewed impulse to write fiction--fiction of a special kind. In *Vaiti of the Islands* we shall find what the Pacific had given the writer of fiction so far.

Notes

¹ The title of this chapter is indebted to several sources: Ti-Grace Atkinson's pioneering work on feminist theory, *Amazon Odyssey*, and Dan Vogel's "A Lexicon Rhetoricae for 'Journey' Literature", which defines an odyssey as following:

The hero sets out on what appears to be a straightforward journey to a pre-decided terminus. A series of divinely inspired adventures befalls him that does not seem to be ruled by any cause-and-effect patterns, nor by any spiritual purpose for which he had set out. Only in an arbitrary sense can it be said that the plot has a beginning, middle, and end, for no organic relationship among the parts is perceptible; and though each adventure may have symbolic value as a comment upon life, no such symbolic value surrounds the hero.

To call a work an 'odyssey' is to make a distinction between *purpose* and *mission*. In an odyssey, the hero does have a purpose--he wants to get to a certain place. But he has no mission in the spiritual or moral sense (188).

Mary Daly, in *Gyn/Ecology*, which is about what she terms the feminist odyssey from anaesthesia to "gynaesthesia", would most likely call this chapter an "Athenian Odyssey", for reasons which I explain below; Grimshaw herself, however, most certainly thought of herself as an "Amazon", if not in Daly's sense, so it seems appropriate to use Grimshaw's own usage here.

² The sources of these terms are various. The *Daily Graphic* referred to Grimshaw as a "roving commissioner"; in an application, in very old age, to the Commonwealth Literary Fund for a pension, Grimshaw referred to herself as having been Murray's "unofficial publicity officer"; a Queensland Labor journal referred to her as a "capitalist hireling", but I have no direct source for this, as it was located in an Australian Archives file, A255, "Press Cuttings re Papua".

³ I would like to thank Eileen Dwyer, Archivist for John Fairfax & Sons for helping me to guess how influential Grimshaw's articles for the *Sydney Morning Herald* may have been. The paper's average daily circulation in 1905 was 75,225; in

1906, 77,766; 1907, 80,208; 1908, 87,966; 1909, 93,733; 1910, 97,208; 1911, 103,641. Grimshaw wrote for the *Herald* for most of her career, but these are some of the most important years, when her Pacific "non-fiction" *Red Gods*, and *Vaiti* were published. These figures from the pre-World War One period are not audited, but obtained from an old office ledger.

⁴ In this thesis I am using "ideology"--a notoriously slippery concept--as descriptively, neutrally and flexibly as possible. John Plamenatz' practical-functional definition is a useful summary:

[F]or beliefs to be ideological...they must be shared by a group of people...must concern matters important to the group, and must...serve to hold it together or to justify activities and attitudes characteristic of its members....[T]rue beliefs can also be functional in these ways. What makes beliefs ideological...is their constituting a system of beliefs which is...therefore accepted regardless of whether or not its constituent beliefs satisfy the criteria of truth (*Ideology* 31).

⁵ Cf. Stevenson's account of his meeting with the Marquesans: "A kind of despair came over me...and a kind of rage to think they were beyond the reach of articulate communication, like furred animals, or folk born deaf, or the dwellers of some alien planet....[M]y new fellow creatures sat before me dumb like images. Methought, in all my travels, all human relation was to be excluded; and when I returned home...I should have but dipped into a picture-book without a text....There could be nothing more natural than these apprehensions, nor anything more groundless....[E]ven with the Marquesans, so recently and so imperfectly redeemed from a blood-boltered barbarism, all were to become our intimates, and one, at least, was to mourn sincerely our departure" (8-9).

⁶ Time and again Grimshaw lamented "the luckless traveller whose trade it is to jiggle with words--"Draw that; tell that, if you can!"....I have not told, for I could not' (*FCI* 192); "But through the iron bars of human speech, the human soul can look forth but a very little way" (327).

⁷ George Woodcock's "The Lure of the Primitive" describes activity such as Grimshaw's as "the final frontal assault of organized tourism" (387). To my mind he accurately captures the quality of her Polynesian experience when asserting, "Perhaps the most profound of all the experiences of travelers is the encounter with a society that, unlike their own, lives in harmony with its environment" (400), thus accounting for her

more relaxed appreciation of these cultures. Faced with what the New Hebrides and Western Fiji seemed to represent, Grimshaw was unable to relate, to sense any kinship, and yet, in Jungian terms, she was most likely finding her "shadow", since she projected onto them such repellent characteristics.

⁸ The image of a travelling professional's *nécessaire*, sometimes spoofed in the *Social Review*, appears throughout Grimshaw's work, an admirably condensed means of presenting character. The half-caste Vaiti, for example, deciding between marriage with a disgraced British naval officer and the king of Liali (between racial or aristocratic upward mobility) sorts out the treasures and mementoes of her nomadic existence to help her decide:

Papers, letters, packets of lace, odd bits of jewellery, silk dresses, pistols, knives, collections of rope and twine, cartridges, feathers, shells, cigars, pearl-inlaid boxes, reva-reva plumes, and a miscellaneous collection of odds and ends garnered from all the four corners of the South Seas, strewn the floor, and the box was still half full. ...Vaiti...then opened a little tortoise-shell and silver box, and spilled its contents--a shower of photographs--into her lap. They were an exceedingly various collection--naval, military, British, French, native and half-caste--but most were men, and many were young and handsome. Perhaps the best-looking of the collection was that of a young English naval officer, signed across the corner "R. Tempest," with a Sydney address, and "Must it be good-bye...?" She shut the box, and with set lips took a match, lit it, and set fire to the photograph...the flame seemed to lick sympathetically round her own heart as it crawled about the handsome, debonair, but sensual face... and at last reduced the whole bright picture to a little pile of feathery black ash--dead, dead, dead! (*Vaiti of the Islands* 291-93).

⁹ As "Australian Correspondent Deakin had written about the New Hebrides: "The New Hebrides were ours by right....Once the islands are Anglicised in spirit and Australianised in their immediate relations, the designs of those who seek to make them an appanage of New Caledonia will be defeated" (qtd. in La Nauze. 2 vols. 2: 441). *The Times* had its own lexicon for free-lance and other correspondents: "Our Correspondent" meant "specially employed"; "Our Special

Correspondent" meant employed once; and "Our Own Correspondent" meant resident. When Grimshaw used the term "by special arrangement with the *Times*", she was probably describing her profession in such journalese at the time.

¹⁰ My thanks are due to Hugh Laracy for checking the Colonial Secretary's papers of the Fiji Archives. Item CSO 2880/1905 is a minute dated 3 July 1905, in which Grimshaw states that an honorarium of forty pounds would suffice her to write a book as "a general advertisement for the colony". She then resorts to a threat (however diplomatically put) that she is just on the point of leaving Fiji, but would remain if the forty pounds was granted. She also points out that the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand had paid her fifty pounds for her writings about Tonga, Samoa and Fiji. As we have seen, she wanted im Thurn's imprimatur to authorise the work, and this he was not prepared to do. Laracy notes that Grimshaw's memorandum was apparently submitted to the Colonial Secretary by "representatives of commercial interests in Fiji". The negative reply which was sent to three of them, once filed at 2846/05, has since been lost. Laracy suggests that the interests underwriting *FCI* were the Suva Chamber of Commerce, the Planters' Association, and the Levuka Chamber of Commerce. Grimshaw was not a liar, but she certainly did exaggerate, and so her later statement to Deakin that im Thurn was pleased with her work in Fiji may be viewed as perfectly true, but in retrospect.

¹¹ Grimshaw's correspondence with Deakin may be found in the following depositories: Ltr. to Alfred Deakin, 1 Oct. 1908, Natl. Library of Australia (Canberra), Ms. 1540/2157-9, Correspondence concerning Hubert Murray; Ltr. to Alfred Deakin, 1 Oct. 1908, Natl. Library of Australia, Ms. 1540/15/2419; Ltr. to Alfred Deakin, 1 Oct. 1908, Australian Archives (Canberra), CRS A1 (Dept. of Home and Territories, Correspondence files, annual single number series, 1903-1908).

¹² Another way to contextualise Grimshaw's travel writing would be to compare her work with that of other women travellers such as 'Eleanor Mordaunt', who also travelled in Papua, or Mary Gaunt (*Alone in West Africa*). Gaunt is pertinent because she also began her travels with free passages from Elder Dempster, and she was also self-financing by writing exotic adventure fiction (some of which she wrote before travelling anywhere). Like Grimshaw, she compared herself to an historical survival, or throw-back, to a race of wanderers. Her own travels only became possible when she was widowed. In both instances, freedom from family was a prerequisite for a woman to travel alone. Mary Kingsley's release, if not her motivation, was similar: "[D]ead tired and feeling no one had need of me any more, when my Mother and Father died within six weeks of each other in '92, and my Brother went off to the East, I went down to West Africa to die" (Gwynn, *The Life of Mary Kingsley* 25). Middleton's comment following is realistic rather than harsh: "It would be interesting to know how [women travellers] financed their

trips....One is left with the feeling that although primarily duty and often affection kept a number of women at home...they were also prevented from breaking out by lack of money. Coming into their *patrimony*...[many] dutiful daughters and nieces decided to spend their small income on travel" (6; emphasis mine).

¹³ Batten's *Pleasurable Instruction* is a useful object lesson in the historical fluidity of the genre of travel writing. He notes changes in convention since Pausanias (natural history) and Horace (fictionalised memoir) by focusing on the 18th century, when variations within the genre (by then, an unstable combination of autobiography, descriptive geography, and telling a story for the sake of novelty and variety) made it shift towards the developing novel: Smollett, De Foe, and above all Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*. Day simply concludes, in "Travel Literature and the Journey Theme": "Travel literature is not a genre. It is a great metaphor, or, if you prefer, an archetypal pattern....As probably the greatest theme or archetype of them all, the meaning of the travel motif is simply the journey itself" (40).

¹⁴ A more theoretical exposition of Grimshaw's transformation of perception (from experience) into conception (in her writing) is the process described by Jean Thibaudeau in "Le roman comme autobiographie": how "fragments" become "séquences," the "fragments" being "comme les vestiges d'un livre cependant future," a "livre-futur-déjà-écrit" (201). Equally significant for Grimshaw's future, almost cyclic output, is his explanation of how "[l]e livre--le volume romanesque, le roman--ainsi obtenu--du moment qu'il ne se prétend pas une somme, ne sera à son tour qu'une plus grande séquences, dans une suite non limitée a priori de livres..." (203).

¹⁵ The French structuralist concept of a *combinatoire sé-mantique* designates a "deep structural", fundamental binary opposition which can only be inferred by its workings at the level of textual "surface" and detail, where it organises and orders everything in the text: plot, symbols, images, characters... The critical test of whether a reader or critic has discerned the author's basic meaning-generating system-- is how much of the work can be encompassed and accounted for in terms of the postulated opposition. This conception of narrative as the sequential, surface, distorted manifestation of a binary opposition (also termed a proposition or a predicate) has an ideological dimension as well: the combinational model is decoded as attempting an imaginary solution of social contradictions (historical and political conflicts present, but concealed by, the text itself). As I shall discuss below, Grimshaw's first semantic opposition generating meaning was sexual polarity. But if her Irish heritage of divided, contradictory, colonial and female identity was the first source and shaping force of her imaginative universe (an important early text in this regard is "Killarney"), she was now, in the Pacific, to discover a new hoard of experience and ingredients:

Eastern and Western Pacific; savagery versus civilisation, to add to her basic permutational scheme. Particularly after her visits to Western Fiji, the New Hebrides, and above all New Guinea, polar oppositions hardened and became the sustaining dynamic of many aspects of her later work.

¹⁶ Grimshaw's fascination with the *taupo*-figure pre-dates her Pacific adventures. In the 1890s, one of her pen-names was "Maev", the Queen of Connacht and protagonist of the most famous Irish epic. Of her it is said (as it was of Grimshaw) that "even as a girl...Maeve...outshone her sisters"; "To the old Gaelic bards, Maeve was an Amazon Queen, who commanded her troops in person, and led them against the men of Ulster...The lapse of years has thrown an obscuring halo of romance which has etherialized the warlike, masterful, passionate woman, who ruled Connacht--and her husbands--long ago" ("Maeve.--The Ruler *The Romance of Irish Heroines* 7+). Mary Daly is highly critical of what she would term an Athena-type of woman--another of Grimshaw's emblems--regarding her as a sold-out Amazon, a "daddy's girl" only-too-willing to be conscripted into the Army as a *vivandière*, as Grimshaw described the *taupo*.

¹⁷ Susan Greenstein notes in "Sarah Lee: the Woman Traveller and the Literature of Empire" (in Dorsey et al., *Design and Intent in African Literature* 143) "To the people they met, women like Sarah Lee and Mary Kingsley...were simultaneously less than female (unhusbanded) and honorary males." Stevenson also notes the "sexually ambiguous position" occupied by women "[g]ranted the license to behave like men at moments when 'typically' female conduct would have been not only ludicrous but dangerous..." She notes, however, that, like Grimshaw, many women accepted their honorary male status while anxiously seeking to prove to the public at home that they had remained "self-consciously female in appearance and behavior" (4-5); hence, one assumes, the stylised portraits described in "Ideal Biographical Legend".

¹⁸ C.f. Saul M'Cullagh's revelations about work in "Full Fathom Five:" "And I'm naw mad of wuk, anyhow. Thur's good Belfast i'ern in me. And I've always my work." *On that word he paused*. It had always had a pleasant sound... To-day...it rang harshly. Work... Work... An ugly word, and ugly thing... He saw the mills of Belfast lit up and ablaze, in the dark of the winter morning. He saw the spiritless crowds of spinners and weavers, flowing like a dusky river to the doors...when dark came down and rain fell cold and greasy on the sodden road. He saw shop people, standing, serving, all day long. Himself he saw...springing to the sound of the night bell,...sitting for countless hours in his consulting room, giving out nerve and brain force, which is life, as a conduit gives out water. But behind conduits lie rivers and reservoirs; behind Saul M'Cullagh was his own limited cistern of life, that only, and already it was more than half run away....Over M'Cullagh, worker, swept that morning the worker's bitter revolt against his lot" (*The Long, Long Beaches and Other South Sea Stories* 123. Emphasis

mine).

¹⁹ See Annette Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters* (1975).

²⁰ In her 1893 piece of tourist description, "Killarney", Grimshaw signalled most of what was to reappear as characteristic in her Pacific travel writing: nature worship, "the white man's burden" equated with industrial and urban "civilisation", the postulating of another, ahistorical world, timeless, more meaningful than the time we are doomed to inhabit everyday. Gradually Grimshaw seems to have realised that she could annihilate time if she experienced a similar remoteness in space; when she "crossed the Line" into the South Sea Island world, she felt as if she were walking through the looking glass and dropping off the map into Eden itself; a world she compared to the world of dream, or a galaxy.

Vaiti

"[N]ot an angel in the house at the best of times" (*Vaiti of the Islands* 285).

"A PACIFIC SHREW" (*Daily Express* 30 July 1907, 4).

"[O]ne must be very wide awake when dealing with her" (*Daily Chronicle* 20 July 1907, 3)

When Beatrice Grimshaw created the first female hero of her Pacific fiction, she led her reviewers astray by signalling only one of several literary modes she was experimenting with.

Vaiti...island princess, sailor and pirate, was romance itself, though she never knew the fact to the day of her death, and, indeed, would probably not have understood even the word. Perhaps...the two lawless beings who made their home on lonely Iorana, with their discreditable following of two white beachcombers and half-a-dozen coloured sailors from the heathen Solomon Islands, enjoyed a sip, now and then, out of the magic cup of wonder and romance that lies buried beside the traditional crock of gold, somewhere at the foot of the rainbow. You never found anything but grass and ploughed earth there, good reader, when you painfully toiled to the spot...long, long ago. But that does not say that there are no magic goblets and golden crocks at the foot of any rainbow anywhere in the endless world ("The Last Voyage" 323).

Puzzled comments appear in otherwise glowing reviews that are a delight to anyone interested in reception aesthetics: the calls

for additional impressions and further adventures suggest that in Vaiti Grimshaw produced her own Sherlock Holmes, a character whom readers would not let die. Advertised as "A STRANGE ROMANCE" (*Daily Chronicle* 19 July 1907, 3) it was criticised for what were perceived as structural faults, such as "a singularly unnecessary...prologue which puts the reader on an entirely false track" (*Daily Telegraph* 31 July 1907, 6). The reviewer continued: "The arrangement of the book is perhaps a little confusing, it might have gained more by being divided more definitely into separate stories". "This tale of her doings is just a series of adventures strung together with only the connection of sequence" (*New York Times Saturday Review of Books* 28 Nov. 1908: 706).

What now seems obvious is that they were misreading. Having started on one generic track--romance--and unaware of the necessity to switch, they were instead derailed: mystified by the book's undeniable appeal and oblivious to signs of another generic code staring them in the face. If one reconsiders the comments above, and others such as those following, it becomes evident that romance is hardly the correct designation for what Grimshaw was then producing. Thus the *Spectator* (27 July 1907, 132): "Vaiti, although she is practically destitute of any moral sense, is an attractive and picaresque figure". "[T]hese remarkable stories [are] almost unique...in the adequacy of their heroine alone to the adventures crowded upon her" (*Sydney Morning Herald* 11 Jan. 1908, 12). As one recalls the repeated references to the laughter the book arouses amid scenes of

horror, distaste, or *grotesquerie*, one can hardly avoid the conclusion that we are dealing with a Pacific *pícaro*.

Grimshaw, moreover, appears to have known this, if only intuitively. The implied narrator frequently instructs the reader how to proceed, and provides other clues.¹ Vaiti's story is an unleashing of episodes linked by her majestic, tortured, ambitious personality. This structure results not only because (I surmise) the sequences were written sporadically and speedily, and initially published in serial form.² It is also because picaresque narratives, unlike quest-romances or *Bildungsromane*, imply neither pilgrimage nor progression in a developmental sense, although some upward mobility may occur. Scholes and Kellogg describe the episodic picaresque plot as "the most primitive form of plot employed in the novel" (209). Hence there will be little chronology or character development in either of the Vaiti books.

Vaiti certainly has motivations: "Vaiti had had dreams, oh, but dreams! oh, such dreams! before solid common sense had brought her down to earth, and made her realise [that]...[t]o make a fortune, you must first have one..." (38). But these are overruled by her heredity as the daughter of a disgraced English nobleman (sometimes called "Yorke", sometimes "Saxon", depending on which variant one is reading) and a Maori princess. Thus the prologue, far from "singularly unnecessary", gives the story's principle of causality in six economic paragraphs telling us that Vaiti, like her father, will have a doom rather than a

destiny.

All so long ago! who remembers?

Not the newspapers which, in a day or two after, shrieked the scandal broadcast, east and west.... Not the Prince whose dignity had been insulted by the outbreak of a vulgar card scandal in his very presence--he struck the titled owner of the house off the list of his intimates forthwith...Not the colonel of the famous regiment, who found out defalcations in the funds belonging to the mess, a few days after, and knew why his most promising young officer had done the unforgiveable thing.... No one remembers....

Yet, but for that stormy day in the Highlands, and the boat that fled to sea, these tales of far-off lands had never been told (10-11).

Vaiti of course wants to change her state--to make a fortune and retire to South America, where wealth will conceal the disadvantages of her dubious ancestry and "'on no condition is extradition allowed'" ("Last Voyage" 323). But her secular quest after treasure, reward and profit precisely replicates the narrative's pattern. "Something had taken root in her mind...that struck down and shot up, in the days to come, and led her into [wild] ways and places...As children string berries on a straw, so upon the stem that grew from that seed were strung the strange events that followed, one by one" (*Vaiti of the Islands* 42). Grimshaw could have found no more apt symbols for the narrative movement; Vaiti travels by (and captains, and is master of) a schooner, and her *navigation* amid uncharted waters (as contrasted to the patterned, orderly steamer routes) recapitulates the seemingly random *narration*. That it is *not*

random, but a narrowing circle, is symbolised by the story's end. Vaiti perishes when her schooner is sucked into "the terrible indraught of [a] submarine volcano...like the draught that rushes up a chimney" ("Last Voyage" 331).³

That Grimshaw created a female hero who was a "half-caste", and that Vaiti proved to be so popular, is significant both for feminist criticism and for feminist biography. Not only was Grimshaw producing a phantasised self-portrait or autobiographical projection; she was also making a feminist contribution to the picaresque.⁴ After quoting from the preface to Mary Wollstonecraft's *Mary, a Fiction*, Ellen Moers comments:

Wollstonecraft's preface is a very early, but hardly unique case of the woman writer's stated intention to create a heroic structure for the female voice in literature, and of her encounter with an order of reality perhaps more intractable than social fact--the literary....Those dreadful, sexist little words, the pronouns, have always bedeviled the English writer at moments of heightened awareness that I the Author is a She.

The stammer of incoherence comes into Wollstonecraft's prose as she tries to avoid either male or female forms in her preface.... Heroism is always an awkward focus of the literary imagination, whether the author is male or female...For all writers, female and male, the clash between intention and realisation is the drama of literary creation itself. And where *heroicism* [Moers' term for literary feminism as opposed to feminist social action] is concerned, the by-products of the struggle--changes in literary form and language, in tone, imagery, setting--are often more interesting and more important than the particular heroines it has produced (*Literary Women* 123-24).

To support her contention that "Feminism and heroinism can often be seen to touch in women's literature, but they are not the same" (126), Moers points out that women writers of the 1780s, 1790s and 1800s could take up a whole range of attitudes (including apparent indifference to controversy):

[t]he élitism of Mme de Stael, the Evangelicalism of Hannah More, the conservatism of Maria Edgeworth, the cautious prudery of Fanny Burney, the pedagogical hauteur of Mme de Genlis, the Americanism of Susannah Rowson, the escapism of Mrs. Radcliffe, the irony of Jane Austen (125).

But complete indifference to heroinism was not possible (not even desirable to the most socially conservative of women writers), once women appreciated the money-earning, professional power of speaking in their gender-inflected voices about matters arising from their socio-sexual experience. Scarcely an episode of *Vaiti of the Islands* lacks this literary feminism, which takes picaresque conventions and converts them to the author's own purposes. Vaiti herself voices, in her inimitable literary accent, the conservative "proto-feminist" views of her creator: "Man he see something stop end of him nose. Woman see all the thing stop behind back man, back belong self. Englis'man more 'tupid any Maori man--ugh!" ("The Missing Passengers" 722). And there can be no question that Grimshaw was aware of "those dreadful, sexist little words, the pronouns". Writing to Margaret Windeyer (member of a prominent Sydney family who herself, as one of Australia's first trained women librarians, began the system of "bush-libraries") from the Lakekamu

Goldfield in New Guinea, Grimshaw became inextricably entangled in their snares:

At present, I am living in a tent...pitched in the clearing belonging to the little bushstore [a common motif in her writings, another index to character as the stock-in-trade symbolises its owner] that supplies the goldfields, which are seven to fifteen miles distant. The store-keeper and his wife have only the two rooms--one for the store itself...the other for their bedroom. So anyone who comes to wait here for the launch...if he is a man, he slings his net in one of the outside bulk stores among the cases, and if it is a woman (pronouns hopelessly mixed--blame the English language, not me) she puts up her tent, and sleeps there.

Contemporary reviewers apprehended, without always comprehending, that the author was bending and transgressing literary norms. Time and again both Vaiti and Grimshaw are described as "virile", and one of the most pertinent aspects of such reviews is that they had seized upon Vaiti's *real* "miscegenation". For while Grimshaw consistently described Vaiti's character as a result of her *racially* mixed heredity, many reviewers grasped that the key to Vaiti's variability and fascination is her "*androgyny*". The sole child of a dissolute father, she acquires his social skills and capacities, and hence such descriptions as "the commanding officer in the muslin skirt" (*Vaiti of the Islands* 27). When her future--and second--husband first sees her, she is wearing "a dainty, lacy white muslin frock" and carrying "a Winchester rifle in her lap" (218). To the *Daily Telegraph*, "Miss Grimshaw is an exceedingly clever writer, with a surprising amount of imagination, and a

most virile point of view and power of treatment" (31 July 1907, 6). "This is a remarkable collection of stories", intoned the august *Spectator*:

[a]nd perhaps the most remarkable thing about them is that they are written by a woman. The stories, both in subject and in treatment, are extremely virile, and will certainly not remind any reader of the work of other women novelists; but they suggest the work of certain male writers on the same subject. It might, perhaps, be said that 'all can grow the flower now that all have got the seed'; but these stories...have certain points of originality. For instance, the character of Vaiti herself... (27 July 1907: 132).

This is a typical review, for often those who accepted that a woman had written such a "racy" and "amusing" book (*Academy* 10 Aug. 1907: 779), also deplored that Grimshaw had invaded "blood-curdling!...hair-raising...creepy...and...altogether horrible...jarring" territory more suited to male adventure writers (*Daily Chronicle* 3), such as incest, murder, leprosy, torture, sexual violence (the latter, moreover, practised by Vaiti *against* her husband, not the reverse), and cannibalism.⁵

Numerous others signalled their baffled expectations by admitting that "The sympathies of the reader are with Vaiti all through in spite of the terrible things that she does" (*Dundee Advertiser* 20 July 1907, 9).⁶ Such puzzled criticism was to greet many of Grimshaw's novels: reviewers, delinquent in their censoring function as a "gate-keeper", relished rather than reproved. The *Tribune* (10 July 1907, 2) was the first to see

that "Vaiti...differs from its fellows [in this instance, Jack London's *The Sea-Wolf*] in that it has a heroine instead of a hero". Vaiti represented, in short, "Something new to stories, and to heroines, too..." (*New York Times Saturday Review of Books* 28 Nov. 1908: 706).

Vaiti was as profitable as she was original. Although her own treasure hunts frequently failed, she was a small goldmine for her creator for several decades. The *Morning Post* was one of Grimshaw's most favourable reviewing media, for its reviewers realised that she was no "little Englander". On 14 Oct. 1907 it "demanded" a second "edition" of *Vaiti of the Islands*, by which it presumably meant a second impression. This had in fact already appeared by August 1907, two months after the first printing. The *Morning Post* ventured to "prophecy that [the novel's] vivacious humour and original theme will carry it triumphantly to a third and even a fourth ["edition"] (2). Indeed, Vaiti had already appeared, and continued to appear, in a variety of formats.

It is tempting to speculate when Grimshaw actually wrote this lengthy sequence. In book form, *Vaiti of the Islands* and *Queen Vaiti* were published 13 years apart. But the stories comprising them were all composed earlier, for the last incidents in *Queen Vaiti* were serialised in late 1908. We know that Grimshaw had to take her chances waiting for a schooner for seven weeks on Savage Island during the northern hemisphere summer of 1904. She then spent four months of the "hot" season of 1904 on the

schooner *Caroline* and four weeks around Christmas time on Tonga, perhaps because, like the songwriter-protagonist Deirdre of *Conn of the Coral Seas*, "she felt the urge of music increase in her, [and]...shut herself in her room at the hotel, and wrote much of the day, coming out at times to play for a quiet hour on the piano--songs written and to be written, fragments, interpretations" (21).⁷

After her travels to the New Hebrides in October and November 1905, Grimshaw returned from Sydney to London in March 1906. Since many of Vaiti's adventures (by no coincidence, the most gruesome ones) take place in the New Hebrides, one deduces a fairly frantic writing spate early in 1906, for by June of that year the first Vaiti series was appearing on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.⁸ Grimshaw's agent's records indicate, moreover, that by 10 June 1906 the English and Colonial Book Rights had been sold to Vaiti's first publisher in book form, the same Eveleigh Nash who had first published *In the Strange South Seas*. By Dec. 1906 *Pearson's Magazine* was serialising the same group of stories. The second series (the stories that became *Queen Vaiti* in 1920) began in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in January 1908, and entered the American market via the *Saturday Evening Post* from February to June 1908. *Pearson's Magazine*, loyally declaring that Grimshaw's "insight into the life of [the] South Sea Island-world surpasses that of any writer since Stevenson's death", ran the second series from April to September 1908. *Sunset, the Magazine of the Pacific and of all the Far West* published two of the tales in late 1908.

In book form the first sequence, *Vaiti of the Islands* was published by Eveleigh Nash in June 1907, when an export number of the *Publisher and Bookseller* also mentioned in an advertisement that *Vaiti of the Islands* was in preparation for Unwin's Colonial Library (27 July 1907, 59). It was followed by cheaper Newnes editions (1907, 1916 and 1919), a Pearson edition (1915) and an American edition (1908). *Queen Vaiti* had a similarly popular career, appearing in the New South Wales Bookstall series in 1920⁹ and in England in a variety of Newnes editions, first as a seven penny novel (1921), then as a cheap (one shilling) edition in 1925 and as a six penny version in 1928.

Whenever *Vaiti* was conceived, then, she survived in print for 22 years. Some measure of her appeal may be gauged by the fact that, in the 1921 series of "Newnes' Novels", Grimshaw, Arnold Bennett and H. de Vere Stacpoole each authored three of the 37 titles, and Jack London and Conan Doyle four each. Although the buxom, sultry *Vaiti* had always been attractively illustrated, in 1908 she was clothed even when diving, but by 1921 she was bare-breasted with her second husband (and, through him, the reader) depicted as spectator-voyeur. *Vaiti* is one of the few Grimshaw heroes to make the transition from (father's) daughter to sexual partner--from adolescence to adulthood--and the only one whose sexuality is represented (always sadistically).

Roughly converting serialisations and editions into hard cash, Nash's *Vaiti of the Islands* initially earned Grimshaw 20 pounds,

negotiated for in 1906 but not paid until 1908. The American serial rights for one story ("A Tea Party in Cannibal Land") of 5000 words were sold to the *New York Herald* for \$100.00 in 1907, the increase in payment per wordage itself significant. However, by contracts in 1919 and 1920 Grimshaw sold all remaining rights in fiction and other works published prior to *The Terrible Island* (1920), except for the cinema rights to *Red Bob of the Bismarcks* (1915), for 400 pounds, perhaps to finance her 1921 trip to England. While the agent's records are not precise enough to account for the financial fate of each of the Vaiti stories or series, the fact that six stories in the second series earned over 150 pounds in 1908 for "British serial rights with entry to the Colonies" suggests that Grimshaw must have known, packing her bags for her second Pacific trip (the one that settled her in Papua for 30 years) that fiction of the type she was beginning to elaborate--with a rogue hero, performing dubious exploits in a distant and therefore pardonably lawless, marginal part of the world--was going to pay. Her good (i.e., chaste) female heroes would marry, and the wicked ones, like Vaiti, would be punished with death. But neither was to be Grimshaw's fate. This kind of writing would enable her to remain single and to prosper.

But if, in a tradition by then (after Stevenson, and including Becke and London) becoming well-worn, in which there was "no end to the extravagances that may be committed by a lady with a ring through her nose" (*Academy* 10 Aug. 1907: 779), in what did Vaiti's originality consist? It would seem, as I hinted earlier,

in Grimshaw's female, literary-feminist modulation of the picaresque. Hers was a reworking of the genre, involving more than the fact that the central character is female.¹⁰ By briefly summarising basic definitions of picaresque, and applying feminist criticism of the roles of women within this genre, we can see both how Grimshaw conformed to, but also deviated from, generic conventions.

Most critics agree that the central character of a picaresque tale, usually male and often illegitimate or of questionable and/or exotic ancestry, is forced to live on his wits, in a marginal social situation, as the servant of tyrannical masters. Unscrupulous in craving upward mobility in a materialistic world, his morality is a function of his financial position, and wavers accordingly. The narrative is usually "autobiographical", a pseudo first-person account in a vernacular. Its implicit social thrust is said to be satirical, since the episodic narrative movement involves "horizontal" adventures through various classes, conditions and circumstances: social criticism is thus virtually inevitable, if not necessarily explicitly voiced.

But what if the *pícaro* is a *pícaro*?

Ann Daghistany notes in "The *Pícaro* Nature" that:

The *pícaro* occupies a unique position in the history of literature. She is not glorified as an angel or mother figure, nor can a neat

label such as siren, murderess or evil married woman circumscribe her personality. She is no old maid, and her immorality is as often cause of celebration as of the remorse of the traditional adulteress....The contrasts between the male and female counterparts of the picaresque genre illuminate the interesting deviations and limitations of the *picara* nature (51).

In a survey ranging from *Quartilla* to *Moll Flanders*, Daghistany argues that male and female rogues differ in their nature, not merely in the structural subordination of the *picara* within the *picaro's* story which one might expect. For while the *picaro* is a victim of class, the *picara* suffers from both class and gender exploitation, with her immutable femaleness traditionally represented as "naturally" evil. Femaleness is equated with sexuality, and female sexuality associated with pollution or perversion. Males may exercise sexuality; females incarnate it.

Because of the *picara's* social immobility compared to the male (her gender restricting her opportunities for geographical or social change), she is forced to resort to, and made to pay for, wiles associated with her sex, as well as intellect or cunning. She has a few opportunities denied the male (e.g., disguising herself as a man). But having no masters is not one of these, since she is thus also deprived of apprenticeships and skills and can rely on only one major way up--a wealthy marriage. Because she must resort to "the charm which fascinates, an effect associated with magic spells and the powers of darkness" (56) "the connections between beauty, duplicity, ingenuity, charm and sexual licentiousness...unmask the hidden face of evil

and corruption embodied in woman as the devil's advocate, a tradition begun by Eve as the serpent's spokeswoman". Daghistany concludes that the male may be a social outcaste, but not necessarily a moral one, whereas the female inevitably is.

Moers is more concerned with the uses to which women *writers* have put a literary mode not of their contrivance, or how they have invented other modes to permit female heroes to accomplish what traditional genres would not permit. She thus regards the Gothic novel as evolved by women as "a feminine substitute for the picaresque, where heroines could enjoy all the adventures and alarms that masculine heroes had long experienced, far from home, in fiction" (126). The *Vaiti* series includes many Gothic strands or elements, and ignores "the prohibition on outdoor female activities" (130), a taboo that Moers also finds consistently violated in the female Gothic-picaresque.

The Victorian woman writer's interest in Mrs. Radcliffe, long after her kind of mannered and genteel Gothic fiction had vanished from the literary mainstream, is a minor but interesting sign that women's literature flourished on its own traditions. More significant is the whole thrust in women's writings toward physical heroics, toward risk-taking and courage-proving as a gauge of heroism, long after male writers had succumbed to the prevailing antiheroic, quiescent temper of the bourgeois century, and admitted...that adventure was no longer a possibility of modern life. Latecomers to literature as they were, and still bedazzled with the strengths of feminine self-assertion, women writers of the nineteenth century were long reluctant to succumb to the ennui, the spleen, the *tedium vitae* of the *mal du siecle* (131).¹¹

What Grimshaw accomplished with Vaiti, we can now see, was generic innovation. She gave the *pícaro* centre stage. Far from being the "princesse lointaine" of fairy tale and romance, the object or reward of a quest, Vaiti is the subject and agent of her own story, the forerunner of "the Liberry woman", the prophet Andi Lala (*The Star in the Dust*), Rizpah (*Victorian Family Robinson*) and several other convict or shady Grimshaw protagonists who are "prisoners of sex" because, by expressing rather than withholding their sexuality, they are inevitably killed. Vaiti has a new accent, an unusual voice in literature. Like Vaiti, Grimshaw seems never to have mastered foreign languages not cognates of her own. But she did, again like Vaiti, have an acute ear for dialect, creoles and pidgins, preferring them to "English and prose" (*Vaiti of the Islands* 131). Contemporary readers seem to have derived much of their pleasure from reading the Vaiti stories *aloud*. In *Queen Vaiti* her first words are "Hades! I think some pretty dam queer business he do here, my word" (11).

That this striking figure owes much of her appeal to picaresque conventions transposed to the South Seas now seems obvious, as does her literary-historical ancestry. Among the many signs of her literary origin are *her parentage* ("descendant of cannibal chiefs and lawless soldiers, more than half a pirate herself" (140) and the incest she nearly commits with her cousin Pita; her *morality* ("unscrupulous, ruthless and crafty", 26); her *materialism* ("The Tale of the Scarlet Butterflies" clothes

her in a gown decorated with the world's rarest orchids); her skill at *disguise* (she discards European clothes as easily as English verbs) and *transvestism*; her *sexuality* (her status as a "scarlet woman" is symbolised by flowers, her red whaleboat, her red *pareo*, and her red lips, but her "beauty was almost repellent [with] a certain strain of fierceness" [*Queen Vaiti* 3]); her *occult powers* (like the *Sybil* for whom her schooner is named, and Cassandra and Medusa with whom she is compared, black-eyed Vaiti possesses foresight and second sight, "and hidden away somewhere in the strange nature of this strange thing in woman's shape, there was more than a touch of the true witch wildness and fire" [*Vaiti of the Islands* 151]); she is even capable, by sheer willpower, of breaking witchdoctors' curses); and her *cunning* ("She hated thinking, and felt as if she was going mad when the half-white brain in her pretty dusky head took a strange fit of sober industry. Swift, instinctive plotting and planning were one thing, deliberate reflection quite another..." 234).

But what may her character owe to life rather than literature? Is Vaiti a projection, analogue, or rejection of aspects of Grimshaw? A magnified self or an anti-self?

It seems to me that there *are* autobiographical elements in Vaiti, whereas the first-person Pacific non-fiction has a black hole where the heart should be. This suggests that in fiction Grimshaw could be more indulgent towards her own phantasies, less self-protective. The Vaiti books may be read,

symptomatically, as biographical documents. More precisely, all three of the Pacific narratives can finally be "placed" if read together as I have done. Together they form what Scholes and Kellogg term a "picaresque-autobiographical shape" in which the "quasi-autobiographical string" [with "interesting echoes" of the author's "own life"] "is of more importance to the history of narrative than the interesting beads which are strung on it" (76).

The Vaiti stories could be said to contain their author at several levels, some of which are more under Grimshaw's control than others (like Vaiti's whalebone stays, which can only restrain her at times). An occasional, intrusive, startling first-person narrator addresses the reader directly, an "Ancient Mariner"-type ploy which Grimshaw continued to use in her fiction--a phatic "you" which seizes the reader's attention and will not let it rest. ¹²

You are not to suppose that Saxon's daughter did not see and feel these things--did not hear the voiceless talk of the great seas on starry evenings, or feel her mortal body almost rapt away in the ecstasy of a black midnight or a shrieking storm; just as you, perhaps, who think that no one ever shared such experiences yourself, may feel (*Vaiti of the Islands* 34).

The narrator is self-described variously as "the necessarily all-knowing biographer of Vaiti" (40) and her "chronicler". S/he claims personal acquaintanceship with Vaiti ("I who knew

her") although admitting that "no one ever knew her altogether" (124).

That this person is learning to be a story-teller is indicated by a poorly-integrated incident which is nonetheless of considerable importance to Vaiti. She visits "Tusitala...the great English story-teller, living in his splendid house...surrounded by a humble clan of native followers...who was as great a chief as Mataafa himself, and had spoken to her, Vaiti, as one worthy of all honour" (42). This image of Robert Louis Stevenson, earning money and prestige by story-telling, remains in Vaiti's mind (and was surely securely lodged in Grimshaw's) as she resolves to free herself of her father's debts and "to be 'someone'" (40).

To disentangle the dreams and hopes, wild fancies, and wilder aspirations of the half-caste mind when that mind, puzzling and elusive enough to the pure white in any case, is further complicated with a touch of genius, would be a task worthy of a whole academy of science. This much alone can the necessarily all-knowing biographer of Vaiti say--that she wanted to be 'someone,' and wanted it so badly that nothing else in life seemed worth having, or even existent (39-40). ¹³

Vaiti supplies what is missing throughout *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* and *In the Strange South Seas*--the unifying protagonist for whom the incidents and settings have personal and symbolic meaning. Other characters in Grimshaw's fiction may be more directly autobiographical, like Deirdre Rose of *Conn of the Coral Seas*, a Belfast girl who awakens in adolescence, not

to love, but to the urge to wander.

Could she tell [her sister] how words, lines, names in geography books...hynotised her, and repeated again and again the call that she was sure as death, she must answer one of these days? ... The names of the Irish mountain ranges, strung in a row to be learnt off by heart, were full of a mystic wonder, a beauty that she could not have explained or told.... [T]hey sounded like bells rung at evening to her. And yet it was not they that she desired. It was something that they meant (12).

After a disastrous, unconsummated marriage and an unhappy love affair, Deirdre finds herself "in her wanderings and...her work. It was to write the love-songs of the world--she who had not, and never must have, love" (16).¹⁴

But Vaiti, too, encompasses much of Grimshaw's personality, not necessarily in the sense of being a conscious self-portrait, but undoubtedly as phantasy. From what we are told of Vaiti, we can glimpse aspects of *Grimshaw's* identity, partly already formed, partly still in the making. As Edel has written in *Literary Biography*:

The critic and the biographer must see the particular and the general, the story itself and the myth of which it may be a part; they gather up the images and symbols of the poet, or in fiction the design, the range, the matter, the manner, the creation of characters, their projection and their relations--...attach them to tradition and discipline and influence, and determine their essential pattern and meaning...[The biographer] discovers recurrent images and recurrent modes of thought; patterns have a way of repeating themselves, for each writer

has his own images and his own language and his own chain of fantasy; there is no writer, no matter how rich and varied his imagination, who does not possess his individual world of words and his peculiar vision of reality. . . . [E]very comma, every period, every inflection, every word has been placed on the page by the living, glowing, creating consciousness. If he reads the words of the novelist, he soon begins to see that certain types of story--regardless of the adventitious circumstances of creation--certain significant characters, certain solutions, and certain ethical views have a way of recurring, always in new and artful disguises. However much a . . . work is independent of its creator, and may be judged independently, invisible threads remain--many more than anyone can discover and disentangle--which bind it to the fashioning consciousness (52-54).

Supposing that the Vaiti stories were the only fiction by Grimshaw we possessed, or which she ever wrote, some matters are reiterated too often to be coincidental. These include her subordination and fixation, but superiority to, a weak and alcoholic father (just as Yorke/Saxon cheats at cards and steals funds from the officers' mess, Nicholas Grimshaw, also a "Saxon", was abruptly dismissed as manager of the largest spinning mill in Belfast); the assumption of imperiousness ("Doubly dowered...with the instinct of rule" [*Vaiti of the Islands* 40] in a person hankering after an impossible legitimacy--impossible because her ancestry is not only mixed but dubious; "the Irish Grimshaws" were from Lancaster and we have seen how they liked to claim descent from Edward Ist of England and Margaret of France); the assertion that her mixed heritage (not only national or "racial", but socio-sexual) is demanding, strengthening and draining at once ("'Alf-caste or

quarter-caste, Vaiti's too good a daughter for him...She's got all his brains..." 9); her conviction that only capital--not easily available to a woman--will compensate for her lack or loss of class, caste or husband; her decision to live by her wits and learn new skills to further her ambition; and her preference for instinct, impulse and intuition rather than analysis.

Ultimately, of course, Vaiti is a fiction, and my intention is not to equate her with Grimshaw, for Vaiti may contain as much wish-fulfillment or denial as transposition of biographical "fact". Rather, only a certain kind of woman would have created that kind of character.

Throughout this and the preceding section I have shown Grimshaw in transition, searching restlessly for a home and a vocation, and finding something not intended for a woman of her nationality and class. Instead of making a suitable marriage in Ireland or England, she chose to become a writer in the Pacific. Having seen this come about, we must now ask why.¹⁵ Initially Grimshaw's passage to Papua was not inevitable or predictable (perhaps not even imaginable); ultimately, it was by no means coincidental. Many of the keys to her personality and to her writing must be sought in the Ireland evoked in the early Vaiti stories as "the impetuosity that is handcuffed, by an odd freak of geography, to the steady, serious English" (Watt edition of *Vaiti of the Islands* 27).¹⁶ The literal and metaphorical significance of Ireland to Grimshaw's Papuan work

must be sought 100 years before Grimshaw's birth. when her great-grandfather Nicholas Grimshaw of Lancashire (1747-1804), lately imprisoned for debt on the Isle of Man, "crossed the water" to Belfast.

Notes

1 For example, the lovely passage about the despoliation of Arcadia by Vaiti and her companions, an "ex"-naval officer, "ex"-doctor, "ex"-attache and an "ex"-gentleman at large.

Oread nor Dryad, satyr nor faun, have ever lent the charm of their names and legends to the lovely South Sea Islands, so far more beautiful than the archipelagoes of story-haunted Greece; yet if they had, it would need but little imagination to picture the gentle spirits of the wilderness flying in terror and despair from every isle where the foot of man should be set. A year before, the lonely island had been like a maiden's dream of the sinless Paradise guarded by the flaming sword, in Eden long ago. Now...fear had come to the wild creatures that nested in the bush, and dead men's bones were rotting in the sands...and, in Vaiti's green palm-leaf house, the white men were drinking, crying and chattering... ("The Tale of the Missing Passengers", "Sunset Magazine" 721).

2 The Vaiti stories were serialised in Britain, the U.S. and Australia. From the start of her Pacific writing career, Grimshaw had several metropolitan audiences, undermining the Laracys' claim that her readership was mainly regional. The records of Hughes Massie, Grimshaw's agent for most of her career, reveal a keen appreciation, on her part, of her rights as an author.

