

INDIRECT EFFECTS OF DIVERGENT RECURRENT SELECTION FOR
ENDOSPERM PHENOTYPE IN SWEET CORN

by

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CHAPTER ONE: Indirect effects of divergent
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INTRODUCTION

The primary genetic difference between standard sweet corn and field corn involves the sugary (su) locus on chromosome 4. Sugary (su su) conditions an eight-fold increase in water soluble polysaccharide (WSP) and a two-fold increase in sugars over starchy (Wann et al. 1971). At optimum edible maturity high quality sweet corn contains 70 to 75 percent moisture and about 20 percent dry matter as sugar (Wann et al. 1971). Sugary alters carbohydrate synthesis in the endosperm, particularly inhibiting formation of water-insoluble polysaccharides and increasing total sugar levels (Ferguson et al., 1979; Gonzales et al., Michaels, 1979; Wann et al., 1971). Additionally, su slows the rate of change of the endosperm carbohydrate fractions and the rate of moisture loss as maturity advances (Soberalske and Andrew, 1978; Wann et al., 1971. Wolf and Showalter, 1974).

Producing excellent quality seed of sweet corn (Zea mays L.) is of considerable importance because germination rate and seedling vigor have traditionally been problems in sweet corn. Mutations conditioning carbohydrate alterations, principally higher sugar, in maize endosperm have been incorporated into sweet corn breeding programs (Cameron and Teas, 1954; Hannah

and Bassett, 1977; Styer et al., 1980). The higher sugar and lower starch content of these endosperm mutants lead to production problems. The low germination and seedling vigor of mutants may be due to the low total carbohydrate content of the endosperm (Creech, 1965).

A major limiting factor of sugary for the sweet corn industry has been low seed vigor. Woodstock (1969) defined seed vigor as "that condition of active good health and natural robustness in seeds which, upon planting permits germination to proceed rapidly and to completion under a wide range of environmental conditions." The cause of low seed vigor in sugary genotypes is not fully understood. Some research has shown that selection among high-sugar lines is effective for improving seed quality (Crane, 1964; Rowe and Gareood, 1978). However, the effectiveness of selection within sugary genotypes has not been researched. Usually low seed vigor in crop plants is attributed to aging of the seed or to some physical injury that impairs the ability of the seed to germinate. However, in high-sugar genotypes in sweet corn it is not known whether low seed vigor is due to a small reserve of nutritive materials in the endosperm, or if the embryo itself is genetically inferior and incapable of exhibiting strong vigor (Wann, 1980). Wann (1979, 1980) studied sweet corn vigor and concluded that normal (Su) showed superior seedling vigor over sugary and high-sugar corns from intact kernels but that superiority was not evident when excised

embryos were grown on nutrient medium, suggesting that vigor in normal corn was due to larger nutrient reserves in normal kernels. Low seed vigor in high-sugar genotypes appeared to be related to smaller and less supportive endosperms.

In 1907, D.F. Jones (Jones, 1919) crossed dent (No. 8, Illinois High Protein strain) by sweet (No. 54, Black Mexican sweet) and selected semi-starchy ears from the F₂. He selected two extremes, starchy and sweet, and found that in external appearance and in gross chemical analysis the pseudo-starchy type was much like starchy maize, particularly in content of soluble and insoluble carbohydrates. Nevertheless, due to its inheritance, the nature of the starch grains, and the quality of the seed, the starchy-appearing selection was considered to be independent and genetically distinct from true starchiness. He also concluded that the character was quantitatively highly variable and responsive to selection. Haskell and Singleton (1949) found that sugary (su) and normal (Su) endosperm corn did not significantly differ in percentages of emergence in a cold test. Haskell (1949) found that differences in seedling emergence in soil under suboptimum conditions were less dependent on endosperm type, su versus normal, than on other genetic factors. In a subsequent study, Haskell (1952) found an inverse relationship between dosage level of the su gene and percent emergence in soil. Using F₂ seed from crosses between isogenic lines, Nass and Crane (1970) found su endosperm type was associated with significantly reduced

seedling height, seedling growth rate, and percent emergence compared with normal counterparts. Rowe and Garwood (1978) concluded that the inconsistency of conclusions concerning normal and su kernel vigor may be due to the experimental procedures used. Cultivar differences and endosperm genotype were confounded in all studies except that of Nass and Crane (1970).

Leakage of seed electrolytes during imbibition has been associated with poor seed quality in several crop species. Seed leachate conductivity (SLC) has been evaluated as a possible method of predicting seedling vigor in maize (Schmidt and Tracy, 1988; Wann, 1986; Waters and Blanchette, 1983). Schmidt and Tracy (1989) found that significant differences among genotypes could be detected immediately after seeds imbibe water. However, the greatest differences in their study were shown at the 24-hr conductivity reading. Abdul-Baki and Anderson (1973) reported that low-vigor soybean seed had more leaching of metabolites than vigorous seed. Different endosperm types in corn have been examined (Schmidt and Tracy, 1988; Styer and Cantliffe, 1983; Wann, 1986; Waters and Blanchette, 1983). Wann (1986) found among three endosperm genotypes, electrolyte conductivity was greater from seed with endosperm genotypes sh2 or ae du wx ('Florida Staysweet' and 'Pennfresh ADX', respectively) than the su hybrid ('Iochief') and the germination percentage of su was greater than sh2. However, The seed of these hybrids was produced at different

times so that causes of the differences are unclear. Leakage was greater for sh2 seed than su seed (Styer and Cantliffe, 1983; Waters and Blanchette, 1983). Among 13 sweet corn hybrids, (su endosperm), field emergence and electrolyte conductivity were negatively correlated ($r=-0.58^{**}$), while field emergence and standard lab germination tests were uncorrelated ($r=0.20$).

The objectives of this study were to determine the effects of phenotypic divergent selection for endosperm appearance, within homozygous su su endosperm type, on electrolyte leakage and percent germination, seedling height, and seedling dry weight under both warm and cold germination conditions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The sweet corn population, Minn. 11, formed cycle 0 of the recurrent selection program and was supplied by Dr. D. Davis of the University of Minnesota. Minn. 11 was derived from crosses of an F5 su line to Ill-125b-739-77 and to Pa405 to introduce common leaf rust and maize dwarf mosaic virus resistance, respectively. The source of the F5 line was (I453 x B52). Inbreds Ill-125b-739-77 and Ia453 are sweet corn lines and Pa405 and B52 are corn belt dent inbreds. In 1979, the two hybrids were intercrossed to form the Minn 11 population (Davis et al. 1988). The population has undergone three cycles of divergent recurrent selection for endosperm phenotype at the University of Wisconsin. The selected endosperm types were extreme pseudostarchy (full opaque kernel) and extreme sugary (wrinkled, glassy kernel). All material was homozygous su. In 1985, the seed of C0 was planted, approximately 150 plants were self pollinated, and the selfed ears were harvested. The extreme 20% pseudostarchy and sugary ears were selected. Balanced bulks within each selected type were made and seed of each was planted in the winter nursery. A minimum of 100 plants in each population were sibbed. Balanced bulks were made with seed from the selfed ears. This recombination step resulted in C1 full (C1F) and C1 sugary (C1S). The process was repeated in 1986 and 1987.

The direct effects of selection were evaluated in 1988

and 1989. Seed from all cycles, C0, C1F, C2F, ~~C3F~~, C1S, C2S, and C3S and three commercial hybrids were planted at Madison, Wisconsin at two planting dates each year. The experimental design was a randomized complete block design with four replications per block. Two row plots were used. Each row was 5.3 m in length and 0.76 m apart. The rows were over planted and later thinned to 20 plants. The ears were allowed to open-pollinate, and ten representative ears were harvested and dried to constant moisture. Individual ears were rated for endosperm appearance. Five equaled extreme sugary and one equaled extreme pseudostarchy. Means of each plot were used in data analysis.