3 Even in the realm of fiction and phantasy Grimshaw could not permit a half-caste to survive. "(P)rovidence ought rightly to have a down on the man...responsible for any one of them, for there seems to be no right place for them, either in heaven or on earth" (VAITI OF THE ISLANDS 198). Both literary convention and many scientists at the time supported the belief that half-castes inherited the worst qualities of both parents. Because of a double sexual standard, it was taken for granted that the guilty party would be male; when a white woman took the sexual

initiative, she was immediately beyond the pale. Grimshaw cites a monitory "case" in *In the Strange South Seas*. In her fiction as well, she refers frequently to this "case".

⁴ I am using "feminism" in the literary sense defined by Ellen Moers, who differentiates between feminism as a consciously held ideology and "literary feminism, or what I propose to call heroinism..." (*Literary Women* 122).

⁵ In a remarkable tour-de-force, "The Tale of the Missing Passengers", Grimshaw structured a mystery story around the theme of white people eating other white people without ever directly representing it or even mentioning it "aloud", so to speak. The reader completes the story by deciphering ample, skilfully scattered clues.

⁶ See also "In the South Seas" under "New Novels" in the *Tribune* 10 July 1907, 2.

⁷ Women writers, Moers notes, often represent their own artistic activity by analogy within a work, such as Jane Eyre's paintings. In this case, Deirdre's talent at composing popular songs may be seen as emblematic of Grimshaw's own craft.

⁸ At this time the *Sydney Morning Herald* had an average daily circulation of 77,766, although the Saturday edition in particular must have had many more readers. It did not fail to note, in its editorial blurb at the beginning of the first Vaiti sequence, that Grimshaw's fiction had a definite link with politics: much of the action was described as taking place "in that portion of the Pacific, which is almost a heritage of Sydney"--in other words, the New Hebrides. Expansionist-minded, nationalistic Australians wished to wrest the islands from joint Colonial Office and French control, and Grimshaw shared this view.

⁹ *Queen Vaiti* was one of the few Grimshaw novels published in Australia, the others including *White Savage Simon*, a women's magazine abridgment of *My South Sea Sweetheart*, and *South Sea Sarah* and *Murder in Paradise*, which were published in one volume. This reflects the dependence of colonial writers on metropolitan publishers and, in the case of Grimshaw's later work, both her degeneration as a writer and the difficulties of publishing in wartime: some of Grimshaw's bookstock was destroyed during bombings in London in World War II, while World War I saw the sinking of ships containing her books.

¹⁰ There had, of course, been *pícaras* in English fiction before, but most of them were the creation of male authors and served as foils for the central male character.

¹¹ Moers also comments that "Many a woman writer after Radcliffe has responded to the restrictions of her life with the same kind of romance ['travel combined with rapture' through an exotic, impossible landscape, ever changing, ever delightful to

the senses]" (128). Her examples include Fanny Burney's *The Wanderer*, Georges Sand's *Lettres d'un voyageur*, and Virginia Woolf's *The Voyage Out*.

¹² Grimshaw thus advised her neighbour and fellow writer, G.M. Turnbull, "You want to have a story to tell which you would be dying to impart to your friends, if it had happened in real life. A story that would make you catch hold of someone and say--"Look here, you've got to listen; just think what happened to...." (punctuation hers; Ltr., 28 June 1930).

¹³ When Vaiti becomes Queen of Liali, her social ascendancy may be regarded as a reference to Grimshaw's own success in fiction: "Some few there were who frowned at the triumph of a foreigner and a stranger; but Vaiti's arts had succeeded in making her popular, and the malcontents were borne down by the road of public amusement and assent" (*Vaiti of the Islands* 299-300).

¹⁴ In making Deirdre a composer of love-songs who will never know love, Grimshaw is endorsing the patriarchal taboo on women artists: creativity is only licensed by the renunciation of socially conventional "femaleness". Her two earliest fictions, *Broken Away* (1897) and *A Fool of Forty* (serialised in the *Social Review* the following year), as well as many of her early short stories, hammer home the point that women's proper creativity is *reproductive*. Creativity required chastity. The irony and the pathos are that Grimshaw accepted this injunction.

¹⁵ To anticipate, it seems very likely, judging from Grimshaw's abrupt exit from the *Social Review* after weeks of haranguing in it, that over-work and possibly even breakdown forced her to take stock of her life, in the process resolving to fulfill her childhood dreams after all. She thus wrote in the Introduction to *Three Wonderful Nations*:

Some one [sic] was very tired.

Someone had been overworking....The sordid details of each day's work suddenly became unbearable; singly, collectively, and altogether life itself became almost unbearable too. Yet where was real rest to be found...? [T]he price of a journey through "The Islands" is not altogether covered by steamship fares and hotel bills...[T]he voyager must be prepared to add the real-gold coin of a little heartache, the heavy silver of a little longing, paid down on the account of life for long months after the journey is a memory... (1).

¹⁶ Vaiti's constant antagonist is the Irish Donahue, master of a rival fortune-hunting schooner. Needless to say, the author and Vaiti see to his destruction in the end. Here one

senses the author pitting her female hero against "Irish" temptations which she can only control, ultimately, by killing them.

Coming of Age in 'Bigotsborough'

[I]reland is the country of antitheses and contradictions (Douglas, *The Unpardonable Sin* 113).

When the soul...is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets (Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 184).

They let him go. That he would have gone all the same, occurred to nobody (Grimshaw, "His Royal Highness, Smith" 200).

It was around...Ireland that the moral problems of imperialism first assembled: whether one race ever had the right to rule another, and whether the end could justify the means....[T]he Irish question was the most crippling of all the imperial burdens....It was a backward people, properly part of the White Man's Burden. It was a proud and ancient people, only kept backward by oppression. It was a nation incapable of self-government. It was incapable of self-government only because it had never been allowed to try. It was really British anyway, and had no right to separate loyalties. It was a Celtic entity, different in race, custom and religion. It would prosper only as part of a greater whole....Free Ireland and you would dismember the Empire. Hold Ireland and the Empire would never be serene (Morris, *Pax Britannica* 478).

Not 'til the loom is silent,
 And the shuttles cease to fly,
 Shall God unroll the canvas,
 And explain the reasons why.
 The dark threads are as neatful,
 In the weaver's skillful hand,
 As the threads of gold and silver,
 In the pattern he has planned.

(Weaver poem qtd. by Messenger 155).

In "His Royal Highness, Smith", a story published when Grimshaw had lived away from Ireland for over three decades, she described the motives and impulses driving a person very like her younger self to "break away" from social privilege and duty:

Kerry Smith was a half-caste; not in body, as the white-and-black peoples are, but in soul, as very often, are they who claim mixed English and Irish blood. He had an English father, an Irish mother; he, Smith senior, had had an Irish mother...descended in part from Anglo-Irish settlers....Kerry...was English, Ulster, practical not quite half the time; the other half and a bit, he was Celt to the core, full of dreams and queer desires, harbourer of the sort of fancies that 'fatten no pigs.'...

Kerry's refusal to become the lord of a 'good wee weavin' mill' near Whitehouse, was set down, by his family, as evidence of criminal lunacy. ...[H]e had been heard to say that the sound of a weaving shed, fifty yards away, made him want to cut his throat.

Kerry's cousin, Andrew...bought the factory cheap.... 'Send him to the Colonies, and make sure he can't come back,' advised Andrew... (199-200).

References to Ireland throughout Grimshaw's work represent far more than a residue. A structuring symbolism is at work, rendering a world-view centred around confusing and complex

notions of gender, race, class and nationality. As a woman from a declining mercantile family, who matured in Britain's oldest colony¹ when it was wracked by industrialisation, urbanisation and dissident nationalism, Grimshaw could hardly have arrived in the Pacific colonies and dependencies without some presuppositions concerning colonial-metropolitan relations and colonial settler/"national" economic development within an Imperialist framework. Her heritage was contradictory identity in a colonial-become-capitalist society. Her own family had been pioneers of Ulster's "industrial revolution" in textiles, so that "it is no exaggeration to say that the fortune of the city was largely founded on the cotton trade" (Gill, *The Rise of the Irish Linen Industry* 227).

Both the problems and the privileges of Grimshaw's experiences in Ireland fed into her later depictions of Papua. Contradictions, oppositions and paradoxes, at the levels of apparent themes and deep structure, betray the continuing importance of her formative Irish years: the organising matrix of much of her later fiction.² Even a mere listing of her characters' names--Deirdre of the Sorrows and Conn the Hundred-Fighter, Vaiti's antagonist Donahue, Connemara, Hugh Lynch, Owen Ireland, Red Bob (of the Bismarcks), Piers Finian/"Peter Green"--manifests the continuing influence of Ireland on her Pacific fiction.

But the significance of Grimshaw's Irish background has received no attention by historians or literary critics. By stressing it,

I am not implying a simplistic, unilateral, or reductive relationship: because she was this in Belfast, she was bound to be that in Port Moresby. Origins are not sufficient explanations; connections are not necessarily continuous or automatic; relating is not reducing. Emphasising the importance of a concept such as "determination" in understanding a writer's development is not to argue for *determinism*. Rather, Grimshaw's Irish experiences were a determinant framework in the sense of "limitations and pressures" explicated by Raymond Williams in *Marxism and Literature* and "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory". Or, as formulated by a writer Grimshaw considered one of her models, Robert Louis Stevenson, Ireland was her first opportunity for identifying "the narrow limits and great possibilities of our existence" ("Walt Whitman" 66). To adopt a metaphor from the linen weaver's craft, Grimshaw's country and society of origin provided her with a kind of warp, which is "fixed", "already there when the weaving begins" (Miller, "Ariachne's Broken Woof" 57).

But Grimshaw, within its confines--and, like a handloom weaver, taking the warp chains away from the warehouse to work at home--left her country and wove a new design. To visualise her life-history of inheritance, flight, recapitulation and modification--the relations between the Irish world she abandoned (but which never left her, in dream or in writing) and the Papua she adopted (but which would never entirely accept her)--one may imagine a portrait, an embroidery, perhaps, with a bleak Northern background and a lush tropical foreground. One

hundred years after her birth, the Anglo-Irish writer Denis Ireland, like Grimshaw from a textile manufacturing family, described how he would alter a conventional portrait of his grand-uncle.

Instead of that stuffy brown curtain there should be white strips of linen bleaching on the green banks of the Lagan [River]; behind that again, Belfast's mountain-dominated forest of factory chimneys; with...prospects of tumbledown cottages and handloom weavers working the treadles in their stockinged feet. Further back, beyond the looming city and its black pall of coal smoke, should be wars and massacres and a peasantry dispossessed and starving...("The Victorian Society" 15).

Had he added a thriving Northern Imperial port with warehouses heaped with *Kolonialwaren* his representation would be even more accurate.

Our figure is an authority of some kind, bespectacled, the very personification of a "compleat authoress". But she is also wearing a mantilla, and a rose is at her throat. She is always clad in black or white, and favours Tsarina-like arrangements of her hair hinting at its suitability for tiaras. All round her one should picture a luxuriant, Rousseau-like dreamscape of flowers and wild animals running riot; an environment where Gauguin, Derain, or William Morris with his delight in "bright flowers and strange birds" would not feel strangers. In this distant place, in nearly 40 books, she created her own design, picking up the Irish threads and remembered patterns, but achieving a result (if not always a resolution) very like the

beaded tapestry worked by one of her earliest female heroes:

In composition, in drawing, and in technique, it violated a half-a-dozen canons of art. Yet the life and spirit of the work, the wind in the sky, the wild freedom of the whole design, and above all, the superb splendour of its colouring... ("Miss Silver's Attic" 191-92).

It is no accident that this is created by a spinster, Miss Silver, with no living relatives, rather than by "Dorothy Gordon, the brilliant young painter...who would not exhibit in the Royal Academy,...who had been quite rude to the editor of the 'Ex Cathedra Review' (and who) had seen strange countries and alien races" (191). Miss Silver, like Dorothy but in an uncannily predictive way, is a Grimshaw self-portrait. Eking out an existence in an isolated, northern coastal village only tolerable for tourists for a few months in a year, Miss Silver has, in her own fashion, obeyed the "call of the wild" described by Mary Daly in GYN/ECOLOGY. In personality she is "not tamed or domesticated...being...of a kind not ordinarily subjected to domestication...(and) not living near or associated with man" (343). Her work is equally eccentric and original, "growing or produced without the aid and care of man...exceeding normal or conventional bounds in thought, design, conception, execution, or nature: EXTRAVAGANT, FANTASTIC, VISIONARY (sic)...acting, appearing, or being manifested in an unexpected, undesired, or unpredictable manner: RANDOM, ERRATIC" (sic) (343-44). Dorothy Gordon's astonishment prefigures the amazement of several later Grimshaw characters who expect Papuan art to be "primitive" or

"wild" in the crudest senses.

Line? These half-cannibals could teach it to all Paris. Colour? They take the sunset--the strange, secondary-colour sunset of the black-sand country and spin it into their skeins of twisted pattern, hue for hue ("The Long, Long Day" 272-73).

Many striking connotations spring from Miss Silver's tapestry and the story in which it figures: the eccentric spinster's struggle to create it, and thus to triumph, via art, over her stifling environment. She practises her arts in secret. A sense of power and productivity are exercised within a rigid frame. Embellishment, imagination and invention surpass "reality."

Such an image could come naturally to a woman born into a family that had for generations been textile craft workers become factory owners; famed not only for their industry and technological inventiveness, but for the beauty of the designs they printed on or wove into cloth. In 1812, 30 years or so after Grimshaw's great-grandfather pioneered the first water mill in Ireland to spin cotton twist while carrying on with his original calico-printing business, the Rev. John Dubourdieu remarked that the patterns printed on material produced in the Grimshaws' factories possessed a "beauty and variety...too well known to require a panegyric here" (*Statistical Survey of the County of Antrim...* note to 407). "In the trade of printing calicoes Messrs. Grimshaw took the lead, and were popularly distinguished for the style and execution of the goods brought

out at their establishment" (McCall qtd. in Gill 232). These patterns included fruits, flowers, crests and mottoes.

Unfortunately the patterns invented or adapted by the first generation of "Irish Grimshaws" have not survived. Industrial art historian Ada K. Longfield has lamented the paucity of information about:

this form of industrial art at a period when it was really still in the nature of an art, and before the mechanical perfections of 19th century machinery had virtually eliminated the earlier attributes of a craft....The imperative need for a continuous supply of fresh designs is obvious...and these would have included not only smaller types suitable for clothing, but also larger pictorial and semi-pictorial compositions adaptable to hangings, wall and furniture coverings, and to decorative and commemorative handkerchiefs....Conscious as well as unconscious 'borrowing' and copying of particularly popular patterns was not at all uncommon, and indeed it was the growing excess of cheap provincial imitations...that led to the passing of the first English copyright acts protecting designs for printing on cotton, linen and muslin...("Notes on the Linen and Cotton Printing Industry in Northern Ireland..." 64).

Fascinating for the biographer are Grimshaw's legacies of technical expertise combined with imaginative virtuosity, and of a talent for exercising a craft transformed into mass production. Beatrice Grimshaw had a lifelong fascination for emblems, designs, and self-declarations (which can also be construed as guides or admonishments). To Stephen Conn (the "Hundred-Fighter" of *Conn of the Coral Seas*) she gave Captain

J.P. Grimshaw's motto, *Candide et Constanter*. Common to such patterns and mottoes is that they crystallise past initiative and ingenuity which have then become a reliable but static heritage, repeatable in mass-produced form. The image combines necessity and originality, much as the master image in the Vaiti stories which instructs readers how to interpret *her* "chronicle" or "biography": a *seed* takes root and a *chain* of events follows, but the action, however wide-roaming or "Odyssean" is centripetal (see also "The Woman in the Cage" 178).

So Grimshaw seems to have conceived of life (at least, for her characters). Individual autonomy is heavily governed and circumscribed by pre-given, genetically-innate possibilities, although occasionally or briefly surpassing them. It seems only appropriate to render the shape of her life as she seems to have lived, felt, and thought it, as well as to reserve space for writer and readers to analyse and interpret this pattern.

Edel notes in the preface of the definitive edition of his life of Henry James that after the publication of *The Untried Years* a "deluge of James letters...followed":

At one moment I had 2,000 holographs on my desk... When I had finished, I had read not only the family archive at Harvard, where there are at least 7,000 letters, but as many again scattered in many places. The new material had to be assimilated; my solution was to use a 'retrospective' method--...a form of 'flashback.' I saw no reason why this could not legitimately serve the ends of biography as it does the writer of fiction....I decided that my ideal form would

be the scenic, the episodic. Instead of freezing myself into chronology, I sought a kind of Proustian flexibility, moving backward and forward in time (*The Life of Henry James* 1, 14).

In *Literary Biography* Edel transformed what had been for him a circumstantial necessity into an essential tenet of the poetics of literary biography: "I am proposing...that the biographer borrow some of the techniques of fiction without lapsing into fictional biography" (151). His later "principia" expand upon and clarify this approach:

Every life takes its own form and a biography must find the ideal and unique literary form that will express it. In structure a biography need no longer be strictly chronological, like a calendar or a datebook. Lives are rarely lived in that way. An individual repeats patterns learned in childhood, and usually moves forward and backward through memory. Proust is perhaps a better guide to modern biography than Boswell. ...[T]he task and duty of biographical narrative is to sort out themes and patterns, not dates and mundane calendar events which sort themselves. This can be accomplished by use of those very devices that have given narrative strength to fiction--flashbacks, retrospective chapters, summary chapters, jumps from childhood to maturity, glimpses of the future, forays into the past...("Biography and the Science of Man" 10).³

This is the conception of the biographer as an "artist under oath" who cannot imagine data but is free to violate chronology with theme, or otherwise recompose, although not invent, a life. I practise this method to an extent here because I believe that not only literary but *feminist* biography demands it. To write

either the life of an imagination (a writer) or the life of individuals supposedly confined to the private, personal and domestic (women) is to confront the centrality of subjectivity. Such a reappropriation of subjectivity, however, is not uncritical, untheorised acceptance of the notion that the individual's experience was exactly as it seemed to her or him. Rather, it takes what could be an occupational hazard--the primacy of personal apprehension and response to experience, whether on the part of the subject or the biographer--and transforms it into a critical tool.

Anyone who has attempted to understand her or his sympathy or antipathy for an historical actor is familiar with the interpersonal relationship which develops: the feeling of being chosen by one's subject, and the processes (at various levels and intensities of consciousness) of identification and partial dissociation that ensue. Too intent a response, we seem to have obediently learned, is inappropriate: distortions and projections risk obliterating or misunderstanding the "real" biographical person. And since subjectivity is deemed to be an occupational hazard of "femininity", it also seems "de rigueur" for a feminist biographer to cover her emotional and imaginative tracks in academic writing.

Yet IS it desirable, in feminist or other biography to suppress the author's involvement and commitment? By this question I do not mean that the developing genre and form of feminist literary biography should indulge in self-advertising, impassioned

reaction or polemic. Rather, the subject of a biography exists not only in the linguistic and other material traces s/he, most probably haphazardly, bequeathed to posterity. The subject exists above all in her biographer's mediating consciousness. Once this relationship is recognised, and continually scrutinised, why regard it as a liability (which it certainly would be if repressed)? From within criticism of literary biography, Matthew Arnold's biographer Park Honan has reclaimed subjective response as a tool--not only useful, but essential:

I can intrigue nobody...by telling about my visit to Hampstead and my eye-opening adventures with Keats in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum;...I shall do well to recall that my purpose is not to scrape up...Keats' bones or dust. In what does his being consist now? how does he enter my narrative? He exists only in the *minds* of the living, therefore in my mind; and in no ghoulish or morbid sense my *relationship* with the historic Keats is my only bridge over the River Styx, and the most vital element in my biography. When that relationship has emotional, intellectual, and moral pressure and is considered by me of central importance to my work, I am perhaps ready to write a Life of Keats--or to begin to research it....It is... the biographer's function...to keep the emotional, intellectual, and moral relationship with the biographee in focus--...to relate everything to the illumination of the man in history at the other side of the bridge ("The Theory of Biography" 114-15).

If opinions such as Honan's seem contaminated by association with the eclecticism and subjectivity usually associated with Anglo-American literary criticism, Lukács--who continuously evaluated narrative choices according to the scientific historical understanding they embodied--also suggests that

lively, sensitive, self-aware prose need not imperil authenticity, or, insofar as it is possible, "objectivity":

[T]he important works of historical science have often used artistic means, too. And this does not mean simply good and expressive prose, it means subtle description, plastic representation, forceful irony, satire, etc. None of this will undermine the basic character of scientific method, which is to disclose connexions in accordance with the objective laws governing them (*The Historical Novel* 367).

Rather, this paragraph by Lukács implicitly raises a more disturbing question. Is "feminist" biography a contradiction in terms once the category of "the individual" is seen through for the mystification that it is, naturalised and normalised by the bourgeois "cultural revolution" of the last century or so?

The destinies of individual persons, *experienced as individual destinies*, cannot provide a means for clarifying objective connexions and laws. To create a really good historical portrait of a...figure one needs to show his personal singularity...intellectual physiognomy...singularity of...method, [and] the objective significance of this method in the context of the most important movements which lead from past to future, at whose crossroads he stands and to whose development he has contributed in an original way--all of which must be shown in a very generalised...scientifically concrete form, using the correct scientific means (emphases his; 367).

Any biography worth its salt asks the Sartrean question: what did the subject make of what was made of her? How much freedom was available to her (conditioned by class, gender, generation,

geographical region, time, political circumstances...)? How did she exercise her real, if conditioned, powers of self-determination?

A central interest of any person's life, and writing about it, is psychological recurrence within chronological progression (so that, rather than visualising a life direction as a straight line, it is more accurately viewed as a spiral, widening and narrowing, moving along in time). And how, having identified consistent patterns, still to convey change or development? To describe a configuration of problems and possibilities without determinism? (For what is now, seemingly, consequence, was once only one possibility among others; strongly weighted perhaps, but not as fatalistic as it now seems, when the accounts are closed.)

The discovery of patterns, unless conveyed with all the resources of the writer's command in her particular language (European languages differing in their means of conveying time, for instance), risks becoming too deterministic: one may forget that the life, when lived, had crucial moments of indeterminacy and reversibility. The biographer needs to exploit to the full the linguistic means capable of conveying the "presentness" of the past: these can range from subtleties in word choice to more complicated narrative strategies such as resorting to "the complex tensing possibilities which...allow one to relate events to one another while sustaining a relation to the speaker" (Cebik, "Narratives and Arguments" 10).⁴ This is no gratuitous

word play, but recognising and challenging the flexibilities and constraints of "the prison-house of language".

Various writers have deployed a range of means to give their biographies "a shape...a form, a direction, and an overall economy" (Edel in Schiff, 39). Antony Alpers' *Life of Katherine Mansfield* faces the issues of origins, identity, and destiny in its first paragraph:

To say that Katherine Mansfield was born in Wellington, New Zealand, on 14 October 1888 would seem a simple statement of fact, beyond all contradiction, and in every way a sound beginning for an account of her life and her art and the time she lived in. Yet it wouldn't describe what actually happened that Sunday morning to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Beauchamp, and their child. Since the name is a pseudonym, which she adopted only nineteen years later, 'Katherine Mansfield' can hardly be said to have been born that day. Or can she? There is no avoiding the fact that her story begins in complexity--and with a name problem (1). ⁵

Another tactic, adopted by Yvonne Kapp in the concluding paragraphs of the first volume of *Eleanor Marx*, acknowledges and forestalls the anti-climax exerted on biography by knowing the ending in advance. Kapp mixes verb tenses and allows her own and her readers' subjectivity to enter Eleanor Marx's life history momentarily:

The facts widely known about Eleanor Marx are that she lived with a man of evil reputation who married someone else and that she killed herself. Of this the stuff of theatre is made: a neurotic woman, a villain, an unhallowed union, betrayal, suicide, and hey

presto, the Marx-Aveling melodrama is produced: the Emma Bovary of Sydenham (minus the style). The sub-plot concerns the awful fate and actuarial risks attendant upon being one of Karl Marx's daughters...Eleanor's union with Aveling may have been, was, disastrous in the long run; his character may have been, was deplorable. Nevertheless, from the time her life was joined with his, it became purposeful. She does not doubt where she is going, she goes. Her manner, unassuming and frank as always, now takes on authority. She has lost none of her humour or humanity--on the contrary, these qualities deepen--but she is a woman complete: responsible, fearless and supremely capable of using her gifts to the full in the service of her fellow men (*Family Life, 1855-1833* 286).⁶

Of course, some of biography's historically-determined weaknesses should be recognised and avoided. These include its stress on personal and picturesque factors at the expense of socio-structural conditions; its theatrical detaching of the hero from her context, which turns history into a colourful but static backdrop rather than a continually changing combination of social forces; its confusing naturalistic accuracy of detail rather than a more encompassing realism of typicality, with the effect that such "period sets" *over*-distance history from the present, making connections unlikely to be grasped.⁷

But some of biography's very peculiarities, which various authors have used with greater or lesser effectiveness, indicate that the potential of biography for situating subjectivity within society is only beginning to be explored. Biographies (symptomatically located next to fiction in the Dewey system) are popular reading because they interweave intensely

subjective, virtually "fictive" data with "objective" documentation. Sometimes they must confront gaps in empirical information with informed and imaginative (which is not "imaginary") speculation, *identified as such*. Lukács suggests (concerning *male* writers' fictionalised autobio-graphies):

Since reality as a whole is always richer and more varied than even the richest work of art, no detail, episode, etc., however exactly copied, however biographically authentic, however factual can possibly compete....[I]f one wishes to re-create the richness of reality, the whole context of life must be refashioned, one's composition must take on an entirely new structure (365).

If one concludes, as the above considerations have led me to, that the Papua which Grimshaw later represented is *already*, in its essentials, present in her experience of Ireland (like the plant in the seed, the ore in the mountain), and that her conception of race originated in the first great identity problem of her life--her understanding of gender--than a linear narrative is inadequate. Papua must be embedded and Ireland extended. Chronology must zigzag, stop and start, feel free to pause and, in a shifting of tenses, present a *portrait* of the writer or the woman at a crucial stage.⁸ At times, too, as I have done with Vaiti and shall do with Theodora, it can be enlightening to focus on a given work as a particularly clear example of the relations between an author's narrative structures and the patterns and choices of her life. A "matrix of fabulation" (Brée, "Georges Sand" 445) originates in an early familial emotional configuration, and generates significant

images, problems, and relationships--however transformed or disguised--in the writer's later work. Life-work interactions may vary, including direct transposition, projection, or denial.

If a writer has elaborated a characteristic formal design, a "suspicious", sceptical scrutiny of documents has an important place. For much biographical evidence is inspired or tintured by unconscious motivations, desires, needs and fantasies. Its reliability is further undercut when most of the testimony comes from an incorrigible story-teller: someone who customarily patterns events and gives them meaning.

For, as Edel puts it, the poet *is* in the poem, "star[ing] at you within and between the lines" (Edel in Schiff, *Contemporary Approaches to English Studies* 39). Or, as one of Grimshaw's favourite writers, Thoreau, admitted, "poetry...is 'a piece of very private history, which unostentatiously lets us into the secrets of a man's life'". Cocteau, however, modified by Edel, cautions us that "the artist is a kind of prison from which the works of art escape. The biographer is the historian of that imprisonment and also of that liberation".

This returns me to my primary and ultimate reference point, Grimshaw's *work*: how her imagination developed. This is also Edel's emphasis:

My entire biography [of Henry James] takes its shape and form from my constant attention to the emotional content of James' life. The

quest for the feelings contained in letters and his work is based...on certain fundamental psychological premises, the most important being that art often takes its impulse from the emotions, and only afterwards does the rational side of man intervene (qtd. in Clifford, *From Puzzles to Portraits* 128).

Concerning James as well--but applicable more generally--William Gass commented, "The history of such a man must...contrive to be the history of his imagination--what feeds it, what it does with what it gains, how it embodies itself in his work--since his words were those servants who did his living for him; and consequently every sign of significant change in the nature of that imagination will mark an important moment in the life of its owner" (qtd. in Petrie, *Ultimately Fiction* 42).

Given the relative paucity of biographical data about Grimshaw, and the inadequacy of much biographical data anyway, ⁹ the last methodological word fittingly belongs to Grimshaw herself: "In the years of this century I have had adventure, sorrow, happiness, romance and tragedy, of which little has appeared or will appear in my writing. But no doubt the influence of it has run through all that I have written" (qtd. in Lett, "Miss Beatrice Grimshaw" 5-6).

"[T]he first [cotton] preparing and spinning machinery in Belfast was made by Nicholas Grimshaw and set to work in the Poorhouse" (Green, "Early Industrial Belfast" 80).

In highlighting Nicholas Grimshaw's instruction of institutionalised boys who would later become apprentices, I do not intend anachronistic judgment of a man whose activities typified contemporary notions concerning discipline and training of the poor. Rather, I'm foreshadowing the recurrence of "job-training schemes" aimed at those dispossessed or distressed by massive social dislocation, schemes which Beatrice Grimshaw later endorsed in 1890s Dublin and post-1906 Papua.

There is no question, however, that from the beginning of their residence in Ireland, the industrious, inventive Grimshaws' philanthropy contained a heavy admixture of social control. This led the "neutral" economic historian Conrad Gill into convoluted turns of phrase.

*Cotton Manufacture in Ulster....*Contemporary writers were agreed that the actual beginning was made, in a rather curious manner, in 1777.... The foundation was an act of public service. ...Trade had scarcely recovered when the American War...cut off an important market and source of raw material... [I]n Ulster, ['distress due to the war'] led to the foundation of the cotton industry as a means of relieving unemployment and preventing emigration.... Robert Joy...started a cotton manufacture in Belfast....The firm had workrooms in the Charitable Institution, and, after the English fashion, employed pauper children to serve under the minders. Machinery for carding and spinning was supplied by Nicholas Grimshaw, an English calico printer, who had settled in Belfast as a printer of linens.... The extraordinarily quick growth of cotton manufacture in Ulster is shown by Grimshaw's estimate that by 1800 it was giving employment to 13,000 people, and indirect employment to another 14,000, within a radius of ten miles of Belfast (231-33).¹⁰

Nicholas Grimshaw of Blackburn in Lancashire set up the first cotton spinning mill in Ireland at Whitehouse in 1784. This was after an ignominious sojourn in prison for mismanaging a factory on the Isle of Man, a fate similar to that narrowly avoided, it would seem, by his grand-son--Beatrice's father. Nicholas' enterprise, well within 100 years, transformed much of the Northern Irish peasantry into a proletariat, and Belfast into a great and terrible city. Not the least of his legacies to to his great-grand-daughter were the articles of faith that economic development is a *sine qua non* of political progress, and that such development is ultimately beneficial, however socially disruptive initially.

Grimshaw was "the acknowledged leader of the Belfast industry" (Dickson, "Aspects of the Rise and Decline of the Belfast Cotton Industry" 106). His private and public self-images were that of a *paterfamilias* (he and his wife had 15 sons and four daughters!). He appears in public documents at least from 1800, when he sought recompense from Parliament for over 30,000 pounds he had invested in all stages of cotton manufacture; nearly going bankrupt in 1788, 1793, and 1799. He justified his petition both in terms of his own "numerous Family...he hopes a not undeserving one", and "the many thousands of men, women and children he [had] so long employed", to whom he wished to "continue to give Bread". The 12 cotton manufacturers endorsing his claim labelled him "the *Father* of the Cotton Business in this Kingdom". An obituary lauded him, in 1804, as a "liberal and humane...master". The 1821 *Biographia Hibernica* added, "[H]e

might...be termed with great justice, the patron of industry and the unwearied benefactor of the indigent and distressed "

George Benn's 1823 *History of the Town of Belfast...* described the Grimshaw domain at Whitehouse, "distinguished...by an appearance of uncommon industry and comfort, greatly to be attributed to the extensive cotton printing works in its neighbourhood" (157). He mentioned that both a Lancasterian School ¹¹ and a Sunday school were provided on the estate for those cotton workers, servants, and apprentices who could not attend schooling during the week.

As late as 1924 an amateur local historian asserted that the young artisan Grimshaw, "with no capital, save an inventive mind and an indomitable pluck", had protected "many of his adopted countrymen against the blighting winds of unemployment and destitution" (Millin, "Early Belfast Trade" n.p.9). To the end of *her* life Beatrice Grimshaw, also a self-made person, stated that her family had been "notably philanthropic" employers (*Dictionary of Catholic Authors*).

Perhaps commentators and descendants lingered on his memory because "Nicholas Ist" (as I call him, to distinguish him from Beatrice Grimshaw's father) embodied characteristics--industry, philanthropy, political liberalism--which Belfast's harsh nineteenth century history made increasingly impossible to combine.

Indeed, Beatrice's father did not espouse these qualities at all. The Belfast chapter of J. Dunsmore Clarkson's classic *Labour and Nationalism in Ireland*, for instance, stigmatises the city as "the very incarnation of capitalist industrialism in its most nakedly brutal form" (344). With post-Napoleonic War stress in the cotton industry, and steady decline in the linen industry after 1873, the interests of employers and employees increasingly polarised. Cotton workers boycotted their employers and attacked one of their houses, leading to the execution of two operative ringleaders, the murder of a trade union official, and a strike (Gill 226). Shortly after Beatrice Grimshaw's birth (1870) there were almost total lock-outs in the linen industry (1872 and 1874). In 1872, mill-hands at Whitehouse "'perpetrated a wanton and malignant outrage'" (Boyle, "The Linen Strike of 1872" 20), probably meaning, in the language of the time, destruction of the employer's property and equipment.

A portrait of Nicholas Ist in Irish Volunteer uniform ¹² symbolises the "Irish Grimshaws'" loyal but critical relation to England. For awhile, and reaching its height during their second generation in Ireland, this entailed a notion of Ireland as a distinct economic and political entity. Nicholas Ist *twice* opposed the enforced union of Ireland with England. Symbolically, the Volunteers' uniform were made of Irish cloth, and "Volunteer patterns" were printed on calico; a sign that cotton manufacturers among the Volunteers feared absorption by England would stifle their own developing industries.

The Volunteers determined to wrest concessions from the mother country: Free Trade, exclusive encouragement to Irish manufacture, and increased political rights. They even contemplated extension of the latter to middle-class Catholics. Nicholas' "economic man" psychology appears in a contemporary anecdote claiming that, while Belfast was celebrating the granting of Free Trade with fireworks in 1779, Nicholas remained toiling away in his mill at Whitehouse.

By the time of Nicholas' namesake, Beatrice's father, priorities and loyalties had narrowed and almost reversed to what George Bernard Shaw bluntly labelled "securing the dominance of [one's] own caste and creed behind the power of England" (Preface to *John Bull's Other Island* xxix). As a Liberal Unionist, an ally of the Conservative Party in England, Nicholas opposed any form of Home Rule for Ireland. Liberal Unionists feared that an independent Ireland would endanger its status as part of the British Empire, and especially Belfast's role as the third-largest port in the United Kingdom: it thus had access to an imperial free trading area greater than anything Nicholas' grandfather could have imagined.

Nicholas Ist's local patriotism had also been supported by Protestant hegemony in Ireland. His grandson's defensive posture was in part a reaction to the growing political power of the Catholic majority, then crystallising in the Nationalist Party. If "the Irish Grimshaws" never wavered in their insistence on a liberal but reciprocal relation with England, they never

contemplated abandoning it, either. Like many other Ulster families to this date, and like descendants of First Fleet Australians or Daughters of the American Revolution, the "Irish Grimshaws" would have been proud of a rebellious ancestor while consolidating their respectable social position.

During the nineteenth century, when this extended family substituted linen spinning and weaving for cotton manufacture, their activities typified the merchant class at its most effective. They were entrepreneurs and intellectual or cultural achievers. As the appearance of two of the first Nicholas' sons in public documents demonstrates, Grimshaws preponderated wherever profit, rent and interest were recorded, and whenever the civic growth of Belfast (in opposition to the conservative, governing Belfast Corporation) was at issue.

Thomas Grimshaw testified to the House of Commons Committee on Combination of Workmen in May 1838 that his employees' intent to unionise had ruined his calico-printing business. By defending his practises of employing large numbers of (lower-paid) women and apprentices, he was obviously opposed to a minimum wage. He had sought to withstand his journeymens' attempts to create a closed shop and organise a self-help fund. The latter, he asserted, was dissipated "generally in drinking and idleness and folly" (238). But his principal objection was doubtless that, "to a certain extent", self-help could make such workers "independent of the master" (239).

Thomas' brother Robert (1787-1867), Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of the County of Antrim, appears in a more benign light. But his benevolence, typical of his time, had definite social-control aspects. In addition to being one of two managing directors of the Ulster Bank at its establishment, he was on the shareholders' committee of the Northern Bank, the first joint-stock bank in Ireland. He was immediate lessor of most of the village of Greencastle--over 80 houses, stables, workshops and offices--as well as of substantial portions of Upper Whitehouse and Ballygoland. All of this land was leased from the Marquis of Donegall, and its new use aptly illustrates the shift of economic power from a declining aristocracy to an ascendant bourgeoisie. (What these classes had in common, however, was their Protestantism.)

Robert collected rents from tenements in several other locations as well: some of the most important Grimshaw property was in the centre of Belfast and in what became Protestant working class neighbourhoods. Such income from employee accommodation could operate as a significant control over the work-force. Moreover, as treasurer of the Belfast Mont-de-Piété and Loan Fund Society, Robert again combined supervision with benevolence. Money was lent on pledges rather than interest at terms usually more favourable than money-lenders'. Approved purposes included apprenticing a child, repairing a house, and acquiring a stock of raw materials.

As one of the first directors of the Ulster Railway Company, and a member of the council of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and the Belfast Ballast Corporation (which aimed to improve the port and harbour), Robert's interests paralleled the developments which were to make Belfast the third port in the United Kingdom.

Robert's civic responsibilities were expressed as one of the founders of the (Liberal) Reform Party in 1830, which opposed the Donegall family's hereditary hold over political and economic activity. He was, moreover, Trustee for Life of the Mechanics' Institute and the Association for the Protection of Rights of Conscience. ("Civil and Religious Liberty to All the World!" was one of the toasts at a banquet celebrating the inauguration of the Northern Bank, over which Robert presided. As classic liberals associating civic liberty with property rights, their other toasts--"Prosperity to the Cotton Manufacture of Ireland!" "The Ladies Who Are Proprietors!"--were in character.)

This indefatigable man was also manager of the Belfast Academical Institution (founded 1810). His will--with an estate valued at over 28,000 pounds--also mentioned a share in the Royal Botanical Gardens (founded by his son James in 1827) and the Royal Ulster Hall.

Robert's pragmatic, ameliorative, supervisory activities were privately-funded initiatives. To be a Liberal in Belfast at that time, as the editor of the *Northern Whig* later wrote, entailed

"pecuniary loss, loss of municipal and Parliamentary honours, loss even of ordinary social courtesies from the great Ulster noblemen and their families" (Macknight 55). This may well have fostered a certain "agin' the Government" stance which people who knew Beatrice Grimshaw later remembered of her.

During Robert's time, this stance would have involved rejecting outdated, Conservative practices or ideologies, preferring "unlocking" land and allowing free competition. But it certainly never implied, as political ideologies developed later in the century, any affiliation with socialism. It was less democratic or egalitarian than fraternal, and was not above dealings with Tories on occasion. ¹³

In innumerable ways the Grimshaws, through enterprise and strategic marriages, were implicated in the dynamics of Belfast's growth. They figured in the area's three major export trades: linen, shipbuilding/engineering, and provisions. Beatrice's brother Ramsay was to become a marine engineer, inspiring, no doubt, the character of George Scott in *Guinea Gold*:

If you have ever visited the North of Ireland, you have met many men a little like him, but none quite the same--one does not pick George Scotts off every family tree....A lad of delicate upbringing and strength none too great, flung at seventeen out of a luxurious life into the poverty that lurks always underneath the splendour of mercantile Belfast, George Scott had gone through the hell that only 'workmen apprentices' of his kind and class can know. In the bitter winter

days he...had gone short of food and fire, while his half-grown frame was struggling desperately to keep up with the tale of crushing labour laid upon it...He had won his way, he never knew how, afoot through illnesses that would have sent most men to bed for weeks: had been always tired for years, always short of tobacco and tram money...He had had more than his share of the inevitable cruel accidents of a foundry, and had not been able to lay up when they occurred...George Scott was a man, and a very strong one; instead of a box of bones in the Upper Falls burying ground. The workman apprentice life of Belfast means one or other to most gently nurtured lads (16-17). 14

Beatrice's father and uncle, Nicholas and O'Donnell Grimshaw, traded as "Grimshaw Brothers, Wholesale Wine, Spirit and Oil Merchants". Besides cloth and other commodities, Ulster exported talented people (as well as the "distressed" who had no option but to emigrate), investing capital and kin throughout the expanding British Empire. William Grimshaw emigrated to the U.S., where he wrote schoolbooks, an etymological dictionary, and a life of Napoleon. Thomas Grimshaw, Jr., "about to sail for and reside in Ceylon", Alicia, Kathleen and John Templeton Grimshaw planned to grow coffee in Ceylon, foreshadowing the tobacco plantation in Papua which Beatrice funded and Ramsay managed (PRONI, D1905/2/44/11). O'Donnell's will--which left over six thousand pounds, as compared to his estranged brother Nicholas' paltry thirty--bequeathed shares in Rhodesian Cold Storage.

As the nineteenth century progressed, few areas of public life lacked a Grimshaw to organise, control or administer. One was a

post-master general. Several were commissioners of the peace. One, during a brief period of Liberal representation on the Town Council, was a nominated member. They championed public access to the Cave Hill, helped to establish the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society, the Statistical Society of Ulster, and the Little Theatre. They served in the Imperial forces and organised annual *fêtes* to commemorate royal visits.

Their social concern was perhaps at its highest immediately before and during Beatrice's generation. Her grand-father was on the General Committee of the Society for the Amelioration of the Working Classes of Belfast, as well as on its Baths and Washhouses Inquiry Committee. Beatrice's cousin, Thomas Wrigley Grimshaw, M.D., of Dublin, became Registrar-General of Ireland, his statistics grist to the mills of Home Rulers and Unionists alike. Her sister Maud's husband, Dr. (Francis) Howard Sinclair, became a tuberculosis expert, specialising in an environmentally exacerbated illness plaguing Belfast's workers. His own practice, however, was an open-air sanatorium in the resort area of Warrenpoint.

But what, one may well wonder, were the *women* of the family doing? Patriarchal bias appears in instructions accompanying family trees compiled by young descendants to write male names on the thick lines and female names on thin lines. Before Beatrice's generation, such records (mainly solicitors') as do pertain to women overwhelmingly locate them within kinship structures, where their roles as agents of property transfer and

reproducers of legitimate successors, if hardly negligible, were hardly self-determining. Since their early days in Lancashire, the Grimshaws' "marriages with heiresses increased the power and influence of the line" (PRONI, T116/55): Susanna Grimshaw's marriage settlement in 1828 was one thousand pounds. It can also be speculated that, when they didn't cross over to Lancashire to find suitable marriage partners, the "Irish Grimshaws", marrying women in or of their adopted country, strengthened their affiliation or identification with Ireland.

The nostalgic *Victorian Family Robinson* (1934), one of the few Grimshaw novels to portray a mother, even for a few pages, evokes "Mamma [who] was half Irish":

[B]ut nobody held this against her; they were very kind about it, even when she sang Irish melodies with altogether too much voice for a drawing-room, and more expression than a lady should permit herself to use....Mamma had wild gipsy fancies; used to say that she would like to go to the South Sea Islands and sit in the water underneath a palm. It sounded almost indecent. ...After Eleanor [Beatrice's mother's name, here transposed to a daughter] was born, and baby William was born and died, and Adeline was born, and the twins, boy and girl, were born and died, Mamma seemed to lose her interest in gipsy wanderings. She talked no more about the South Seas; took no more travel books out of the library. You never found her...seated quite undignifiedly on the floor of Papa's study, turning round and round...the yellowed globe that stood by the window-seat, tracing the outlines of continents, caressing (or so it seemed) the curves of the wide blue seas....Once she said to Eleanor...'The Line! Would you like to see the Line?' And Eleanor said, as in duty bound: 'The Line is imaginary, Mamma, one could not see it.'

'I can,' said the little Celt, looking oddly at her daughter. 'But I never will...'. [Y]ou could not mould Mamma. Small and weak as she was, she enshrined a flame, unnamed, unrecognised all through her life, for what it was--the torch of the pioneer....She had, one thinks, the Celtic gift of second sight (11-14). ¹⁵

In Beatrice's generation one woman appeared in a quasi-public role, but this was an extension of domestic nurturance, thus conforming to the Victorian bourgeois insistence on separate socio-sexual spheres. Once more, a Grimshaw was mixing social concern with social control. Beatrice's cousin by marriage, wife of Thomas in Dublin, was Sarah Elizabeth Grimshaw, a pillar of the Ladies' Sanitary Association. But her 1884 paper to the Congress of the Sanitary Association of Great Britain, which met in Dublin, could only be presented by a man.