Analysis of variance was used to determine if there were significant differences between methods of selection and among cycles within methods. The genetic progress from divergent recurrent selection for pseudostarchy and sugary endosperm types was computed using the model suggested by Eberhart (1964). Data were combined over years. The year and block effects were considered random, and therefore they were combined as the environment effect. Cycles were treated as a fixed effect while all other effects were considered random. The cycle sum of squares due to regression were partitioned into linear and quadratic regression and deviation effects. The linear and quadratic effects were then subdivided into average and between linear and quadratic effects. Significant between regression effects indicated that the responses due to

divergent selection for endosperm types were different. Significant effect of average regression indicated that the average of the two directions of selection was not zero which means the response to divergent selection was not symmetric. Therefore, one of the selection responses was greater than the other or both responses were in the same direction. Linear regression coefficients for each selection were calculated from cycle means over two years (n=4).

Growth chamber studies

The seed and seedling vigor studies were conducted in the spring of 1988 and 1989. In 1988, the seed of both C3 cycles were not generated in the same environment as the other cycles, thus they were not included, leaving only five cycles (C0, C1F, C2F, C1S, and C2S). In 1989, all seed was produced in Madison, Wisconsin, and the third cycles of both selections were included in the evaluation. Data with five cycles (C0 and C1F, C2F, C1S, and C2S) over years were combined and analyzed. The seven cycles from the second year were analyzed separately to evaluate the third cycles of each selection method.

For both the warm and cold germination tests, seed was planted in sterilized sand in a 11x21x2.5 cm tray. Prior to planting, trays with sand were watered, sealed with saran wrap, and incubated at 10⁰C and 22⁰C for 48 hours before planting the cold stress test and the warm test, respectively.

In the cold test, 34 seeds of each cycle, per

replication, were planted 0.5 cm deep and incubated at 10⁰C for seven days, followed by four days at 22⁰C. Treatments were carried out in a Percival growth cabinet. In each year, three separate runs were performed with six replications per run.

In the warm test, 20 seeds of each cycle, per replication, were planted in 0.5 cm deep and incubated at 22⁰C. Seed was incubated in a Percival growth cabinet for seven days, In each year there were two separate runs, with four replications per run.

Data for percent germination, seedling height, and seedling dry weight were taken. Percent germination was the number of seeds producing plumules above sand, divided by the number of seeds planted, multiplied by 100. Seedling height was measured on the first twenty and fifteen seedlings within each replication of the cold and warm tests, respectively. Seedling height was measured from sand surface to the tip of the top leaf. The measured seedlings were cut off at the sand surface, harvested, and wrapped in paper towels and dried in a 60⁰C oven dryer. Dry weight of each cycle was recorded.

Randomized complete block designs were used in both the cold and warm tests. Each replication contained all the cycles to be tested and the commercial hybrid 'Jubilee' as a check. Analysis of variance was performed. The year and run effects were combined as environments and considered random as were replications within environments. Cycles were analyzed as a fixed effect. Effects were partitioned according to the

Eberhart (1964) model described previously.

Electrolyte leakage conductivity study

Seed electrolyte conductivity was measured on the seed lots used in germination evaluations. Five cycles and seven cycles were examined in 1988 and 1989, respectively.

Conductivity was measured using the method of Schmidt and Tracy (1988). Vials containing ten seeds of a cycle were filled with 50 ml of deionized water at one minute intervals. Conductivity readings were taken exactly 24 hours later. Conductivity was measured using a Amber SD-412I solubridge conductivity indicator. Five replications within each year were performed. Each replication consisted of vials of all cycles from that year and one deionized water control. Room temperature was held constant throughout the experiment.

Data were analyzed as a randomized complete block design. Cycles were treated as a fixed effect, while all other effects were considered random. Cycle effects were analyzed according to the model of Eberhart (1964).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Phenotypic rating

The environment by cycle interaction was not significant, thus the pooled error term was used to test cycles (Table 1). Highly significant differences ($P < 0.01$) were detected among environments, cycles, linear, between linear, quadratic, and between quadratic effects indicating that divergent selection significantly changed the phenotype of the endosperm. The linear coefficients for pseudostarchy and sugary were -0.45 and 0.53, respectively. There were significant differences among cycles within direction (Table 2). The between linear effect indicated there was highly significant differences between the two selections. All selected cycles were significantly different from C0. The quadratic effect indicated that selection was most effective on the first cycle of selection. The effect of selection approached a plateau in the successive cycles (Table 2).