The subordination of women to men in the family and in society gave Beatrice telling, if rather garbled, analogies for class and colonial power relations between "Celt" and "Saxon". A significant number of her plots revolve around a triangle: an Englishman and an Irishman compete for the loyalty of a woman who is often Irish, and/or associated with an island home ("The 'Roisin Ruadh'", "Carry Me Out to Sea"; *When the Red Gods Call*, and *Red Bob of the Bismarcks*, whose leading female character is named "Isola Bella" are only a few). A familiar trope of colonial fiction portrays a conquered land and people as female. But when Grimshaw--member of a dominant "race" and class, but also of an oppressed sex--came to use it, she was drawing on

experience as well as convention.¹⁶

A number of later references indicate that Grimshaw was aware of her family's role in creating an industry which made the north of Ireland the world centre of linen manufacture. They were at their most prosperous shortly before her birth in 1870. The industry was fully mechanised between 1852 and 1862, creating an impression of expansion due to increased production. But this impression, from 1873 onwards, was belied by steady decline.

One of the family interests, Linfield Mill, became in its day the largest spinning mill in the trade. The Murphy family, who had built it in 1833, were joined in partnership (marital and economic) in the 1840s by Grimshaw's grand-father Conway Blizzard Grimshaw and Adam Duffin. The American Civil War, depriving the rival Lancashire cotton industry of raw material, made their fortunes. In 1866 the three major partners in the Linfield Mill--the Murphys, Duffins, and Grimshaws--floated their interests as the Ulster Spinning Company, Ltd.

At any time between 1868 and 1895 the linen work-force consisted of 25% juveniles and 70% women and children. In addition to its divisions by gender and generation, it was split along sectarian lines. These differences came to symbolise and exacerbate socio-economic inequalities in Belfast, which was not only quickly urbanising, but becoming segregated as well. Housing areas were soon to be identified by sect, itself overlapping to a considerable degree with class.

The harshness of employment can be ascertained from the fact that the linen industry, as well as being the first (hence, primitive and dangerous) to mechanise so completely, was therefore the first to be subjected to state regulation. This, however, was cursory by twentieth century standards, and the pace of unionisation (less than 9% by 1900 according to Boyle) was also very slow.

If the daughters of linen barons played the piano, took singing lessons, rode horseback, and went to London to finish their education, family incomes profiting from an exploitative industry paid their bills. Until 1920 factory children were legally allowed to attend school only half-time. Working class women toiled in hot, moist, or dusty rooms, suffering from colds, fainting, oedema of the legs and ankles, crushing and flattening of the arch of the foot (particularly affecting spinning-room girls, who had to stay on their feet all day), varicose veins, coughing attacks forcing them to rise even earlier than necessary so as to choke, gasp and retch for half an hour before going to work, and the hazards of fast-moving, poorly-fenced machinery. As Sean O'Casey evoked their working conditions in *Drums Under the Windows*:

Then there were the women and children in their Protestant mills, fined for laughing, or stooping to smooth down their hair; and the little children fined when sick twice as much as they could earn in the same time, using the quickest speed their little hands could know. Christ Himself would find it pretty hard to do this kind of work....And not a one of these girls, like the sprightly Pippa, the silk

weaver, would spring out of her bed...to rush into a...Belfast linen mill, murmuring, God's presence fills our earth, each only as God's will can work.... Work? Ay, work's all right; but is this work? No; it's the ripe robbery of life from the very young and the little older. Browning, Browning...[y]our Pippa never passed through...Belfast, nor did she ever see a bobbin spinning on a spindle there (168-70).

Beatrice must gradually have realised that Belfast itself was a relentless mill, grinding its labourers into immiseration. Later, when the Dublin magazine that she edited, the *Social Review*, reviewed Lady Dilke et al.'s *Woman's Work*, with two chapters on the textile trades and a section on "Deaths of Belfast Mill Workers", she could scarcely not have known that linen manufacturing in Belfast was officially classified as a dangerous trade. At a very superficial level, one of Grimshaw's initial reactions to the relaxing rhythms of South Sea Island life was to quote (as had Stevenson) Browning's

We are not cotton-spinners all.

But she described the hero of one of her short stories--a former mill hand said to be in her 70s, a most unlikely life-span for that occupation at that time--more compassionately. Jane Meakin was:

a solitary little figure, with the mark of the manufacturing town plainly to be read in the short-legged body and economical build. Looking at Jane Meakin, you felt sure she would not take much to keep; further, you knew that she could do a good day's work, and would not unseasonably knock up. None of her

forebears, bred in the roaring mill town of Belfast, had been able to indulge in the luxury of knocking up, whether they felt like it or not....They had all gone on till they died ("The Swan-Song of Jane Meakin" 183).

Grimshaw's (and "His Royal Highness, Smith's") observation concerning the deafening roar of a weaving shed was accurate. One of her father's last business ventures was the Tavanagh Weaving Factory at Portadown. As one worker recalled her initiation into a weaving factory in Belfast at roughly the same time, early in this century:

Well, the first day that I went to the weavin'...was desperate....Well, it's the awful blunderin' of the looms...I couldn't right describe it....You only have to be in a Weavin' Shed to understand... It's a sort of fear on you... I was very sick. That sickness was on me nearly a fortnight. Every night I went to bed...at 7:30 (qtd. in Messenger, 121-22). 17

Again, in *Victorian Family Robinson*:

To the Reverend James, stuffy cottages and unwashed old people, barefoot, dirty children hurrying on their way to work fourteen hours in a mill, were not repulsive....[H]e had spent the last shilling in his pocket upon bread and milk for little, hungry victims of mill-owners' greed. Eleanor and Adeline wanted for nothing, not even the luxury of a carriage; but the Vicar went about with a pony and a governess cart....[I]n his time and circumstances, he was more or less Tolstoyan (37-38).

It was equally typical of Grimshaw, however, to suppose that systematic social injustice of any kind could be alleviated significantly by actions of individual generosity.

Nicholas Grimshaw, it seems, was an incompetent capitalist. After his very short period as managing director of the Ulster Spinning Company, a report to its share-holders in 1868 guardedly noted "that Mr. Nicholas Grimshaw has sent in his resignation...and arrangements have been completed by which the cost of management for the future will be considerably reduced" (PRONI, D1769/1/2A). From 1870, the year of Beatrice's birth, he appears in the Belfast and Province of Ulster Post Office Directory and Official Guide as a wholesale wine, spirit and oil merchant.

It may have been this business which took him and his family to Caen in 1877. It may also have been his moral undoing, if one trusts the "evidence" of many alcoholic and spendthrift fathers in Grimshaw's fiction. One of our first views of Vaiti shows her giving her father an injection to bring him out of *delirium tremens*.

Her father...had a nasty trick of starting a drinking bout just when he was most needed--in fact, it was the one point in Saxon's character on which you could absolutely rely. Vaiti, therefore, had grown used to doing without him, and rather liked to have a perfectly free hand (*Vaiti of the Islands* 135).

Jimmy Conroy, in "Peak of the Moon", comes from a "famous squatter family", or "what had been, till his father went through most of the property that the end of the century 'big drought' had spared" (212). The young singer Harold Page of *Nobody's Island* has a drunken father. Old Meredith Finian, in *The Star in the Dust*, is "weak and overbred", with "a weak strain in his character which...caused him to get into difficulties at home" (10); he is incapable of managing his Fijian cotton plantation when prices crash after the American Civil War.

In Caen the young Beatrice apparently attended a French school, and probably first encountered the sensuous appeal of Catholicism which later caused her much spiritual agony. Equally, if indeed not more important, this sojourn may have kindled her longing to wander. "Passions Unclassified", which, as we have seen, is one of her pivotal texts, evokes, rarely for her, a European landscape. A sense of loss underwrites every word; an alternative title could well have been "Passions Unsatisfied":

[W]hen the word 'passion' is mentioned, 'love' is the significance invariably placed upon it. For all that, there are a great many passions...almost, if not quite, as strong as love itself, and certainly more enduring in the generality of cases....

A glimpse of violet midsummer skies--a memory of great rivers sweeping through fields stored with unfamiliar crops, and dotted with women in strange, graceful, brilliant garments--a recollection of...unknown musical instruments...unknown tongues chattering

softly in the dusk close at hand--how it all comes back with a sense of...pain on foggy yellow November nights at home, when the eaves of the houses drip with slimy wet, and the country roads are a sodden waste of mire and gloom! (*Social Review* 16 May 1896)

Nicholas Grimshaw is also classified as a "gentleman" resident at Cloona(gh) House in Dunmurry, a village about five miles from Belfast named for the ruins of Viking forts in the vicinity. In 1870, the year of Beatrice's birth, Dunmurry, with about 60 residents, was on the outskirts of industrial civilisation: not isolated, because the Belfast and Ballymena Railway (another of the family interests) stopped there. It was large enough to boast one Presbyterian and one Unitarian church as well as a Roman Catholic chapel two and a half miles away. Mammon was represented by a flax-spinning mill, dye works and finishing company; the State by a constabulary, dispensary, and a national school. Although the local councilor described it to me in 1979 as a kind of original stock-brokers' belt, the area was secluded enough and romantic enough to satisfy a young girl of Beatrice's temperament.

Brian M. Walker's *Sentry Hill: an Ulster Farm and Family*, although concerning several generations of Scots Presbyterian settlers, deals with the attachment of an immigrant family to an Ulster area (Carnmoney, where Nicholas I st is buried) familiar to young Beatrice. It gives an idea of what the heritage of a sensitive, outdoor-loving, late nineteenth century girl would have been like. His is a socio-historical evocation of a life-

style Grimshaw portrayed in fiction:

I like to think of [Deirdre] in the leisurely days of that nineteenth century end, that was the end of all leisure, riding the Antrim roads among the rust-red and lilac hills... I like to think of that time, of the lull before the storm, of the quiet dawn that ushered in a noon of happenings, strange, wild and terrible....

Deirdre, with beauty in her face that the North Antrim mill-owner could neither understand nor desire--Deirdre, with the hot heart and roaming foot of the world's eternal gypsy breed--Deirdre, cursed or blessed--who knows?--with the terrible gift of 'unlikeness'--Deirdre, the wanderer, the fated, riding softly among still home lanes in Maytime, dreams in her eyes, and peace that was to last so little time, upon her untouched, girlish lips--when I see her thus, I think that I am...telling some story of lost peace (*Conn of the Coral Seas* 12).

The Carnmoney district was overwhelmingly Scots in settlement. The bitterness of land and other forms of alienation for those Irish speakers remaining was perhaps mitigated by the fact that 75% of the farming families were not descended from the ruthless seventeenth century "plantation" of Ulster, but from later arrivals. (Novelist James Douglas, in *The Unpardonable Sin*, described Ulster people's identity as having "abandoned one country without accepting another" 26-27.) They preserved many of their own idioms and contributed to the harsh Ulster-Scots dialect which Grimshaw grew up understanding and appreciating. As late as 1885, moreover, many Ulster people still spoke Irish (Walker, *Sentry Hill* 80).

Local traditions were colourful and scary. Place names and legends referred to Danish settlement and to Stone and Bronze Age communities. In the late eighteenth century the "Hearts of Steel", an agrarian secret society disrupting possession of the land, had flourished. A never-published Ordnance Survey Memoir of Carnmoney parish written in the late 1830s claimed that "In no part of Ireland does a more implicit belief exist in witchcraft, sorcery or the black arts as also in fairies, brownies and enchantments" (qtd. in Walker, 21). In 1807 a well-known sorceress, trying to cure a sick cow, instead "accidentally" caused the death of three people. As late as the 1830s fairy thorn trees were "held in great reverence and their demolition or mutilation...considered as sacreligious" (Walker 21).

By the 1860s, however, one of the McKinneys (the family described in Walker's book) was writing:

What a great change time has wrought in little more than half a century! The belief in the existence of fairies and witches, brownies and banshees, ghosts, wraiths and hobgoblins, which was...almost universal, is now fast dying out--is, indeed, all but extinct (qtd. in Walker 53).

But to how many nursemaids, one wonders, would these spooky creatures have been extinct, and how many sorcerers and seers have lived on in such Grimshaw characters as Andi Lala, Rizpah, the "Liberry woman", and the prophesying Irish woman, Mrs. Carberry, in *Conn of the Coral Seas*? The Ulster speech of her

childhood droned and grated in Grimshaw's later fiction. In "Full Fathom Five", two Ulstermen need only open their mouths to recognise a kind of tribal loyalty, and became resigned to kinship in an adventure. *Nobody's Island* opens with the authoritative words and unmistakable accent of an Ulster fishwife framing the story that follows, a technique repeated in "The Day of the Paw-Paw Tree". Eve Landon's discovery, in *The Coral Queen*, of a "Lost Island" is narrated almost wholly in "Irish". Phil Amory, of *Black Sheep's Gold*, sensing danger, remembers Katy, "my Irish nurse [in] the night nursery in the old stone house among the pine trees" (144) as a guardian presence.

The 1830s Memoir quoted by Walker also made fairly explicit reference to increasing differentiation between peasants and factory people in the parish. By Beatrice's girlhood, the area had long been scattered with printing works, small spinning mills, and bleach greens. Although the area was prosperous and peaceful enough for enterprising families like the McKinneys, they were accustomed to large numbers of siblings, cousins, and children emigrating to Australia and Canada. The ports of Liverpool and Queenstown cast their shadow over the parish. So, until the end of the nineteenth century, did tuberculosis.

And, probably more than anything else, politics cast their shadow before as the Liberals lost to the Conservatives in Antrim in the 1885 elections. Both parish (Carnmoney) and county (Antrim), relatively free till then from political and sectarian

strife because of their firm regional identities, were now embroiled in the clash between Empire and Irish nationality. Linked to both, they had not belonged to either. As Walker, in *Faces of the Past* sums up changes in Ulster from the early 1880s (when Grimshaw still lived there, only leaving for Dublin in 1891) to the first years of World War I):

[The] scene of progress and improvement was...only part of the whole picture. In many areas traditional patterns of working and living remained. With the tremendous economic growth went other more disturbing features. Conditions were frequently harsh in the factories, sanitation was very inadequate...and life for many with no social security must often have been desperate. In the countryside farm labourers gained little from the changes. Social inequality was a glaring feature of the period. *Such was the world in which our artists lived.* (Walker, 1974, 7. Emphasis mine).¹⁸

When Beatrice was born--third daughter and fifth of six surviving children--great social changes were underway in Ulster and the whole of post-Famine Ireland. Belfast had just completed its most impressive growth decade. The first Englishwomen's Married Property Act was passed in 1870, as well as another piece of legislation which, in the event, was to be more important for her: the Education Act making primary education compulsory. This contributed to the eventual growth of a working class audience and the proliferation of publications for the mass-popular press, Grimshaw's main market. In 1869 the [Anglican] Church of Ireland, to which Grimshaw's family belonged, had been disestablished, and 1870 saw Gladstone's

first Irish Land Act. Although ineffective, it sounded the death knell of the alien gentry.

In 1870, too, the Home Government Association, the conservative predecessor of Home Rule organisations, was formed. In that year the "Oceanic" was launched--the first of those Belfast-built liners whose passengers Grimshaw later entertained and informed with guidebooks describing nearly every imperial port between Gibraltar and Sydney. In 1879 the *Cyclist* began publication in Coventry, a forerunner of the *Irish Cyclist* which ultimately gave Beatrice the opportunity to become self-supporting.

1886--a year before Beatrice was dispatched to Bedford College in London--witnessed the Land League's "Plan of Campaign" and the defeat of the first Home Rule Bill.¹⁹ This legislation polarised Irish politics into Home Rulers versus Unionists, forcing the disappearance of the more generous, genial liberalism with which the "Irish Grimshaws" had traditionally been associated. The Land War ravaged the countryside while Belfast, for over three miserable months throughout the summer and autumn of 1886, endured the worst sectarian rioting in its history. Violence flared up and disfigured the ghettos of Belfast throughout Beatrice's youth: 1872, 1880, 1884... No doubt for her (and her chaperone), as for people today, "no-go" areas were a grim, familiar part of life.

Beatrice would, as would any girl of her class, have normally been protected from proximity to the dank alleys and lanes

branching off from the business areas in the town centre. There her male relatives owned property and sold insurance. But since this was near the smartest shopping area (the Maharajah of Cooch Behar himself patronised Robinson and Cleaver)--High Street, Donegall Place and Castle Place--she must have ventured there, and would be moved by a sight that never failed to touch her heart. High Street ended in a view of ships' masts just behind the ornate Albert Clock and beside the customs house.²⁰ Time and again she evoked in writing the painful excitement aroused by the docks, and ships unexpectedly glimpsed around a corner, almost as if they proposed sailing or steaming up the street ("the glittering masts far away down the river must never be looked at as one passes. [On] a misty autumn evening, when steamers creeping up to sea-port towns send long cries across the water, one here, and another there, will stir uneasily in his chair by the fire, and shut his ears against the insistent call.... Why should he listen, who may never answer?" [*In the Strange South Seas* 1-2]). In *A Fool of Forty*, sensing that even on their honeymoon his bride prefers mathematics and astronomy to his company, Bevan impulsively takes the train from Warrenpoint, and solaces and torments himself by haunting the Belfast docks and quays for a few hours.

He was married--he had settled down--the East might call in vain for him.... There was a lump in his throat, his eyes were dim, his heart was throbbing like the *Heroic's* own mighty screw. O this nameless passion, this mad desire of which no novel ever spoke, yet which was strong enough to make a man forget...his settled home, yes, even his newly-wedded bride, and consume him from head to foot with

its fierce longing only!.... Had he been mad, to tie himself hand and foot...when he did not know, but only hoped, that the 'salt drop' in his blood had worked itself with the years? (*Social Review* 17 Sept. 1898: 221)

One could starve in Belfast--literally and imaginatively--but as long as Belfast was an imperial port, it also offered a way out to those perceptive and plucky enough to take it.²¹ Meanwhile, a veterinarian named Dunlop invented the pneumatic tyre in Belfast in 1888. He thus started one of the first consumer boom industries. In the process, his invention made Beatrice mistress of the roads, created her first employment, and set her going on a journey that would see her cycling in far Samoa.

From her school-days, according to an account in the *Northern Whig*, Beatrice was "the incarnation of the spirit of adventure, a mixture of Jo...and Puck, full of mischief, forgetful, careless, clever, and head of her classes all the time" (9 May 1922). To judge from a later story ("Number Two. The Diversions of Some Irish Girls", *Social Review* 2 May 1896) she and her three sisters lived a Little Women kind of existence: socially isolated but mutually supportive. Significantly for a biographer, the first sentence of "Number Two" (the title refers to the address of the sisters' hide-away) presents itself as "not a story; not an imaginative work of any kind. It is only an account of the doings of four sisters in a lonely...town...told truthfully and plainly, in the hope that other girls doomed to live in stagnant spots may find useful suggestions" (799).

Emma Grimshaw became a landscape artist who trained in Paris and exhibited at the Royal Scottish and Royal Hibernian Academies. One of her canvases portrayed Portrush, the resort town appearing in Beatrice's earliest known writing, and figuring most prominently in the murder taking place in *A Fool of Forty*. In "Number Two", Emma becomes Eleanor, an artist hoping to create a sensation at the Royal Hibernian. (Eleanor, we have seen, was their mother's name, recurring in 1934 in the sympathetic hero of *Victorian Family Robinson*, who inherits and fulfills her mother's ungratified *Wanderlust*. But the fictional Eleanor is a young woman. Grimshaw seldom portrayed a mother in her fiction, partly, one surmises, because romantic novels are not usually about mothers, but above all because Grimshaw was extremely devoted to her father and brothers.)

Beatrice, we may assume, is Belinda, "tumbled as to hair, and sleepy as to manner", whose desk at a window above a chemist's enables her "to look down upon the street and observe the interesting manners and customs of Ballyrath on market days". Such an Olympian posture was always congenial to Grimshaw, and we may glimpse in the humble inhabitants of "Ballyrath" prototypes of those Papuans whom Grimshaw also described without mingling among them. Nichola, the youngest, whose Portrush musical performances were later duly reported in Grimshaw's Dublin-based society weekly, is Nella, a violinist.

This sisterhood is sexually secluded, a combination of cloister and hide-away. It both typifies the education of late-Victorian

girls and also represents Beatrice's early ideas of female independence. Married, middle-class women were not supposed to work, and economic dependence on their husbands was thus ensured. Beatrice, while paying lip-service to this stricture, remained unmarried and determined to develop a practical craft enabling subsistence without depending on a male relative. In the end her brothers came to depend on her.

Yet the outside world could not fail to impinge on the aspirations of the sisters in their lair. Like all middle-class girls in Victorian Britain, they would have been finding their sphere of activity fast shrinking to a future of marriage, little if any productive work, and maternity. As Joan Burstyn describes the sexual division of labour in bourgeois education:

For most of the century social control was the predominant theme of Victorian education for women of all classes....Hence, women of the middle classes, unlike their brothers, were subject to as rigid a programme of control as their lower-class sisters, although it was different in kind....What was new in [the concept of 'separate spheres'] was not the segregation of labour by gender...but the establishment of an ideal that removed women from all productive labour but child-bearing, that separated the men and women of a family during their working hours, and that channelled women's energies, and only women's, into arranging for the consumption of goods and services by themselves and their families and for those less fortunate.... (*Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood* 11 and 19).

The Grimshaw daughters appear to have received the kind of education described by James Bryce (Assistant Commissioner to

the Schools' Enquiry Commission) as typical amongst the merchant and professional classes between 1865 and 1917. As summarised by Carol Dyhouse in *Girls Growing Up....*, daughters were first taught at home by nursery or visiting governesses till they were about 10, frequently sharing lessons with their brothers. They were then sent for two to three years to a local day school, and then, at 12 or 13, attended a select (sex-segregated) boarding school till they were 17 or so. Boys, Bryce pointed out, were educated for the world; girls for that drawing-room which, we have seen, became one of Grimshaw's most detested symbols of stifling confinement. ²²

Whatever the curriculum, the message of girls' education was that:

[T]he Victorian ideal of femininity represented economic and intellectual dependency; it prescribed service and self-sacrifice as quintessential forms of 'womanly' behaviour. From early childhood girls were encouraged to suppress (or conceal) ambition, intellectual courage and initiative--any desire for power and independence (Dyhouse 2).

"In their attempt to reconcile their drives with what they had been taught to perceive as their 'feminine' social identity," Dyhouse notes that "many strong intelligent women wrestled" with "feelings of guilt and/or ambivalence" (2). She concludes that as long as their education did not challenge the sexual division of labour--more binding for middle class women than class division itself--"girls approaching maturity would continue to

be presented with a choice between marriage and career, between sexuality and intellect. The choice remained a crippling one" (78).

Several factors sheltered Grimshaw, although she could not escape the "choice" altogether. She was able to solve this double-bind in a fashion not only socially acceptable, but enjoyable for herself. One of these factors was that, from 1865-1871, among those aged 15 or over, the excess of women over men in Britain increased by 42% (Burstyn 34-35). This imbalance prevented many women from marrying and forced them to work without social disapproval. Grimshaw was also fortunate to live in, or have access to, the countryside, where she shared her companionable brothers' love for sport. Before she was sent away for "finishing", first to Victoria College in Belfast and then to Queen's College in London, she was able to participate in the rough-and-tumble life which Moers describes as, often, the only physical contact with the opposite sex that an unmarried Victorian woman would ever know. ²³

That Grimshaw's life was otherwise restrictive can be inferred from the ambivalent resurrection of those "wonderful days" in *Victorian Family Robinson* when "Nobody wanted anything" (7) and "springs and summers were longer, warmer; winters brighter and colder--ask anyone who still survives" (10).

In those days...people liked to have plenty of space and time...hours and hours for doing nothing, busily or idly. Girls at home,

cheerfully, spent half a day writing the notes, and doing the flowers. Mamma 'saw the cook', went to the pantry with a jingling bunch of keys, and gave out the stores. That was house-keeping....Giving things out--that was Mamma's work, besides...piercing holes in fine linen and sewing them up again... (7-8).

Victorian Family Robinson was written in old age, a time when idealised childhood recollections often wash up on the shore of memory. Read carefully, however, the novel summons up the standards of late Victorian girlhood, including the ironclad imperative to be chaste (remembered so vividly and bitterly in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas*), only to reject them: "All men were brave and noble, all women (ladies, rather) were gentle and pure. That was the creed; at your peril you denied any part of it" (11). It is telling that Grimshaw could depict--and thereby endorse--rejection of those standards, *occurring in Victorian time*, only by shipwrecking the Vicar's family and then locating the rest of the action--which includes the brief flowering (and de-flowering) of Eleanor's sexuality--on an island peopled by "white savages", descendants of a group who have survived a *Bounty*-like catastrophe.

Familiarity with a double sexual standard of morality or achievement; conforming to it moreover, doesn't rule out a period of struggle, especially for a person as independent as the young Beatrice. It seems no coincidence that her first two novels were to debate the issue of erotic (to her, marital) fulfillment for intellectually-gifted women (or, to phrase the same double-bind differently, the possibility of intellectual or

other creative fulfillment for married women). *Broken Away* presents one of its heroes as resolved to be a famous writer's "shadow", "even though it had involved the stifling of more than one talent which she possessed" (42). This stifling is aptly symbolised by the disappearance of her name (Eva; "life") behind "Mrs. Rivington". *A Fool of Forty* literally kills the hero who refuses to subordinate her academic interests to household management.

But Grimshaw's early relationships to men seem to have been amiable enough. As "Maev" she wrote a scathing review of Marie Corelli's *The Murder of Delicia*:

The story is simply a peg--and not a strong one at that--whereon to hang unlimited shrewish abuse of reviews and reviewers, society people, countrytown people, and last but not least men. About men, indeed, Miss Corelli waxes not merely violent, but lunatic....[S]ome of the epithets wherewith she favours the male sex are of a character that would attract the editorial blue pencil at once, if used in these pages. But the head and fount of man's offending, as taken from the gospel according to Saint...Corelli, is...that he does not care for clever women... The fact is, that the man of to-day really does not know whether he cares for clever women, as such, or not; what he does care for, and always will, is a womanly woman, not compounded of mingled aggressiveness and spite, and not learned in the language of the streets, and skilled in the public anatomising of filthy states of mind, under the guise of love of purity.

I would like to say...and I say it because I know I shall represent the opinions of thousands of others--that the women who rail against all men in the wholesale fashion of

'Delicia' can never have known the sex through what is perhaps the truest medium of knowledge--the possession of good fathers and brothers. Those who have grown up together with men in their own family, and learned the truth that has almost been forgotten in these days of hysterical shrieking against the whole male sex--that a man *can* be as pure, as tender, and unselfish as the best of women, while yet possessing every manly quality--will never lose faith in the sex, with whatever evil they may afterwards be brought in contact. And there is nothing worse, and nothing that causes more moral deterioration in man or woman, than to lose faith in the half of creation from which should come their greatest happiness, and their strongest motive to achievement (*Social Review* 9 Jan. 1897: 26; emphasis hers).

Maleness, to Grimshaw at that time, connoted superior, desirable attributes about which--since she regarded them as biologically given--she never voiced overt estrangement or hostility. But this is not to say that sexual difference, and the social inequalities it entailed, were therefore a non-issue for her. To the contrary, they constituted the greatest conundrum of her existence, which she obsessively addressed in literally dozens of stories and hundreds of inches of column space. The few documented recollections of her childhood and adolescence are notable for the mother's emotional mutedness and virtual absence; egalitarian identification with brothers; and fixation on her father.

There is little unusual in this late-Victorian configuration of sexual power relations within an eminently bourgeois nuclear

family.²⁴ Its biographical significance is that Grimshaw never outgrew it; never confronted the patriarchal-incestuous imperative of transferring love from a father to a husband; never challenged that imperative by identifying with other women. When she finally settled down with anyone, it was with her brother Ramsay, first when he managed a plantation for her in Papua, then when she kept house for him until his death in Bathurst, a *ménage* which, we shall see, she forecast in the *Social Review* 40 years earlier.

Once she was of secondary-school age Beatrice, conforming to the pattern observed by Bryce, attended Victoria College in Belfast. This was the creation of a former missionary, Mrs. Byers, now widowed. This benevolent autocrat was later the subject of an interview in the *Social Review*. The article is unsigned, but since it appeared after Grimshaw had been editing the weekly for over a year, it seems unlikely she would have dissociated herself from the interview's approving stance. Mrs. Byers' experiences in China must also have appealed to the developing imagination of a schoolgirl who thrilled to exotic names in her geography textbooks as if they were music:

Could she say...what she wanted, she who was different? Could she tell...how words, lines, names in geography books...hypnotised her, and repeated again and again the call that she was sure as death she must answer one of these days?

Foolish little spells they were, to raise up spirits so strong. They had begun their work in the schoolroom....It made her tremble...

(*Conn of the Coral Seas* 12).

Mrs. Byers also provided a model of individualist self-reliance ("having carved her way entirely unaided to celebrity and fortune") whose ameliorative aspirations for women strategically avoided any hint of social disruption:

In Belfast...we had to pass through a storm of ridicule incidental to the first attempt of girls to compete with men in public examinations; but after a 20 years' trial, man's reverence for womanliness and woman's admiration of true manliness, have not on either side been diminished by this comparative test of their intellectual powers. In asking for the same standard and tests of culture, we did not desire to place girls in antagonism to boys, nor was our aim to prove...that girls are as clever as boys; all that we did want was to get the influence of the best training that boys receive...and thus to do our part in improving the education of the community (17 Oct. 1896: 373+).

But for a growing girl it must have been perplexing to belong to the sex whose gender-role denied it right of entry into the world of public achievement, when she was dowered with ample drive and ability. (Far more than Beatrice's other brother, Osborne, for instance. Through her influence he later obtained a post as a Papuan resident magistrate. He is remembered as a gentle but ineffectual personality who committed--through inadvertent bungling rather than intent--the cardinal sin, in Hubert Murray's territory of Papua, of killing a "native" prisoner trying to escape.)

In the same year that Grimshaw excoriated Corelli, however, she reviewed Dora Sigerson's [Mrs. Clement Shorter's] poems, "The Fairy Changeling" and "A Vagrant Heart". Here Grimshaw discussed the dilemmas of a young woman aspiring to tasks and privileges normally regarded as male. Women, "but not the other sex, I fancy", would understand the lines:

O to be a woman--to be left to pique and pine
 When the winds are out and calling to this vagrant heart
 mine....
 Alas! to be a woman, and the nomad's heart in me
 (*Social Review* 27 Nov. 1897: 453).

In retrospect, these contradictory reviews epitomise Grimshaw's own conflict. What right has a woman, who *should* be domestic and dependent *by nature*, to hanker after broader experience? Grimshaw seems to have experienced this quandary, individually, as an ethical failing--in many ways she bore the impress of Ulster Calvinism. She attempted to resolve it by invoking "natural" law to quell self-doubt about the appropriateness or justice of socio-sexual roles:

It was once said, and very truly, that--'Some women know what it is to have had a man for their father.' A young girl is often passionately rebellious against the fate that has placed her soul in a woman's body. Especially is this the case if she is one of the vigorous, full-blooded creatures that (without seeing either of her parents) one instinctively feels to be more like the father than the mother. The spirit of adventure,--the love of danger for danger's sake--the pure animal joy of exerting muscle and taxing vitality in violent exercises--all these take hold upon such a woman as strongly as upon her brothers; and the necessary limitations imposed by her sex cause her to chafe and

fret....

It wears out, however, in 99 cases out of 100. As the years go by the feminine side, that may have been almost dormant at first, asserts itself more and more strongly. The liking for the constant society of men in general passes away (being frequently replaced by a desire for the society of one in particular)--a feeling of healthy comradeship with other women drives out the melancholy sensation of fellow-slavery, which was the only sex-feeling of her early days. 'The nomad's heart' beats more quietly, and only now and then responds to the old stimuli--the roar of the sea, the smell of shipping down among the docks, the long white road stretching out...in the cold sun of a restless March morning. But it never dies. [After children come] physical daring and reckless courage die away as they almost always do...and [children] draw out every purely feminine characteristic so strongly as to exclude all others.... (453-54).

Probably, too, women like Mrs. Byers embodied a suspicion which life confirmed for many schoolgirls: academic achievement was as unseemly as any other unless a woman was unmarried and used her education to serve others. Such a woman's career, rather than being seen as a profession, should be an extension of the duties that women performed already.

[T]he women who staffed the new schools and colleges for girls presented their pupils with conservative images of women's work and lives. They tended to be highly respectable women, exemplifying...the quintessentially 'feminine' virtues of selflessness and service, albeit in a comparatively 'public' arena... Full time, paid employment was still socially unacceptable for middle-class women after marriage. Women who sought personal autonomy and the stimulus of continued employment therefore sometimes chose to remain single....As Delamont has noted, 'Celibacy was a common form of revolt against the traditional female sphere.' It was

inordinately difficult for women to separate their sexuality from what they had learned about 'femininity'--from associations of fragility, passivity and dependence. So they frequently denied both at the same time. But the celibate life-style of women teachers hardly commended them as role-models in the eyes of the majority of their pupils... (Dyhouse 72).

Grimshaw herself remembered, well over 40 years later, that lecturers at ladies' colleges, once they were over 30, tended to become "dessicated, nervous, and inclined to giggle miserably in the presence of pupils' fathers" (*Isles of Adventure* 12).

Nonetheless, such a career was marked out for Beatrice by her parents. Accordingly, in 1887 they despatched her to the Ladies' College at Bedford Square (now Bedford College of the University of London). It was a typical choice for a family who retained traces of their ancestral rebelliousness. They might have sent Beatrice to Queen's College, London (Katherine Mansfield's school). This was Church of England and governed largely by men. Instead, the Grimshaws sent their daughter to a non-conformist institution, founded by a woman, where women's role in management was considerable.

Beatrice was clearly intelligent. Her own family, neighbours and acquaintances all regarded her as exceptional, although they would have been hard put to say why. The grand-daughter of Nicholas Grimshaw's last business partner (at the Tavanagh Weaving Factory, Portadown) recalls that her own mother, six years younger than Beatrice and one of a family of nine totally

uneducated girls, described Beatrice as a "blue-stocking". But Beatrice wore her learning lightly. Dr. Helen Grimshaw, a descendant of Nicholas' brother O'Donnell, has "childhood memories of my father saying how odd [Beatrice] had always been and that her adoption of the South Seas was typical of her. I never heard the slightest mention that her parents considered her 'a black sheep.' She was just Beatrice, who everyone knew was different from the rest of us!" (Ltr., 5 Nov. 1979). Another correspondent, while paying Grimshaw a writer's highest compliment ("I remember her name because I liked her stories") asked rhetorically, "For her time, wasn't she quite a gal?" (Ltr., Mrs. Kitty Bergin, 1 Feb. 1979).

It seems likely, however, that all were mistaking intellectual ability for inclination. But Beatrice's choices were limited, for "occupations for women other than teaching", as noted in an 1886 pamphlet by Selina Hadland, could be enumerated on the fingers of two hands, as far as "ladies" were concerned:

- (1) Patenting inventions, from deep sea telescopes to fire escapes;
- (2) Administrative positions, e.g., Prison Officers, Poor Law Guardians, School Board members (Lady superintendent prison officers, Hadland pointed out, were waited on by women prisoners, so "Gentlewomen [who] do not often apply...might...never soil their hands");
- (3) Medical;
- (4) Literary work ("more precarious than any" including copying at the British Museum and tracing Americans' ancestry (7));
- (5) Artistic (ranging from the drudgery of china painting to lithography and drafting;

also singing, and Grimshaw did briefly train as a contralto);

(6) Clerical (e.g., Post Office work, banking);

(7) Domestic ("In this department, at least, women have only their own sex to compete with" 10)--this included nursing, which Grimshaw apparently tried and then abandoned. Later, in her careers advice for women, she did her best to demystify the "ministering angel" image while reserving her highest praise for those who could sustain their idealism amidst drudgery);

(8) Commercial (e.g., dress-making).

Beatrice's 1887 courses, although not intended for a University of London degree, were demanding. In the Lent term of 1887, she studied mathematics, chemistry, English language, Latin, Greek and English History. In the Easter term, her course of study was the same, apart from the elimination of English History. In the Michaelmas term, she studied mathematics, physics, chemistry, English language, Latin, Greek and French.

Today Bedford College possesses only rudimentary archives for students at that time. But the Calendar of 1888, based on input from the years immediately preceding, suggests several avenues of biographical speculation. In 1886 the student magazine started, with a picture of the mighty, motherless, virginal Pallas Athene on the cover: an appropriate emblem for a woman who never married, presented her father with the only book she ever dedicated, lived by her wits, and wrote for years under the pseudonym of a warrior queen, "Maev". Years later, Grimshaw was

still contributing to the magazine.

The development of her future craft must have been influenced by such Class Examination Papers as English Language (July 1887) which included the question, "Illustrate the saying that 'all words are in some sort faded metaphor,'" (*Bedford College Calendar*, 1887, 178) while a topic in English Literature at the same time required its students to think from what we would now call a literary-sociological perspective: "Connect the Faerie Queene with the age that produced it, in respect of both its form and its thought".

In addition to a Music Society (years later Grimshaw sublimated this interest in amateur performances, as for the Royal Hospital for Incurables in Dublin) and a Sketching Club, the Bedford women, in June 1887, acted "Iphigeneia" *in Greek*. Whether Beatrice took part in such activity or not, over 20 years later familiarity with such experience was one of many which made her such an agreeable companion for Sir Hubert Murray. Professor Gilbert Murray sent his translations of Euripides to Papua, where Grimshaw and Murray read them together on the deck of the Government yacht during official tours of inspection.

Beatrice's participation in these extra-curricular activities is surmise. Her first appearance in print, in keeping with her later career as polemicist, publicist and propagandist, shows her plunging into the concerns of the Debating Society. Her first "non-fiction" shows an opinionated, if not very

successful, practitioner of rhetoric. Perhaps mindful of the political disturbances at home, or of the Hyde Park riots occurring in London, she argued in May 1887 for the proposition that "the lawful authority of the government is likely to suffer by the freedom with which its actions are at present criticised" (*Bedford College Magazine* June 1887, 14). The motion was lost.

Her performance in November was also a loss--19 to two--but retrospectively amusing. Miss Grimshaw moved "that there is a growing want of appreciation of real poetry among the English people", vaguely defining "the mass of English people" as "those who are fairly educated". Her argument had a three-tiered, cumulative structure:

- (1) "That the increase of trashy novels has greatly destroyed the power of concentration of mind in the present age;
- (2) "That publishers will not take the risk of bringing out poems by many authors, but bring out novels by the hundred;
- (3) "On the other hand may be brought forward the increased sale of poetical works, but this does not prove that they are the more read and studied" (Dec. 1887, 10-11).

With historical hindsight we can relish the irony of a rather pompous 17-year-old invoking élitist notions of literary value when her own reputation would be as a purveyor of mass-popular novels. But in 1887 George Newnes' *Tit-Bits*--the first successful, advertisement-based, widely circulating magazine for "mass" tastes--was only six years old. The petit-bourgeois,

working class and gender-differentiated audiences to which Grimshaw eventually appealed were in the process of formation.

25

"In the Far North", Beatrice's first signed contribution to the *Bedford College Magazine*, prefigures Grimshaw's later tourist writing. The beauties of a place overshadow the presence and significance of its people who--in this case guides, beggars, and [geological?] specimen sellers--are in any event only part of the scenery. History is suppressed, except when it serves her argument. The value of the "foreign" is to provide an occasion for extended or relaxed behaviour, but self-assertion in the face of convention is limited. In Portrush, you can eat oranges in the main street, go without gloves, dry your hair on the front terrace of your hotel, and wear sandshoes all week long, reserving boots for Sundays.

As to what the Bedford experience ultimately meant to Grimshaw, in "College Days" "Graphis" sketches a portrait of "the incorrigible of sixteen, who kept strange beasts in her bedroom, and organised midnight rows, [now] a busy journalist, frequently turning night into day for more serious work than of old" (*Social Review* 21 Jan. 1895: 444). "There was yet another, a pleasant, merry-faced girl...but of her those who are left never speak!" The article values female educational emancipation ("Oh, the appalling incompleteness and pettiness of...finishing school, as our mothers knew it!....What an atmosphere of premature and unhealthy sentiment prevailed among these elegant sixteen and

seventeen-year-olds!"). It praises the idealism of the sexually-segregated academic cloister while hinting at its impracticality. "College Days" is commemoration and celebration, but criticism came soon. In *A Fool of Forty* Theodora, in a passage almost word-for-word the same as "College Days", recalls her time at Newnham:

What a peaceful, busy, unreal life it had been...where all was strangely strenuous and pale, and the fierce white sun of everyday life never broke in upon the ghostly colouring of college years....Afterwards, afterwards, the sun and the rain and the thunder had come altogether (*Social Review* 22 Oct. 1898: 301).

A Fool of Forty, Grimshaw told her publisher, was intended as an *indictment* of women's colleges. As late as 1924, Stacy Rowan (*The Sands of Oro*) is "intellectual...not just everyone's fancy...still quite young, but in spirit...of the 'eighties and 'nineties...rather highly educated...with the student paleness and the student nervousness..." (4). Like Theodora, confronted with the thwarting of her sensuality, Stacy's education *unfits* her to recognise her inner nature: "For all her keen mind, for all the college training on which she prided herself, Stacy did not know the meaning of the wild fit of tears that...left her beaten down as corn is beaten down by rain" (12). White Savage Simon pragmatically asserts that the value of his improbable Oxford education "is that it teaches you not to overvalue such things as degrees" (86). It is thus no surprise that a key moment and image in his story--a long meditation about alogical, associative thought modes--ends by his throwing an encyclopedia

into the sea.

Most of Grimshaw's female heroes equate the end of adolescence with the end of innocence. This is not only sexual (although that is difficult enough for most of them to negotiate, if they do). It is also social and economic; their security disintegrates all around them.

In Beatrice's own case disillusionment set in when she returned from Bedford to Belfast. She was torn between acquiescence in doing what was expected of her and yearning for what was not conceived of, let alone allowed, in her social milieu. "There followed a year or two of social duties--the good and useful period of conscription that everyone ought to serve. All the time I was trying incidentally to break athletic records..." ("About Myself").

Conscription is a revealing term, with its connotations of involuntary servitude and military drill. A bourgeois woman's apprenticeship, Grimshaw seems to have realised, was deadly serious, preparing her for the only "occupation" she was supposed to want: marriage. "It must be remembered," the narrator of *The Terrible Island* reminds us in a passage almost identical to the autobiographical fragment above, "that my people were well off..." (32). Thus, unlike the homegrown Australasians in the story, he recognises the social position of a shipwrecked woman who has lost her memory and very identity; she is a Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Alexandra.

She was broken, drilled, to the line and rule of Society. She was trained. She would never show her feelings where feelings could be concealed; she would be courteous if she were dying at the stake...(32).

Most of Grimshaw's later writing, however, inverts the importance of class-marked "shibboleths", exposing them as cant rather than signs of "good breeding". The most admirable heroes, like the Australian Ben Slade (*Nobody's Island*) have "no profession, no people" (265). Mark Plummer (*The Sands of Oro*) is "of no class at all that one could define, and no particular occupation, unless--Yes, of course, he had discovered rivers, and found mountain ranges... [But] who were his people? Probably absolutely nobody" (28). Protagonists like Hugh Lynch and Phil Amory are much better suited to become heroes of adventure as soon as their family fortunes crash, propelling them into the "real" world.

Nobody's Island is particularly interesting in its exploration of female roles. The aristocratic Edith must *disown* her Englishness (she becomes a "vert to Australianism") (233). This includes rejecting inherited, unearned income ("[D]o you like the idea of [tenants] keeping you?" 72). She must learn to be self-sufficient ("[Y]ou're waking up when you begin to see that making your own bread and meat and potatoes and housing and clothing, is the only way for a man to be a decent human being" 73). She abandons her quotation-crammed, grammatically over-precise, snobbery-ridden speech ("[T]he English language," her Australian husband tells her, "was made for me, and not I for

the English language" 233). The by now-familiar devaluation of formal education also appears as he asks her, "Have you decided yet that a college education is not--always--indispensable?.... Also that a man is not an unclean beast if he doesn't use the shibboleth, and call it 'Varsity?" (75).

Meanwhile, the endearing Murua's (another woman named for an island, the land-as-woman motif surfacing as usual in colonial fiction) struggle *not* to become a woman is an equally important rejection of the social construction of 'femininity'. Raised alone in the Papuan bush by her resident magistrate father after her mother's death in childbirth, she has been brought up as a boy. When love awakens her, only, she thinks, to disappoint her, she explains her decision to return to the bush:

'I got tired of my skirts,' said Murua. 'Women do, you know, Captain Campbell. I got tired of being a woman, too. Only most women have to stay that way. I haven't... I shall go back to the station, and when Pups goes on patrol I shall go with him. And the boys will carry our tucker-box, and when it's one o'clock we shall dine somewhere by a river-bed, and the bell-birds will be ringing in the bush.... [T]here'll be Pups and me and the boys, and New Guinea....Nothing more....I think the world is full of trouble, and most of it belongs to women' (317-18).

Murua resolves this dilemma in a typically conservative Grimshaw fashion by marrying the man she is speaking to: a father-figure.

But when she was still 17, Beatrice's class and gender were an imperative and mandate. She may have questioned, but she obeyed.