Growth chamber studies

1) Cold test

Cycle effects were highly significant for all traits. There were no significant interactions between environments and cycles for percent germination and seedling traits over years. The difference in percent germination between successive cycles was linear (Table 3). The highly significant

between linear effect indicated that the divergent selections were significantly different. There was a large response in both directions measured by the regression coefficients (Table 4) reflecting the result of indirect divergent selection of endosperm types. Selection for pseudostarchy endosperm significantly increased germination rate and the opposing selection resulted in a significant decline in germination rate. In 1989, the genetic effect showed quadratic form (Table 5) and the average percent germination rate of cycles in 1989 alone was greater than that of two year average. However, the environment and cycle interaction was not significant. The selection for sugary endosperm resulted in significantly lower germination (Table 6). Although cycles for pseudostarchy were not significantly different, the mean values and linear coefficients showed an average 1.75% increase per cycle.

Environments, replications within environment, and cycles were highly significant over years for seedling height. Although the deviation mean square was highly significant, it was relatively small and was not considered further in the analysis (Table 3). There were highly significant between linear effects indicating that divergent selection affected this trait. Average seedling height varied from 6.94 cm to 5.75 cm and there was an average of 0.3 cm difference between each cycle of selection (Table 4). In 1989 there was a significant linear effect on seedling height due to selection for pseudostarchy (Table 6). The significant effects of

environments and replications within environments were due to the variation among growth cabinets and the positions of trays within the cabinets.

Seedling weight was affected by the environment, replications within environment, and cycles (Table 3). The causes of the significant environment and replication effects would probably be the same as those that resulted in significant effects on seedling height. Linear effects and between linear effects were significant indicating that divergent selection for endosperm type affected seedling weight. There was a gradual but non-significant increase in seedling weight for pseudostarchy selection and significant decrease for sugary selection (Table 4). In 1989, the results were similar with significant environment and replication, cycle, linear, and between linear effects (Table 5). However, there was a significant linear effect on seedling weight due to selection for pseudostarchy in 1989 (Table 6).

Linear effects account for a large proportion of the variations of cycle effects. The r^2 values for percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight were 0.98, 0.87, and 0.96 over years and 0.91, 0.90, 0.96 in 1989, respectively. There were significant phenotypic correlations among percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight. For two year combined data, the correlations (N=10) were 0.97 ($p=0.0006$) between percent germination and seedling height, 0.99 ($p=0.0001$) between germination and seedling

weight, and 0.982 ($p=0.0001$) between seedling height and seedling weight. For all 7 cycles examined in 1989, the correlation coefficients ($N=7$) were 0.902 ($p=0.005$) between percent germination and seedling height, 0.953 ($p=0.001$) between percent germination and seedling weight, and 0.951 ($p=0.001$) between seedling height and seedling weight.

2) Warm test

The interaction of environment and cycle effects for percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight were not significant, therefore the pooled errors were used to test the other effects. Germination was not affected by cycles (Table 7). However, there was a significant decline in the sugary selection (Table 8). The non-significance of the cycle effect was probably due to the constant germination rate on pseudostarchy. Under favorable conditions germination of C0 was nearly 100%, eliminating the possibility of improvement. The linear coefficient of the genetic effect on sugary selection showed 1.33% decrease in each generation (Table 8). In 1989, the results indicated significant differences between directions and the between linear effect accounted for the difference (Table 9). The selection for sugary endosperm resulted in decrease in germination rate (Table 10).

Highly significant environmental effects for seedling traits were observed. This was probably due to the same effects that were discussed for seedling traits under cold test. Linear effects were highly significant for seedling

height (Table 7). The selections for pseudostarchy and sugary were not significantly different. The linear effect was mainly an average linear effect meaning that although the selections for different endosperm appearances were not significantly effective, one of the selections still had a greater response than the other. The linear coefficient for sugary selection showed significant decrease, and it was 42.2% smaller than that of pseudostarchy selection. In 1989, seedlings from C3 pseudostarchy were taller than those of other cycles (Table 10). However, there were no significant differences due to cycles (Table 9).