When Beatrice attended Queen's as a non-matriculating student in 1890-91, her family lived at 19 College Gardens, a street of attractive homes named for its proximity to the Botanical Gardens founded by James Grimshaw in 1827.²⁶ (The other reference is probably not to the university, which now owns the house, but to the elite Methodist College--"the Methody"--facing this row of houses.)

Thanks to James Grimshaw, Belfast possessed another attraction, besides its harbour, to offer the young bored with Biedermeier interiors or weighed down by imperatives to train themselves in social duties and professional obligations. The novelist Forrest Reid wrote an autobiography of his youth in *Apostate: an autobiography of youth in Victorian Belfast*. He elaborated an aesthetic uncannily like that voiced later by Grimshaw. Both good and bad art, he claimed, sprang from a desire to return to "an Eden from which each of us is exiled" (7). He attributed his first intimations of another life beyond and behind everyday existence to the time when his nurse used to take him to these same Botanical Gardens.

What I saw then, was not the Botanical Gardens at all, but a tropical landscape, luxuriant and gorgeous. The damp warmth of the greenhouse atmosphere, the moist earthy smell of the ferns and creepers and mosses growing there, helped to deepen the illusion that I was far away in virgin forest. Tigers and panthers burned in those shrubberies and scarlet, green and blue parrots screamed soundlessly in the trees. Soundlessly as yet; and as yet the tigers skulked almost unseen; but in a very few minutes I knew I should pass really into their country (9).²⁷

The Grimshaws no longer had a country "seat", and began an urban-nomadic existence, their father's residential address changing in the *Belfast Directory* every few years. The 1880s and 1890s were one sorry saga of decline which eventually resulted in the enforced sale of the Grimshaw family's commercial properties in downtown Belfast by 1899. It was Nicholas' sad distinction to be the last member of the family to be involved in linen manufacture. His partnership with James McFadden ended in highly libellous charges, according to McFadden's descendants. When Beatrice was attending Queen's the worst financial disasters were yet to come, but she may well have suspected how precarious the family's position was. In 1887 (to pay her fees at Bedford?) Nicholas had mortgaged some of the downtown properties. In 1892 (to pay her fees at Queen's?) he went further into debt (over four thousand pounds) over these properties, which he and his brother O'Donnell still hoped to repurchase. But that would depend on their raising more than 13,000 pounds in interest alone (PRONI, D 1905/2/61B/2 and 5; D/1769/38/1).

I was in the plight of a good many others [Grimshaw recalled in 1930] whose people were just discovering in that nineteenth-century end, that the 'top drawers' would not, and could not, hold them any longer, and that it mattered not the least bit...during how many or how few centuries they had inhabited those top drawers, now that darker conditions and a changing world had shaken them out. It was no question of wish and have any longer. What you wanted, beyond the ordinary necessities of life, you must get for yourself (*Isles of Adventure* 18).

"Darker conditions and a changing world" are a typical Grimshaw translation of economic conditions such as over-production and recession into a metaphysical near-universal. In any event, they were a blessing in disguise, necessitating and releasing capacities in the Grimshaw children that might otherwise have remained unrealised. Ramsay, we have seen, apprenticed himself as a marine engineer on the same terms as working class youths. Beatrice, as soon as she was legally able, went to Dublin to earn her own living, initially as a development of her passionate hobby, cycling. But until she could--until she was 21--her parents seem to have insisted on the year at Queen's.

Once again Beatrice was the fortunate inheritor of a family tradition which included, even several generations earlier, acceptance of at least tolerance for the education of women.

The "godless" Queen's Colleges of Belfast, Cork and Galway had been established in 1845 as a partial, not particularly successful, solution to the class and sectarian problems bedevilling tertiary education in Ireland. This was polarised between Catholic and Protestant, and dominated by the pillar and expression of the alien, Protestant Ascendancy--Trinity College, Dublin--and the privately-funded Catholic university, now University College, Dublin, where Cardinal Newman spent five influential, if personally agonising, years. Queen's College, Belfast, with a high proportion of Presbyterian students, was in character more like the Scottish universities which had for many generations educated Ulstermen. Macknight noted with approval

that Queen's, Belfast formed Empire builders rather than scholars or visionaries.

Queen's no more than Bedford provided Beatrice with a specialty, but its impress was nonetheless lasting. She was one of three non-matriculating women (as opposed to 43 men). By this time Queen's had produced one female and 45 male graduates (including several of her male relatives and her sister's future husband). Women could attend all classes but not compete for scholarships and prizes, which discrimination they agitated against two years after Beatrice had left. But if Beatrice's academic interests were desultory, Queen's gave her an admiration for Samuel Dill, Professor of Greek, which "Maev" later recorded in a review of his *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire* (*Social Review* 14 Jan. 1899: 521).

It is intriguing to speculate about Dill's influence on a young woman who became a strident advocate of tropical colonisation. One of his November 1890 examination questions was, "What were the great colonising states? Name some of the remoter Greek settlements in the east and west" (*Queen's College Calendar, 1890-1891*). The theme of colonial encounter which monopolised his attention also attracted her. But it is equally important to note the significance, for her, of the exotic and distant (whether in time or space), and her appreciation for skillful graphic selection and reconstruction. Her review is an embryonic aesthetic; her comments reveal that it was not "the truth" in the sense of verbal reproduction of otherwise verifiable

circumstances that appealed to her, but rather the *feel* of (in this case) the past.

The main object of the book appears to be the picturing of barbaric and classical life in close contact, the former amalgamating with and driving out the latter by degrees. The literary life of the day is described in close detail, and many a clever 'touch of nature,' introduced in exactly the right place, carries the reader back with surprising effect into the very atmosphere of the third and fourth centuries (*Social Review* 14 Jan. 1899: 521).

Here, the exotic was remote in *time*. But she would eventually discover that, even in her own time, it could still be found in faraway *places*. Distance could psychologically fuse with time to create an impression of liberation *from* time. By now, in Belfast, Beatrice was enduring not only economic but religious distress, and casting about for certainty of some kind.

I kept looking for the something that was lost. I did not find it up the Lagan River, ahead or behind my pulling boat, nor yet within the range of my bicycle ("About Myself").

I always got a thrill when I saw the pattern forming; often it would be flowers that took me back to my childhood's days (Linen weaver qtd. in *Messenger* 155).

A letter Beatrice wrote on College Gardens stationery to the publisher Richard Bentley, requesting references to other work by an anonymous writer of a religious article in *Temple Bar*, is

a late Victorian *cri de coeur*.

Even the few articles in Temple Bar have had a very great influence over me, and helped me out of the confusion of utter scepticism--I owe much to them, and I cannot think of all the author *may* have written since then, without making one more effort....I am very sorry to trouble a busy man with merely personal enquiries, but I have no other course (Ltr., n.d.) ²⁸

Like others in her generation ("Decadents", Aesthetes, patriots), Beatrice was inclining towards Catholicism. But she would have received scant comprehension at home for a course of action which had radical political implications, however personal the decision seemed to the convert. Her ancestor Robert had branded the *Anglican* Established Church as "the insidious remnant of the superstition of a darker age, a pampered Prelacy and domineering church" (Budge and O'Leary 66). Now Beatrice was adopting the spiritual ideology of an even more powerfully organised, socially domineering church. ²⁹ In addition to political overtones, her eventual conversion (in 1893, when she was safely distant from her family of origin) can be interpreted from other contexts: the romanticism of other artist-converts such as Wilde, Beardsly, Johnson and Dawson; Theosophy; other forms of *fin-de-siècle* mysticism, antiquarianism and Celticism.

Beatrice's personal motivations seem to include the attraction of Catholicism's colourful, sensuous pageantry, and a quest for "roots", the title of the article which had so impressed her. Perhaps, as her not quite Anglo-Irish family were swiftly

descending down the social scale, she was beginning to suffer a feeling of historical moorlessness. The appeal of roots or sources, besides revealing a quest after origins (a hallmark of identity crisis) was to blossom freely once Grimshaw reached the Pacific and succumbed to the lure of the primitive.³⁰

Her 1893 poem, "To Myself", hints at emotional stress as well.

If loving, loved, thy spirit yet
 A loneliness has known,
 If thou the soul hast never met
 That speaks onto thy own--...
 Though the dark maze of human life
 Lie heavy on thy heart...
 Man may be false, and flesh is weak,
 But God is strong and true.
 (*Irish Monthly* 1893: 654)

Later, editing the non-sectarian *Social Review*, Grimshaw sensibly observed:

Few people, we daresay, stop to consider how much our individual religion, from the sectarian point of view, is influenced by the accident of birth, or ever reflect that in all probability the bigoted Protestant, the offspring of Protestant parents, would have been a still more bigoted Roman Catholic had his parents happened to be of that denomination. And yet the fact of the very small percentage of those that change their form of religion after they come to years of discretion, should show that it is more the accident of birth that governs such matters than the seasoned conviction of maturer years. ... [M]uch of the energy devoted to proselytising might be better employed in teaching common humanity and common sense (23 May 1896: 849).

This is all very well. But one may also wonder why, almost ten years after Beatrice left Belfast for Dublin, and was about to leave Ireland for the South Seas, she spent her holidays at Catholic Port Stewart while the rest of her family continued to holiday (and, ultimately, to retire to) Protestant Portrush. A loner in the family, she was fast becoming an exile at home. Her address is written as "Derry" rather than the colonised "Londonderry".

Indeed, she would not again feel at home till she found Papua, where "I knew that I had found it. In spite of all temptations to belong to other nations...I returned to and remained faithful to New Guinea" ("About Myself"). As Rilke wrote to Duchess Aurelia Gallarati Scotti in January 1923:

We are born, so to speak, provisionally, it doesn't matter where; it is only gradually that we compose, *within ourselves*, our true place of origin, so that we may be born there retrospectively, and each day more definitely. For some people find their spiritual birthplace coincides with that which one finds mentioned in their passports, and it must confer an unheard of happiness to be identical to such a point with external circumstances (qtd. by Alpers, 1).

In 1891, when Beatrice left Belfast for Dublin, she was not yet close to such "unheard of happiness". But she *was* beginning the 16-year trek towards the country of which, we have seen, she later declared, "For me, there is no other...". It took Grimshaw nearly as long as the time she had spent within her family to

find a place she could call home.

Notes

¹ To refer to Ireland as England's oldest colony is a convention requiring slight modification; the Isle of Man may be regarded as the first. Throughout the Irish chapters, I refer loosely to late nineteenth century Ireland as a colony, a usage which Grimshaw's family, at that stage of Ulster's development, would probably have rejected. Nonetheless, eight centuries of British dominion over Ireland provided Great Britain with a training- and battleground for conquering other alien lands. That such insistence on regarding Grimshaw's background as colonised is not inaccurate may be supported by the 24 Feb. 1980 issue of the *Guardian Weekly* which entitled its leader "A Foreign Land" and commented in its opening paragraph:

Anyone accustomed to wandering round the...Third World would find little in Ulster that is unfamiliar. Guerrillas, suspended democracy, armies and gunmen on the streets, unthinkable behavior in prisons, questionable and questioned frontiers, squalid housing, grinding poverty, indifferent multinationals, once vibrant economies in visible decline... The uniqueness of Northern Ireland is that it lies, not south of the equator, but just off the shores of Britain (4).

² Linda Susan Beard's "Doris Lessing: African Writer" (a distillation of her 1979 dissertation for Cornell University, *Lessing's Africa: a Study of Geographical and Metaphorical Africa in the Novels and Stories of Doris Lessing*) argues a very similar case. She rejects the notion that Lessing's African years survive in her later work *only* as a background or source, regarding instead Lessing's African childhood and early middle years as "a workshop for Lessing's imaginative education" (252); her "home ground" (Lessing's own term) which "stimulated the metaphysician in her". (M.J. Daymond, in "Areas of the Mind: Continuity and Change in *The Memoirs of a Survivor* and Doris Lessing's African Stories" asserts that "criticism of [Lessing's] work must acknowledge that although she has successfully relocated her work since leaving Southern Africa, the products of her imagination still manifest the shaping power

of her earlier experience" (1). A third critic, Rebecca O'Rourke ("Doris Lessing: Exile and Reception") concurs that Lessing's central, formal concerns--"The problems of what to represent and how"--are "grounded" and "forged through Africa" (Taylor, 222).

³ Matthew Arnold's recent biographer, Park Honan ("The Theory of Biography," *Novel* 13 (1979): 109-20), borrowing Raymond Williams' concept, "structure of feeling", pushes this plea for innovative narrative procedure further. Since "synchrony is always in tension with diachrony in successful narrative" (112), "the normal order of events may be reversed or defied...for a good reason....Boswell knows that there are a thousand ways to narrate ABCDE" (112). Honan thus visualises biography as the intersection of two "planes" or levels of exposition (paralleling the subject's own, multiply-determined experience, seldom lived as a simple, unilineal, developmental unfolding). If this conception of writing a life (as lived) is granted, the narrative attempting to encompass it must allow for a gamut of stylistic strategies and resources. To restore "the re-creation of an historical present" (118) "intrusions, backward-sweeping and forward-looking generalizations about [the] subject, [and] vignettes" (113) are necessary. "[A] diachronic, documented narrative...demands an inner structure of feeling, with synchronic strategies" (117). If not, "the sense of experience-in-events may be lost. I may need...so many expository facts...that I find my narrative a clotted string of evidence" (116), a monument to "cold retrospective factuality" (118). Honan's final recommendations for overcoming "the special presentational problems in this extremely difficult genre" (120) boil down to continual, inventive use of the historic present and the narrator's willingness to take part in the narrative.

⁴ "Speaker", applied to this context, may be read as "author", and thus a "reader", who is addressed, is also implied.

⁵ But does Alpers glimpse the symbolic connotations of his subject's choice--that she was invading a "man's field"? Judith Thurman confronted a similar, even more complicated problem when female writers take on pseudonyms, as the title of *Isak Dinesen: the Life of Karen Blixen* indicates. Thurman explains her procedure for dealing with her subject's search for an identity in her introduction:

She was born Dinesen...and christened Karen Christentze. Her family called her "Tanne," which was her own mispronunciation of Karen and a nickname--forever diminutive--that she disliked....Osceola [was] her first pseudonym; Baroness von Blixen-Finecke, by her marriage; Tania and Jerie to her white and black African familiars, respectively; Isak,

'the one who...laughs.'...To her secretary she was the old battle horse, Khamar. To various literary disciples she was Pellegrina, Amiani, or Scheherazade. In Denmark, when she was elderly, she was spoken of and to almost universally as *Baronessen*,...according to feudal usage. The name on her tombstone is Karen Blixen.

These names had their own etiquette, logic, and geography. They were separate entrances to her presence... But...'Dinesen,' unmodified either by a sexual or a Christian identity, was that idea of herself and her origins which the child carried with her into old age. It expressed...the relation to her father, to his family, to a sense that they were a tribe--a *stamme*...--a rootstock (5).

⁶ I use this example from Kapp because it seems to illustrate Colin MacArthur's argument, in *Television and History* about the legitimate uses, *within factual accounts*, of techniques more often associated with fiction. Referring to a programme about Scottish history, "The Cheviot, The Stag, and The Black, Black Oil", MacArthur writes:

There is a tendency among those seeking alternatives to the dominant bourgeois forms and practices to reject out of hand the whole catalogue of techniques and effects of bourgeois art and pose radical alternatives on a one-to-one basis. As an example...the central reliance of bourgeois art on dramatic climaxes and *crescendi* is felt to require, on the part of some radical practitioners, a commitment to severely cerebral structures and to forms of de-dramatisation....[but] an across-the-board rejection of dramatic pacing and climax should be viewed with great caution....[I]t is difficult to resist the conviction that, *in an appropriate mix of methods and techniques designed to foreground conceptual issues and provoke reflection, traditional strategies must retain a place* (British Film Institute Television Monograph 8, 52-53 (emphases his)).

⁷ Honan, in "Beyond Sartre, Vercors, and Bernard Crick: Theory and Form in Literary Biographies" cites my "No 'Story,'

No Script, Only the Struggle': First and Scott's *Olive Schreiner*" as a reminder of "how implacably we seek for moral values in an author's life," as "mak[ing] a strong...case for 'social contexts' and "testif[ying] to a healthy influence of 'objective' biographers" (*New Literary History*, Spring 1985, 643). This is in response to my own citing of the article of his mentioned above. While gratified to be found in such distinguished biographical company, I feel than Honan has missed an important point: rather than seeking "objectivity", I am trying to evolve a method that adequately describes (socially-conditioned) subjectivity.

⁸ In *Literary Biography* Edel defines a portrait as "fram[ing] the subject in a given position" (127) at a crucial stage in her or his history. His specialised use of the term is from *Portrait of Zélide*. My final chapter is a "portrait moral" of this kind.

⁹ Peter Nagourney, in "The Basic Assumptions of Literary Biography", notes how Western expectations affect our assumptions that the subject is unified and her life trajectory linear, while David E. Schwalm, in "Locating Belief in Biography"; highlights the inadequacy of biographical "evidence": "In the final analysis, we have relatively little information about any biographical subject, some of it of dubious provenance, all of it of indeterminate significance" (16).

¹⁰ See also extract from George K. Smith and William Hughes, "Chronological statement in reference to the origin and operations of the Belfast Charitable Society", Document 2 in *Problems of a Growing City* 13-19, especially the reference on page 19 to "spinning and knitting...[being] of considerable pecuniary benefit to the Society".

¹¹ A Lancasterian school was the invention of Joseph Lancaster of London, who thus advertised his system when wishing "to extend its advantages to Ireland":

By this System, paradoxical as it may appear, above One Thousand Children may be taught and governed by one Master only, at an expense now reduced to Five Shillings per annum, each Child, and supposed still capable of further reduction. The average time for Instruction, in Reading, Writing, and the elements of Arithmetic, is twelve Months....

[S]urely, if any Country needs a short way to the education of her Youth, it is Ireland. To Ireland, everything which can increase the comforts, purify the morals, and improve the conditions of her mechanics and peasantry...is

a point of greatest moment (Document 6 in *Problems of a Growing City* 6).

¹² The Volunteers originally formed as a militia to protect the coasts of Ireland, particularly Belfast, from French naval attack during the American War of Independence, when British naval forces were too depleted to protect Ireland. "France might be the enemy against whom they had armed in the first place, but the oppression of Ireland by England formed the main theme of their discussions" (Beckett, *The Making of Modern Ireland...* 212). By 1782, when the Volunteers successfully agitated for (Protestant) Parliamentary independence, "they represented the spirit of the Protestant nation" (222). Over time they had "broken loose from the control of the aristocracy and the gentry; ... [t]heir officers [like Nicholas] were radical merchants and shopkeepers, rather than members of the landed gentry....[I]n the north...the Volunteer movement remained strongest, and its here that revolutionary and republican sentiments were most loudly expressed" (247).

¹³ This collaboration with the Tories took place during the 1841 General Election. See Budge and O'Leary 49.

¹⁴ "Maev" commented in her "Notes by the Way" (the opening pages of each issue of the *Social Review*) that accidents at the shipbuilders' Harland and Wolff were becoming too common in the engineering works, and noted the many gentleman apprentices "who go through the routine of work in exactly the same manner as their comrades of the working class" (23 Jan. 1897: 81).

¹⁵ In fiction, to the very end of her career, Grimshaw permitted her heroes to indulge this passion, which for many years she obviously hesitated to accept for herself. She seems to have understood that such *Wanderlust* could threaten, if not indeed sabotage, the socio-sexual division which, keeping women under "house arrest", was essential for the reproduction of late Victorian society. Thus:

[P]assion...seized upon Eleanor in that moment; the passion for travel that had been hopelessly frustrated in her own mother [and] till this hour, had lain unrecognised, almost unfelt, in herself. How could one recognize a feeling that had no name, was not even supposed to exist? Girls were for love, for passion of one kind only.

Mrs. Pfeiffer, Miss Cumming, Miss Bird--one had heard of these distinguished women, but one did not wish, if one were truly nice, to emulate their feats ... Such feats might or not be admirable; they were certainly 'fast'--

in the Victorian sense of that word, which had nothing to do with morals. 'Fast'...meant doggy, horsy, athletic, outdoorish-to excess; in fine, a feeble imitator of the inimitable Man. ...

As for the wild queer passions that were to lure the girls of forty, fifty, seventy years later away from their proper occupation of marrying and having babies...no one yet had dreamed of such monstrous improprieties.

Yet some few of the young ladies of the day did, furtively, long for adventure... Some of them knew strange nostalgia for places, homes that they had never seen. Eleanor was one of these... [W]ith her, the love of places, that had made her somewhat cold to people, not quite, for all her beauty, attractive to men, was waking, and would never die; even as in her little disappointed mother, it had survived to the very end (*Victorian Family Robinson* 27-30).

C.f. *The Coral Queen* Eve Landon's *matrilineal* inheritance for adventure: "Many girls think they are born to some uncommon fate--to far travel, strange adventures, passionate love affairs. Eve Landon had never thought; she had known....You see, there were drops in her blood that talked and prophesied, as blood will do, if you know how to listen. There was Arabella...Queen Adelaide's maid of honour.... The drop that came through Arabella leaped and sang like a flame....Eve used to look at her miniature sometimes and wonder... (7-8).

¹⁶ George Moore's *A Drama in Muslin*, exactly contemporaneous with Grimshaw's adolescence, compares the Land War with sexual antagonism and barter, to contend that both colonial conquest and male-female relations are property and power contests.

¹⁷ Messenger comments:

a recording made in a Weaving Shed confirms the description of the deafening noise which assailed the ears of the novice. The 'blundering' was...produced by the whirling power belts of the machines, plus the racing of the shuttles and the banging of the sleys--also, where damask was woven, the complicated Jacquard card machines...of hundreds of looms turning out various kinds of linen cloth

(122).

¹⁸ All of Walker's books, including also *Shadows on Glass: a Portfolio of Early Ulster Photography*, are an invaluable record of scenes from everyday life as the young Beatrice would have observed them, both in town and countryside. The sections on Portadown, and the photographs of coal schooners, auctions, hiring fairs, markets, and the like would all have been familiar to her.

¹⁹ The Land League itself was recognised in its own time as "Nothing less than the strongest native revolt for over two hundred years, [which] sought to disrupt the bases of the Cromwellian settlement and of British rule" (O'Brien, *States of Ireland* 47).

²⁰ Photographs similar to what the young Beatrice would have seen may again be seen in Walker's *Shadows on Glass*, especially "Mid-Victorian Belfast" 80-95, and "Darkest Belfast" 108-13.

²¹ Nor was this longing limited to those who might someday be able to afford it. The working class hero of James Douglas' *The Unpardonable Sin* responds similarly:

[Gaby] devoured with exultation Robert Louis Stevenson's immortal romances... He fell irrevocably in love...with the sailor tales to sailor tunes, storm and adventure, heat and cold, with schooner, islands, and maroons, and buccaneers, and buried gold....[N]o physical or moral coercion could quench Gaby's thirst for forbidden romance....The boys of Bigotsborough were sorely beset by the irresistible temptations of the docks, which were always crowded with ships of all shapes and sizes from all ports of the world...with strange figure-heads, and innumerable tarry smells. There were to be seen sailors of every race from every port in the seven seas--...with real clasp-knives at their waists, real earrings in their ears... [The boys] hurried home reluctantly leaving the enchanted shore. On the road Bob declared that he intended to try his luck as a stowaway (60-63).

²² The schooling of some of Grimshaw's contemporary Irish women writers fits the pattern described here. Susan L. Mitchell, "A.E.'s" friend and editorial assistant, as prolific and varied in her journalistic output as Grimshaw was to be for Mecedry's publications, was a day pupil at a "good private school for girls...and...had the best tuition available for

music, singing and drawing and dancing lessons. She then helped her two younger sisters to keep a school" (Kain 21). Katherine Tynan's education at the Dominican Convent of St Catherine of Siena was "completed" when she was 14.

²³ She wasn't as fortunate as the Irish-Australian "Iota", however, whom "C.E. de Moleyns" [a pen-name suggesting the writer was "of the mill", hence possibly Grimshaw?] interviewed in the *Social Review* ("Interview with Irish Celebrities. Mrs. Mannington Caffyn. ("Iota", Authoress)"). "[I] was brought up and educated entirely in my Irish home, as my father had a strong and rooted objection to anything in the shape of girls' schools. I spent a great deal of time with my father, accompanying him in his hunting and shooting excursions; in fact, I was brought up far more as a boy than a girl, and I could ride and shoot as well as any of them. It was an ideal life, to which I always look back with regret, and my own experience makes me decidedly of the opinion that girls should be brought up freely with boys, and always have them as companions; it is equally good for them both" (27 Oct. 1894: 9).

²⁴ Her contemporary Katherine Tynan's "affectionate mutual dependency" with her father, much closer than Grimshaw's seems to have been, Tynan's biographer comments, "of course, unmarred by Freudian second thoughts" (Rose 23).

²⁵ Grimshaw's mode of argumentation here is symptomatic of her later techniques. Whatever the circumstances--criticising the availability of gin and guns to New Hebrideans, pandering to Yellow Peril fears in northern Australia, prattling about Papua's (in)fertile soil--many of her verbal strategies scarcely varied over the years. She offered vague definitions or none at all; pseudo-generalisations; exaggerations; provided minimal "evidence" and refutation by citing a "contrary" (but only partially so) point of view. Typically, Grimshaw came to adopt the assertive style rather than the substance and logic of debate, disguising (perhaps even to herself) presuppositions as propositions. These were stated so categorically and authoritatively that they seemed absolved from the hard task of proof.

²⁶ James' own publications reveal his fascination with the natural phenomena of both local and exotic places ("Flora of the Cave Hill", 1823 and 1824; "A Visit to the Coast of Barbary", 1826; "Tour through part of Portugal", 1827; "Tour of the Empire of Morocco in 1825", 1832 [see Arthur Deane, ed., *The Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society Centenary Volume, 1821-1921* 80 and 132]). He married the sister of a well-known botanist, and his son John Templeton Grimshaw followed the natural-historical bent apparent in so many of the Grimshaws ("Some Rare Insects Observed in the Vicinity of Belfast", 1860; Deane 132). James' place in the records of this remarkable family is of a civic pioneer in a most interesting sense, for he provided an alternative world or "space" which liberated the the cultural and imaginative potential of younger generations. What

to him was science was to them a gateway to another way of seeking and knowing which they might never have sensed or explored, had he not trampled and toiled, collecting and transporting specimens, and like Grimshaw later, "bringing it all back home".

²⁷ Not unlike Grimshaw, Reid wrote of this Eden: "It is a country whose image was stamped upon our soul before we opened our eyes on earth, and all our life is little more than a trying to get back there, our art than a mapping of its mountains and deserts" (*Apostate* 7). Similar to young Gabriel in *The Unpardonable Sin*, he became conscious, in his boyhood reading, "through the work, of the mind behind it, of a something that was not the story, though the story was necessary to reveal it" (99-100).

²⁸ Unfortunately I have not been able to trace the article to which Grimshaw refers, nor any reply from Bentley.

²⁹ To this day, when I mention to Northern Irish that Grimshaw changed her sect, a typically immediate reaction is-- "Then there was no other place for her but Papua". In other words, she was well on the way to class-betrayal, apostasy, and possible social expulsion, although these may well not have been her motivations.

³⁰ Discussing Grimshaw's conversion with Irene Stevens of the Literature Board, Australia Council for the Arts, whose Jewish husband became a Catholic, it became apparent that for some people conversion to a highly organised and hierarchical belief system may not negate individual expression as much as it seems. She explained her husband's decision as "knowing who you are, where you fit. With a stable identity, you can expand individuality". Grimshaw's Catholicism, however arrived at, fulfilling whatever needs, was sincere and practised. Like a freemason's ring, it gave her access to valued social contacts (Murray in the first instance, but others as well). Her poverty in later life was ascribed by some observers to her generous donations to missions. Despite an overall wariness when missions sought to usurp government functions, Grimshaw wrote admiring articles about the activities of Catholic missions in Papua, which her neighbouring Protestant mission at Kwato rather deplored (see Aurousseau). In 1923 the *Melbourne Advocate* wrote: "The nuns of the Papuan mission will warmly welcome this clever woman novelist and explorer back....[S]he has always proved a true and generous friend" (10 May, from A255, "Press Cuttings, Papua", at Australian Archives).

Neither Nationalist Nor Unionist, But Irish

The course of literary ambition was neatly said...to begin with aspirations for high poetic renown and to end with promotion to a sub-editorship (Escott, *Masters of English Journalism* 344).

From her school-days Grimshaw had believed that romance was to be found anywhere but in Belfast, described by Beatrice Webb in *My Apprenticeship* as "that last backwater of the sanctimonious commercialism of the nineteenth century" (I, 33). No later than six months after Grimshaw had been editing the *Social Review* "X" contributed a lengthy confirmation of the good sense in "breaking away" to the capital.

[T]here is a thoughtlessness of others in...Belfast which mars a good deal of the comfort of living there....Belfast...with the disadvantage of being built on the river-bed, is abominably drained. The fashion of running up jerry-built houses in the 'modern Athenes...where rubbish was shut the day before yesterday is bound...to be followed by disastrous consequences....Nature has done many things for Belfast...[but]...[with] one exception--...the Queen's College--there is no public building of architectural beauty... Sunday is kept as solemnly as in Scotland. ...[T]he Protestants set the fashion for the Catholics--it is a sin to ride a cycle, and anything like the public pastimes one witnesses in the South on a Sunday would be regarded...as a public scandal, calling for the intervention of the police. The political intolerance and religious bigotry ...is...deplorable and contemptible. Catholic and Protestant stand at arm's length...for the love of God....If the Northern is really to be a force in these islands he must think of

something else besides turning himself into a mere money-making machine. We know a Northern who when his small child forms an attachment for a doll...goes to the trouble of maiming the dumb creature to show...that it is 'only sawdust.' Surely life has something more ennobling to do than reducing all our ideas to 'sawdust' ("North and South," 24 Oct. 1896: 407). ¹

But Dublin was another grim outpost. Grimshaw's cousin the Registrar-General, in his compendium and analysis of statistics from the time of the Famine to the year of his cousin's arrival in Dublin, was as sanguine as one would expect of a late-Victorian philanthropist and social evolutionist:

[I]n this country we are quite too much given to discuss what might have been if something had happened which did not happen; or if something else had not happened which did happen....Ireland suffers very much from the love her public men have for the romance of history. We should rather follow the example of practical nationalities, accept facts as we have them, and deal with the results of events in the recent past....[The Great Starvation /Famine, referred to by him as 'the 1846-7 crisis'] caused a social revolution...so complete, that every important existing institution may be considered to have had a new birth or development after that great crisis....I have shown...that Ireland has advanced in the arts of civilisation and in material prosperity....[W]hen we consider the mighty collapse that took place...it may be that Ireland has advanced more rapidly, and recovered from a condition of almost total wreck, more completely than any other country would have done, or ever has done (*Facts and Figures about Ireland* I, 5-6).

Nonetheless, James Morris claims that in 1897 (Queen Victoria-- "the Famine Queen's") Jubilee, Ireland's "literacy rate [was]

little higher than Burma's":

Its death-rate was actually rising, and Dublin's was higher than any other European city's. Its peasantry was weakened by malnutrition and dulled by a fatalistic form of Catholicism....Its countryside, one of the most fertile in Europe, was neglected and dilapidated--more than 60% of it given up to grass, a proportion unparalleled in the world, and only about 11% ploughed. The chief ambition of young Irishmen was simply to leave... Marriages were fewer, and happened later, than in any other country: of women between 15 and 45, only one in three was married. This was an old, sick country, peopled by absent friends. A standard decoration of the Irish cottage was the daguerrotype of a daughter far away, with her rings and ornaments painted in gold upon the photograph (*Pax Britannica* 460-61).

F.S.L. Lyons, in *Ireland since the Famine*, describing the seemingly stagnant but seething period before 1914, charges that:

Belfast, for all its harsh conditions and its sweated industry, seemed almost a paradise for the workingman compared with Dublin....About thirty per cent...lived in the slums....Over 2000 *families* lived in single room tenements...without heat or light or water (save for a tap in a passage or backyard).... [I]nfant mortality was the worst...in the British Isles. Disease of every kind, especially tuberculosis, was rife and malnutrition was endemic.... [U]nemployment...[was] anything up to twenty per cent....And this, it must be emphasised, relates to men only. Unemployment or underemployment, among women was in all probability as bad and the prevalence of prostitution may well have been a consequence of this (277-78; emphasis his).

Such, then, was "Dublin the the Age of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce"--and Beatrice Grimshaw. The first paragraph of her only autobiographical recollection of Dublin is about leaving it.²

Grimshaw's writing apprenticeship in cycling and society journalism may surprise those for whom literary life in 1890s Dublin is associated with the Anglo-Irish "Revival". (A journalistic beginning *per se*, however, would not startle anyone familiar with the careers of two of her contemporaries, Barrie and Kipling.) Grimshaw's Dublin years coincided with Yeats founding the Irish Literary Society in London in 1891. Douglas Hyde's lecture on "The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland" was given in Dublin on 25 Nov. 1892. Yeats established the National Literary Society in Dublin in 1893, as well as publishing "The Countess Cathleen" in 1892 and "The Celtic Twilight" in 1893. Hyde published his *Love-Songs of Connacht* in 1893 and founded the Gaelic League in the same year: the cultural organisation which Lady Gregory claimed accomplished more than any other, even explicitly political groupings, to restore pride and dignity to Ireland.

But anyone attempting to trace Grimshaw's activities in the minute books of literary societies at the National Library of Ireland will be disappointed. Instead, she appears (from 3 Oct. 1891) in the photographic albums of the Ohne Hast Cycling Club, with captions proudly recording: "Torrents of rain. Wind Set Dead against Us" (12 Nov. 1891). Its pictures (among the few

snapshots of Grimshaw which exist, albeit posed) show her with three men in a rowboat, Grimshaw at the oars, or munching sandwiches whilst her bicycle is propped against several feet of snow.

There were in fact links between such seemingly disparate kinds of writing as social or sporting journalism and the Revival, as might be expected in a provincial-colonial capital with a small, inter-connected and loquacious, not to say combative, intelligentsia. Resources in the Irish periodical literature of the time have hardly, nearly a century later, been tapped. But appeals for union lists, collection building, content analysis, and information about staff, proprietors, and ideological affiliation (for an Irish *Wellesley* and *Waterloo* in effect) commonly reiterate the dominant biases: "high-cultural" and Nationalist. The spectrum and continuum of cultural expression at the time is obscured. Richard Kain's "Irish Periodical Literature: an Untilled Field" concludes rather lamely that, "for a diligent literary and social historian...[i]f nothing else be learned, we shall appreciate the strenuous, often well-intentioned, often misguided opposition which confronted the leaders of the Irish Literary Renaissance" (*Eire-Ireland* 7: 99). But there is far more to be found in these little-read periodicals than that.

Grimshaw's employer, Richard James ("Arjay") Mecredy (1861-1924) published the *Irish Cyclist* (1885-1931), the *Social Review* (Oct. 1893-1913), the *Christian Irishman* ("The only Protestantism we

advocate is...of a Scriptural Creed and a Christian Life"), the *Irish Field* (puffed by the *Social Review* as suitable for ladies since it did "not reek of the pot-house or the slum, like so many typical sporting papers" [23 Mar. 1896: 702]) and the *Irish Builder and Engineer*.

Whatever the magazine, and perhaps due to having done Literature Honours at Trinity College, Dublin, Mecredy consistently endeavoured to produce "family" magazines "for the classes, not the masses", or, as he and his printing partner, Samuel Kyle, stated in the dock in May 1897, "not for the vulgar and uneducated, but for people of taste and refinement" ("Action against 'The Social Review,'" *Irish Times* 13 May 1897, 7).

Advertisements and correspondence in the *Social Review* however, indicate a heterogeneous audience unsure of social roles and skills. It is more accurate to say that the *Social Review* and the *Irish Cyclist*--especially compared to their scurrilous Unionist competitors *Irish Society* and the *Irish Wheelman*--aimed at a non-condescending "levelling up" of the "uncultured and base" elements of their audiences. Apart from occasionally differentiating the *Social Review* and the *Irish Cyclist*, as far as Grimshaw's roles and contributions are concerned, I shall discuss these journals together. Issuing from under the same roof, they were produced by an over-lapping staff. From now on I shall refer to them as *TSR* and *TIC*.

TSR's book reviewing--which dated from its first issue-- commended such publishing ventures as T. Fisher Unwin's "New Irish" and Downey's "Irish Novelists" Libraries. It reminded its readers that Irish journalists were amongst the most brilliant in the British Isles, and that many of the most notorious of the "New Women" writers such as "Iota" and "Sarah Grand" were at least connected with Ireland at some stage in their lives. It reported meetings of the St Mary's University College Literary Society and, almost note-by-note, the Feis Coil. A contributor in its early years, Charlotte O'Connor Eccles, was on the committee of the Irish Literary Society. *TSR* itself preached that "The man who has the pure literary interests of his country at heart, is more to be commended than the man who fights his country's political or strategical cause" (review of W.J.Paul's *Anthology of Modern Irish Poets* 28 April 1894: 266). It asserted, moreover, that "Anyone who contemplates writing Irish tales and sketches...should certainly make a point of mastering the Celtic tongue, which at once opens up a way into the hearts of the Irish-speaking population" ("General Notes," 20 Oct. 1894: 664)--an accomplishment which Yeats, for one, never mastered. A more mundane link between commercial and cultural activity is found in the painter Jack Butler Yeats, brother of the poet, who appeared in the lists of shareholders of R.J. Mecedry and Co. for at least a decade, and who contributed to one of Mecedry's failed ventures, *The Cycle*. Most fortunate for Grimshaw, however, was that W.P. French, "probably the greatest, and certainly the most prolific, modern writer of comedy songs in the tradition of the Irish ballad" (Healy, *Percy French and*

His Songs vii)--author of "The Mountains of Mourne", "Come Back, Paddy Reilly" and the world-famous "Abdallah-Bulbul Ameer"--was her fellow staff writer for years. "Singer, composer, author, versifier, engineer, painter, journalist, landowner's son" (vii-viii), he journeyed all over Ireland on his bicycle: he was "a member of the gentry who became a wandering professional troubadour [and] story-teller par excellence....one of the most popular entertainers of his time" (1-2), and one of the best-beloved. "Abdallah--Bull Ameer", it has been written:

has sounded in the Australian outbacks, in the diamond mines of South Africa; on the cattle trains of the West and on the decks of Arctic trawlers. The undignified and unforgettable air has been whistled in Chicago poolrooms, in the water dives of Marseilles and in every pub from Fairbanks to Hobart (O'Dowda, *The World of Percy French* 5).

Grimshaw enjoyed working with him, and, most probably inspired by him, dared to try her own successful improvisations and imitations; when she parodied Kipling's "Song of the Dead" as "Waiting for the Spring" in *TIC* (18 Mar. 1896: 625) the *Freeman's Journal* commented, "The well-known lady cyclist who writes under the pseudonym 'Graphis' has now added to cycle poetic literature an excellent set of verses...in last week's issue of Mr. Mecredy's admirable paper..." and quoted one of her verses (26 Mar. 1896, 4). Mecredy was indeed fortunate in his staff, and there is every indication that he knew this.

But there were of course significant differences between social and sporting journalism and Nationalist or cultural journals. Mecredy's publications would have reached a wider, more diverse readership. This self-proclaimed "Irish industrial concern, run by Irishmen on Irish capital" (A.P. Hearne, "Our New Home," supplement to *TIC* 20 Jan. 1898, 10) not only had its own modern printing works. It had also strategically amalgamated with Hely's, a large stationery business so efficiently using the Post Office and railways that its products were distributed to "every town and village in Ireland" without needing a commercial traveller. But another factor in Mecredy's success was his early and life-long association with Alfred Harmsworth, the future Lord Northcliffe.

Harmsworth provided Mecredy with an ambivalent model. For a short while Mecredy enlisted the Irish-born newspaper magnate's financial support for *The Cycle*. This London-based journal was edited by Mecredy from 5 Dec. 1893-19 May 1894; Grimshaw (the one woman on a staff of 24 men) wrote for it as "Graphis". It was bought out by the Harmsworth interests.

Sean O'Casey has left a sour account of the facile popularity of Harmsworth's *Answers to Correspondents* in Dublin. A working-class, Republican employee of the Harmsworth Irish distributors, forbidden to read patriotic literature on the premises, he regarded this mass-popular weekly as an agent of mental colonisation and stultification.

Rotten Dublin; lousy Dublin, what had it for anyone?...The gates of Dublin: poverty, pain and penance....Thank God, the Gaelic League was doing all it could to turn the Irish people from a descent into a vulgar and idiotic Tophet; but, so far, with little success. The Orange cover of ANSWERS covered the whole country. The priest had it in the inner pocket of his soutane; the teacher had it on his desk; the student had it under his arm; the labourer had it round his lunch; the soldier had it in his sentry-box; the postman in his bag; and the policeman had it on his beat....

Harmsworth and his henchmen!...He heard him say to them: Attention! We're here to follow, not to teach. Look out for likely whims, and cater to them. Who are we to look down on ignorance? No, look up to it, for it has great power. Get down to it; you won't have to go far. The less you know the better....Don't forget these essential points: One, the English girl has ne'er an equal. Two, marriage is a mainstay, with the baby, and, of course, Mother....England will always weather the worst... (*Autobiography 2, Pictures in the Hallway* 213, 215--16). ³

The journalists of *The Irish Cyclist* aimed higher. Its readership, Mecredy believed, due to social acceptance of the bicycle, eventually increased to being more than half "wealthy professional and business men" ("The Irish Cyclist. Its History." Supplement to the *IRISH CYCLIST* 19 Jan. 1898, 13). The journal's self-definition can be inferred from its spoof of the Harmsworth substance and style.

The cycling paper will never really catch on universally, because the tone is too healthy. We know a man who thinks there's millions in the idea of starting a paper called AGONIES. It will be utterly creepy from cover to cover. Every crime, real and imagined, would be minutely described, and every device of art and science employed to secure the horriddest

realism. It would smell blood. Brought out as a Sunday paper it would be read by millions, and they would hunger for more: add a 'Society' column, got up regardless of libel, and financial and sporting columns, regardless of consequences, and behold the ideal paper for the classes and the masses. Literary tastes and poetic sentiment be blowed. What the people crave is blood and thunder ("Jottings" 12 Jan. 1898: 550).

Four years earlier in 1894, when the magazine's content inclined more towards racing and club items, rather than trying to "grip" the "influential classes" (Mecredy, "The Irish Cyclist: Its History" 13), an editorial described its philosophy of cycling journalism ("we had almost said literature"):

Our ulterior object is...to point out the necessity of preserving, to the utmost possible extent, an elevated literary tone in a branch of journalism which appeals to so vast a section of the public....[E]very grade of...taste must be provided with a suitable literary pabulum if the paper is to be a success from a business point of view; but the most successful will be he who, while never supplying matter over the heads of his readers, still strives to confine himself to such 'copy' as has...a tendency towards refinement, and thus takes his part in hastening...the great general progress of lower towards higher forms ("Cycling Journalism" 31 Oct. 1894).

Decades later, we have seen, Grimshaw blamed the Harmsworth press when her comments on Papuan cannibalism were sensationalised. Forwarding her excuses to his superiors in Melbourne, Sir Hubert Murray saw fit to omit her outburst, "The press has simply gone to pieces under the Northcliffe regime; they have not the slightest desire for truth, only for vulgar

sensation" ("B. Grimshaw's Statement," G69, 12/19, f. 1-4, 1922). Grimshaw's long-standing ambivalence towards mass-circulating, advertisement-funded, jingoistic journals is significant, for most of her subsequent career attempted to appeal to their audiences while maintaining some autonomy of opinion, subject matter and style.

Autonomy had been the aim of *The Cycle*, which Mecredy hoped to keep free of any advertising. If he succeeded, he intended to run the *Irish Cyclist* in the same way. Reader/contributors were inveigled with offers of half a guinea per paragraph (a ploy frequently used with success, since proud contributors would probably buy several copies for their friends). They were also, presumably, tempted by typical circulation-raising manoeuvres of the time, such as insurance schemes: "Cheer Up! If you get killed while riding a bicycle, you are insured for 1,000 pounds" (*The Cycle* 23 Dec. 1893, 5).

Another popular contemporary feature was a serial story somehow connected with cycling. *The Cycle* ran Gilbert Floyd's "Warfare on Wheels". Other practitioners of the genre in the 1890s included H.G. Wells, Jerome K. Jerome, Arthur Conan Doyle, George Gissing, Charlotte Yonge, Grant Allen and Arthur Morrison. In the interests of female readers Grimshaw came to dissociate herself from the worst examples of "this sort of slush" (*TIC* 25 Aug. 1897: 1696):

Why...should it be supposed by the (presumably) omniscient editor that his feminine readers are all athirst for a washy love-story a week, forcibly bound up with a cycling interest, with which it turns about as comfortably as a convict steps with his iron ball?

It is almost always cut out in the same pattern, too....No matter what the symptoms may be, the prognosis...is the same--a meeting, brought about by the bicycle, and a wedding....Is the average lady cyclist a mere amiable idiot, that she is expected to enjoy such literary fare? And if not, why is it so persistently served out to her?

By June 1894 Mecredy relinquished editorial control of *The Cycle*. His own "beloved" *Irish Cyclist*, run on very different business principles, was storming ahead. In Sept. 1897 every employee's salary was raised by 25% and backdated to April, pleasant recompense for their loyalty years before when they had volunteered to accept a 25% reduction. (Lord Northcliffe, recounting this story when presiding over a celebration of the Mecredys' silver wedding--an all-male affair!--found this scarcely credible.)

Grimshaw was on excellent personal and professional terms with her mentor, who came from a typical Protestant Irish background: country rectory, the Royal School at Enniskillen, Trinity College, solicitor's office. Their relationship anticipated her association with another fanatic athlete and determined individualist, Sir Hubert Murray. One assumes that Grimshaw's friendships with them was mutually supportive and socially companionable, but not sexual. Both men were husbands and

fathers, but Mecredy's daughter-in-law believes him to have been reserved and undemonstrative. Murray's temperament was monastic, and neither of his two wives lived with him long. But Grimshaw charmed them both; with this self-supporting woman, perhaps, both men felt "safe".

Grimshaw was also friendly with Mecredy's wife Catherine, and the six Mecredy children remembered Grimshaw as a strong personality who spent weekends at their luxurious country home. There, even in winter, the entire family slept in tents out of doors! ⁴ Mecredy publicly acknowledged his admiration for Grimshaw and her competence:

[S]he is about

the best journalist

of our little crowd. Her literary style is excellent, and she can make up and tackle any subject under the sun. She had not been with me three months before she had read through the file of the I.C. from the very beginning, and had made herself up on cycling history, and completely mastered the policy of the paper. After this she could run the whole paper, should I happen to be away, and deal with the most difficult technical subject, without putting her foot in it. She possessed the rare faculty of being able to put herself in someone else's place, and recognising the fact that the Editor must run the paper, she dealt with subjects according to my opinions, and sunk her own individuality, except when writing under her *nom de plume* of 'Graphis.' She was...a marvellous rider, too, and frequently went for a 100 mile spin, at a steady fifteen miles an hour gait ("The Irish Cyclist: Its History" 19 Jan. 1898, 11).⁴

She, years later, remembered him as "a fine athlete and fighter (he needed to be)" (*Isles of Adventure* 3). Mecredy gave her a platform, a forum and a springboard. In his employ she learned many journalistic techniques, including photography and Mecredy's main attention-getter of bold-faced, centred type to break up a sentence, later used with some effect in pamphlets such as "Papua the Marvellous: the Country of Chances". Mecredy's readiness to rely on talented women (including also an indispensable private secretary, Mabel Richards) made Grimshaw sub-editor of the *Irish Cyclist* in her early twenties and editor of the *Social Review* when she was only 25.

[T]here were reporters whom, with awful impudence, I instructed in their duties.Over the way they were dynamiting each other on daily paper staffs....The staff of the society paper did not tear me to pieces, but that was not for want of goodwill towards the task. The proprietors sat back, saw their bank account fatten, and laughed.

Sometimes I edited both papers, taking both editorial rooms, and feeling quite seven feet high (3).

The sub-editing function was crucial: the person responsible melded diverse contributions and produced the paper's apparently unified or characteristic tone. Like an Athenian house-wife, if the sub-editor's work attracted public comment, s/he had blundered. No less an expert than Harmsworth predicted that the sub-editor and descriptive reporter would become the most important newspaper functionaries. Escott, in *Masters of English Journalism*, stressed the sub-editor's social and moral

responsibilities:

He...more than shares with the editor himself the custody of a paper's reputation for adaptability to household reading,...and above all things for the absence of whatever might bring the blush to the young face....It is through the miscellaneous matter of the sub-editorial columns, arranged to suit each issue's particular make-up, that libel for the most part finds its way into print (340).

In other words, much of the colonial rhetoric Grimshaw is remembered for--camouflaging political policy in anecdotes and her diffident, evasive voice and stances, were trained in petty, explosive Dublin.

It would be premature, however, to scrutinise Grimshaw's roles, originality and limited autonomy in Mecredy's journals without noting some of the social forces and pressures producing them, and in which they participated. Why did cycling give her her first audience?

Anyone who subscribes to an automobile club bulletin, stays at a recommended hotel, uses the association's maps, or buys automotive accessories at a club discount or because a prominent racer swears by them, is patronising a successor of Mecredy's publications and other business ventures. (These included not only cycling papers, but road maps, tour books, camping guides, and "Arjay" cycling shoes.)

This comparison enables some appreciation of the safety bicycle's impact in bringing about an economic boom and revolutionising not only transport, but many social mores. Economically this "mechanism of progress and...vehicle of flight" (Rubenstein, "Cycling in the 1890s" 53) made the fortunes of advertisers (inspiring posters that remain attractive examples of *fin-de-siècle* art), while also giving rise to joint-stock companies, over-production, and speculation culminating in the crashes after the boom years of 1893-96. If this industry "provided one of the first consumer durables for a mass market, an early...luxury which became a necessity for large numbers of people" (Harmond, "Progress and Flight..." 250), it also--rather like the elimination of independent handloom weavers in Ulster--emptied country villages of skilled craftspeople.

The bicycle helped free women of chaperones and heavy clothing, fostering self-confidence and health simultaneously, although Grimshaw later recalled the hazards of being a cycling pioneer:

[I]n 1891...a ride through [Dublin] was an affair not to be lightly undertaken.... [F]ollowed by the cat-calls and whistles of every street boy in sight, you took your courage in your hand and pedalled down the street...with your mouth tight shut, and an expression of resolute absent-mindedness on your face, meant to express your total indifference to the frequent remarks of "Disgraceful!" "Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" "Hussy!"....You felt the fierce light that beats upon a pioneer burn round you almost painfully, wherever you went; you knew that only a fire-engine could rival you, and that even a serious street accident could not

surpass you, in public interest (*TSR* 15 Jan. 1898: 53).

The touring clubs which sprang up were usually mixed-sex and sometimes cross-class, although, at least in the case of "Arjay's" and Grimshaw's "Ohne Hast", its members were hardly a new social class--a freemasonry of the wheel. To the contrary, in an 1891 *Fortnightly* article, Mecredy, while praising the opportunities for exercise which the bicycle offered "all ranks in the community", reassured its readers that they need not "ride the same cycle as [their] butcher's boy, or even travel to the same resort as he" ("Cycling" 76). He hoped the urban uncultured and ill-educated might acquire a "certain...refinement" through familiarity with nature (78).

The President of the "Ohne Hast" was also a president of the Royal Dublin Society. At times more than half of its 40 members were women (one of whom had an M.A.). But anyone wishing to join had to be invited by a committee member and then unanimously elected by the committee. Married men were encouraged to bring their wives. The object of the club, "Arjay" insisted, was to enjoy mountain scenery, not to run a marriage bureau. The "model social club" was a "HAPPY FAMILY".

Although strong and lasting friendships are formed, there is none of the mock sentimentality so identified with similar mixed gatherings in ordinary life. Healthy physical exercise is the prime object of their meeting...and it has always been a peculiarity of the members that they keep together, whether on the road or at their headquarters,

and don't 'pair off,' as is invariably done at ordinary picnics and fashionable outdoor reunions (*The Cycle* 13 Jan. 1894, 11).

Over 30 years later Grimshaw nostalgically recalled what might seem rather Spartan strictures as chivalry ("'Fast' was a word at which everyone trembled, unless it applied to the speed of your wheels" [*Isles of Adventure* 5]). Her own concerns in the 1890s involved class rather than gender distinctions. "Mixed" clubs were no problem:

in any country place, where the society circles round the rectory, the doctor's family, the solicitor's household, the Big House...where everyone knows all about everyone else.... In a city, however....it is not a case of...a set of people who know...and are in no doubt as to the social status possessed by each. The result eventually is--private gossip, open dissension, and ultimate break-up....

It is much pleasanter and more sensible...to make no enquiries about the antecedents of any member provided he is a 'decent fellow,' and to consider cycling ability as much more important than social position....If you happen to be one of those who dislike narrow social distinctions, and consider a man's or woman's personal qualities more important than the social position of their defunct ancestors, you can choose your own friends; and enjoy informal runs; but...avoid definite organising...(TIC 26 May 1897, 1254 and 1257).

Several commentators have noted how cycling offered "a clear but limited challenge to the restraints of convention...an ideal form of middle-class self-expression" (Rubenstein 59). One could travel in privacy or in company, determine the timing and route for oneself. Eventually, as socially-segregated clubs and

touring amenities sprang up, it seemed possible to enjoy local or Continental exoticism with a minimum of discomfort.

But rigours faced early enthusiasts like Mecredy and Grimshaw--rough roads, unexpected encounters with Fenians (as in Papua later, when Grimshaw travelled alone, she took a revolver with her) and sexual slurs (once Grimshaw heard a woman shout after her, "No wonder the dacent poor is wanting for bread"!). Gary Allan Tobin claims that "Danger, discomfort or risk were never components in the bicyclist's conception of adventure", and that the tourist could "mingle with nature without suffering because of it. The urbanite...redefined the concept of nature to mean those aspects of the non-human environment that were enjoyable....Bad weather, thorns, and dangerous animals were excluded" ("The Bicycle Boom of the 1890s..." 645).

But such criticisms hardly apply to Mecredy, who wrote his first contribution for *TIC* while doctors debated whether his leg should be amputated after a Dublin-Cambridge race (this was *before* the pneumatic tyre was invented). Nor do they to Grimshaw, who "covered thousands of miles annually and could climb, awheel, any height...humanly negotiable" and once rode over 200 miles within 24 hours with no one accompanying her" ("Miss Beatrice Grimshaw," *Irish Cyclist and Motor Cyclist* 1922, 13).

Tobin stresses the observational, "sampling" nature of cyclists' appreciation of foreign localities and people. To him, zooming

through a landscape en route to a clubhouse could hardly have been a participatory activity. Grimshaw's first novel, *Broken Away*, is precisely about a group of socially prominent artists and professional people who "leave society and cast off civilisation as a garment" (67). Which is to say that they bicycle off to a cottage in County Wicklow, where the men burn their collars in a woodfire, all prepare their own meals (accompanied by "champagne out of tins"), continue to use soap, and stipulate that their holiday cottage shall have several rooms and "no peasants". Mecredy himself, however, claimed that one of the greatest pleasures of touring was "to mingle with unsophisticated peasants in out-of-the-way districts; to listen to their quaint legends, mark their strange customs, and sympathise with their sorrows--these are pleasures...calculated to educate, to elevate, and expand the mind, and to supply an unfailling store of subjects for future thought and meditation" (*The Art and Past-Time of Cycling* 10). Bicycle tourists were stay-at-home explorers who could well encounter "interesting people, curious scenes, and strange customs, and [come] back with a deeper knowledge of mankind, a more charitable feeling towards [their] humbler brethren..." ("Cycling" 80). For Mecredy--as Grimshaw stated about Pacific Islanders throughout her career--the most interesting "native" was most untouched by the industrial civilisation of which tourists were the harbingers.

Whatever class or ethnic encounter cycling actually afforded her, fellowship and exercise with the "Ohne Haster's" must have

been one of Grimshaw's main ways of staying sane in a profession requiring iron health sustained through odd working hours and constant, relentless production.

Every Irishman is in Lancelot's position: his honour rooted in dishonour stands; and faith unfaithful keeps him falsely true.

(George Bernard Shaw, "Preface for Politicians" JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND xxxv)

How "Irish" WAS "TIC"? How may its ambivalent loyalties have affected Grimshaw's later identifications? Despite contemporary boycotting of English sports and Nationalist advocacy of traditional Irish games, Mecredy believed cycling to be neutral and democratic. Individually indulged exercise on a privately-owned, mass-produced machine could avoid the implications of tribal loyalty so often associated with team sports.

But Mecredy's favourite team sports were precisely those which the Gaelic Athletic Association banned--Rugby, soccer, cricket and hockey. His--and others'--contradictory national consciousness is evoked in a memoir describing the Mecredy family's outdoor sleeping and tree-climbing initiation rites: Dr. Bethel Solomons' ONE DOCTOR IN HIS TIME (obviously Jewish but, more importantly, Dublin, non-Catholic, upper middle class like Mecredy). Solomons records an anecdote about a reaction to the "Irishness" of his Trinity College Rugby team ("14 fucking Protestants and one bloody Jew!"). This again raises the question: what did it mean, as TIC claimed, to be neither

Unionist nor Nationalist, but Irish?

It probably meant, to use a figure from an exercise rather different from cycling, walking a tight-rope. The journalist Michael MacDonagh recalled in 1903 that the burgeoning nationalism of the 1890s exerted virtually totalitarian pressures on journalists. Provincial weeklies, indifferent or unresponsive to local abuses, drummed up the "National Question" to the point that an editor's arrest, MacDonagh claimed, was a honour. Bernard Shaw charged that:

Nobody in Ireland of any intelligence likes Nationalism any more than a man with a broken arm likes having it set....But if you break a nation's nationality it will think of nothing else but getting it set again. It will listen to no reformer, no philosopher, to no preacher, until the demand of the Nationalist is granted. It will attend to no business, however vital, except the business of unification and liberation....The great movements of the human spirit...are stopped on the Irish coast by the English guns of the Pigeon House Fort. Only a quaint little off-shoot of English pre-Raphaelite'ism called the Gaelic movement has got a footing by using Nationalism as a stalking-horse....Every election is fought on nationalist grounds;...every speech is a dreary recapitulation of nationalist twaddle;...and every Irishman is unspeakably tired of the whole miserable business, which nevertheless is, and perforce must remain his first business until Home Rule makes an end of it... ("Preface for Politicians" *John Bull's Other Island* xxxvi).

TIC assumed one of its responsibilities was "to open up the country which supports it, and thus aid not a little, perhaps, in the national progress" ("Jottings" 20 Oct. 1897: 1950). It

praised Harmsworth's English cycling papers for advocating Irish tours, and apparently it occurred neither to Mecredy nor Grimshaw that tourism is a typical colonial foreign-exchange earner: it markets a country's most comfortable and exotic attractions while, like tropical agriculture, providing uncertain, seasonal employment for the "natives". But as one probes the meaning of "opening up" (one of Grimshaw's favourite euphemisms later for developing Papua by Europeans) and ponders what conceptions of patriotism and nationality are involved, we are back to the economic development--within--an--Imperial--framework model characteristic of the Liberal Unionists. *TIC's* variant was:

Our best revenge for past wrongs is to secure present rights. When we have busy factories in Ireland, make our own iron and textile goods, have our cycle factories, that will make the Coventry makers sit up in amazement...and have various industries and monopolies in which we can bully ['the Sassenach']...to our purses' content--won't that be sweet revenge? ("98" 12 Jan. 1898: 566).

But there is no awareness here that one reason Irish industries were stillborn was consistent English statutory protection against their competitive development: something that Grimshaw, coming from a family whose fortunes had depended on subsidies and protection, must have realised to an extent.

As far as Irish tourism was concerned, this was a decade during which mass tourism "at home"--at the seashores and in the darkest Celtic hearts of the British Isles--became possible for the

English petit-bourgeoisie. The fiery editor of the *Leader*, Daniel P. Moran, discerned that tourism was not necessarily a philanthropic enterprise:

In this age, when economic tendencies rule the world, there is no stopping the tourist development. Yet, this particular industry breeds some of the meanest types of the human species. It is all fawning on vulgar people with money, tip-taking, and cringing. It breeds beggars in rags and beggars in broad-cloth products which...do not tend to the glory or preservation of Ireland a nation ("The Future of the Irish Nation," *New Ireland Review* Feb. 1899: 345-52).

Emigrants and tourists, in other words, frequently took the same boat, but in opposite directions. For the places where tourists could "get away from it all" were usually depopulated, despoiled areas no longer suited for permanent human habitation. Mecredy's "patriotism" urged the development of tourist resources in Ireland by Irishmen with capital. Moran, no doubt, would have retorted that "Irishmen with capital" were most likely to be the descendants of Huguenots or Scots-Irish like Mecredy himself. Moran realised that "development" would be largely funded and controlled by British interests which, to him, were "foreign".

Two decades later when Beatrice Grimshaw visited Fiji, we have seen how merchants in Suva petitioned the Governor, Sir Everard im Thurn, for official sponsorship of her reportage, expecting that her enthusiastic descriptions would encourage immigration and investment. Presumably Grimshaw would have assumed the commission, had it been granted, without feeling any loss of

independence. She had been used throughout her Dublin days to endorsing products without being in the producer's direct pay. *TIC* depended not only on advertisements and factory "announcements" as filler; it was also closely associated with "the prince of businessmen and financialists", Mr. Harvey Du Cros of the Dunlop Tyre Company (*TSR* 6 [1896]: 821-22).

Time and again Mecredy was accused--and fought back publicly--of being in Du Cros' pay. But du Cros, contrary to Dublin rumour, had no interests in Mecredy's publications; rather, Mecredy was on the board of Du Cros' Pneumatic Tyre Company. The relationship was complex: Mecredy at first hesitated to become involved "with the trade in any shape or form, believing that it would prove prejudicial to the interests of my beloved IRISH CYCLIST" ("The Irish Cyclist. Its History" 19 Jan. 1898 supplement, 8) as indeed it did. But he never failed to say that he could "truly state that no effort was ever made to influence or control the paper in any way" (9). In May 1896 *TSR*, in an unsigned character sketch, "Mr Harvey du Cros at Home", lauded him as "having done a good deal more for ['our distressful country'] that many of her self-advertising patriots" (821-22). In 1897 *TIC* editorialised against a strike at Dunlop. (Since the editorial also criticised Harmsworth's *Daily Mail* for supporting the strikers, the editorial managed to support one Mecredy patron while castigating another.)

[W]e are only sorry for the misguided strikers who, in a moment apparently of infatuation, and with...very inadequate grounds, attempted

to bully their employers. A fairly long experience and careful observation has led us to form the opinion that, as an almost universal rule, strikes only do harm to *both* sides, and rarely result in the least good. We speak quite as much from the point of view of the employes as of the employer. As long...as we have agitators and so-called Socialists, who live by stirring up strife, so long will strife of this class exist....The Dunlop workmen may have had good grounds for appealing for an increase of wages as a generous concession on account of the unexampled prosperity of the company, but to demand it peremptorily...could not possibly be yielded to ("The Dunlop Strike" 20 Jan. 1897; emphasis in editorial).

Mecredy seems therefore to have felt little contradiction between advocating economic autonomy (somewhat nebulously defined) for Ireland and demonstrating fervent Imperial loyalty. He was widely known as "pro-British" and, while such Nationalists as Maud Gonne organised counter-demonstrations during Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1897, he ornamentally landscaped his country house grounds in celebration. Contemporaries, however, endorsed his self-description (as recorded on company records, for instance) as "Irish". A Dublin paper summarised the speeches of Lord Northcliffe and others at the Mecredys' silver wedding celebration in 1913 in the following terms:

[T]he remarkable tribute...showed that a prophet may enjoy a worldwide reputation, and yet be held in high honour in his own country. Lord Northcliffe...noticed the very representative nature of the gathering and the entire absence of political feeling or political allusion....It has been one of [Mecredy's] great functions (unconsciously no doubt) to disinfect Irish politics with fresh

air. He has been...an apostle of the life health-ful [sic], and, therefore, beautiful. He has done more for the Irish democracy in that respect than all the *sera* and sanitoria of our time.⁶

Northcliffe's notions of "representative" interests are clear enough from the lists of subscribers and guests who came from English and Scottish, as well as Irish, manufacturing towns. In addition to cycling club members, they included magnates from rubber companies, cycling magazines, the Irish industrial Association, the Automobile Association, the Bank of Ireland, the [Tory] *Irish Times*, the Dublin *Evening Mail*, and Arthur du Cros, M.P.

Twelve years later, obituaries and memoirs reiterated Mecredy's pioneering ventures in terms which he would have preferred; terms which could, indeed, later be applied to Grimshaw's activities in Papua:

[I]n his day he knew Ireland better than any other writer....[T]his country never had a better advertising agent....His journals...are the only papers of their kind...lit by literary grace (J.C.P., "A Sad Anniversary" 11-12).

But the contradictory Anglo-Irish identity required continual adjustment and redefinition to oneself and in relation to others. Even the normally clear-headed Bernard Shaw could refer within one paragraph to the necessity for exploding "those two hollowest of fictions, the Irish and English 'races'" (xi) while

declaring, "I would never think of an Englishman as my countryman" (x). As he amplified what his Irish "nationality" meant to him:

When I say that I am an Irishman, I mean that I was born in Ireland, and that my native language is the English of Swift and not the unspeakable jargon of the mid-XIX. century London newspapers....I am a genuine typical Irishman of the Danish, Norman, Cromwellian and (of course) Scotch invasions. I am violently and arrogantly Protestant by family tradition; but let no English Government therefore count on my allegiance: I am English enough to be an inveterate Republican and Home Ruler. It is true that one of my grandfathers was an Orangeman; but then his sister was an abbess; and his uncle, I am proud to say, was hanged as a rebel....Blackguard, bully, drunkard, liar, foul-mouth, flatterer, beggar, backbiter, venal functionary, corrupt judge, envious friend, vindictive opponent, unparalleled political traitor: all these your Irishman may easily be, just as he may be a gentleman (a species extinct in England, and nobody a penny the worse); but he is never quite the hysterical, nonsense-crammed, fact-proof, truth-terrified, unbalanced sport of all the bogey panics and all the silly enthusiasms that now calls itself 'God's Englishman.' England cannot do without its Irish and its Scots today, because it cannot do without at least a little sanity (viii-ix).

Mecredy and his class would undoubtedly have favoured Conor Cruise O'Brien's "maximum definition" of "the Irish race": "{A}ll those who were born in Ireland, whatever their religion, ancestry, political opinion or allegiance" (*States of Ireland* 50). Such a definition, O'Brien observes, was "never wholly believed in and never wholly abandoned". Solomon's father, for instance, although Jewish *and* an Imperialist, called himself "Irish". Mecredy's son Eric customarily left the nationality

item blank on official forms. He was aghast to discover in World War I that Protestants were encouraged to enlist from Belfast rather than from Dublin Castle. Nonetheless, in Dec. 1979 he insisted to me that, whatever the Free State may think, he is Irish--but he lives in Sussex.

Some of Mecredy's notions of Irishness were sentimental and humorous. As he described his brother Alec, "It would have been hard to find a more typical Irishman...exceedingly witty, [and with]....an irresistible LOVE FOR A FIGHT...." ("The Irish Cyclist. Its History," 19 Jan. 1898, 3). Coley O'Connel, *TIC's* roving commissioner, had a "GENUINE IRISH FACE, and...a vein of humour running through his...side-splitting speeches..." (12). But it would seem that his "love of Ireland" went far beyond stereotypes, as obituaries referred to his "descriptions of scenery, his talks to men on the roadside, his interviews with the dwellers in humble cottages" (J.C.P., "A Sad Anniversary" 11) and his misery during the post-1916 "Troubles", "when Mecredy was obviously torn by conflicting loyalties" (Manning, "The Turn of the Wheel" 269).

Like many others (Lady Gregory, Sir Samuel Fergusson, Douglas Hyde), Mecredy interested himself in Irish history, archaeology and peasant lore. (Such an interest is often the passion and preserve of an outsider who does not have to face the harsh imperatives and restrictions of peasant life.) During the centenary of the 1798 rebellion--which incited patriotic and anti-British demonstrations--*TIC* ran a series of touring

articles about battlefields: something which few people in Northern Ireland would advocate today, unless they relished stone-throwing and police/Army "protection."

By this time Grimshaw's role in cycling journalism was confined to "The Wheelwoman" in *TSR*. The opinions are her patron's, but "Graphis" noted their "non-political" character approvingly. They amount to a candid, symptomatic credo about colonial conquest, rebellion and assimilation from a man who influenced her greatly.

Ninety-eight and its stirring history is but little understood....Were its history told aright it would affect a man of any nationality; and an Englishman without forgetting himself would discover another point of admiration in Ireland and its people ("'98'" 12 Jan. 1898: 566)

In our article on the Boyne...we are perhaps making a rather risky venture. It is one of the misfortunes of Ireland that an event is exceedingly slow in passing from the political to the historical stage. Sectarianism inflames....almost any matter later than the Norman Conquest....[W]e simply want to try and give the foreigner and the tourist an idea of what happened in the historic and beautiful spots of our island. We want to interest him, not to proselytise him. We would have all political and party considerations cast aside; would try and show him the *human* interests in the events....Surely any man with a bit of feeling in him can take a higher interest in going over battlefields...than any mere partisan satisfaction in their political consequences. *The picturesque, the poetic, the dramatic interest in the stirring events should sway his better nature, be his creed or politics what they may....*[W]e have followed our own ideas in working...up [main points and description] and *the reader may regard the result as historical fiction if our notions do not tally with his* ("Jottings" 26 Jan. 1898:

698; emphases mine).

Does insistence upon conciliation or consensus betray confusion about one's own loyalties? One could unkindly categorise this cosmetic modification of Irish history as its transformation into a technicoloured, cast-of-thousands, four-channel dramatisation, its sites tamed into picnic spots. A universal human nature is postulated; dissident elements are "merely" partisan and political. Yet Mecredy was talking about *the battle of the Boyne*, described by O'Brien as "the final victory of the Protestant cause...in 1690" (39), and therefore the final overthrow of Gaelic power. Indeed, at the very time Mecredy was writing, a Nationalist procession in Belfast instigated yet another riot. Mecredy had himself recognised that in Ireland, mythologised history is part of the pathology of the body politic. But his own variant was also a mystification: set adrift in the present, the past is romanticised, distanced, purged, and retouched.

1916 was less than two decades away. Mecredy's offices and all his records would be destroyed in the conflagration when patriots who revived and invoked the past even more romantically than he occupied the General Post Office. They suffered enormous loss in that particular battle, but it was the beginning of the disintegration of the British Empire.

Notes

¹ The title of the article, and its epigraph, are taken from a poem by the Young Irelander Thomas Davis, whose conception of Irish nationality was a conciliatory synthesis:

So, start not, Irish-born man,
 If you're to Ireland true,
 We heed not race, nor creed, nor clan,
 We've hearts and hands for you.

Emphases his.

² See *Isles of Adventure* Ch. 1, "A Dream Come True," 1.

³ The journalist Daniel Moran argued O'Casey's case more insightfully: an Irish peasant--become--"genteel" "might learn much about his country in the English language if he cared to, but he prefers to read Tit Bits, and discover how many times one issue if stretched out would go round the world..." ("Is the Irish Nation Dying?" 211); "Of course...these men take no interest whatever in their country; they have ceased to be Irish, except in name and in what they call 'politics. [I]t is to England and her little tittle-tattle periodicals that they turn their eyes and open their hearts. On all sides one sees...evidence that the people are secretly content to be a conquered race..." (211-12).

⁴ Grimshaw has a most interesting descendant in the genre of writing about cycling in the Irish travel writer Dervla Murphy, whose autobiography, *Wheels within Wheels* shows how cycling freed *her* from a stifling (in this case, Catholic and Republican) family life. She has also written a classic account of Northern Ireland, *A Place Apart*, an account of her one-woman investigation of the "Troubles" on a bicycle during the 1970s.

⁵ I am indebted for these memories and anecdotes to Major Eric and Mrs Kay Mecredy, 6 Rixons Orchard, Horsted Keynes, Sussex, whose hospitality and willingness to share the few remaining family photograph albums and papers I enjoyed in Nov. 1979.

⁶ A collection of obituaries concerning "Arjay" was sent to me by Mr. John Manning of Dublin in 1979, and it is difficult to make a precise reference in this case since several photocopies were amalgamated, without always giving an indication of their source.

"One of Those Women Who Are Against Women"?

Miss Grimshaw was fortunate in that she never did the ordinary woman's journalism... (C.O.S., "Where the Red Gods Call" 21).¹

[Mr. Justice O'Brien] said he had no sympathy with that kind of publication called social papers, which were intended, apparently, to gratify a certain stratum of feminine vanity or public folly, and sometimes to go dangerously near questions of scandal and vice ("Action against 'The Social Review'" *Irish Times* 7).

Chronologies of literary Dublin, we have seen, concentrate on cultural and national consciousness-raising periodicals such as the *New Ireland Review* (which hesitantly awarded Grimshaw's first novel the accolade "Irish") or the *Dublin Daily Express* under T.P. Gill's editorship. But none describes a hybrid suffering from a false start and a libel suit while eventually, under Grimshaw's editorship, finding its feet and formula: the *Social Review*. Alan J. Lee has noted in "The British Press and Its Historians" that there is a dearth of research on Irish, Scottish and Welsh periodical publishing after 1850, and virtually none on financial, sporting, and trade papers (*Journalism Studies Review* 3, 40-42). Therefore, to situate Grimshaw's role of limited autonomy as the *Social Review's* editor for five years, we need to scrutinise its self-justifications (editorials; Christmas and anniversary issues; special numbers as for horse shows, autumn fashions and cycling exhibitions); advertisements; reception by contemporary papers; descriptions in press and advertisement directories; and litigation.

As mentioned earlier, Mecredy & Kyle's pre-1916 office records were destroyed during the Easter Rising. So we shall presumably never know if Grimshaw was a share-holder, as its employees were said to be, nor shall we find marked files identifying her pseudonymous or anonymous contributions. The destruction of Mecredy & Kyle's office records also deprives us of subscription lists and correspondence; nor did Mecredy leave many personal papers. According to his son and daughter-in-law, Major and Mrs. Eric Mecredy, "Arjay's" wife's papers were kept by one of her daughters, but these were destroyed by the daughter's husband after her death.

Fortunately, in both *TIC* and *TSR* Grimshaw conducted a running dialogue with her readers, especially unemployed women, on how to become a journalist. She regularly reviewed literary manuals and guidebooks, one of which, Arnold Bennett's *Journalism for Women* (1898) she both applauded and vilified. I shall therefore use his manual, as well as contemporary articles predominantly by women concerning women's journalism (articles which Grimshaw also reviewed) to situate Beatrice Grimshaw's contributions to *TSR*.

An ideal examination of *TSR* would require a team. As a source for Grimshaw's personal and professional development, it is like one of those gold-mines she later described as having too much Papua in it, i.e., rich, but difficult of access and extraction. She was a staff writer for six years, and editor for four. During this time she produced the opening pages of editorial and

topical comment, book reviews, dramatic criticism, travel description, some of the "Women's Pursuits" and all of "The Wheelwoman" columns, and answers to correspondents. Her fiction comprised short stories, allegories, dialogues, and two novels. In addition to signing contributions, she used two pseudonyms which can definitely be attributed to her: "Maev" (the legendary and literary origins of which have already been discussed) and "Graphis". Another, "Thyra" (a shield? another Amazonian alter ego?), seems to have been used by several staff writers, the column ("Women's Pursuits") which she wrote originating with the paper, vanishing for awhile, and then re-appearing; when it reappeared, both the readers' queries and the writer's replies sound as if readers *knew* Grimshaw was authoring the column at that time. Others I suspect, such as "de Moleyns" ("of the [textile?] mill"?), "Gervase Wheeler", and "E. Dora Grimshaw". Innumerable unsigned articles, others signed "G." and paragraphs sound like Grimshaw. This could, however, be the editorial blue-pencil at work. To complicate matters further, there is a familiar ring to enquiries and paragraphs purportedly from readers. It seems especially suspicious when these correspond in theme to a short story appearing in the same issue, for instance.

Although most examples of Grimshaw's writing discussed in this section come from *TSR* I have selected from all of her 1890s output for my major purpose of demonstrating how her Dublin writing prefigures many of her characteristic Pacific-Papuan themes and narrative strategies. The weekly requirement to

produce varied genres, themes, and modes led Grimshaw to experiment with an impressive range of narrative techniques. But as the change-over from one colonial environment to another was not wholly continuous for her, I shall also describe narrative forms from her Dublin years which she never used again, and speculate as to *why* they became unsuitable for her.

Thematically, I shall explore Grimshaw's treatment of Irish nationality and female gender, primarily as represented in book reviews and fiction. Nationality, gender, and their literary depictions were dilemmas for her. *TSR's* first issues were enlivened by a wrangle over the propriety of women writers representing sexuality in fiction. This not surprisingly developed into a debate as to whether literature, especially by women, should voice issues of social reform. Grimshaw's role in the unsigned polemic can only be inferred from the style, but Alice Mullen, the staff writer defending conservative viewpoints, left the paper to work in London. Grimshaw herself was to leave the paper when quarrelling with a reader who accused "Maev" of being "one of those women who are against women" (15 Apr. 1899: 751). The "New Woman" of the late nineteenth century both attracted and obsessed Grimshaw to the point that she eventually wrote a novel killing her.

It is hardly surprising that Grimshaw's notions of ethnicity and gender later contributed to her ideas about race. Racism and sexism both "justify" social discrimination by emphasising visible physical differences from white men, differences which

are viewed as limitations and held to determine subordinate status. Because this "deviance" is deemed to be innate, it cannot be changed. Such rationalising, as Roland Barthes' writing continually demonstrated--the transformation of socio-historical conditions into "natural" ones--is the fundamental *modus operandi* of ideological mystification.

But the relation between Grimshaw's portrayal of the "New Woman" and Irish peasants (also, in her work, women) and her eventual depiction of Pacific Islanders and Papuans, is not an entirely linear and convergent development. Since her present reputation is that of a self-assured racist for whom stereotypes afforded a world-view and descriptive stock-in-trade, I shall stress the fluidity and uncertainty of Grimshaw's character typing in the 1890s.

When the *Social Review* first appeared on 28 Oct. 1893, its rivals were *Irish Life* and the *Dublin Figaro*. The latter was described by *Mitchell's Newspaper Press Directory and Advertisers' Guide* in 1893 as "Unionist" and "The Topical Journal of Ireland" (57). The former was described by *Willing's Press Directory* in 1898 as "the only Society Journal in Ireland"; "circulates among the upper and middle classes...one of the best advertising mediums in Ireland". In January 1911 *Irish Society* amalgamated with the *Social Review* which, when it had appeared in directories earlier, had been grouped with "Magazines, Reviews and Periodicals".² Even these cursory entries are useful. Assuming magazines described and advertised

themselves, or replied to questionnaires, *TSR* from the outset emphasised its "literary" over its "society" content.

Society journalism could be shady, if not libellous, at a time when the "New Journalism" was thriving on interviews, gossip, exposés and "human interest". T.P. O'Connor, the Irish politician and one of the New Journalism's ablest practitioners, recalled that in the Dublin of his youth "you would find more snobbery...than perhaps in any city in the world, more vulgar pretentiousness and more contemptible social distinctions" ("Journalism as a Career" 18). But, as its first editorial announced, *TSR* issued from a publisher with a socially-ameliorative mission. This was women's socially-acceptable mission or sphere as well, and women were the means of achieving it.

[T]he want of a really good social and literary weekly paper for the refined and cultured classes in this country has been long and keenly felt....It is our most earnest desire to make this...paper thoroughly representative of all that is best in Irish life; to render it the medium through which the best thoughts of Irish writers may be expressed....Nothing of a personally offensive nature will be allowed....THE SOCIAL REVIEW will be thoroughly apolitical and non-sectarian....Being mainly, though by no means entirely, intended for...members of the gentler sex....it must not be thought that we purpose inserting anything of a foolish or frivolous character--indeed, we have too high an opinion of the intelligence of the gentlewomen of Ireland.... [W]e shall endeavour...to raise the standard of society;...to encourage real literary ability; and promote the claims of Irish education in all its branches; to instruct and amuse, but, above all, to edify ("Introductory" 28 Oct.

1893: 1-2).³

Several contemporary papers applauded these aspirations, and skimming through the snide nastiness of the *Figaro*, for instance, suffices to understand their favourable responses. The *Carlow Sentinel and Leinster Agricultural, Commercial and Literary Advertiser*:

hail[ed] with pleasure...a New Irish journal of society and fashion, equal in every respect--letterpress and illustrations included--to the best of its English contemporaries....It is particularly fortunate in securing the assistance of ladies of high literary taste....To the first number the Hon. Mrs. Arthur Henneker [sister to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland]...contribute[s] ("Literary Notices" 28 Oct. 1893, 2).

The *Freeman's Journal* (Dublin) praised *TSR* as "carefully, and at times brilliantly written...and free from any taint of offensive and objectionable personality" (qtd. on back page of *TSR* 4 Nov. 1893). *TIC*, with filial loyalty, ramrodded the point that its sister magazine was "high-class" and "free from the vulgarities which have disfigured other publications". The *Weekly Irish Times* also noted *TSR's* attractive appearance. An equally pleasing format was shared by *TIC*. Both Mecredy and Grimshaw believed that one *should* judge a book by its cover, type-face and binding. Mecredy and Kyle's technologically innovative printing works were among the first in Ireland to use rotary presses and colour printing.⁴

The *Weekly Irish Times* also noted an apparent paradox: a predominantly women's paper featuring a gruesome column, "Emergencies in the Hunting Field", which advised about "croppers, collar-bones, arms in slings, and 'temporary cessation of brain action'" (28 Oct. 1893: 5). But an 1890s society journal cannot be equated with the more domestic women's magazines evolving at the same time. One would therefore expect some articles intended for society men as well as others for nursemaids or shop-girls. *TSR's* summaries of military gazettes reflected the quasi-military occupation of Ireland by an Imperial Army garrison larger than that holding India. In Ireland, resident magistrates, as in Papua later, exercised interventionist powers irritably remembered by Sean O'Casey as "showing the Irish how to live, and to do things in the upright way, from shearing sheep, growing corn, rearing cattle, feeding pigs, telling the truth, acting orderly, and buttoning their flies properly" (*Drums under the Windows* 101).⁵ Ireland, moreover, provided the British Empire, now approaching its zenith, with disproportionate numbers of (usually) Anglo-Irish officers and Irish men. So there was nothing incongruous in *TSR's* "intelligence" that the "Bechuanaland Border Police are, according to all accounts, a splendid body, and in its ranks are many gentlemen" (4 Nov. 1893: 41).

TSR's original owner, a Mr. M'Intosh, served briefly as editor, but its salaried journalists were nearly all women. Opinion was divided as to whether journalism was a suitable profession for "women" (a middle-class, global use of the term ignoring that

journalism was hardly an option for working-class women. In Mecredy's business lower-class women worked primarily in book-binding and account book-making, toiling as binders, perforators, stitchers, pagers, folders, feeders of paper into ruling machines, and page numberers). A.P. Hearne, Mecredy's private secretary and ghost-writer, described these women's labour in terms still according with stereotypes about feminine placidity, fragility and dexterity: "[T]he work is light, but calls for a certain amount of care and skill, so that the occupations are not of a deadly monotonous kind" ("Our New Home," 26 Jan. 1898, 9).⁶ Grimshaw never mentioned the interacting class and socio-sexual division of labour within her own magazine's printing works, presumably taking them for granted. She enjoyed the luxury of an office of her own, where, according to Hearne:

The greater part of the editress's office hours is said to be passed in listening to the various news wafted thither by a stream of lady callers, who come for comfort and advice, and pay for it in kind--or unkindness (?). Sometimes a helpless male creature accompanies them, and he sadly contemplates the second floor of the pub, opposite, whilst his ears are confused by a constant stream of talk... Then the mamma, whose "girls" have just made a splendid photo, calls; and the lady who wants the world to be stormed by her story, and the lady who has a criticism to tender on the favourable description of another lady's get-up; also

the romantic girl

who wants to be an hospital nurse...and many others (5).

Grimshaw did, however, sympathise with and partially romanticise the situation of printers' devils in her second novel, *A Fool of Forty*.

Women journalists suffered numerous disadvantages, including poor pay as salaried workers and a precarious income if freelancing. Advertisers sometimes bribed them with clothes or other personal adornment (essential requirements if a young woman *not* of Dublin Castle society was expected to report on its functions): it was expected that the recipients would then promote these wares in fashion or household decoration columns. Women were also discouraged by exclusion from old-boy networks and clubs, a concomitant being their vulnerability to sexual and economic exploitation by "patrons", "middlemen" and "sweaters". (By focusing predominantly in this section on contemporary *female* advice to aspirant women journalists, I am somewhat misrepresenting the journalistic scene, for Stead, O'Connor, Sala and many other prominent "New Journalists" also flooded the market with advice, but this was aimed at young men and suggested such entrées into the world of news as marrying a proprietor's daughter, going to Eton with his son, or starting as an office boy: advice obviously not applicable to women.)

Yet women were also early members of the Institute of Journalists, the Society of Authors, and the Society of Women Journalists (forming in 1894-95). Indeed, despite lack of formal training and socio-sexual segregation and discrimination, this was an era of outstanding models. ⁷ The doyenne was Flora Shaw

(later Lady Lugard, D.B.E.), the only female and colonial correspondent of *The Times*, whom Grimshaw repeatedly praised in *TSR*, especially with regard to Shaw's advocacy of imperial emigration for British spinsters. Some women ran eponymous papers, Annie S. Swann and "John Strange Winter" (serialised in *TSR*) among others. Still others were part-proprietors, Parliamentary reporters (from the Ladies' Gallery, needless to say), editors, foreign correspondents... Indeed, the types of work were almost endless.

In part the proliferation of women journalists reflected the less-than-professional status of an occupation where the ability, as Arnold Bennett put it, to "wring copy out of any and every side of existence" (*Journalism for Women* 68) counted as much or more than formal training. For a woman like Grimshaw-- imperfectly but broadly educated, with a flair for graphic observation and quick description, athletic constitution, respectable social position and strongly individualistic temperament--journalism offered self-respect and self-support. (However, it offered little in the way of sick-pay, superannuation or other benefits we would now consider essential. One of the Society of Women Journalists' melancholy functions was to help members recover from temporary nervous breakdowns.) Grimshaw was in fact conforming to an evolving career pattern for women in transition which applied outside the British Isles as well; what Blanche H. Gelfant has noted of Willa Cather and Katherine Anne Porter applies equally well to her.

As their birthdates indicate--...1873 for Cather, and for Porter, 1890--[these] women were to grow up in a changing society, their lives bridging a confusedly rapid transition from Victorian to modern times. As children of Victorian parents and grand-parents, they faced expectations...which had been fashioned in a past more remote than historical dates would indicate...Obviously young women of their time were expected to marry and mother children, to submit to their husbands' wills, and to seek their happiness, or more important, their duties within the home...If they wrote for money their family required, an acceptable motive, they were to produce sentimental novels in which women prevailed through the power of their Christian meekness and impeccable morality ("Lives' of Women Writers..." 73-74).

Cather, Porter and Grimshaw, as well as many others, escaped these strictures through travel, journalism, highly individualistic life-styles, and, eventually, "creative" writing.

Emily Crawford--Parisian correspondent of the *Truth* and the *Daily News*, and honorary member of the Irish Literary Society--wrote in 1893 that the profession appealed to her above all because she was "deconventionalised and thrown back on first principles" ("Journalism as a Profession for Women" 369). Crawford also believed that women possessed a gender-specific writing style characterised by "the faculty for throwing life into what emanates from their pen", colourfulness, and "sight-power" (362). The near-sighted Grimshaw possessed these attributes--sexually innate or not--to a heightened degree.

Other commentators agreed that women journalists' contributions were special in a sex-specific sense. (Today one would use the term "gender-specific", but at the time the distinction between sex--a biological category--and gender--a sociological one--was not understood.)

Art and literature, philanthropic effort, political and social movements of the first importance, foreign travel, and exploration of little-known nooks and corners of our great cities at home, tentative talks with men and women who have helped to make history...people in every class and circle of contemporary society--these are the worlds and entities which the lady-journalist has made her own, and in which, with a courage and patience...essentially womanly, she has persisted...in winning a success which has not only meant securing an honourable and remunerative profession for the individual, but the opening-up of a new field for educated and intelligent women-workers...(Anon., "Lady Journalists," *Lady's Pictorial* 11 Nov. 1893: 734).

But specificity could also entail seclusion in a sphere of little interest to men (and, indeed, to many women), in which women's pages invented and exhausted cheese-paring economies and convoluted, petit-bourgeois snobberies related to changing patterns of consumption, leisure, and human relations resulting from modernisation and urbanisation. The debate about women journalists' capacities revolved around questions of "feminine" attributes. At this time sex-linked characteristics were poorly understood, which hindered few from voicing authoritative prejudices. Some of the most opinionated pundits, including prominent token women journalists like the foreign correspondent

Mary Frances Billington, seemed unaware of any fundamental, logical nature/nurture distinctions which might clarify the terms of argument, even if the basic questions could not then be resolved. Instead, intentionally or not, whenever they attributed what they deemed to be usually mediocre characteristics to femaleness, they thereby cast themselves as freaks and exceptions. Thus Billington claimed both that journalism was not suitable for women and that she herself was an outstanding journalist.

The qualities which make for success...are by no means the distinctively characteristic ones of the [female] sex, and the true instinct of the journalist is based on a combination of intense, almost abnormal powers of observation [a trait which other commentators ascribed to *women*]--the faculty of recording, with ease and promptitude, a sense of proportion and space, together with that more abstract ability to judge tendencies and the feelings of masses, rather than the deduction from isolated instances, which is more perhaps the feminine habit of mind....

[I] think that I stand pretty well alone of my sex in what I have done and hope to do [in foreign correspondence] ("Leading Lady Journalists" 95-96).

Grimshaw's retort to Billington's article (which had been printed at least twice, first in *Pearson's* and then in Sell's *World Press*) shows some development since her debating society days. Rather than dealing, as Billington did, with speculation and opinion, she anchored her argument in everyday practice. Although Grimshaw's tone is strident, her underlying values incline towards egalitarian principles: she would humanise women

by refusing to treat them as special, either by limiting or glorifying them.

I do not believe, as a rule, in criticism of women by women, but at times the vagaries of the new literary woman are such as almost compel the amazed beholder to 'up and speak.'...If women wish really--as they so often assert--to stand on the same journalistic footing as men...[l]et the woman who wishes to be considered a genuine journalist go through the mill like a man of the same calibre--do reporting, paragraphing, precis writing, proof correcting, all the routine work, learn to boil down copy into a certain space, or write exactly to scale, practise writing anywhere and everywhere, at top speed, in a style that shall be perfectly presentable without reading over--and then, having learned the tools of her trade, start out to distinguish herself, if she can. And...when she has done so, let her refrain, if she values...equality for the sexes, from cackling in print like a hen that has laid an egg, over being able to do what a thousand men in London do daily, and count nothing at all ("Maev," "Notes by the Way," *TSR* 26 June 1897: 746).

Grimshaw's opinion of women journalists' capacities and responsibilities was closer to Arnold Bennett's; in many regards, such as practical advice, she anticipated his 1898 manual. His *Journalism for Women* insisted that femininity should never be "an excuse for limitations or an abnormality" (10). Women journalists' failings--amongst which he copiously enumerated unreliability, slovenliness, inattention to detail, slipshod style, lack of restraint, atoning for weakness of argument with stridency, and "a certain quality of multiloquence" (18)--were due "not to sex, but to the subtle, far-reaching effects of early training" (11).

Grimshaw had been following for years, and would emulate all her writing life, Bennett's common-sense injunctions to familiarise oneself with the literary market through directories, year-books and press guides; to complete a daily ration of writing; to master shorthand and photography (or, as Crawford stipulated, "More typewriters and fewer pianos" 10); to call on editors personally; and, when novel-writing, to alternate serious works with formulaic best-sellers.

It was not his journalistic advice, but rather his criticism of her favourite female authors that elicited from Grimshaw a torrent of what Bennett would have labelled verbosity, and Grimshaw, passion.

And yet Mr. Bennett considers himself fit (because of his sex, and the fact that he edits a smallpenny weekly fashion journal) to sit in judgment on George Eliot, the Brontes, and Mrs. Browning; all of whom, he is pleased to consider, suffer from 'garrulous, *gesticulating* inefficiency!....Mr. Bennett...brands himself unmistakably, in the volume under review, as one incapable of understanding the very meaning of genius.

Mr. Bennett is, speaking in a literary sense, essentially a small man. He has himself written two novels. 'A Man from the North'...is a nice little book, cut out after the latest pessimistic pattern... Its only fault is that it is not particularly well worth reading once, and quite certainly not to be read twice; it has 'no insides to it.'....

The man who could write the story of Richard Larch, and think it worth the telling, is exactly the man from whom one might expect smug disapproval of the magnificent 'Wuthering Heights,' and that grandest of mid-century

novels, 'Adam Bede.' Fire, force, and fine command of language are, in Mr. Bennett's opinion, gush... I strongly suspect that he sees no distinction between the splendid rush of picturesque words describing the fatal storm at the end of 'Villette' (one of the greatest prose passages in the language), and the hysterical gurglings of such as George Egerton ("Maev," *TSR* 9 Apr. 1898: 309-10).

In any event, the issues for Grimshaw were not whether women *could* be journalists, but whether *any* woman had the right to compete with *any* man in the labour market, and whether married women had the right to continue salaried work. Eventually she "solved" these dilemmas by a conception of the individual artist as non-competitive, and by (as I shall demonstrate) renouncing heterosexual relationship to free herself to write.

What kind of "women's magazine" *was* the *Social Review*?

When the *Social Review* began publication, like any journal it had to establish profitable relations with readers and advertisers, two groups having by no means identical interests. At the worst, at a time when advertisers were beginning to underwrite women's magazines (and the audiences for these magazines were extending down the social scale and differentiating among more groups of women), many magazines served the interests of advertisers first or primarily, so as to survive during a decade of considerable economic rivalry. Such kowtowing could be accomplished in a variety of ways, from the bribery mentioned above to less obvious, but influential, devices such as referring enquirers to specific shops, writing

advance notices of sales and providing detailed descriptions while they were in progress, or disguising passages extolling the health-giving properties of some decoction as a medical column.

Except for bribery, *TSR* lent itself to all these ploys. In its "Society" aspect, it provided endless descriptions of fashions (112 dresses at a Military Tournament, compared to its competitor's enumeration of a paltry 43), coiffures and jewelry at Dublin Castle drawing rooms, "at homes" and charity fairs.⁸ In this way it may well have aroused desires for emulation and consumption among its humbler readers.

Yet, under Grimshaw's editorship, *TSR* became a self-contradictory, almost subversive society magazine. She didn't hesitate to write satirical dialogues and pointed comments about Dublin's poverty in columns directly next to lists of wedding gifts, for example. "Maev's" "terrible tale of a misfortune that once befell an English society journal" when the editor took on a new contributor who, for once, wrote the truth about an "At Home", shows a capacity for "serious humour" on Grimshaw's part which *Papua* seldom elicited from her.

The hostess looked juvenile in a smart white muslin gown, tied up with pink ribbon....Miss Jones rendered something very conscientiously; it was generally believed to be Italian.... Mr. Martin's usual cold did not prevent his doing just what he could to a fine song of Schumann's....Mrs. De Jenkyns is to be congratulated on having got this smart function well over ("Maev," "Notes..." 13 Mar.

1897: 325-26).

It would be mistaken to assume that *TSR's* relations with its readers were only advertisement-derived, manipulative, or unilateral, however. At a time when railways, the post office, and mail-order firms were making inroads into the isolation of rural Ireland (from which, however, only young men escaped in large numbers), such a magazine was a kind of shop--window--onto--the--world. As the journalist Michael MacDonagh appreciated:

To the peasantry...the newspaper is a source of rare delight....[T]hey heartily bless the...newspaper which lifts them out of the monotony and narrowness of their daily life and brings them into close touch with the great world outside their barony....[W]hen the news is exhausted, the advertisement columns are turned to with the same eagerness.....If anyone wants to reach the Irish people...let him use the Irish press ("Irish Provincial Journalism" 74).

TSR accepted contributions from its readers: hence the "Chat from the Counties" or "Leinster/Kildare Notes" to which Mrs. Ross, the first sub-editor, gave such prominence that staff and management quarrelled with her about it. (The original owner/editor, Mr. M'Intosh--like his counterpart Bennett of *Woman*, one of whose avatars was "Gwendolyn"--wrote the London Ladies' Letter and "Beauty and the Toilet"!) But even later, under Grimshaw's editorship, readers were encouraged to visit her offices, and she was willing to arrange, through her columns or in private correspondence, to interview them closer to home. As

far as fiction was concerned, Grimshaw/"Maev" banned stories with "any 'sex problems' of any sort or kind whatever".

THE SOCIAL REVIEW is a family paper, and intended to remain such; the type of fiction which deals with subjects not discussed in decent society has never found a place in its pages, and never will....I regret...to say that it is usually young, unmarried women who write them. I had hoped that this...was confined to the sister isle, where literary tastes demand much stronger meat than goes down over here ("Notes," 27 Feb. 1897: 261-62).

LETTICE may save herself the trouble of writing to the "SOCIAL REVIEW" again. She may deceive 'Modern Society,' or 'Woman,' or the 'Pall Mall,' but we are not so easily 'drawn'... I am quite familiar with her, and her husband, and her maid, and her mother, and daughter, in all their personifications; and it may do her good to be plainly informed, for once in her life, that she is merely a very nasty specimen of a very nasty class of hysteric, with whom, unfortunately, the Press is only too familiar ("Answers to Correspondents" 17 Dec. 1898: 427).

Grimshaw's attitude towards female physiology and exercise was enlightened but seldom sensual. Sensuousness was, for her, sublimated and projected onto religious ritual, ruins and landscapes.

Her passion throughout the 1890s was to enable other women demographically caught in her position--most unlikely to marry--to earn their living. Most of her advice was directed to that end. By the time she left, *TSR's* accounts of "patriotic weddings", where the bride's trousseau was stitched in Dublin and she herself resplendently ornamented with an emerald

shamrock, were counterbalanced by counsel one would hardly anticipate in such a magazine, such as references to Sir Horace Plunkett's recommendations on fertiliser or treating hog cholera. From the beginning of "Thyra's" association with the paper, a decided, practical preference for manual work was voiced, of a type more demanding and dignified than the intricate teacosies sold for a pittance by distressed or "decayed" Irish gentlewomen ("[I]n Canada, where there is most promise of healthy, spirited, cultured young women finding occupation, ladies are considered quite uneducated and below par if they are not skilful in housewifery..." 10 Mar. 1894: 159).

The paper's contents were initially divided fairly evenly between "Society" items--with advice which quickly suggests that many readers were *not* the Lord Lieutenant's sister or daughter--and, more characteristic of *TSR*, literary material. "Society" items included attractively-printed portraits of Anglo-Irish vice-royalty, social leaders, actresses, musicians, and authors (one can surmise, following Morris, that these would have decorated many a country parlour or cottage wall). *TSR's* gospel of social evolution and consensus was exemplified by its exhortations to society women to act as non-patronising Lady Bountifuls, who were to "study how to harmonise, instead of intensifying distinction, and to mitigate the rigours of social inequality" ("General Notes," 18 Nov. 1893: 53). It seems to have been adding its voice to the "Constructive Unionism" of the period to which "A.E." and Sir Horace Plunkett devoted a very great part of their energies. *TSR* thus commended such ventures

as Lady Arran's Industrial School for Girls, and one of its portraits was of Lady Aberdeen at her spinning wheel. *TSR's* sense of social responsibility also manifested itself in consistent reporting of royal commissions on labour, speeches by social reformers such as Beatrice Webb, and reviews of women's employment directories.

The advice columns included, in the first two years, "Dress and Fashion", "Decorative Arts" (home-decorating), "The Home Circle", and music. But the "Women's Pursuits" column by "Thyra" poses special difficulties of verification. From some of her beliefs (desirability of reform from within, unpleasant implications that homosexual men were the worst enemies of autonomous women) and style (exaggeration, sweeping generalisations, passive voice implying consensus, amused use of literal or self-contradictory "Irish'isms"), it would seem that, on occasion, Grimshaw was "Thyra." But this practical personage, who had learned the Anglo-Parisian style of dress-making for mental relaxation, may also have been an office composite.

By the end of 1893 several columns with a marked literary emphasis reveal Grimshaw's growing, attributable influence. These include the unsigned "General and Literary Notes" and "Books Worth Reading" by "Orlando Lyall" ("Lie-all?"). A power struggle was underway which ended with Grimshaw becoming editor in 1895, although the woman she deposed, "Mrs. Ramsay Colles, late Mrs. Annie Ross, née Miss Sweeney" fought back through the courts well into 1897.

The proprietors of THE SOCIAL REVIEW wish to state, as prominently as possible...that the paper is at present, and has been for the last year and a half, solely edited by MISS BEATRICE GRIMSHAW, especially for literary matter, editorial letters, paragraphs, and sketches for reproduction (21 and 28 Nov. 1896).⁹

A newspaper's legal disasters are its historian's opportunity. Litigation may express severe disagreements among proprietors, editors and salaried staff (roles which may partially overlap), prompting editorial explanations such as the above. The *Social Review*, never shy about advertising itself or the other journals owned by Mecredy and Kyle, emblazoned "THE TRUTH ABOUT 'THE SOCIAL REVIEW'" on its 9 May 1896 cover. The preceding week's issue provoked this self-justification and eventually landed it in court.

But to understand why the words "Mrs. Ramsay Colles, late Mrs. Annie Ross, née Miss Sweeney, HAS NOW NO CONNECTION WHATSOEVER" were inflammatory, one must backtrack to June 1895, when new features altered *TSR's* originally rather more genteel formula.

"TO OUR READERS. SOMETHING NEW AND AGREEABLE. WHAT OUR EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT US" (8 June 1895: 614) was the first major editorial statement since the first issue. In 1893 the paper had been at pains to display its respectability. Signed contributions were to emanate from "gentlewomen of social distinction", and the staff themselves were "ladies personally mixing in the circles whose doings they chronicle"

("Introductory" 28 Oct. 1893: 1). Curious readers might well have wondered why these "ladies" had to work.

By 1895 *TSR*, mindful (to the extent of quoting him) of "Our Oscar's" opinion that society people were beautiful idiots and brilliant lunatics, had apparently decided that such were not the only or the most profitable market. Into its habitual emphasis on cultivated refinement crept a hint of modest domesticity, apparent in the editorial and even more so in the reduction of the price by five pence:

The proprietors...are fully aware that there are classes in Ireland to whom the mere chronicling of society's doings and fashions and fancies are not sufficient mental pabulum.

There is room in Ireland--and the time was never riper than now--for a really high-class journal that will meet with the approval of the most literary and cultivated classes in a country that has ever been noted for its devotion to learning and letters; that will find its way into the hearts of the mothers and daughters of Ireland--true home makers and home lovers...that will not forget the light side of nature in catering for a constitutionally mirthful nation. [The editorial also noted that most Irish housewives were neither millionaires nor chefs.] ("TO OUR READERS..." 8 June 1895: 614).

But was *TSR* of 1895 so very different from its 1893 self? So much so that it would become "a paper such as Ireland has never yet seen"? ("TO OUR READERS..." 8 June 1895: 614). There was little new about the revived London letter. Links with advertisers still appeared in various guises ("We were

privileged to look in at Mr. Manning's...").

But the announcement that "an up-to-date story by a clever and practised writer will be given each week, and these, together with bright and instructive articles, notes on literature, music, and all current topics, poems, and paragraphs, will be the most noteworthy feature" (614) signalled Grimshaw's victory in the power struggle. It can be paraphrased as "Beatrice Grimshaw, fortunately only 25 and possessed of abundant energy, ambition and vocabulary, will be in charge of churning out such material regularly from now on". That same issue advertised a story, "By Carlingford Bay", a romantic tale with an artist hero and her long-vanished lover, each doomed by tuberculosis but miraculously reunited at death's door (and in a private sanatorium much resembling that run by Grimshaw's brother-in-law). Grimshaw was well embarked on a spate of self-publishing that was to last four years. 1895 saw the serialisation of her first novel, *Broken Away* and the emergence of her characteristic Dublin narrative forms--types, dialogues, allegories and essays (all didactic or argumentative, but "universalising" and thus softening the impact of discussing such subjects as euthanasia, alleged torture of political prisoners, or Home Rule).

The preceding issue, opening with a new column, "Literary and Social" pointed towards the dominant subject of future topical comment (one of the first comments concerned George Bernard Shaw). Within six months "Maev's" "Notes by the Way", a rich source for Grimshaw's theory of fiction, was the magazine's mos

conspicuous and lengthy feature. Within the year "The Bookshelf", signed by "Beatrice Grimshaw", had separated into a distinctive feature.

But if these were *TSR's* intellectual aspects, one new feature-- "A CHAT WITH THE GIRLS. Conducted by Aunt Norah" and a revised one ("UPSTAIRS AND DOWN. By Housewife") addressed the emotional and practical problems of young, apparently lower middle--class women during the years immediately before and after marriage. Courtship's Byzantine rituals and dangers were discussed, but serious assaults on chastity not even hinted at. Marriage was interpreted as household management, not as a sexual or even a maternal relationship. Aunt Norah's cloying intimacy, were it ever achieved, would have been most atypical of personal relationships in the atomised, urban aggregations of Dublin or Belfast, and a positive danger in a small town:

I am about to constitute myself your guide, philosopher and friend, a sympathiser with you in your sorrows, one who will rejoice in your joys, the recipient of all the little secrets and doubts and hopes and longings which fill the bosoms of all young girls, and which they can so much better confide to an unknown but kindly friend than even to their own mothers and sisters (1 June 1895).

The column didn't last. But an echo of its unlikely stance-- assuming maternity and modernity while belied and limited by lack of experience--surfaced in a preface by Grimshaw to *Christian Courtesy for Catholic Girls* published 40 years later in New South Wales. One may well suspect that "Aunt Norah's"

advice was one of Grimshaw's fictional contributions to *TSR*.

The printer-owner Samuel Kyle stated in court in 1897 that *TSR*, which had been losing money well into 1896, was striving to become "bright", "crisp" and urban-centred. But Mrs. Colles, one of the four original proprietors, was beginning to create trouble. When her first husband had died, Mecredy had raised 500 pounds for her, as the man had been a former cycling friend of his. She then, in effect, reinvested the 500 pounds in a new Mecredy venture by buying into *TSR*. Later, she tried to end the partnership as she wished to run the paper herself on more provincial/"genteel" lines. Much of 1894 was soured by attempts to settle with her. After bickering and last-minute, out of court settlements, Mecredy and Kyle bought her out; this was the occasion for the editorial self-praise on 2 May 1896. It highlighted once again the paper's literary ambitions and purported upper-class readership ("It does not profess to cater for the uneducated classes, and therefore declines to lower the character of its columns by inserting any rubbish that may be sent, for the sake of a dozen or so specially-ordered copies....THERE IS NO PAPER in the country, outside the big dailies, which spends so much money on obtaining good literary matter"["About Ourselves"] 2 May 1896: 787).

Despite some discernible changes during Grimshaw's editorship, *TSR* never wavered in its claim to cater for "refined and educated" people. But this may have been an advertising ploy, a

means of flattering the readership. Simply by reading the magazine, it is obvious that the readership was stratified and diverse, so that reading *TSR* today is a far from onerous task. Although editorial asides suggested that *TSR's* principal implied reader was a gentlewoman in her over-stuffed drawing-room (and, if she left the magazine on the beshawled piano, her husband), self-definitions through contrast provide other insights into the notional audience.

Praising Newnes' *Woman's Life* as "the best value of all 'home papers' at present" ("Maev," "Notes by the Way" 18 Jan. 1896: 518) implies that *TSR* did not place itself in that domestic category. Sneering references to readers who could be satisfied "with a pennyworth that consists of three farthings' worth scissors and paste, and a farthing's...inane gossip" (25 Aug. 1896: 167), or with intellectual procedures that "boil down all the facts of the universe into paragraphs, and live upon theories reduced to the level of the 'Bits' and 'Scraps' papers" (22 Feb. 1896:, 606), indicate that its self-image was not that of a Dublin *Tit-Bits*.

But the editorial also precipitated libel action. Far from being bright or crisp, Mrs Colles charged that *TSR*, by linking her origins with her pretensions ("*née Sweeney*") had "wounded not so much by coarse vituperation as by refined suggestion, which was like poison transmitted through the point of a needle" ("Action against 'The Social Review,' *Irish Times* 13 May 1897, 7). It had thereby "seriously damnified and injured her in her credit,

reputation, and calling as a journalist" (12 May 1897, 3). Mecredy and Kyle had bought her out for 325 pounds; now she thought 10,000 adequate compensation for words which Grimshaw had written but which Mecredy, "who still retained the feelings and ideas of a gentleman" (13 May 1897, 7), admitted to be "wrong, as any person acquainted with the decencies and courtesies of life would".

Mecredy's politic dissociation from his employee's error of taste probably did not surprise her. Earlier in 1896, à propos of disputes in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Grimshaw had stated that "as the editor is really only a paid servant of the owners--it is his duty to submit his judgment to theirs in all matters where his conscience is not concerned (meaning matters of actual right or wrong, not mere opinion..." ("Maev," "Notes by the Way," 15 Feb. 1896: 589). It was a very fine point because Mecredy had read and passed Grimshaw's editorial and then disclaimed responsibility by saying that he had not dictated it and would not have written it that way himself.

The outcome of the case (dismissed) is less interesting than its trivialisation of women journalists. Both women were single and self-supporting. Both were deserted at crucial moments by their mentor Mecredy. Both worked in a supposedly competitive profession, society journalism, where public rivalries actually masked an underlying identity of interests among publishers and proprietors. The writer and her work were not taken seriously. The court rang with laughter when Mecredy's solicitors admitted

that "The great point in conducting these society papers was to get advertisements. The reading matter in them was all stuff and non-sense" (*Irish Times* 12 May 1897, 3). When Mrs. Colles sought to dignify her standing by stating that she was a member of the Institute of Journalists, Mr. Justice O'Brien asked, "Has the *New Woman* found her way there, too?" (Laughter) "Are there female members of it?" Witness--'Yes.' Mr. O' Shaughnessy.--"It will soon break up.' (Laughter)". 10

When Mr. Justice O'Brien stigmatised the inherent frivolity and nastiness of society papers, Mecredy's solicitors were afire to instigate another case. But the outcome of this one was positive enough for Grimshaw. For four years from then on, she did have virtually the last word at *TSR*. Within the confines of conventions and formulae, somewhat limited editorial autonomy, and advertiser pressure, she orchestrated a society paper with "serious-popular" and "literary" dimensions. These were particularly apparent in the magazine's reviewing and commentary about Ireland and about women.

* * *

England and Ireland, indeed, occupy very much the same position as the typical man and woman. The former is strong and virile, not easily impressed with either the thoughts or the pains of others, and on that account all the more able to cut his way straight to success... The work of the world, the business of the world, the money of the world are in his hands, and, consequently, the power also; and...he cannot see why the weaker, more emotional, more keenly-feeling creature at his

side should not be contented with the crumbs that fall from his table ("Maev" reviewing Kipling's *The Seven Seas* 23 Jan. 1897: 81-82).

TSR's Irish reviews in 1893 included Jane Barlow's *Irish Idylls* and Lady Wilde's ("Our Oscar's" mother) *Ancient Cures, Charms and Usages of Ireland*. Of the latter, *TSR* asserted that only Yeats had done more to preserve antique Irish culture. The reviewer's opinions reflected the prevailing peasant romanticism which Synge later impugned, as well as the tactic of projecting evil characteristics onto other nationalities: "Throughout the entire range of these Irish fancies...nothing vicious, venemous [sic], or in any sense wholly bad, can be found. And in this sense they are most unlike most of the popular tales of the northern nations" ("Orlando Lyall" 25 Nov. 1893: 71).

A review of Mrs. E.M. Lynch's *A Parish Province* (26 May 1894) did, however, reject patriotism as an esthetic criterion, counselling its readers to skip Sir Charles Gavan Duffy's "long-winded" introduction which sought "to twist the story's meaning into a cudgel with which to belabour the Irish gentry" (329).¹¹ In 1896 J.F. Taylor's *Owen Roe O'Neill* (issued by T. Fisher Unwin's "New Irish Library") was praised for avoiding "vexed questions that touch sore points in present-day affairs" (22 Feb. 1896: 606).

Reluctance or refusal to accept nationalism *per se* as a sufficient guarantor of literary value was--and remains, in post-colonial criticism--a useful but negative standard. The

dilemmas of language choice, élitism, and estrangement from one's own people in subject matter or audience were continually debated by Irish writers in the coming years. In May 1894 the *Social Review* approvingly reported the Catholic convert and poet Lionel Johnson's lecture on "Poetry and Patriotism" to the Irish Literary Society. In this instance the magazine endorsed the possibility of retaining some aspects of ethnic identity within an overarching context of cultural assimilation and domination:

[H]is lecture showed a charming combination of English culture and Irish feeling.

Sympathetic towards the younger Irish poets...Mr. Johnson defended them...from the charge [of] being un-Irish and wanting in national sentiment. As the lecturer truly pointed out, it is unfair to demand from a poet other work than that which is the outcome of his inner artistic-feeling....

The individuality of the Celt, said Mr. Johnson, is never really lost, and...he said that when an Irishman had been heard to remark of a poem, "How un-Irish!" an Englishman had said of the same poem, "How un-English!"

[T]he vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. John O'Leary [former Fenian, and mentor of Yeats] whose classic Celtic personality suggested a warrior bard of the ancient days, and seconded by Mr. T.W. Rolleston... (Anon., "General Notes" 5 May 1894: 279).

Under Grimshaw's direction the Irish debate continued to centre around formidable criteria announced in an 1893 review of Jane Barlow's *Irish Idylls*: "true and sympathetic vision of Irish proletariat character and surrounding...exact in...reproduction of Irish dialect...acute in observation of the flitting moods of native humour and native pathos...rendering every phase of Irish

rusticity as it is..." (Orlando Lyall, "Books Worth Reading" 11 Nov. 1893: 39). Later reviews chided authors whose "monotonous" peasants resulted from "a limited amount of actual observation from real life" (review of Barlow's *A Creel of Irish Stories* 11 Dec. 1897: 494). *TSR* finally concluded that Barlow failed to fulfill her earlier promise and could not understand "the untutored savage of any land" (as contrasted to Kipling and Louis Becke, "the only two who have plucked out the heart of East and South so far", "Maev" little knowing that one day she herself would receive such accolades; "Maev," "Notes by the Way" 15 Oct. 1898: 278). Reviews also criticised those who relied on popular literary conventions to churn out stock peasant characters. Bram Stoker was advised astringently that a few "dinnas" do not suffice to create a Scots peasant. "And how these artless peasants talk!" (28 Dec. 1895: 469).

Other issues, as *TSR* saw them, included whether some years' experience *in* Ireland (however limited, as Spenser's colonising venture had been) entitled an outlander to speak of and for Ireland. Could the inclusion of such authors in an Irish canon be justified (*TSR* referred to Spenser as the last Irish poet of renown)? "True Hibernicism", according to the magazine in 1896, was "an elusive quality" (review of E. Rentoul Esler's *The Wardlaws*, 6 June: 890). But it could be attained by persons of non-Irish origin who were willing to labour to acquire "not only a knowledge, but a true sympathy with, Ireland and its people". "The Irish novelist for whom we are all looking" was therefore encouraged to be "a stay-at-home, although...he or she must not

make the mistake of confining observations to one small parish" (11 July 1896: 18). At this stage, Grimshaw had started her signed "Bookshelf" column, but she never voiced the magazine's earlier insistence that "Anyone who contemplates writing Irish tales and sketches...should certainly make a point of mastering the Celtic tongue, which at once opens up a way into the hearts of the Irish-speaking population" ("General Notes" 20 Oct. 1894: 664).

In effect, then, *TSR* was discussing the cultural double-binds challenging colonial and post-colonial writers generally. Can an exotic ever become a native? Take root or die, as an 1820 South African settler poet defined his dilemma? How is one to steer among insular, parochial, regional, national and metropolitan identifications and loyalties? For it can take decades, as the little-known, brilliant poet and "Ulsterman of Planter Stock", John Hewitt, has said, to reach a conclusion (and identity) as complex as his own:

I'm an Ulsterman of Planter stock. I was born in the island of Ireland, so secondly I'm an Irishman. I was born in the British archipelago and British is my native tongue, so I am British. The British archipelago are offshore islands in the continent of Europe, so I'm European. This is my hierarchy of values, and so far as I am concerned, anyone who omits one step in that sequence of values is falsifying the situation ("The Clash of Identities," *Irish Times* 4 July 1974).

Although quick enough to criticise other authors' selection of traits representing putative Irish "character", *TSR* never,

throughout the six years Grimshaw wrote most of its book reviews, questioned that such a unitary (and by implication, static) entity existed. Perhaps influenced by her classical education, Grimshaw often resorted to the device of typological characterisation, producing some Theophrastean-like petty misers, "Society men" and lady cyclists. But it is hard to know what she really meant by an expression such as "excellent type of Irish peasant woman". Is it shorthand, a reduction, an average, or a very loose generalisation? What causal or conditioning relationships are implied in "Maev's" use of simple connectives in a phrase such as "the race and the life and habits" of the Irish?

In a sense, however, such questions are anachronistic. Little in Grimshaw's education (or anyone else's) before Max Weber's elaboration of the process of creating ideal types, would have inclined her to sociological classification and discriminations. But the very intellectual air hummed with the assumption that physical traits expressed moral capacities. Mecredy and Kyle's "popular pamphlets" included one on physiognomy, and one of Grimshaw's early essays, "The Prophecy of a Face", explores the possibility of "reading off" a person's future from physical appearance.

Even without the presuppositions of popularised science, however, Grimshaw would probably have adopted the technique of implied physical and moral equivalence, for to a degree this is almost every writer's tool. At this stage of her career,

Grimshaw used such words as "type", "class", "rank" and "race" almost interchangeably, sometimes with implications of hierarchy, sometimes not. When "race" enters her vocabulary deterministic overtones start to appear, but not consistently. When she used "class", moreover, she sometimes conceived of it very rigidly: class-belonging could only result from birth, e.g., inherited breeding. Yet her autobiographical sketch, "The Decent Poor", and several reviews of proletarian novels, e.g., Robert Barr's *The Mutable Many*, show an awareness of possibilities for upward and downward mobility. And later, as we have seen, she directly attacked upper-class status as a hindrance to coping with life's adventures, although she never ceased to discuss, and approve, of some of her characters because of their regal ancestry.

To understand Grimshaw's thinking about social ranking when she was still in Ireland, it is important to remember that expressions like "the Irish peasant" or the "New Woman" referred to oppressed groups whose social position was undergoing tremendous improvement, thereby inciting no small amount of conflict and resistance. Scrutinising Grimshaw's changing critical and artistic opinions, either about the peasantry or the emancipation of bourgeois women, one must remember that these groups, and the conventions governing their traditional literary representation, were undergoing massive change.¹²

Grimshaw's own structurally ambiguous and precarious social position may well have fostered slightly eccentric, "original"

ideas about gender and ethnic identification. Her family and class of origin were literally on the way down (and she on the way out). Even her "Anglo-Irishness" was no simple identification or affiliation, since she was not of the Ascendancy, which could at least claim a distinctive identity and history. She was a marriageable but "redundant" professional woman. She had identified with one aspect of Irish culture by embracing Catholicism, although this may have been partly a reaction against Belfast Puritanism, and would not have been sufficient to make her feel at ease by espousing a wholly Irish identity. She became neither a Gaelic chauvinist nor an Irish Nationalist like Maud Gonne, for instance.

Such socio-structural dissonance may predispose a person towards a critical, if somewhat confused, stance concerning social changes. One could anticipate that sensitive Anglo-Irish writers would adopt literary devices betraying the dilemmas of divided identity and sensibility. Such devices ranged from mordant satire and the fallible narrators and delicate structural irony of Maria Edgeworth or Somerville and Ross. The comments below, culled from Grimshaw's attributable book reviews, show her grappling with more difficult intellectual and artistic problems than Papua would ever present her. For there "race" seemed to explain everything, and her *métier* became confined to its most simplistic rendering in popular fiction.

TSR consistently deplored stage Irishry. "Whether an English audience would recognise the Irishman in a play [without] a red

nose, a rolling eye, a bottle, and a glass, and the most villaneously impossible of accents, is a matter for grave doubt" ("Maev," "By the Way" 30 Nov. 1895).

But the fact that Paddy or Roseen has been caricatured is not in itself disturbing; the objection is that it was done badly, with no ear for dialect, by foreigners. When insisting that "It is quite time...our neighbours should be brought to the knowledge that the English language, in its purity and sweetness, can be heard to perfect advantage in many parts of Ireland; and we certainly do not require to take lessons from the mighty Babylon with regard to our speech", *TSR* was in effect consenting to linguistic colonisation. Grimshaw's Papuan fiction later unequivocally endorsed the colonial administration's policy of replacing *lingue franche* with English. In *Guinea Gold* (1912) an intrepid Irishwoman, a "cannibal driver", actually builds an enclosure within which "natives" may never speak their home language. This is uncannily reminiscent of the early English attempts to enforce spatial and linguistic segregation between the "old English" of Dublin and the Irish "natives" who lived literally "beyond the Pale".

More positively, *TSR* called for a novelist who could depict "a real Ireland from a historical, a traditional, or a latter-day realistic point of view" ("Maev," "Notes by the Way" 21 Dec. 1895). But its comments about a biography of the novelist William Carleton indicate conceptions of "realism" and "history" that are only mimetic *for effect*.

Not that Carleton, to my mind, has done the best that was or is possible for his humble countrymen and women. His eyes were keen, but they were not always kindly; he told the truth, as a rule, but the truth without glamour, without poetry. He never glorified anything which he touched; his sympathies and his love and his sorrow were probably with what he wrote of, but the soft touch was lacking. We have yet to find the ideal historian for rural Ireland; such a one as Kickham might have been if literary ability and the power to tell a story had gone hand in hand with feeling and observation ("Maev," "Notes by the Way" 7 Mar. 1896: 649).

This is a useful clue for understanding Grimshaw's own fiction. She seldom aimed at photographic accuracy, "objectivity", or comprehensiveness. She thus criticised Kipling, whose "descriptions are vivid beyond those of any other living writer", for nonetheless "leaving the trail of the journalist....over all that [he] writes" ("Maev," reviewing Arthur Morrison's *A Child of the Jago* 10 Apr. 1897).

Any minimal definition of "reality", for her, included idealistic and emotional components. And a "history" could not account for the past unless retold as a story, with the storyteller's endowment of selecting, heightening, and intensifying the material ready-to-hand. Thus, when "Maev" described Louis Becke (in *Rodman the Boatsteerer*) as "the historian of the South Seas" (5 Nov. 1898: 326), she meant a teller of tales which are initially rooted in experience, but which surpass the arid confines of chronicle. The successful teller and recorder was the author as eye-witness, relying on the authority of experience as an attention-getting device for the tale which

then unfolds. Scholes and Kelloggs' crucial distinction in *The Nature of Narrative* between "the recording of specific fact" and "the representation of *what resembles* specific fact" (87) is most pertinent here. In her own fiction, Grimshaw later told Lett, "Life cannot be photographically represented in a short story. All that the author can do is to convince his audience if possible that the characters did live, and the story happened; and this can only be done by a process of ruthless selection. 'Select the relevant' should be the short story writer's motto" (Mollie Lett, "Miss Beatrice Grimshaw" 5).

An author's crucial test, Grimshaw was to insist again and again, was in the first instance participation or involvement with her or his characters: narrative success or failure would follow upon the sincerity of the author's viewpoint within the story. The one fault she had to find with Morrison's character-drawing in *A Child of the Jago* was "a certain lack of sympathy with his *dramatis personae*. One is inclined to surmise that the intimate association with the most callous and degraded savages in the world, without which the story of [London's East End] could not have been written, has made the delineator of these savages somewhat callous himself. Mr. Morrison evidently regards the black agony and horror of such lives from a purely artistic standpoint" ("Maev," "Notes by the Way" 10 Apr. 1897).

When Clark Russell's *The Sea Queen* was republished, Grimshaw deplored his later descent into pot-boiling, as she later deplored Edgar Wallace's mechanically popular narratives (and a

we may well regret about hers). For she ranked Russell's "finely representative tale of adventure" with *Lorna Doone* and *Treasure Island* in an appreciation showing her awareness that "realism like romance, is construction and convention.

The hateful word 'local colour,' expressing...the sharp-nosed, pencil-fingering, journalistic attitude of our present day novelists, when they descend to describe the life and manners of the lower classes, is entirely inapplicable to such work. 'The Sea Queen' was written by a man who knew and loved the rough sea-faring class of which he wrote, and thought more of delighting himself by drawing them as he knew them, on a clear canvas, instead of pleasing the purchasing section of readers by a lurid picture, coloured to suit their love of so-called 'realism' ("Maev," "Notes by the Way" 13 Aug. 1898: 101-02).

"Maev's" pragmatic sympathy for Patrick Pearse's *Three Lectures on Gaelic Topics* (reviewed on 16 July 1898) shows her accepting her own partial foreignness with Ireland, rejecting Pearse's redemptive conception of Irish destiny within the Empire, but endorsing some of his esthetic and moral standards. Twenty years later the half-English Pearse led the Easter Rebellion and was the first revolutionary whom the British executed; in the 1890s he was a Gaelic League ideologue and Nationalist school-master whose cultural propaganda inveighed against fin-de-siècle materialism and "decadence". The *Three Lectures* were addressed to "the barbarian", "to whom our National Language, with its wealth of poetry, and romance, and folk-lore, is still a sealed book" (6). "Maev", interestingly, was not offended by the designation, noting simply, "The barbarian has cause to be

grateful" (16 July 1898: 37).

Not only was Grimshaw, as far as we know, a stranger to the Irish language (although not to Ulster Scots); her and Pearse's notions of the Irish mission in the modern world were diametrically opposed. "Maev" focused on one of Pearse's essays, "The Intellectual Future of the Gael", which defended the sub-culture of the colonised by a tactic familiar among Black Consciousness and women's liberation movements today: minimising political defeat and social subordination by valorising moral "superiority". "Maev" quoted some of the following:

The Gael is not like other men; the spade, and the loom, and the sword are not for him. But a destiny more glorious than that of Rome, more glorious than that of Britain, awaits him: to become the saviour of idealism in modern intellectual and social life, the regenerator and rejuvenator of the literature of the world, the instructor of the nations, the preacher of the gospel of nature-worship, hero-worship, God-worship...(49).

"Both thoughtful and interesting", was "Maev's" comment. "Mr. Pearse is, no doubt, an idealist, but there is some solid truth at the bottom of his idealism--it is a pleasing fancy; let us hope it may justify itself--some day" (16 July 1898: 37).

But Easter Sunday 1916 could hardly have been the date she had in mind. Few "civilising missions" could have been more antithetical. Pearse envisaged an ethical, "anti-Empire" of the dispossessed who would ultimately assert their national identity

through blood sacrifice and martyrdom; Grimshaw celebrated the British Empire in her review of Kipling's "The Song of the English":

We are perhaps a little too apt...to forget the real greatness and strength of the English nature in our passionate resentment at its long-standing cruelty and neglect towards ourselves; 'The Song of the English' is a useful reminder to us of the really admirable qualities possessed by the race we do not love ("Maev, review of *The Seven Seas* 23 Jan. 1897: 81).

Grimshaw was far more interested in Pearse's paeans to Irish folk literature, which he claimed was suffused with Nature-worship: "The Gael...loves nature...as something possessing a mystic connection with and influence over man" (52). An overwhelming influence of Nature over human beings was to be a major theme of Grimshaw's Papuan novels. A spiritual, not yet malevolent, dimension in nature typified Grimshaw's writing years before she reached Papua. Thus she wrote of the much-, perhaps over-described Killarney:

But it is not only--perhaps, not first of all, a place....To the traveller of a more liberal mind it is an atmosphere, a mental world....The true spirit of Killarney, in the midst of the imperial feast it provides for the bodily eye, is perceptible to the eyes of the mind alone ("Killarney," *Irish Monthly* 30 Sept. 1902: 532).

Rather than reducing Killarney to a picnic spot, Grimshaw proclaimed it a natural temple for initiates into a world of

romance. Accordingly, she endorsed Pearse's "disgust" before "decadent" modern literature:

Now, this may be...up-to-date, and all that; but I ask, is it pure, good, healthy, natural literature?...[T]he intellectual and literary tastes of the world have been carried away by a craving for the unreal, for the extravagant, for the monstrous, for the immoral....There is no healthy out-of-door atmosphere in modern literature (50-51).

Grimshaw's response to the "pathological" literature she abhorred was two-fold. Hardly a week went by without a scathing attack in *TSR* on some unfortunate "decadent", "aesthete", or "New Woman". She then penned a "Society" novel forcing its characters out of their drawing-rooms into the outdoors. For, as Grimshaw remarked more than once, there was no antidote to over-cultivation and refinement like a wholesome dose of "savagery".

Broken Away, as an illustration of Grimshaw's development as a writer, has a multiple significance. In this context it is pertinent to note its favourable reception precisely because it was read as anti-"Decadent". This is surely what Grimshaw intended. When *Broken Away* was nearing completion, *TSR's* mention of John Eglinton's *Two Essays on the Remnant* (25 May 1895)¹³ paraphrased his counsel that "chosen people" (artists and "thought-artisans") should return to nature for a "complete casting off of the shackles of civilisation". The reviewer favoured the compromise of "occasional withdrawal" (582). *Broken Away's* hero Stuart Rivington, Ireland's brilliant but

temporarily exhausted rival to Kipling, whose "clever" wife ominously notes increasingly artificial mannerisms in his style, decides he can only recover "reality and force", and discard excessive self-consciousness, by a simple-life holiday in the Wicklow Mountains.

Announcing John Lane's forthcoming publication of *Broken Away*, *TSP* took pains to state that the novel would be in the "Lane Library Series", "which has been disputing popularity of late with the famous 'Keynotes Series' of the same firm" (6 Mar. 1897: 302). (Ironically enough, the novel of Bennett's that Grimshaw so despised was issued in the same series as *Broken Away*.) The "Keynotes" series, in Grimshaw's opinion, was associated primarily with morbid and decadent literature, very often penned by "New Women" (and many of which, today, are now being reclaimed and reissued by Virago). Before the novel was released in book form, the author of "Women's Pursuits" defended the anonymity of the novelist while the book was still being serialised, but assured "Sheila" that "I may go so far as to say that the tale was *not* penned by a gentleman. I agree with you that "Broken Away" is the cleverest story which has appeared in THE SOCIAL REVIEW" (15 Feb. 1896: 600).

"Scorcher", in the *Irish Cyclist*, crowed over favourable reviews of the novel by "our own Graphis", and quoted passages of its nature description. The *Publishers' Circular* described the novel as "an agreeable relief...decidedly refreshing...[with] a genial breeziness" (17 Apr. 1897: 454).

One of the most substantial reviews was in the *National Observer and British Review*, which, under its former editor W.E. Henley's direction, had promoted Stevenson, Kipling, and "deliberately favoured writers who...wrote of an outdoor world far from the metropolis" (Tuohy, *Yeats* 52). Henley himself was regarded as the personification of counter-Decadence: he hated the pre-Raphaelites, ignored the Aesthetic Movement, and became imperialist to the point of jingoism in the 90s (by which time he was with the *New Review*). While the *Publishers' Circular* praised *Broken Away* as a "plain straightforward story, cast in an unconventional mould....Of plot there is little, of characterisation there is not too much, while of 'problems' there are none" (454), the *New Ireland Review* regretted that:

the novel is mainly one of incident. Study of character is not a department of the novelist's art to which Miss Grimshaw here devotes herself....[S]he gives proof of power of graphic description and lively narrative, which will make her book entertaining to the ordinary novel reader ("Two Irish Novels" Sept. 1897-Feb. 1898: 118).

Next time, the *New Ireland Review* hoped, Grimshaw would "appeal to the more thoughtful and exacting class of readers, and will add...a study of the deeper motives which influence women and...the subtler shades of character by which human souls are distinguished". One notes the intriguing assumption that women best understand women. But although her next novel was to dissect one woman very thoroughly, motivation and introspection were aspects of character which Grimshaw never privileged in the

two dozen novels following her first two.

Grimshaw's discussion of Pearse is the most complete indication of her selective appropriation of Gaelic strands in Irish literary self-awareness. It would be intriguing to know her opinions about Yeats. After the Abbey Theatre's first, stormy production of his "The Countess Cathleen" and Edward Martyn's "The Heather Field", there was only one signed comment in *TSR* ("Maev's" "At the Play" 13 May 1899: 841). This quoted "the general verdict" that "whatever ["The Countess Cathleen"] was, it was not interesting or attractive; and...did not correctly interpret either the much-desired Celtic spirit, or the characters of typical Irish men and women" But the writer then confessed that she hadn't seen it herself!

An extremely favourable review appeared the following week. But it was unsigned. The title of the column had changed. And the timing coincides with Grimshaw's last contributions. The reviewer's initial evasiveness sounds like her: "If this were a place proper for the discussion of...dramatic and literary principles...from Aeschylus to Coleridge, one might say many interesting things about the new Irish Literary Theatre. *But...*" [Emphasis mine]. So does the distrust for any programme of accelerated social reform: "Mr. Yeats is a very gifted young extremist, from whom it would be dangerous to take our views...." The magazine's cautious rephrasing of The Abbey's aims, downplaying literary politics, is congruent with what Grimshaw had been saying about Irishness in literature for

years:

They want to give a distinctive note to Irish literature by making it national, not so much in subject as in treatment; they want to create a drama--not necessarily 'Celtic'--whose sound literary and dramatic merit will drive from our stage the abject frivolities of London theatrical syndicates; they want to give Irish talent a chance of asserting itself in all legitimate directions; and they want, if they can, to shift, in some degree, the modern home of literary culture...to a metropolis which, with all its ignorances and all its prejudices, is yet an unexplored treasure-house of fine impulses and high ideals ("Notes of the Week," 20 May 1899: 851-52).

But there is no certainty that Grimshaw wrote this.

The most apposite way to apprehend and evaluate Grimshaw's conception of Irishness is watching her attempt to portray it herself. The evidence is meagre: two "country sketches", one Northern Irish short story, and, to a degree, her first two novels. But *Broken Away* and *A Fool of Forty* are so little "Irish" to my mind that I discuss them below with the themes of the artist-as-female-hero and the "New Woman". That Grimshaw's "Irish" output was so slight suggests immediately that it wasn't particularly important to her to be accounted an Irish writer, although she was not beyond billing herself as such on the cover of *TSR* as an advertising gimmick, since the paper had always had a policy of localising its subject matter.

The country sketches concern the love affairs of superstitious Irish peasant girls: the characters thus personify several

social groups--gender, class, ethnicity and age. "The 'Roisin Ruadh'" ("Red-Haired Roseen") is a rather slick tour de force with some potential, an entirely first-person monologue. Both of the country sketches aspire to accurate dialect, as well they should, given Grimshaw's stringent criticisms of others:

"Is it giving me back me ring ye are, Lizzie Magan, because ye seen me kiss Molly? Well, an' if that's all ye care--sure, if I'd known that weeks ago, I'd have spoke then; but every sowl in the village knew Molly an' me was crazed over other, except yourself; an' I'd never have gone back on you, Lizzie--I wouldn't so, indeed--only if ye don't care more than that, why, there's no harm done. Sure, it was a mistake from the beginnin', Lizzie; for if ever two people was made for other out an' out...an' the colleen breakin' the heart of her over me this great while" ("Her Christmas Gift. A Country Sketch." *TSR* 21 Dec. 1895: 464).

"A wee bit dialect the way the middle classes would have heard it", was the opinion of the late Professor E.R.R. Green, Director of the Institute of Irish Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast, when I asked him in 1978. And the presence of a "M'Gurk" in "Her Christmas Gift" as well as the obviously strategic placing of "stravaguin'" several times over, incline me to wonder if this wasn't also the way Grimshaw had *read* it. If she could imitate Kipling and Le Gallienne so well, why not Barlow or Tynan?

But replicating dialect is a technical problem. Grimshaw's prime criterion, we have seen, was ethical: sympathetic concern for one's characters (except, of course, for the villains). In this

respect "Her Christmas Gift" is sentimental and patronising. Although attempting, within a third-person framework, to render a young girl's mental ramblings, a judgmental narrator intervenes several times to inform readers that Lizzie was, for example, "best described by the term 'ineffective...a plain, rather conceited, warm-hearted, thick-headed young woman" whose "slow understanding was not quite capable of taking in the meaning of [what] she had seen" (21 Dec. 1895: 463-64). The formal devices for rendering speech and thought do not disguise the author's comment from a height and at a distance--precisely the posture of young "Belinda" back at "Ballyrath". Far more of the authenticity and sincerity Grimshaw had herself called for appear in her depiction of the New Woman and woman as artist.

Notes

¹ C.O.S. is almost certainly Connie Stephens, daughter of the pioneering Australian literary critic, A.G. Stephens. As editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald's* women's pages, she was well placed to sympathise with another woman journalist who had sought to escape such confines.

² The *Irish Cyclist* merged with the *Irish Wheelman* in 1903, and these manoeuvres belie Mecredy's oft-stated belief in healthy capitalist competition.

³ It goes without saying that *TSR* classified itself as "the best penny paper in Ireland" and claimed the highest circulation of any society paper there.

⁴ Samuel Kyle, who was in charge of the printing aspect of Mecredy and Kyle's ventures, was responsible for the enduring, attractive appearance of their publications. He imported printing techniques from Hanover, Brussels, Berlin and Leipzig, and his offices possessed the only Meihle letterpress machine in Ireland at the time. In addition to the speed afforded by such machinery, he became interested in graphics and hoped to enable Ireland to compete with Holland and Germany with colour printing. As a result, William Morris would have been at a loss to criticise the appearance of these journals, and Grimshaw's thorough acquaintance with all aspects of the

production process influenced her book reviewing considerably; while constantly pleading for cheap editions of popular or valuable works, she also insisted that they should be attractively presented.

⁵ For a fictional portrayal of the life of an Irish resident magistrate, see E.O.E. Somerville and "Martin Ross", *Some Experiences of an Irish Resident Magistrate*. This popular, hilarious series of stories was serialised and much reprinted. It may have been one model for C.A.W. Monckton's *Experiences* and *Further Experiences of a New Guinea Resident Magistrate*. These, however, substituted bombast for Somerville and "Ross'" sustained, delicate irony conveyed through a fallible and sympathetic narrator.

⁶ Rachel Harrison's "'Shirley': Relations of Production and the Ideology of Romance" discusses working conditions for women and children in the printing trade a decade or two earlier. These included sorting disease-carrying rags from hospitals for paper manufacture. In the 1880s wood-pulp began to be used in Britain, and it would be interesting to know the source of Mecredy's paper in deforested Ireland. Harmsworth planted forests in Newfoundland to obtain his.

⁷ See the 1898 series on "Lady Journalists" in the *Ladies' Pictorial*, or Mary Frances Billington's "Leading Lady Journalists" (*Pearson's Magazine* July 1896) for abundant examples. My "'Information of a Peculiarly Exclusive Character: Research Suggestions Concerning British Women Journalists of the 1890s" (*Women, Literature and Criticism Newsletter* 3 [1980]) also contains a substantial amount of information both about the journalists themselves, and how to avail oneself of the resources available to study this still rather neglected and untheorised area of enquiry.

⁸ It is worth noting *TSR's* coverage of the Araby fete in 1894, the sympathetic reporter observing "Lascars" shivering in the Dublin winter. This fair may well have been a model for Joyce's story of that name in *Dubliners*. Grimshaw named one of her later exotic female heroes "Araby".

⁹ 21 and 28 Nov. 1896. This announcement was boxed and inserted in the opening pages; in bold type on 28 Nov.

¹⁰ Notable here is the association of a "professional" woman with the "New Woman", another probable reason why Grimshaw preferred being referred to as neither in the colonies later. Renate Mohrmann's comment in "Occupation: Woman Artist" that "[C]ritics...treat female authors differently from men. The criticism of their private lives, their clothes and make-up are invariably part of textual criticism. Sometimes I get the impression that the writer is more important than her book" (*Feminist Aesthetics* 157) seems to have been recognised from the start by Grimshaw. As I have shown in "Ideal Biographical Legend", her image-making was both effective and protective.

¹¹ Sir Charles, a Young Irelander, emigrated to Australia, where he eventually became Premier of Victoria. After his return to Ireland he became Yeats' principal literary-political antagonist in the 1890s.

¹² This is not to imply that changes in social status are *directly* reflected in literature. The changes themselves were uneven, and in any event the relationships between literature and the aspect of society which it signifies or represents are oblique and complex. As Grimshaw herself described "reality" within literature:

[t]he prisms and mirrors through which literature refracts and reflects the rays of life, are only prisms and mirrors after all....[T]he wise man turns to the open air and sun, sees 'the thing as it is', in his own fragment of the world and slice of time, and keeps the prisms for the diversion of idle armchair and firelight hours. The ordinary man concludes that literature is Lie, and turns his soul to the engineering of Stock Exchange fluctuations, or the nearest equivalent (Ch. 34, *A Fool of Forty*, *TSR* 24 Dec. 1898: 478).

¹³ Eglinton was a pseudonym for William Kirkpatrick Magee [1868-1961] whom Yeats regarded as "our one Irish critic". A Theosophist and friend of "A.E.", like Grimshaw he was strongly influenced by the essays of Emerson and Thoreau. Also somewhat like her, "he was not regarded as sympathetic to the literary revival; his classical education led him to insist on literature having larger than national horizons" (Jeffares, *Anglo-Irish Literature* 292-93).

"Will Nobody Rid Me of This Turbulent Type"?'¹

In 1897, "Maev" announced, with her increasingly strident fiat, "The truth is that if all, or most women, married, there would never have been any talk of professions for the feminine half of creation" ("Notes" *TSR* 10 July: 26). She herself, of course, was an unmarried, working woman, sometime columnist of "Women's Pursuits", yet still advising other women to marry, to mother, and not to work.

There is nothing more certain than this truth...a rock of fact not to be avoided--that the one sort of woman whom the world really wants...is the good wife and mother. If there had never been a single learned or advanced woman in the history of the world, civilisation would not have been appreciably farther back than it is to-day; science would have stood exactly where it does; art, literature and music would not have suffered in any degree worth mentioning. The causes that have contributed to the making of the professional woman are complex, and not all of them will bear public discussion, especially the one that has most of all to do with the low marriage rate [e.g., prostitution]--the one that should shut the lips of every man who rails against the learned and 'advanced' self-supporting woman, for very shame. For this reason, if for no other, man should refrain from throwing any stumbling-block in the way of the wage-earning woman, until such time as the problem of the sexes--*the greatest that the modern world has known*--shall have worked itself out, as it will...though probably not in the time of any who...read[s] these lines....The question is as immense as it is momentous. The whole Victorian era has seen but the beginning; it will take at least another 60 years to show us even where we are going, or where we want to go [Emphasis mine].

"Maev's" antagonist in this instance was the patriarchal but bland Sir Walter Besant, comments of whose in the *Queen* had sparked this tirade.

Two years later "Maev's" by now even more formidable arsenal of polemic was aroused by "Sarah Grand" in a *Lady's Realm* discussion as to whether or not marriage hindered a woman's self-development. The opening pages of the next four issues of *TSR* (harking back to its very early days) resounded with combat as "Maev" skirmished with "An Indignant Irishwoman" (whose first letter accused "Maev" of being a man). "Maev" had the last, but pyrrhic word, by literally never appearing in the magazine again. "The Woman Question", to which she had given so much qualified allegiance in earlier days, was now transforming the magazine into an ideological battleground, and "Maev"/Grimshaw into the open during the late nineteenth century war between the sexes, or, to be more precise, ideologies about sex. These were in effect, ideologies about "woman's" "nature", since the Darwinian and Spencerian problematics within which the various antagonists perforce located their arguments allocated "woman" that realm first and foremost. As Boulemlha in her discussion of the effects of sexual ideology on Thomas Hardy's fiction has explained:

[Ideology's] role--which is not to say that it is governed by any intention--is to offer a false resolution of real social contradictions by repressing the questions that challenge its limits and transposing, displacing, or eliding the felt contradictions of lived experience in a way that will permit of an apparent

resolution....While ideology is real, then, in that it is compounded of lived experience, it is simultaneously 'false', in that it obscures the nature of that experience, by representing as obvious and natural what is partial, factitious, and ineluctably social....[I]f Hardy's radicalism is to be read correctly, it must be situated historically...not in a context of simple contemporaneity, but in relation to the shifts and mutations of contemporary ideologies which the fiction itself produces and transforms. The 'sexuality', the 'women', the 'marriage' and the 'non-marriage' which it represents are all constituted in an ideology of sexual difference that was transformed...by the impact of biologicistic interpretations of Darwinism (itself, of course, constituted within a 'science' that was not the objective and incontrovertible discourse it proclaimed itself to be) (*Thomas Hardy and Women* 5 and 8).

Although the *Lady's Realm* had published the opinions of six other women, "Maev's" only reply was to "Sarah Grand", whose *The Beth-Book* she had already assaulted with a vitriolic review. Her aversion to "Grand's" arguments (as opposed to her vehemence for what she considered their tastelessness) was not stated, but one wonders, given "Maev's" previous opinions on "the greatest problem that the modern world has known", how much it had to do with "Grand's" contention that even a genius would produce inferior art if celibate, and that a childless woman was not likely to produce good art. Nothing could have contradicted Grimshaw's own hard-won belief in the difference between physiological and intellectual reproduction more. Although the Laracys characterise Grimshaw as "the very model of the liberated 'New Woman' of the 1890s" ("*Beatrice Grimshaw*" 156) Grimshaw would certainly never have applied this label to

herself. Their argument is based on Grimshaw's choice of a career rather than marriage, and the contention that "the individual liberation relished by Beatrice was not allied to a concern for the condition of women in general. The New Woman was not necessarily a suffragette, nor, in any explicit way, a precursor of the modern feminist". This, however, is to misunderstand both the New Woman and the modern feminist, although in significantly different ways. The literary variant of the New Woman was precisely what Grimshaw was not: sexually liberated and professionally educated. Grimshaw justified professional women's careers as "an alternative to starvation, either immediate or prospective", and "a vicious necessity [which] civilisation has made, and must deal with...." It was not hypocrisy, but her self-conception as "a woman with a special talent" that allowed her to except herself from arguments phrased in terms of duty towards the species or the 'race'. The case of such women was:

somewhat different. Talent demands exercise, and to a certain extent makes laws for itself, and it would be unjust to keep the woman artist of any kind (quite apart from the question of its being impossible), from the exercise of her gifts. The woman artist, however, is not in most cases obliged to seek her work in...public competition... ("Maev," "Notes by the Way" 10 July 1897: 26).

The woman artist's situation was by no means easy, however. Using as an example the painter Rosa Bonheur, Grimshaw conceded that a few women could marry and continue to develop as artists, but she predicted a "terrible...fight between the two halves [of

any professional woman's] nature" (31 Aug. 1895: 162). (This rhetoric of "sides" and "halves" was never reconciled by Grimshaw, who characteristically thought in terms of irreconcilable polarities, whether intragender or intergender.) Of all the world's "passions unclassified", we remember, "G." had speculated that the strongest was the artist's ambition to "see clearly" and then depict what she saw. It is thus no surprise to find that the sub-texts of her own final, fictional statement about "woman's" creativity capacity are some of the nineteenth century's most famous texts about art and marriage: Georges Sand's *Consuelo*, George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, and Browning's "Andrea del Sarto". This is not to say that she assented fully with any. But they provided her with a framework (as well as names and motifs, from the transmutation of Dorothea into "Theodora" and the frightening symbolism of the basil plant, discussed below) within which to conduct her own fictional argument.

"Maev" recommended Georges Sand's *Consuelo* "for every comprehensive library, public or private", despite "certain trifles of plain speaking inseparable from the work of all great French authors":

It presents the most perfect picture conceivable of the artist life; there is nothing finer of its kind in literature than the description of the night at the theatre when Consuelo first realises the terrible possibilities of a life that allows no room for private joys and sorrows, the artist being sold, body and spirit, to the public which pays for his or her services ("Notes," 28 Jan.

1899: 554).

Grimshaw came to view the claims of love (for women) and art as a battle between antagonists of nearly equal strength in which the lover within the woman *must* be killed, both to nourish the artist and set her free. Sometimes the lover would be forcibly destroyed, anyway, in which case art might be a substitute, but a poor one. The painter Terry in *Broken Away* (who has no domestic muse and psychological support such as her cousin, the novelist Stuart, has in his wife Eva, whose name obviously designates the "life" support system she gives him), after great pain, has reconciled herself to losing her lover and fostering what vitality and creativity remain to her. When Elliot Ritchie inexplicably leaves Ireland, it is:

as if the...steamer had a cord running right into [her] heart, and was tearing it out, flesh and blood and all....Did you ever hate the life in yourself, and want to throttle it like a wild beast, when you think that it *won't* go out, for all your longing--not for 40 or 50 years perhaps? Here I am at 30, very well and healthy and--happy, as people go: for it isn't a merry world at best (148-49).

Once again, a Grimshaw hero must choose--or accept the circumstances life has doled out to her--between art and love when aged about 30 (the age Grimshaw was approaching as she completed *Broken Away*, and as she left Ireland). Terry's art *is* a substitute, not a choice. Since *Broken Away*, as the dissatisfied critic in the *New Ireland Review* noted, is a "Society" novel--an upper-class variant of popular romance--

Ritchie returns as mysteriously as he vanished. Terry abandons art for love in less than a sentence: "[H]er very soul went forth from her keeping, and her neck was under his foot" (251). An artist must be independent. A woman in love cannot be.

Grimshaw's thematic and polemical concerns, as her Dublin years were drawing to a close, were obsessed with the conditions and circumstances facing the female achiever. Eva relinquishes her New Woman aspirations when she marries Stuart (she had wanted to become a doctor). Terry abandons art for love when she has a second chance. Theodora, "the first woman mathematician in the Kingdom" (*A Fool of Forty* 3 Sept. 1890:, 190) loves miserably, marries disastrously, murders another woman (Alix, her sensual rival and foil), gives birth to a stillborn son, and perishes herself of unspecified neurosis. (All of these women, by no means coincidentally, as we shall see, are motherless.)

When examining Grimshaw's tortured relations to these and other characters of her own making--models, projections, splits, alter egos--we recognise a crisis in the biographical drama taking place. She drops most of the personae concocted for the *Social Review*, with the exception of the increasingly harassed "Maev". She produces signed or readily attributable allegories of "the" female condition, with didactic intent. Her "dialogues-up-to-date" caricature lower middle-class Dublin women: such a static, closed form of satire denies the possibility of positive change in these characters, whose creator's disapproving and dismissive stance is plain. She signs novels where the tensions between the

woman, artist and nomad in her are fought out and drastically resolved by the renunciation of heterosexual relationship and adopting a masculine identification or pose, although it is interesting to note that, after writing out her dilemma in *A Fool of Forty*, she never felt the need for a pseudonym again: in that previously-unknown novel we find Grimshaw's "liberation project" for herself as a writer finally achieved.

Grimshaw attributed the original New Woman, Dorothea, to George Eliot, and the New Woman's style to Olive Schreiner. But she claimed that dream and allegory, in the hands of a writer such as "George Egerton", had degenerated into a diseased rambling.

'Symphonies'...was a study in hysteria.
'Fantasias' suggests a study of the opium or kindred habits. Its formless masses of inflated imagery, its total lack of any sense of proportion, its jerky inconsequences, all are suggestive of a brain warped from its proper poise ("Maev," "Notes" 1 Jan. 1898: 1).

Sick of "the Turbulent Type", as she called her, Grimshaw predicted her eventual demise and called for books that would lead away from "extremely moral questions that somehow become extremely immoral in the questioning, into a land of sea-breezes and hard work and primitive, unproblematical men and women" (signed review of F. Hopkinson Smith's *Tom Grogan* 15 Aug. 1896: 118). But for four years more she portrayed various New Women herself.

Eventually Papua provided her with a socio-historical situation which released the trammelled forces that found expression only in incongruous or limited contexts during her Irish years. The fiction of her Dublin years shows that she had reached a stage of development where she could, in effect, say to herself, "I know I can write, but what kind of writer shall I be?" But how--indeed why--should one write for the society and professional people of Merrion Square and St Stephen's Green? Grimshaw herself criticised the novelist Ella MacMahon for extreme "classiness":

Such narrowness of outlook betrays a false view of life, and is unworthy of Miss MacMahon, from whom...I had expected better things than a horizon bounded by the *Lady's Pictorial*....[O]ne who can do no better work than the society novel has certainly either lost, or never possessed, the power to 'see life steadily and see it whole.' I have no wish whatever to undervalue class distinctions or the force of heredity, but it is easy to see that any writer who aspired not only to rise above the crowd, but also to stay there, must rigidly avoid the 'class' point of view. The penalty of catering for the cheap applause and ready four-and-sixpences of the Croker--Hungerford--Broughton style of reader, is rapid extinction ("Maev," review of *An Honourable Estate* 24 Sept. 1898, 230).

Each major character in *Broken Away* embodies a choice in Grimshaw's increasing and converging conflicts. But the only resolutions are artificial (a marriage unprepared by the plot; mental disease; suicide). The critic of the *National Observer*, who regarded the love story between Terry and Elliott as irrelevant, had noted a structural imbalance which may reflect

two originally different novels: one a wholesome, socially fashionable romp in the domesticated "wilds" outside Dublin, the other a more serious study of the New Woman (who would "out" in the end, as Theodora, in the separate *A Fool of Forty*).

The New Woman of *Broken Away* is not the artist Terry but Stuart's wife Eva, who has serenely solved problems that would have provided ample drama for another novel altogether. Her presence in the narrative, like her role in marriage, is subordinate and muted, but her thematic importance cannot be concealed. Temporarily she becomes a passionate mouthpiece who has her say. When Stuart, with the egoistic aim of improving his art, cries, "*Let's run away!*" he is astonished by Eva's endorsement that they should (as if they could) escape from society and civilisation for awhile. But she explains that she had once hoped:

[t]o BREAK AWAY--to live my own life--to see Nature and God as they are, not as we in our little clique and 'schools of thought' imagine them....I wanted a life of adventure--you can't tell how the longing for it used to pull at my very heartstrings! I wanted to live for myself, and work out my own life; to be--well, what you would call a New Woman, I suppose! You don't know how the passion for absolute freedom sometimes takes hold of a girl!.... And then!...I met you, and it was all over...all over... [W]hen a woman really loves, and happily, her ambition dies. If she is unhappy in her love--well, she turns to ambition only; and whether it satisfies her or not, I don't know, thank God. But sometimes, I suppose, to everyone, the ghosts of the old ideas will come back for a minute, if just to--(46-47).

Eva then storms out of the drawing room because Stuart is turning her outburst into copy. But neither his humorous defusing of the situation, nor her tentative and halting speech, hides the drama beneath the surface. This is the only time Eva is really allowed to speak for herself. Usually, the author assures us, she is content with her roles as comforter, muse, Aphrodite, Galatea, for "[s]he did not need the example of Carlyle and his wife to teach her that the helpmeet of a man of genius must be his shadow, rather than his attendant moon" (42).

Two short stories contemporaneous with *Broken Away's* composition and serialised publication foreground more of the New Woman's double-binds. "The Woman of Three Ages: An Impossible Story", by "Graphis", recounts the Dantesque encounter of "Three women [who] came to the same spot in a wood, by diverging paths..." (17 Aug. 1895, 136). Laura Matilda, the Old Woman and "smallest of the three", chatters about her accomplishments: "I can make two dozen different kinds of pickles, all by myself; I play the harp, and paint on velvet, and I have read all the poetry in Papa's library. I am also a person of true sensibility". The New Woman, "Johanna, generally Jack", is a "good fellow" who speaks "in the most gentlemanly manner possible". She is clearly no model either. "I believe in freedom of every sort, and you bet I've got it. I wear knickerbockers when I feel inclined. I can enter pretty much any profession I choose, and I study everything, and know everything, and do everything".

The Coming Woman can only be glimpsed, since she is covered with a thick veil, but she walks "without mincing or striding like the first two". She has no name. She hardly speaks, but when she does she castigates Laura Matilda for accusing Jack of not understanding men: "*She* has learned not to be spiteful, at least. Don't be little-minded. Johanna cut my pathway through this wood for me, and it is all that hard work that has taken away her beauty" [emphasis Grimshaw's].

"A Man-Woman" (by Beatrice Grimshaw, 27 June 1896), however, forsakes the timeless dimension of allegory for the contemporary Dublin of financial speculation. The author's technique is everywhere domineering. Motherless Louise is masculine in her intelligence. She refuses "domestic duties" (symbolised in the story by a refusal to cook, but sexuality is revealed as the real issue she would prefer to reject). She wears a "curious travesty" of male evening dress. Distance between her and the reader is ensured by a garrulous, manipulative narrator who speaks directly to her and to us: "[You are] [c]oming to learn, Louise--...You cannot make a man out of woman, even if she has a man's brain;...the home-making instinct can no more be thoroughly eradicated from her breast, than the nest-building habit from a bird" (955).

Louise, too, encounters Fate in a forest, incarnated in a lost child whom she kidnaps for an afternoon. "Louise had forced herself into manliness so long that the accumulated strength of her womanhood was breaking bounds...like a river that has burst

its banks....She was acting now without thought or reason...she, who had prided herself on not knowing what impulse was!"

A number of Grimshaw's later techniques and motifs appear in miniature in this story. Most prominent is the device (later used to open *The Coral Queen*) of a split interior consciousness, of which the rational half is male and the protesting but resigned and practical other half female. In order to make the unsubstantiated, loose generalisations that so often saved her the trouble of logical argument, Grimshaw frequently resorted to supposedly mutually exclusive alternatives. The male/female dichotomy was, for her, the primordial model of such splitting. She conceived of it as absolute, allowing for no overlap and the expression of no more than two, antagonistic viewpoints. In this she may have been no different from anyone today:

Recent research leads to the conclusion that a child between one and a half and three years old already feels herself/himself to be a 'sexual person' and not a member of the species 'human being'. [...] The recognition of one's sex, and therefore of the male-female dualism which is the first cognitive step a human being makes, is the basic pattern according to which all creatures and natural phenomena are classified, the first ordering principle, the first process of abstraction when observing the world, the first distinct experience of oneself (Gisela Breitling, "Speech, Silence and the Discourse of Art," *Feminist Aesthetics* 169-70).

Today, however, if it is hypothesised that the recognition of gendered identity is the first model for classifying the world, this opposition need not be seen as hierarchical; although it is

unlikely not to be, since children are born into a world of patriarchal discourse in which the terms "male" and "female" are hardly equivalent.

Although "Fate", here and in later stories, is embodied in a child, it more often assumes the guise of a male: a ruthless crusader and master who demands absolute capitulation. Marrying him is no partnership; it is self-abnegation. Wherever there is passion, only one can be master. Louise has no choice; she accepts love like a martyr going to the stake.

In other words, Grimshaw allocated determinism to her female characters and reserved freedom of choice for her male characters (and for herself). Very similarly, when she later dealt with race, she was acquainted with Darwin's and Spencer's writings too well to ignore evolutionary theory; nor could anyone who used to drink tea with Malinowski ignore developments in contemporary anthropology altogether. But her white characters become Lamarckians who, in one generation, can acquire and transmit new hereditary characteristics, while black characters develop at a very slow pace.

One price of Grimshaw's personal independence, then, was the renunciation of nearly all aspects of contemporary feminine identity. This included not only the negative attributes of dependency, but the comforts and satisfactions of bourgeois marriage, maternity, and (so far as we know) sexual fulfillment. For Grimshaw, physical expression seems always to have been more

calisthenic than erotic. When, on their honeymoon, Frank decorates Theo's hair (which he unbinds and spreads on her pillow) with fox-gloves, telling her, "That's how you *ought* to look" (3 Sept. 1898: 190), she recoils with horror before her mirrored image: "so wild--odd--she could not find the word". Nor could Grimshaw could have found a more appropriate symbol: the plant which yields a heart-cure (*digitalis*) also yields a poison. One also senses gripping fingers (*digits*) within those gloves. As we know, Grimshaw sublimated her own erotic feelings onto landscape, as Pratt has suggested (in *Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction*) that many women writers have done.

Grimshaw's later fictional self-projection, "Mary Greene", neatly encapsulates within the character's name connotations of virginity (Mary), nationalism (the green of Ireland), and love of nature (the green world). Theo's rejection of sensuality is also represented when she throws out the "goodies" Bevan sends her, since she hates "sweets", and doesn't enjoy eating anyway.

Grimshaw further advised her readers that, failing "perfect" marriage, there was no happier household than the menage of brother and sister. "Cinderella" was thus advised (30 Jan. 1897: 134): "CREDE EXPERTO" [emphasis hers]. The ascetic nature of her choice is symbolised by the murder scene in *A Fool of Forty* when the intellectual New Woman, Theodora, kills Alix, the sensual woman who has married Theodora's former suitor. The war for female liberation is internecine. Battle is waged against female aspects of the self in order to set free not only the artist, but the sea-rover.

The 40 year old "fool" is "Frank" Bevan. A fool is defined as quixotic, occasionally wise, romantic, idealistic, and a poet who doesn't "look at things like other fellows" (26 Mar. 1898: 277). Bevan is a journalist and sometime poet who hopes to subdue his inappropriate wanderlust by marrying his dream woman, an intellectual equal. Grimshaw's least-known novel is also her most didactic, a summary of her socio-biological beliefs up to the time she left Dublin in 1899. Theodora, the walking encyclopedia to whom Bevan becomes married but not mated, a clever, pretty, and stupid woman, represents an intensification and extension of Grimshaw's anti-feminism.

Theo (an ironic appropriation of "Dorothea", since this, too, is the story of a woman's conflicts within marriage, only turned inside out, since Bevan, not Dorothea, marries the intellectual) is Grimshaw's most problematic female hero. The biological die is cast before her story opens (the laughter of "cruel Lachesis" in Chapter 3 tells us so), but this, obviously, cannot be fully evident from the beginning or there would be no story to tell. Theo's journey towards a literally fatal destiny is given fuller treatment and scope than any of the romantic-formulaic colonial heroes created by Grimshaw later was ever to enjoy. But Theo is not so much the literary ancestress of Stephanie, Stacy, Charmaine, and innumerable other domestic heroines of popular romance. Her descendants are the half-castes like Vaiti or the criminals like the sorceress Andi Lala (*The Star in the Dust*). They, like Theodora, inherit and incarnate dubious and conflicting biological legacies.

But while a half-caste like Vaiti incarnates the social and moral tragedies which Grimshaw believed to be inherent in *racial* miscegenation, Theo embodies a notion of *sexual* miscegenation which, however ludicrous-seeming today, must have seemed plausible at the time. Chromosomally sex-linked characteristics, as well as the existence of hormones and their effects, were not yet understood. As racial half-castes were popularly supposed to do, Theodora has inherited the worst qualities of both her parents (to be more precise, the defects of their best qualities). She also comes close to fulfilling the widespread belief that "hybrids" were sterile, or, as Spencer would have had it (and Theodora herself gives Bevan her own copy of *The Principles of Sociology*, her favourite book, during their courtship), that energy diverted by women into intellectual activity unfits them for breeding.

According to this implacable and dichotomous biology, women inherited "womanly" characteristics from their mothers. These qualities were an amalgam which later generations would sort into biological (e.g., sex-related) and socio-cultural (e.g., gender-related) components. Only seldom would "male" attributes dominate in female children. But if they did, the result was held to be deviant and probably fatal. Such beliefs circumscribed the possibilities either of psychological "androgyny" or professional equality *for women*. For a sexual double standard as inexorable as race ruled Grimshaw's biological and moral world. Bevan is allowed to possess some "female" qualities, although the author assures us that there is

nothing of Wilde or Le Gallienne about *him*. He has "an almost feminine keenness of perception", "quickly moved sympathies", and detests inflicting pain (26 Mar. 1898: 277). He is allowed to be over-sensitive, unreasonable and illogical, as Theodora seldom fails to note (and criticise).

The best ideas of a literary man often come to him along a zig-zag lightning path of unperceived inferences and deductions, passed by too swiftly for classification. At that moment, a sentence suddenly came into being in Bevan's mind, sprung apparently from nowhere--yet he felt it to be his own, and knew it to be true.

'A woman who is very distinctly the daughter of her father, physically or intellectually, will in some essential detail be unlike other women' (11 June 1898: 505).

But there is something about Theodora that Bevan cannot understand. Initially he regards her oddness or eccentricity in a positive light:

'The Ithuriel spear that proves all men by its touch is--primitive emotion. Love, hatred, death, the only great realities of life, are its only true tests....When this woman loves or hates, or when she faces eternity all alone, then those...with her will know wherein she is different to others. Different she *is*. These women who are "daughters of men" are never like the daughters of women. They may be quite as feminine--it isn't there that the difference comes in. It is in a certain discordancy that is not a false note--that may, even like a musical discord, express something finer than a perfect harmony--but that is, essentially, a thing abnormal. Theodora has curious possibilities (Emphasis Grimshaw's).

But she hasn't. Her divided genetic inheritance is leading her to doom. Her own father, a doctor, regrets ever having sent her to Cambridge. "[A] woman who does work that has anything like genius in it--as a few of 'em do in every century--pays through the nose for the privilege..." (2 July 189: 17). Not coincidentally, given the socio-biological authority lent to ideologies of sexual difference at the time Grimshaw was writing, Theodora's nature is ascribed and circumscribed by two doctors: one, as we have seen, her father, and the other an old family friend who presides over her death from a mysterious wasting sickness. Her function is to embody their normative generalisations, as well as Frank's: he is forever formulating maxims about her, although George Eliot could have warned him that "[t]he mysterious complexity of our life is not to be embraced by maxims..." (*The Mill on the Floss*, qtd. by Nancy K. Miller, "Emphasis Added" 46).

Moreover, Theodora is also her mother's daughter. The dead woman's unpromising legacy stares at Bevan from her portrait: "the bloodless lifelessness of it--the thin primness--the stunted, starved nature which it revealed..." (4 June 1898: 489). In the same chapter where he views this painting, Bevan voyeuristically glimpses Theodora (unaware of his presence) for the first time. She possesses:

a pale, clearcut, handsome face, like her father--yes, very like him--yet infinitely different in some mysterious way--a pair of dark eyes strangely set in a colourless face, under colourless tresses of fine, fair hair;

thin, well-cut lips--plain white coat and skirt dress, unrelieved by a single touch of colour, unless the grey silk tie that circled her high collar could be classified as such. It was a handsome face that Bevan saw, not a pretty one;...interesting...and most curiously contradictory. What had those dark passionate eyes to do with the nunlike coldness of the lips and brow?

Marriage cannot change this antagonistic combination of female sensuality become frigid and male genius. This is not only because Theodora's personality has been "set" genetically. The education available to late nineteenth century women has disastrously encouraged the man and repressed the woman in her. "Such as Theo was...she was unalterable; early formed and moulded, too soon developed in intellect, too early hardened into permanence of character, she had reached her own limits, by very near" (24 Dec. 1898: 478).

Scrutiny of Grimshaw's insistent, confused characterisation of Theodora at this point repays the effort of disentangling its contradictory components and assumptions; for Theodora crucially foreshadows Grimshaw's thinking about racial difference. She functions to confirm Grimshaw's early conclusion that the sexes are almost completely discontinuous. Their antagonism, not their common humanity, is emphasised. Sexual division is the prototype of the oppositions structuring Grimshaw's later popular fiction, the *combinatoire sémantique* described previously.

How else could the differences and relations between female and male have been conceptualised?

There are in fact numerous ways to organise and represent contrasts. Formal logic distinguishes between an *opposite* (A and B) and a *negation* (A is not non-A). "Natural logic" (the conceptual-denotative domain of semantics in everyday language) has both richer sources for contrast and greater dangers of confusion. Geoffrey Leech's *Semantics*, for instance, distinguishes among taxonomic, polar, relative, and "other" (including hierarchical) oppositions.

Examples of the taxonomic type include the *binary taxonomy* in which two opposing terms are absolutely distinctive, e.g., "alive/dead". It is as if a "territorial boundary" ensured their mutual exclusivity (106). The *multiple taxonomy* arranges more than two exclusive terms, such as metals, biological species and primary colours.

Polar oppositions, however, imply a middle, meeting ground. They are conceived as two extremes with a gradable scale connecting them: "old /young"; "large/small"; "deep/shallow". Sometimes they express subjective norms and evaluations, such as "beautiful/ugly". *Relative oppositions* express irreversible relationships such as "up/down"; "left/right"; "ancestor/descendant"; "parent/child"; "teacher/pupil" (I would suggest the latter two are more accurately characterised as formally non-reciprocated, although socially not: children can be their parents' care-takers on occasion, and most teachers learn from their pupils). Or they may represent potentially reciprocal, symmetrical relationships: "opposite", "near",

"similar", "be married to". Taxonomies are discrete contrasts; polar oppositions are continuous; relative oppositions of the reciprocal type neutralise contrast.

Semantic oppositions exist nowhere in nature or "reality", only in language. But discourse, precisely, is what shapes reality for human beings. Oppositions seldom occur in the fairly clearcut divisions listed above. More often a person seeking to order perceived difference combines the features of various semantic oppositions to arrive at "conceptual" definition and meaning. Unlike the formal precision of scientific and technical categories, semantic oppositions and relations represent a "folk taxonomy" (122). Such classificatory strategies, more often than not, express misclassification or "fuzziness".

In Grimshaw's world-view, "male" and "female" were largely incompatible contrasts. She never resolved this quandary in any scientifically or logically coherent manner. But her fictional and ideological solutions, however incorrect, were consistent. Her notions of male and female difference can be inferred at an abstract, "deep structural" level from the "surface texture" of her imagery, characters, settings and themes; it can be observed at work as a powerful and prolific story-telling mechanism.

One consequence of regarding sexual division as a chasm or schism rather than a spectrum or continuum is a symbolism based on contrasts and absolutes. (Retrospectively, it is clear that

not only did Grimshaw confuse biological sex and socio-cultural gender, but that she assumed observable sex differences--as in the sexual division of labour, for instance--reflected biological necessity rather than differential, discriminatory social opportunity.) Confusing consequence (social inferiority) with "cause" (biological difference), in turn, predisposed her towards fatalistic, conservative and static ideologies. The only historical aspect of her thinking was an inclination towards origins as total explanations. Hence the recurrence of such words as "roots" and "bedrock" in her attempts to justify the socio-sexual division of labour.

Ironically, however, Grimshaw's very obsession and diligence in producing *A Fool of Forty* carried its own refutation: there would be little need for such intensive ideological work to reproduce and perpetuate such a world-view if these roles were indeed pre-given and immutable. The polemical, dogmatic dimension of *A Fool of Forty* should therefore be interpreted in the context of late nineteenth century feminism, as a rearguard action.

The expository dimension of *A Fool of Forty* is obtrusive and seeks to be definitive. But it also possesses other aspects pointing towards Grimshaw's future work. One is the appearance (but incomplete evolution, at this stage) of a bisexual narrator. Usually the first person "truthful chronicler" poses as a hearty, elderly announcer of the most banal generalities. Sometimes "he" addresses the reader directly and assumes that

"we" share "his" commonsense philosophy. But this usually male narrator also possesses an almost uncanny, implausible, inside knowledge of female existence (or, to state Grimshaw's eventual achievement in another way, she, as a female, was able convincingly to put herself in a male psychological place). Grimshaw is rehearsing an "androgynous" tone and comprehension which later reviewers (e.g., Francis Grierson in the *Bookman's* review of *Conn of the Coral Seas* 1922) singled out for praise. Neither belabouring nor belittling the challenges of apprehending and representing the psychological experience of socially different male and female worlds, Grimshaw, at her best, learned to write convincingly as a female or male.

There are several ways to read the ignored, seminal text that *A Fool of Forty* represents within Grimshaw's oeuvre. One is to relate it to her contemporaneous non-fiction concerning the ideology of sexual difference, as I have already done; it presents the special interest of an anti-feminist novel by a woman representing the problems presented by emancipation for middle-class women. Another is to watch the artist-gypsy breaking away at last, and most important (although closely inter-twined with the two other) is to interpret the text as the most autobiographical Grimshaw ever wrote, which I shall do in the following section. But to observe Bevan's liberation is, to an extent, to observe Grimshaw's as well, so I will briefly discuss that first.

Bevan is liberating himself from Dublin, a Kipling-esque "man-

stifled town"; from the wholesome but limited feminine qualities represented by sensual, robust Alix, and the pathological characteristics embodied by the brilliant but unbalanced Theodora; finally, Frank is freeing himself from the social ties represented by relatives, a profession, and marriage. (As "Maevroe" was advised in "Women's Pursuits", "Matrimony is a good thing in its way, but the unmarried woman need never find life empty unless she has an altogether exaggerated idea of the good qualities of the opposite sex" *TSR* 19 Sept. 1896: 283). Not only is Frank *free* to leave, he *must* if he is ever to fulfill his nature, symbolised by a wild bird, "dead or dying in his heart", that has one last chance "to wake up to spread its wings and fly" (25 Feb. 1899: 639).

And where might this adventurous bird fly? There is no telling now, but Frank does have a vision of:

the lotos-eating islands of the far South
Seas, where the roar of our restless
civilisation comes more faintly than the sound
of cocoa-palms that clap their long leaves
together through the endless silent mornings,
above the blue lagoons--all this was his own,
at last, and for ever (25 Feb. 1899: 640).

Nor does this inclination--like a compass needle trembling on the verge of pointing magnetic and truth South--seem any accident. On his honeymoon Bevan hears a sailor singing "Mandalay", which itself points East and South: "When you've heard the East a-callin'/You won't heed nought else" (17 Sept. 1898: 221).

Frank's story is Grimshaw's valedictory to the *Social Review*, Dublin and Ireland itself. His future is indeterminate: Grimshaw wrote no other novel with such an open ending. But predictions appear at several points in the text. Perhaps he will develop his gifts as a popular story-teller. When he and Theo visit Dunluce Castle on their honeymoon, his wife is emotionally attracted despite herself:

For almost the first time in her pedantic life, Theodora laid aside the scholar's frame of mind, and forgot the architectural, geological, ethnological details with which she had been fully primed before starting, to listen to her husband's purely 'popular' stories. He had all the old legends at his fingertips (29 Oct. 1898: 317).

Whatever he does, he must renounce marriage. In no matter what form--passionate, intellectual, companionate--it would dilute and compromise his "happy egoism--a walling up of mind and soul behind their own bulwarks, from all the other world--a damming up of every mental power into one single reservoir, where thought and fancy might cast up wanton fountains of their own..." (29 Feb. 1899: 639-40). (A double standard, of course, again reigns here, for Theodora herself asks for nothing more than to remain absorbed in her own gifts, even though married). Above all, he must quit the social environment strangling him: Grimshaw's last Dublin stories and sketches are cluttered with imagery of stifling, choking, pollution and suffocation. Like many another Irish artist who felt further development was contingent on crossing "that bar of green sea that has perhaps

cut more lives in sunder than any other" ("The English-Irish", 11 Apr. 1896: opening page), Bevan is about to exile himself from "the most beautiful and the most historically interesting island in the world" ("Maev," review of T.O. Russell's *Beauties and Antiquities of Ireland*, 19 June 1897: 714). Having set Frank free, it now remains to see how and why Grimshaw was able to free herself. Since, it seemed, no one else would free her of the "turbulent type", Grimshaw did it for herself with Theodora.

Notes

¹ "Will Nobody Rid Me of this Turbulent Type?" was a misquotation appearing in *TSR* on 4 Dec. 1897, and the type herself defined as "Earnest at all times...priggishly objectionable as a child; frequently, painfully, and freely amorous in her early youth; developing later on into a large-souled, great-hearted creature without a grain of humour in her solid composition, or a single saving grace of everyday comfortableness in her character; struggling, to the depth of her mighty nature, and the length of some 500 pages, with Convention, and the World, and other Be-Capitalled Generalities; ending at last in tragic death or equally tragic marriage--what a weariness to the spirit this "Woman of To-day" has become, in print!" (474).

"Recklessly Drawn from Life" ¹

In what ways did the creation and destruction of "Theodora" finally free Grimshaw? What kind of experimentation was being carried out in the text of *A Fool of Forty*? (That an experiment was indeed being carried out is symbolised in the very first chapter, which equips Frank's study with modelling clay, retorts, test tubes, jars, Bunsen burners, pen and ink, a spectroscope, and an electric battery; matter is subject to moulding, radiation, fire and other processes in what may or may not be a benevolent Pygmalion's or Frankenstein's chamber. Most significant of these internal models of creativity, however, are the various "dream-women" who inhabit Frank's study/imagination with him: Ophelia, Cressida, Hetty Sorrell, Aurora Leigh, Alcestis, Euripides' witches, and Maggie Tulliver: women as martyrs, artists, wives, faithful sisters, and subversives of civilisation.)

Theodora, Grimshaw's most thoroughly realised "Irish" woman in fiction, is, as we have seen, a *sexual* half-caste. Vaiti, Grimshaw's first "Pacific" hero, was intended by her creator to be a *racial* half-caste, but reviewers also noted her combination of male and female attributes. Both, due to their catastrophic inheritance, can figure only in plots closed by their own deaths. Stephanie, in Grimshaw's first "Papuan" novel (*When the Red Gods Call*), is also "motherless," a cosseted only child (this time, of a new kind of authority figure, a British

colonial governor). Unlike her predecessors, however, she is more aptly described as a heroine (a female protagonist whose prime importance is derived from her relationship to the male hero) than as a hero, as her future husband realises when he first sets eyes on her:

She made me think of Christmas annuals and coloured pictures--of primroses coming out in green lanes under a soft, cool, milky sun--of wet streets with shop-lights shining on the pavement...and pretty boots, and furs...of lilac smelling fresh in the rain on heavenly spring mornings...of many things that were no longer in my life, and never would be again, since I had paid them all away...

For what?...

I, the rough, uncivilised planter and trader, who lived in a hut, and was married to a black wife, must not press too closely upon the path of his Excellency's daughter...a white lady, delicate and dainty as one of the pale sweet flowers of her own far North. No tropical hibiscus or flame-flower this, but a snowdrop, a spring anemone... How white she was! (RG 64)

Discovering on her wedding day that her husband Hugh, a *déclassé* Irishman, was first married to a Papuan woman and complicit in her death, Stephanie deserts him. After nearly ten years, however, she retraces him through cannibal country, braving torture and sorcery to be reconciled. *They*--unlike the hapless Theo and Vaiti--live happily (and, from their plantation, profitably) ever after. The tragic implications of being one's father's daughter have softened into the sentimental misadventures of a daddy's girl. In Grimshaw's first novel for Mills and Boon, the psychosexual drama pervading much of her

previous work is repressed, and in exchange for her doing this, Stephanie is rewarded with a bi-sexual name, adventures, and the right to wear male clothing at times; but she never has an adventure unaccompanied by a man.

But *When the Red Gods Call*, Grimshaw's best seller and her own favourite, still contains her "matrix of fabulation," the early-familial constellation of relationship and fantasy that Bree discerned transforming itself into Georges Sand's typical storytelling pattern, in autobiography and fiction alike ("George Sand: The Fictions of Autobiography" 445). Here I will suggest that Theodora's story was, for Grimshaw, the necessary imaginative act that enabled her to distance herself from "problem" novels concerning gender relations. Moreover, it enabled her to ally herself with the conventions of domestic, romantic comedy for the rest of her career, so that most of her subsequent output can be classified without qualm in the category that Frye calls "kidnapped romance." ²

But in order for all the Stephanie-types to live, the "turbulent type" represented by Theodora had to be sacrificed. Theodora sacrifices herself by her own hand, so to speak, via a wasting sickness that represents a slow suicide; in forcing her to do so, Grimshaw was also, I suggest, sacrificing aspects of her own female social-role attributes that were opposed to the mission that she had chosen. Throughout this thesis, I have insisted on distinguishing the autobiographical author or narrator from the textual first person or other characters. But here I shall

accept Theo and Frank, as to some extent I did with Vaiti, as evidence of "surreptitious feminine autobiography" (Johnson, "My Monster/My Self" 4), agreeing with Barthes about every narrative leading back to Oedipus.³ In accepting *A Fool of Forty* as Grimshaw's most autobiographical novel, I am not only agreeing with the common-place that early novels free their writers of taboos that might otherwise prevent them from speaking of other issues. I am also taking up Julia Kristeva's suggestion that:

Women generally write to tell their own family story (father, mother, and/or their substitutes). When a woman novelist does not produce a real *family* of her own, she creates an imaginary story through which she creates an identity: narcissism is safe, the ego becomes eclipsed after freeing itself, purging itself of reminiscences. Freud's statement "the hysteric suffers from reminiscence" sums up the large majority of novels produced by women (Interview with Xavière Gauthier in *Tel quel* Summer 1984, rpt. in *New French Feminisms* 166).

A similar perspective has been advanced by Judith Kegan Gardiner in her hypothesis that "the hero is her author's daughter:"

[W]e can approach a text with the hypothesis that a female author is engaged in a process of testing and defining various aspects of identity chosen from many imaginative possibilities... [T]he woman writer uses her text, particularly one centering on a female hero, as part of a continuing process involving her own self-definition and her empathic identification with her character. Thus the text and its female hero begin as narcissistic extensions of the author. The author exercises magical control over her character, creating her from representations of herself and her ideals.... ("On Female Identity and Writing by Women" 357; emphasis

mine).

There may, however, be a darker side to this intimate relationship between author and character. As Louise de Salvo discovered when reconstructing the history of Virginia Woolf's various versions of her first novel, *The Voyage Out*, an early novel may be a clumsy disguise for emotions so difficult to handle that the most elaborate attempts at disguise and displacement may be necessary to carry out the "liberation project" that the novel represents. Woolf herself remarked, of an imaginary novelist (in an article rejected by the *Cornhill*), that she had turned to fiction because:

[S]he thought it indecent to describe what she had seen, so that instead of a portrait of her brothers (and one had led a very queer life), or a memory of her father (for which we would have been grateful) she invented Arabian lovers and set them on the banks of the Orinoco (qtd. in De Salvo, *Virginia Woolf's First Voyage...* 157).

De Salvo concludes that Woolf was, in effect, stating "specifically that the writing of fiction...is a disguise for, in fact a protection against, the description of indecencies observed, a substitute for writing a nonfictional portrait (or perhaps an indictment of) brothers (one of whom had led a very queer life) and for writing a memory of one's father....(for which we would have been grateful." It is not my intention to suggest that the Stephen and Grimshaw families were identical in their problems. But some peculiarly late-Victorian dilemmas did

typify them, and their talented daughters confronted them in their own fashions, which are betrayed, inscribed and embodied in their texts.

All we know about *A Fool of Forty's* publishing history is contained in two letters (22 and 27 Feb. 1899) from Grimshaw to the publisher of her previous book, John Lane. Written at about the time she left the *Social Review*, they show her restlessly, perhaps desperately, mobile. She orders him twice to note her change of residential address, and writes twice within a week all but begging him to take the manuscript on terms most authors would regard as highly unfavourable--outright sale of the copyright for 30 or 40 pounds. "[F]rankly....I want money at present" (Ltr., 22 Feb. 1899).

Lane was clearly interested, for he did ask to view the manuscript. Grimshaw forwarded it in the serialised version, along with a fan letter, "as a sample of many dozens that I have received during the run of the story" (27 Feb. 1899). She directed him to concentrate on chapters 16, 29, 30, the second part of 31, and 37, as "[t]hese have excited the most remark during the run of the serial."

These, by no coincidence, concern the death of Theodora's father, which precipitates her reluctant, fearful, disastrous marriage; sexual rivalry between Theo and Alix, and Theo's near-succumbing to adulterous temptation during the visit to sea-caves described below; Bevan's realisation, while still on his

honeymoon, that in marrying Theo he married the wrong woman; Theo's murder of Alix; and Bevan's hesitant attempt to come to some reconciliation with Theo (consummation by now an impossibility), cut short by his premonition that she will be dying soon.

Grimshaw did her best to convince Lane of the novel's marketability:

'A Fool of Forty' will, I honestly believe, hit the mark which 'Broken Away' just missed. I thought out the matter, and decided that my work wanted a stronger human interest, better plot, and a certain lightening in the way of satire and humour, to make it really saleable ... [I]t ought to 'go,' if its success in serial form is any criterion. I have recklessly drawn from life (though not in such a way as to cause serious offence) and have introduced a good deal more *humanity* of style than the other book possessed. The heroine is rather original--a Senior Wrangler who makes a fool of herself over a society Lothario. She is meant as an indictment against the college woman (whom I know by experience, having been at Bedford College myself) and will, I think, cause a good deal of comment (22 Feb. 1899).⁴

In the event, no one published *A Fool of Forty* in book form. Perhaps "Petticoat Lane", publisher of *New Women* and "decadents" alike, calculated his market would not welcome the story of a *New Woman* whose omniscient creator kills her.

But Grimshaw could not kill off what Theodora represented to her as easily as that. She survives in *Vaiti* down to some of the smallest details. Her opaque black eyes suggest witchcraft (a

peasant girl describes Theo, glimpsed after she has murdered Alix, as a "banshee"), and even on their honeymoon Bevan is chilled by associations linking her very nature with bloodshed and death. The purity of her facial structure reminds him of sea-caves and also prefigures Grimshaw's later fascination with cannibalism, seemingly puzzling for a woman who, in 1890s Dublin, presumably never met a real-life cannibal. The rock formations of the Irish caves are "jagged, cruel...spotted and splashed with crimson sea-anemones, as though the heavens had rained down gouts of blood and shreds of gory flesh... 'What a devil's hole of a place!' exclaimed Bevan under his breath (19 Nov. 1898: 366). Another cavern has "walls stained with a dark, greasy crimson, its deep mysterious pools offering creepy suggestions of hidden sea-monsters lurking within."

Although she is pale as the angel of death on a Victorian tombstone, the suggestion is nonetheless that "inside," as with the inner space of the caves, a dark and bloody chamber lurks in Theo, as, of course, since she is a woman, one does: the question arises then as to why it must be represented as horrible. (Later, we recall, when Vaiti explores notably dangerous caves and murky waters with her cousin Pita, it is hinted that his death is not undeserved, since his relationship with Vaiti was verging on incest.) Theo's "unnatural" mathematical and astronomical skills are turned to practical use by Vaiti when she navigates the *Sybil*, that schooner of evil and doom. An association between astronomy and a hatred of womanhood is contained in the etymology of the word itself, as Mary

Jacobus has noted in "The Question of Language in *The Mill on the Floss*". When Maggie goes to look up the word in the 1831 edition of the *Eton Grammar*, she discovers:

"Astronomer: ut--'as', astronomous--'an astronomer', exosus--'hating', mulieres--'women', ad unum [mulierem]--'to one' [that is, in general] (214).

By the time *When the Red Gods Call* appeared, then, the formula of Grimshaw's future fiction was set: the conventions of heterosexual, monogamous romance took place against a primitive colonial and tropical background. Stephanie, I have suggested, thus represents a sentimental variant of Grimshaw's original plot structure. Its lineaments are still clearly visible, but unlike her predecessors, who refuse the classic Oedipal solution of marriage and motherhood--indeed, who are incapable of it--Stephanie accepts her role as an object of exchange between men and fights for her one remaining right: to choose for herself the next man she will belong to.

Both Stephanie and her author survive by conforming to convention. But many of Grimshaw's Pacific narratives still have female characters descended from Theodora's "unnatural" abilities and Vaiti's downright criminality hovering at the edges. A woman's intelligence, so Grimshaw's reasoning seems to run, has its sources in witchcraft and sorcery: the earliest example of this type of wicked, clever women is in a short story written for a special Horse Show number of the *Social Review*,

and two decades later Eve Landon, *The Coral Queen*, doesn't hesitate to consult a sorcerer when thwarted in love, while the daughter of the governor of the "New Cyclades," again conversant with sorcery, attempts to murder her rival. But even if the "sorceress" character uses her unnatural powers to help others, she runs the risk of death: "the prettiest woman in Dublin" clutches her crucifix while sharing her arcane knowledge. Frank (Ch. 3) is free to dabble in science and art, but towards the novel's end, he concludes that Theo's purposeful, scientific cast of mind had always been linked with possibilities of lawlessness.

We have seen that Grimshaw's family of origin had a typical late-Victorian configuration that the children confronted in various ways as they grew up. As Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall describe "sexual repression...within familial culture":

[M]en who aimed at respectability were constantly urged to control their sexual impulses; at the same time they learned they must prove their virility through sexual adventures and conquests. This left its residue in the burden of guilt. The institutionalisation of this double standard has left its mark on sexual class cultures ever since. *The intense involvement of brothers and sisters, and between fathers and their unmarried daughters* living at home created an underlying preoccupation with incest in the middle classes" ("Home Sweet Home," *New Statesman* 27 May 1983; emphasis mine).

In most of Grimshaw's writing, there is a taboo on further reproduction or regeneration, such as a fear of hereditary

disease (her very first story that I have located after her *Social Review* fiction nearly marries the female hero forever to a madman). Rita Regina, asked, "Is there anyone in your family who hasn't died or lost their lovers?" replies, "I don't really think so....You're marrying into an unlucky lot" (26). Later she reflects, "We're a queer lot; I wonder, aren't we just a little mad?... Did anyone marry the one he or she really loved?" (45). There is also an intimation that *any* marriage is somehow incestuous. Feminists like Chessler (*Women and Madness*) would agree that, in patriarchal societies, this is psychologically true: women are brought up to "marry" their fathers, after laborious training turns them away from their original love object, the mother, while the lure is held out to men that they will, in the end, (re)marry their mother after all.

Only two of the Grimshaw children married, late in life. Beatrice, Ramsay, and Emma remained single. Maud married and became literally in-valid. After years of illness in her husband, Dr. Francis Howard Sinclair's sanatorium, she was replaced by her own sister Nichola, who had already been her husband's house-keeper for years. Here another taboo--marrying one's diseased wife's sister--was in operation. By 1921, defying it was only illegal in the eyes of the Church of England, not in civil marriage. Nonetheless, the two went to New Guinea to marry, always celebrated by Beatrice as being "outside the law," before returning to demure Devon. When Osborne married, his wife was already past child-bearing age, as was Grimshaw herself when she allowed the legend about William Little to surface.

In a sense, the original, quasi-incestuous nursery never broke up. Beatrice kept house for both Ramsay and Osborne, as well as finding employment for them. The little ménage could absorb new members (Osborne's wife, and Howard Sinclair, who was literally absorbed twice over), but it never reproduced itself.

While the above account of the last generation of Irish Grimshaws can be verified via birth and marriage certificates, wills, and other legal documents, fiction also reveals these truths, in its own symbolic way. If nothing but Grimshaw's Irish fiction survived, a consistent psychological pattern would emerge; one which the later fiction simply reconfirms.

The female hero is attached to an unworthy, uncaring or intensely possessive father who raises her as if she were a boy (Murua in *Nobody's Island* and Stella/Antares of *My Lady Far-Away* are the most clearcut, and very moving, examples of the struggle within the young girl both to *remain* a boy and also face the inevitable *feminine* "side" to her nature. As noted above, the end of adolescence is the beginning of catastrophe for nearly every Grimshaw hero; and the end of adolescence, of course, is the end of innocence. It is also the end of sisterhood; as if, after "No. 2" (where the biological sisters practised their developing crafts seriously), and the collegiate sisterhood, a woman must live under "house arrest," isolated in "No. 12" (Theodora's matrimonial address, her husband's home. Her own home is sold when she marries). Such a hero may be companion to many men--indeed, rather likes to overlord them--but she is

either married to none, perishes because she does marry, or marries a boring father figure. She seldom becomes a mother herself.

This pattern appears so often that one senses taboos and phantasies at work within the writer herself; one doubts Grimshaw would otherwise have been so repetitive. ⁵ It could, of course, be argued that the conventions within which she was writing stipulated this formula; conversely, it can be argued, as I am here, that she chose these conventions in the sense that they suited her.

What I earlier called the greatest conundrum of Grimshaw's life, was, then, the social implications of biological difference. What we can now understand as a confusion about the mandates and mutability of sex and gender may well have been, for her, a darker dilemma. At a time when "the exact nature of sex-differentiation and its psychic accompaniment was a subject of intense, though inconclusive, debate" (Conway, "Stereotypes" 47), and "blood/race" seemed to determine character, Grimshaw seems to have feared that she was a kind of sexual half-caste, a "man-woman" who eventually surmounted this conflict, but remained marked by it. Nothing stopped her from wandering or writing, but the price seems to have been emotional distance and sexual abstinence. The image projected in "Ideal Biographical Legend" was in fact the way people remember her: "feminine" enough to satisfy any contemporary standard of appearance and decorum, but celibate.

It thus seems no coincidence that so many of her first-person narrators are observant and perceptive (otherwise they would not be telling the story), but they are physically lamed or otherwise unmanned by a loss referred to, but not explained. The story-teller is a marginal man who cannot win the heroine. But his very inability to participate fully in life is compensated for by his ability to control its interpretation. As Grace Stewart noted in *A New Mythos: the Myth of the Artist as Heroine*, many a woman writer has identified herself, or her female artist character, with the lame craftsman god/Hephaistos.

Grimshaw "paid," it seems, for her license to wander and to write, with re-nun-ciation. *Broken Away*, the shorter fictions in the *Social Review*, and above all *A Fool of Forty* all indicate that she liberated the writer in herself by suppressing the woman. In her Irish fiction, all the women, however talented or even brilliant, are subdued by marriage or destroyed by passion. Only female *qualities* survive, as a source of enrichment for *male* characters. Grimshaw, we know, recognised no greater passion or gratification than an artistic vocation:

The artist...loves his work better than himself....[A]nd the pleasure of creating it is the strongest that he knows....[H]is ambition is for the work, not for his own name, although the latter may come in as a secondary motive. In the future, in the strange-faced centuries which he will never see, men will point to his work and say--'This is good; this is *true*; that unknown man...so long ago, saw clearly in this thing.' Such is the artist's ambition; more like that of a mother for her child than anything else on earth. And of all the passions unclassified,

perhaps his is the strongest ("G.", "Passions Unclassified," *TSR* 16 May 1896; emphasis hers).

Time and again Grimshaw denied this vocation to women, on the grounds that women, *made for relationship*, cannot justify any other dedication such as the commitment that artistic work demands. She conformed to her own rule by accepting an "odd woman" identity, defined by Nina Auerbach in *Communities of Women* as manless, and hence free of the reproductive and emotional demands of marriage and birth, but "in possession" of oneself, and a "house-holder" in one's own right. It seems no coincidence that a friend who knew her later in Bathurst described Grimshaw as "straight out of *Cranford*". But in one crucial respect she was wrong, for (unless, as I suspect, during the mysterious three years when she disappears from historical records, Grimshaw lived in a convent), Grimshaw never identified with communities of women.

Grimshaw was hardly alone in believing in the incompatibility of relationship/affiliation (allocated to women) and creation (the prerogative of men) in a sexist division of labour. Nor was she alone in persisting in her own attempt to become an artist, while denying that possibility to her characters. Carolyn Heilbrun, in *Reinventing Womanhood*, ponders why women writers who *have* succeeded in dedicating themselves to a craft *not* depicted their own success, however arduously attained and, indeed, *because* arduously attained?

With remarkably few exceptions, women writers do not imagine women characters with even the autonomy they themselves have achieved....[U]ntil the years of the recent feminist movement, to tell the story, to continue the quest, to follow through the plot in an extended work of fiction has been all but impossible for women writers (71 and 92).

Stewart, in *A New Mythos*, comes to a similar, sombre conclusion:

Looking at myths frequently used...to represent the artist--Daedalus, Icarus, Prometheus, and Faust--a woman can recognize the roles assigned to her in real life. Traditionally she operates as mother...helpmate...beauteous Aphrodite or muse...or as trouble-maker....Operating within a literary tradition dependent on such myths, the female novelist suffers disintegration. To be a heroine, she must nurture, help, inspire; by defending her independence as an artist, she turns into a gorgon. Consequently,...she must either rewrite the old myths or create a new *mythos*. ... [W]hen the female artist tries her journey to the interior to create the myth of the artist as heroine, she usually miscarries, aborts, or gives birth to a monster....None of [the novels studied by Stewart, dating between 1877 and 1977] depicts a self-made, fully integrated human being, artist and woman (179-80).

Grimshaw seems to have accepted that a certain narcissism and ego strength are necessary for artists in a patriarchal and capitalist society; she granted these qualities quite happily to Frank once Theodora was dead, a not very tacit acknowledgement that, in Adrienne Rich's phrase, "the energy of creation" and "the energy of relation" may be mutually exclusive. This has most certainly been the case with most male writers, and the biographies of most women writers or literary couples confirm

the woman's difficulty when she tries to reconcile that narcissism with her roles as mistress, muse, mother, housekeeper, and so on. By now feminist criticism has unmasked the female partner's contribution (as with F. Scott Fitzgerald, D.H. Lawrence, and countless others) to the very content of the male's work, but this is by no means a phenomenon isolated to literature. Irma Seidler's suicide actually *inspired* a great deal of Lukács' theorising, and psychoanalysis is endlessly indebted to the case-histories which served as building blocks for its theoretical edifice: case histories which, as I have discussed in another context, if written by men, would probably be considered *Bildungsromane*.⁶

Grimshaw also knew that late-Victorian women were not supposed to possess these self-assertive traits, although her own reminiscences in the much later (1930) *Isles of Adventure* suggest that she did: "[B]eing very young and rather brazen and full of the 'beans' that go with a good muscular system, I started to teach other and older people their jobs" (2); "Being more than ever 'full of beans,' and wanting to enjoy...a real thrill, I went out after a world's cycling record, the women's 24 hours road, and got it, by five miles" (6). She refers as well to "natural greed allied to North of Ireland persistence" (9) and being "young and hungry for all the delights of all the earth" (10).

Jane Marcus' "Art and Anger" describes women artists' conflicts, as well as the confusion or threat they have posed to others:

[W]e have generally regarded the artist's exaggerated form it has seemed necessary for the deepest forms of self-expression.

But the narcissistic female artist is a rarity. It still takes one's breath away to read in *The Diary of Marie Bashkirtseff*, 'I am my own heroine!' Even the admiring Shaw felt it necessary to declare that 'woman artist' is a contradiction in terms and would require inventing a 'third or Bashkirtseff sex' to accommodate her ego. Such ego strength as it takes to be a great artist, such fearlessness and ferocity he felt to be unnatural and unwomanly. We accept women's narcissism as a fact, but we note its deflection over centuries to a vanity of the body and dress (71).

My reading of *A Fool of Forty*, then, has been an exploration of the psychodynamics of one woman's creativity. In effect I have borrowed from Schiller's method (from *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry*), described by Fredric Jameson as "descend[ing] into the work of art itself, there teaching us to see the very technical construction...as a *figure* of the struggle for psychic integration in general, to see in images, a quality of language, type of plot construction, the very figures of freedom itself" (qtd. by Pratt in Roberts, *Beyond Intellectual Sexism* 192).

Although in retrospect Grimshaw's choices may seem a difficult and unnecessary price to pay for the right to write, the conflict between love and work may have been less of a dilemma for her than it seems. Only upper-class marriages at the time allowed for the exercise of female creativity, and only within restricted spheres of subject matter and language choice.

As Virginia Woolf remarked in "Professions for Women", a talk given a year after the publication of *Isles of Adventure*, an occupational hazard for women writers was "shocking men" "about women's bodies, for instance--their passions--and so on, because the conventions are still very strong. If I were to overcome the conventions, I should need the courage of a hero, and I am not a hero....[The woman novelist] must wait until men become so civilised that they are not shocked when a woman speaks the truth about her body. *The future of fiction depends very much upon what extent men can be educated to stand free speech in women*" (*The Pargiters* xxxix-xl; emphasis mine). Neither was Grimshaw a hero, but it would be patronising and anachronistic to criticise her eventual resolution of her conflict between anatomy and autonomy. In many ways her identification with *male* characters and narrators did her fiction a great deal of good. Time and again her reviewers praised her for crossing the lines of gender-marked writing without needing to hide behind a sexually ambiguous pseudonym, a style which allowed her to trespass into male subject territory.

Moreover, at the same time that Woolf was asserting a writer's gender could be ascertained in the first few sentences of a work, Grimshaw's reviewers marvelled at the "bi-sexuality" of her work. Perhaps the greatest proof of her success is the simple delight that contemporary readers took in her work: as one elderly woman marvelled to me, she was always amazed that a reclusive, elderly, "odd" woman could produce such convincing (and, to her, slightly torrid) romances: "How could she *know*?"

My reading of *A Fool of Forty* inclines me to think that Grimshaw *did* "know" a number of things, some of which she wanted to forget. Of all the chapters of this thesis, this has been the most difficult to write, for "Theodora" represents a specific ideology of gender relations to which I cannot assent, but which one must understand if one is to understand Grimshaw and her work. *A Fool of Forty* shows Grimshaw wrestling with a number of taboos, for instance, which she seems to have reasoned about, however unconsciously, as follows: "All men are my brothers" (as they were to her model Athene, who declared, according to Aeschylus, that "No mother gave me birth. Therefore the father's claim/and male supremacy in all things.../...wins my whole heart's loyalty". 7) Grimshaw was, after all, born into a family of elder brothers (only sisters followed her birth), so from her initial socialisation into simultaneous language appropriation and gender identity, she would have been aware of gender hierarchy. If so (if "all men are my brothers") one cannot enter into (hetero)sexual relationship with them, for that would be incest. She also came very close to declaring, in effect, and like Strindberg, that the sexes seemed like two very different species, in which case (hetero)sexual relationship would violate another taboo: miscegenation. "Something in woman's very nature is monstrous" (as evidenced by the Radcliffean Gothic description of Theodora's "inner space"). 8 "Men are dangerous to women" (therefore defloration is female sacrifice; cannibalistic). "Women are dangerous to men" (the symbolism of the basil plant, which the narrator assures us cheerfully flourishes on many a man's study desk, diligently watered by his

wife who, if she has read *Middlemarch*, knows Lydgate's interpretation: basil flourishes on the soil of a man's murdered brains). Women therefore possess the capacity for cannibalism: if they do not literally eat men, they steal their intellects. The opposite happens to Theo, of course, in that she wastes away, but not until she has eaten of the forbidden tree of (male) knowledge. Grimshaw, herself, every week, piously committed another act of incorporation/murder: she ate the flesh of Christ and drank his blood.

But lurking behind all these phantasies of the sexes devouring each other is one so obvious that she is never represented, perhaps because to do so would be unbearable: the mother who nourishes us of her own substance before and after our birth, but who can also, in her evil aspect, threaten to devour *us*. I know nothing whatsoever about Eleanor Thompson Grimshaw except for her ancestry and her will--and her daughter's refusal to write about her, except as the mother in one of her last books, *Victorian Family Robinson* (where, nonetheless, she is killed off early, and therefore deprived of her family's adventures in the South Seas she so longed to travel to). The black hole and missing heart in *A Fool of Forty* is maternal: the "motherless" Theo cannot mother, and so the text cannot accomplish the therapeutic function Judith Kegan Gardiner discerns in other novels where "the hero is the author's daughter:

This can be a positive, therapeutic relationship, like learning to be a mother...learning to experience oneself as one's own cared-for child, and as one's own caring mother while simultaneously learning to

experience one's creation as other, as separate from the self ("On Female Identity and Writing by Women" 357).

Identity, as Gardiner reminds us, is an ambiguous concept, incorporating notions of sameness *and* difference. Identification, individuality, individuation are stages in which formation of a self "normally" involves some reconciliation of gender-role attributes perceived in both parents. Such a reconciliation of "opposites" never occurs in Theo's and Frank's marriage, which he hoped would be "an excitement, and an experience, and a novelty" (27 Aug. 1898: 159). Instead, like Persephone going to her cruel underworld rapist/master in winter, Theo marries in autumn. Unlike Persephone--*because she does not have a caring mother*--she never glimpses sunlight again. As early as Ch. 2 we are told that she is dying from love (after rejection by her only other suitor, Raleigh), and flowers associated with her include death-white lily spears, snowdrops, Madonna-lilies, fallen lily petals, white carnations, and larkspurs stiff like ramrods. Bevan, too, is never meant for marriage, but he *is* meant for art, and for life. Not only does the narrator tell us that marriage and art are incompatible for him; so does Theo, by sadly reading Browning's "Andrea del Sarto", described by Trilling and Bloom as a "deep study of a deliberate artistic self-crippling... Andrea has chosen a wife who he knows will betray him, and an existence which must compromise his own vision as a painter" (*Victorian Prose and Poetry* 543).⁹ My point is that, in rejecting marriage as a synthesis or enabling act for her characters, Grimshaw was

rejecting it for herself as well. She remained with the resolution of her 1893 poem, "To Myself".

I would caution, however, against too literal a reading of *A Fool of Forty*, according to which Grimshaw would be rejecting contemporary ideologies about femininity; a more subtle distinction is that she is rejecting *male* ideologies about women, which is probably why it is so often that Frank is the character who speaks them. For, although appearing, both in the *Social Review* and in her Irish fiction, to assent to these ideologies, she nonetheless refused them for herself. Not quite like her symbol, Athene, who *was* a male "brain child", Grimshaw was freeing herself to create her *own* brain children. But these were not, as Hall reminded us earlier in her description of Artemis, typical products of the male Academies and Fora, with their characteristic discourses, which Grimshaw rejected. Like Artemis, she took to the road and the market-place, and she wrote popular novels, not intellectual treatises.

Having started to attempt understanding Grimshaw's work years ago by depicting the interconnections between her representations of "sexism" and "racism", I discovered as well a forgotten, talented contributor to "the" short story in English. Her status should be recognised again. If this thesis leads to that recognition, and to republication of her lesser-known work, I will finally be free of the debt I have owed Grimshaw these many years: my unalloyed but solitary delight in her work.

Notes:

¹ This title is drawn from Grimshaw's letter to John Lane of 22 Feb. 1899.

² "Kidnapped romance" is used by Frye in *The Secular Scripture* to designate the recurrence of romance to renew conventions in the service of ascendant ideologies during times of historical change. In addition to citing Spenser as an early example, he also groups Haggard, Ballantyne, Melville, Buchan and Kipling in this category, characterised as a "frivolous...silly social mythology" (167), "intense but not deep, and...founded on prejudice and unexamined assumptions" (168).

³ Barthes is quoted by Kay Iseman in "Our fathers' daughters: the problem of filiation for women writers of fiction" (*Australian Women: Feminist Perspectives* 107):

Death of the Father would deprive literature of many of its pleasures. If there is no longer a Father, why tell stories? Doesn't every narrative lead back to Oedipus? Isn't story-telling always a way of searching for one's origins, speaking one's conflicts with the Law, entering into the dialectic of tenderness and hatred?

⁴ As Bevan remarks, women's colleges create "bloodless nuns of living human women" (2 July 1898: 15).

⁵ Throughout this thesis, I have been using terms such as "repetition compulsion" in the senses explicated by Charles Rycroft in *A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*:

Term used by Freud to describe what he believed to be an innate tendency to revert to earlier conditions....The concept was also used to explain the general phenomenon of RESISTANCE to therapeutic change. According to Freud...the compulsion to repeat operates as a 'resistance of the unconscious' which necessitates a period of 'WORKING THROUGH', even after the patient has acquired insight into the nature and object of his DEFENCES and has decided to relinquish them....Nowadays

working through tends to be analogous to MOURNING, inasmuch as all change involves abandoning attachments to objects, e.g. parental figures, and familiar patterns of behaviour (141).

I have not sought to psychoanalyse Grimshaw, nor could I do so, but agree with Edel that concepts such as these help us to understand recurrent motifs, such as her preoccupation with "something lost", and the way that she dealt with ideologies concerning heterosexuality and the family. In the end, of course, her defence was a working through via writing.

⁶ See my "Dora and Nadja: Two Women in the Early Days of Psychoanalysis and Surrealism" (*Hecate: A Women's Interdisciplinary Journal* 2.1 [Jan. 1976], 23-40).

⁷ Sandra M. Gilbert quotes Athene's speech in Aeschylus, *The Eumenides*, as an epigraph for her brilliant article, "Life's Empty Pack: Notes toward a Literary Daughteronomy" (*Critical Inquiry* 11 [1985]: 355).

⁸ See Cynthia Griffin Wolff, "The Radcliffean Gothic Model: A Form for Feminine Sexuality" (*Modern Language Studies* 9.3 [Fall 1979], 98-113) for a discussion of how earlier women writers managed to depict their own sexuality by projecting it onto the construction of rooms, castles, etc.; I am assuming the same mechanism is at work here, as Grimshaw uses the caves and their gory contents to represent Theo's feminine "nature."

⁹ Specifically, Theo is reading the lines:

But all the play, the insight and the
stretch--
Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think--
More than I merit, yes, by many times.

"Here I am at 30..." 1

In the midst of wild journalism, varied by wanderings through most parts of Ireland, and punctuated, for the good of one's manners and soul, by excursions back into the ordered world one had left, the dream persisted (*Isles of Adventure* 17-18).

One of Grimshaw's self-portraits appears and vanishes mid-way through *A Fool of Forty*: a young woman in a tram who has overheard a spiteful interchange between two of Bevan's female acquaintances.

[H]er eyes were clear and observant, and she had witnessed the whole scene... She had understood it, too; she saw many such things, this young woman, that the general world passed over; and she stored them up for future reference in a mind well stocked with curious facts (20 Aug. 1898: 129).

I shall borrow this device, and join the queue for a large passenger liner bound for Sydney from Liverpool. Two Irishwomen stand ahead. One is a sturdy, plain but pleasant-faced peasant woman, who has made up her mind, like Mr. Peggotty and his 'darlin', to emigrate to Australia. One of her cousins is a domestic servant in the United States. But this young woman has been reading "Thyra" of "Women's Pursuits" for years, and is thus persuaded that Britain's self-governing colonies have more to offer her. Once, indeed, she even screwed up the courage--with the help of the village National schoolmaster--to write to

"Thyra" herself, when the peasant youth of whom she had had "hopes" married someone else. So she called herself "Nobody's Darling" and enclosed a coupon from the previous week's *Social Review*.

"Thyra" actually answered, all the way from London, where she had been visiting the United British Women's Emigration Association. Since, she said, "Nobody's Darling" loved work, was strong, healthy, and somewhat educated, without "an ounce of romance of morbidity in your composition, and...absolutely not a tie to bind you to the mother country, you are just the ideal girl to make your way" (24 Mar. 1894: 190). Moreover, "Thyra" asked for an account of her experiences in the colonies, and predicted she wouldn't be "Nobody's Darling" for long.

Indeed, almost everytime she advocated emigration, which was often, "Thyra" held out the marriage bait, repeated almost word for word in *A Fool of Forty*:

Great Britain is a colonising nation; her sons leave the mother country early, and look for fortune under Antipodeal skies; her daughters remain at home. Their natural husbands, thousands of miles away, are, for want of better, marrying coffee-coloured natives, and barmaids of more than doubtful character; any respectable European woman can have a hundred husbands to choose from... But the girls at home...if poor go out as governesses--incompetently--and learn to typewrite--badly--and look feebly for situations as a 'travelling companion,' oblivious...that such posts are now-a-days non-existent, outside the *Duchess Novelette*. They do not want to work at all... They only hope to meet, somewhere, somehow, the destined husband who, in sober

truth, sailed across the Atlantic or the Pacific years ago, and has long since settled down on his lonely sheep-farm with a lady whose colour is as much open to comment as her morals are beyond it....Outwardly it is a thing to make the most serious-minded laugh. Looking under the surface, only those whose hearts are cased with stone can refrain from weeping. Civilisation has defrauded these women, loss has embittered them; and the truest instincts of a woman's heart--love of her own home and her own children--rise up arrayed against her... (*A Fool of Forty* 20 Aug. 1898: 128).

But what this farmer's daughter from Ballynahinch never suspects is that the tall woman ahead of her *is* "Thyra", "Maev", "Graphis" and Beatrice Grimshaw all compressed into one imperious, dark-clad, bespectacled figure. They don't chat. Grimshaw is rather intimidating, especially when she stares straight through you with those thick lenses. And she is too tired and harassed for small talk. For nine years she has been grinding out supposedly non-political but mildly controversial common-sense to an audience she doesn't entirely respect. As a competent professional journalist, she has heeded the advice of other successful practitioners:

[T]hose who wield the pen are responsible for much of the weal or woe of those who read, or think they read, their own faiths, their own policies, their own pet theories, in the columns of the dailies and weeklies. A journalist...not only collects and filters the news of the hours, but...must serve up in the most palatable form the noisome details of the police court, the palace, and Parliament; he must rake up forgettable facts and string together obsolete data; he should be able to convince, coerce, contract and control at one and the same time, and if he can do all this and still remain a conscientious man,

he....wins our respect... (Anon., "Some Features of Today's Journalism" 113-14).

But now Grimshaw has had enough of this weekly double-bind. She respects popular prejudice and opinion, and has said so when voicing her own opinions (about euthanasia, for instance). It seems to her that folk wisdom, like the religion she has chosen, is valid because it is ancient and purports to be universal (she may not perceive that her characteristically-invoked adjective, "general", is not synonymous with "universal"). But she is weary of pandering to the homogeneous hydra created by mass journalism. The journalist's role, it is coming to be said, is:

to stimulate rather than control popular feeling...one whose activities tend to excite, not moderate, the popular passions....His readers expect him to emphasise and intensify their own prejudices or convictions, resent it if he makes a show of contradiction or correcting, and at the utmost only allow him to flatter their vanity by discovering...an intellectual basis for their emotional preferences and antipathies....The journalist may therefore inflame, may even instruct public opinion; he does not create it (Escott 337).

She doesn't entirely disagree, but she senses more creative possibilities within herself. For awhile she was content to lampoon medium and audience; her Dublin years sparked a flair for satire and irony in her. Even within the pages of her own paper she wrote stories about reporters who fabricated interviews for the *Scrap-Bag*, concocted letters to the editor from "Fiat Justitia", "Another Ratepayer", and "Audi Alteram

Parte". Other journalists might "murder Art every week...without a qualm....As for me, I would have made the name of the *Constellation* spread from pole to pole on the strength of its fiction, if--but that is another story" ("Our Reporter's Romance", *Social Review* 16 Feb. 1895: 333-34). "[I]t's the easiest thing in the world to please the public" ("The Thing That Died", *Social Review* 13 Feb. 1897: 211).

She has Gissing's sourness in her; if she stayed in Dublin much longer, her pen would dip in acid. Ireland has left her with a mixed heritage: a rich store of imagery and motif, but suspicion of Nationalist politics. Although sympathetic to some measure of legislative autonomy for Ireland, she favours economic development over political independence. Lately, however--especially after the Jameson Raid and throughout the Second Anglo-Boer War--she has had to repress a few doubts about the mission of Empire.

But Ireland has become too small for her. England, even though her ancestors came from Lancashire, is at once too close and too alien. So she, too, will try the southern hemisphere. Like the young woman behind her, she has a one-way ticket. Unlike her, she has no hopes for love or marriage. Once she wrote about Christina Rossetti's poem of renunciation, "Three Stages": "There are a good many people in the world for whom it will have little significance or force. They should pray that they may keep their ignorance as long as possible" ("Maev", "Notes by the Way" 29 Feb. 1896: 630).

Anyway, you don't make a living out of your own "sorrow unearned or disillusionment for which the full price of folly has been paid"--at least not directly ("The English-Irish", *Social Review* 11 Apr. 1896: 733). But this woman's journalistic career has given her a rhetorical facility which will earn her a comfortable amount of money. So far her talents are mainly the blatant, over-simplifying ones of an advertiser and propagandist.

She senses, however, her ability to produce something more subtle and complex, and has no illusions about the difficulties of becoming a writer. She has read countless amateur manuscripts from all over Ireland, counselling aspirant novelists again and again to read the nineteenth century classics and "get a sound English education while there is yet time. Probably not one in ten of these would-be George Eliots could write a sensibly worded, reasoning essay if required to do so. *Literature, Agra, even the lesser work which is not literature, requires perhaps the hardest and most single-minded apprenticeship of any profession under the sun* ("Women's Pursuits", 14 Mar. 1896: 681; emphasis mine).

She has, moreover, read dozens of books, and attempted two serious novels. But something about them was not quite right. The setting was wrong, for one thing; the characters are out of place. That lover she devised for the artist Terry, for instance. Borrowing liberally from Bret Harte and Rolf Boldrewood, she made Elliot Ritchie:

a great rugged figure wielding a gleaming spade, and looking for all the world like the typical gold-miner of sensational tales, in his blue shirt and high boots....[with] a curious sense of simplicity, and of broad, slow-moving ways of thought and life...something, too, of primitive passions, in their full depth and force, unmodified and unsmoothed by the countless...distractions of the ordinary world, as known to the upper classes (*Broken Away* 256).

But where on earth, in the early twentieth century, can one find a man like that?

Flash forward fifteen years. This woman is now more magisterial than ever. She is dressed in white from head to foot, a blaze of brightness against a dark tropical forest vibrant with the chatter of birds and throbbing of insects. As usual, she is the only woman in a group of black and white men. "Native" police, scarcely half her height and bristling with Martini-Enfield rifles, stand at attention behind her. At her side is an official somewhat older than she is, with the austere pro-consular features of a Marcus Aurelius and the bearing of a soldier. He is Sir John Hubert Plunkett Murray, late major of the New South Wales Irish Rifles in South Africa, now Lieutenant-Governor of Papua. His idea of diversion, when not reading Euripides in Greek, is to study the Gaelic of his ancestors; he has an Irish dictionary in his pocket. At a murmur from her, he commands one of his para-military police (in Motuan, a language she has not troubled to learn well) to take his rifle and prod open a grimy string-bag clutched by a fierce-eyed sorcerer. While they desecrate the mouldy, mysterious

tricks of the sorcerer's trade and he begins to contemplate revenge (why not steal that book which the chief so obviously prizes?), we shall flash back to the cold, sodden dock at Liverpool. It's raining, and the tall woman has vanished into a shed to complete formalities. Who could resist a quick look at the nostrums and enchantments in her "ladies' airtight bag for the colonies"?

She is not unprepared, although she can hardly know that this journey "between the magic lines of Cancer and Capricorn" is going to last the rest of her life (*In the Strange South Seas* 17). She has several extra pairs of glasses, a shorthand notebook, and a cumbersome camera. This, she thinks, will be all her professional stock-in-trade, for although she does not underestimate the value of authentic detail, she hasn't the makings of a scientific explorer or ethnologist in her. Moreover, she once wrote of Mary Kingsley's *Travels in West Africa*:

For myself, I must say it has inclined me
most piously to
 'Thank the goodness and the grace
 That on my birth have smiled'--
and cast my lot in a state of life that
cannot possibly demand my
pioneering...among snakes, river-ants,
crocodiles, and cannibals ("Maev", 30
Jan. 1897: 134).

One day she will remember, and find that rather funny. But for the present, she is soon to regret that she didn't include quinine, cures for snakebite, a typewriter, and Whittaker's

Peerage--the latter two, especially, will not be readily available in the interior of New Guinea, that enormous island continent, the tail-end of the Himalayas.

There aren't many clothes, although such as they are, they are very sensible. She doesn't know exactly where she is going. But there is an address book recording the names of steamship companies, newspaper editors, and colonial premiers. She has left her bicycle behind--one doesn't readily associate roads with South Sea Islands. But despite a constitution normally like a horse, she has a packet of stimulants and sedatives obtained from her medical brother-in-law. Of late she has been physically exhausted and troubled by a non-stop, racing mind.

There are several well-thumbed books--more books than clothes, in fact--which have unquestionably changed her life. They are by Rudyard Kipling, Louis Becke, and Robert Louis Stevenson. To her regret, she has had to leave some favourites behind with her married sister: Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*, essays by Thoreau and Emerson, and the poems of Adam Lindsay Gordon and Walt Whitman. She can reel off the poems by heart, anyway. Stevenson and Becke appeal to her most, now that Kipling is becoming suspect. Recently she reviewed W.P. Ryan's *Literary London* and half-agreed with him: "Do we not feel that [Kipling] is giving something to Imperialism which was meant for mankind?....It were a literary tragedy that the possessor of Mr. Kipling's virility and individuality should be made by the claptrap critic and the Man in the Street to content himself

with Navy League Lines...appealing not to the spirit in us, but the tame savage" (120).

She has a supply of food, including tropical fruit brought in cold storage to Liverpool in a ship owned by the same company that is now enabling her to "break away". But the bananas taste like chalk. Once she went to the Canary Islands and tasted the real thing. In any event, she is hungering for something else--not food as such, but just as important to her--which she can, annoyingly to herself, only define negatively at present.

Of clever novels, witty novels, eccentric novels, the supply has been ample--more than ample...if the reader judges by the significant fact that hardly one in 40 has sold out its first edition....Those that are good--and there are many of them--are all good in exactly the same manner. They are short, sparkling (in a certain mechanical way, suggestive of a well-thumbed 'commonplace book,' and an industrious gathering up of stray original notions--also after a mechanical fashion; presenting, indeed, startling differences and novelties when compared with actual life, but displaying a weary monotony of boldness, a painful similarity of striking situations....Worst of all, they do not tell us stories now-a-days. They present problems; give us striking situations to study, or show us crude photographs in black and white, with all the angles left in, and the atmosphere left out, while all the time it is stories that we want, grown-up children that we are... [H]ow short the day is, how little time we have had for play, and how soon the grim nurse with the keys is coming to take us away to bed in the dark....In sum, we want a story-teller very badly indeed ("Notes by the Way" 31 Dec. 1898: 489-90).

When Robert Louis Stevenson died, she lamented that no one could produce more *Treasure Islands*. She believes that "Rudyard Kipling and Louis Becke are the only two who have plucked out the heart of East and South so far, and their laurels are likely to remain undisturbed" ("Maev" "Notes by the Way", 15 Oct. 1898: 273). What she wants is adventure romance. The social conditions most likely to encourage a renaissance of that form and mode are to be on the colonial frontiers where she is bound. The story-teller she is calling for will be herself.

That she, wittingly or not, is bound for a place like Papua is now, retrospectively, obvious to her readers. They have glimpsed it in her love for "Mandalay" (invoking the territory East of Suez, "where the best is like the worst"); she is heading East of Eden, to the land of Nod (flight or exile). As early as Ch. 3 of *A Fool of Forty*, Bevan felt the *East* wind calling for him. What more appropriate place for an "Amazonian" and "odd" woman like herself than Papua, one of the last places on earth at the margins of nature and (Western) culture?

But even she, intrusive and omniscient narrator though she can be, would not accept predictions from a by-stander. She has always been a classical liberal opposing "unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the subject" (*Social Review* 31 Aug. 1895: 162) and her craft will shortly include the cunning elaboration of suspense. Since no friends or family have come to see her off at Liverpool, and since she does not believe that "journeys end in lovers' meeting", let us wave her good-bye,

reminding her of the adage of her master, Stevenson: "It is a better thing to travel hopefully than to arrive".

Fortunately, when this indomitable woman's 50-year voyage will have attained its dead end, she will lack consciousness of almost everything except the delight that she provided a generation of readers "who could not go".

¹ This section heading is echoing Terry in *Broken Away*: "Here I am at 30, very well and healthy and--happy, as people go: for it isn't a merry world at best" (149). Grimshaw, as I have noted concerning so many of her fictional characters, was making the decisive act of her life at the age of 30.

* * *

Epilogue

"From a Museum Man's Album"

My trade takes me frequently into decaying houses,
house not literally in the sense of gaping roof,
although often with the damp maps of wallpaper in the attic
and the pickle of plaster on the cellar shelf:
but house usually represented by a very old woman
who bears a name once famous for trade or wealth
or skill or simply breeding,
and is the last of that name. ...

She will die in a boarding house.

I remember, too, the...stout woman well,
her white hair brushed up in a manner
which was then out of fashion but has been in it again,
her deafness and her gentle smile,
her way of talking as if her words
were like the porcelaine in her cabinets.
The substance of her conversation has gone blurred: ...

I remember, too, her shelves of books;
Okey, Henry James, Berenson, Vernon Lee,

and a number of popular manuals...

She was a widow, and I remember thinking it odd that she displayed no photograph of her nephew who was at that time a Cabinet Minister. ...

Another, younger, a spinster, led me up to an attic, offering antlered heads, and a ship in a bottle, and an ivory rickshaw model.

She panted a little after climbing the stairs, and sat on a leather trunk to get her breath, and pointed out a golden photograph of her tall brother who died of a fever in Siam after his first home leave.

She was giving up the house to go and live in a larger one among trees, left by her aunt, and in the family at least two hundred years.

I selected a rough-edged book in wooden covers, watercolours on worm-holed rice paper, with unstuck silk -- a series of Chinese tortures of prisoners.

(John Hewitt, *Collected Poems 1932-1967*)

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