The between linear effects for seedling weight were not different (Table 7). The average linear effect accounted for most of the linear response. Although no significant differences were found within each selection, there was a greater decrease in the linear coefficient due to sugary selection than that in pseudostarchy selection (Table 8). No significant differences in seedling weight due to cycles were detected in 1989 (Table 9,10).

The correlation coefficients between percent germination and seedling height, percent germination and seedling weight, and seedling height and seedling weight were 0.67 ($p=0.03$), 0.48 ($p=0.16$), and 0.95 ($p<0.01$), respectively. Seedling height and seedling weight also were significantly correlated under the cold test. Churchill and Andrew (1984) found that cold-temperature germination was positively related to total

seedling length.

Electrolyte conductivity

The environment by cycle interaction was not significant and the pooled error was used to test the effects of environment, replications within environment, and cycle (Table 11). Styer and Cantliffe (1983) found significant differences for SLEC in sh2 and su kernels grown in two different environments. However, the environmental effect was not significant in this study. Cycle effects were highly significant and the linear effect accounted for most of the genetic effect (Table 11). The between linear effect indicated that the selection for the two endosperm types was effective in changing electrolyte conductivity. Conductivity was significantly reduced in the pseudostarchy selection (Table 12). The genetic response of selection was significant for pseudostarchy, and there was a 7.3 unit decrease for each cycle of selection. Conductivity was slightly increased for sugary selection, however, the increase was not significant.

Cycle effects were highly significant in 1989 (Table 13). The genetic responses were significant for both selections. Cycles showed significant change in both directions (Table 14). Conductivity of C3 pseudostarchy decreased 18.5% from C2 pseudostarchy and C3 sugary showed a 10% increase from C2 sugary. The average responses were -4.7 and 3.6 ds m^{-1} for pseudostarchy and sugary, respectively. Seeds that leak

heavily are prone to pre-emergence mortality. Permeable corn seeds, as indicated by a high concentration of soluble materials leaching during a soaking period, were more susceptible to emergence failure under cold soil conditions (Tatum, 1954). Conductivity had high negative phenotypic correlation with cold test traits. The correlation coefficients among conductivity and percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight were -0.892 ($p=0.0005$), -0.888 ($p=0.0006$), and -0.892 ($p=0.0005$), respectively. When C3 cycles in 1989 were considered, correlation coefficients were -0.933 ($p=0.002$), -0.952 ($p=0.001$), and -0.938 ($p=0.001$), respectively. Phenotypic correlations between conductivity and warm test data were not significant. Shieh and McDonald (1980) noted that small, flat corn seeds had a faster rate of water uptake than large, round seeds during the initial stages of germinations. Styer and Cantliffe (1983) found greater starch content in seed resulted in a lower osmotic potential and high level of sugary to starch content gave the potential for more water uptake during the initial phase of imbibition. They also found that the reduced amount of endosperm of high sugary seeds, containing large airspaces and low numbers of tightly packed starch granules, may cause rapid water movement into seed and increase the potential for more leakage. The two factors might explain the greater conductivity of the sugary selection than pseudostarchy.

Divergent selection for endosperm type had a strong effect on germination rates for both cold and warm tests, and electrolyte leakage. Under cold stress, plants from lines selected for pseudostarchy endosperm were taller and heavier. For the warm test, effects due to selection for both endosperm types were not significant.

Table 1. Mean squares from the analysis of variance for endosperm rating for seven cycles of divergent selection over four environments.

	df	MS
		— Rating —
Environment	3	2.19**
Rep (Envi)	12	0.09
Cycle	6	18.87**
Linear	2	53.65**
Average	1	0.20
Between	1	107.09**
Quadratic	2	2.95**
Average	1	0.62
Between	1	5.28**
Deviation	2	0.01
Envi x Cycle	18	0.29
Pooled Error	72	0.16

** Significant at the 0.01 probability levels.

Table 2. Mean rating of endosperm type for seven cycles of divergent selection over two years.

Cycles	Pseudostarchy	Sugary
	Rating ⁺	
C0	3.04	3.04
C1	2.63	4.11
C2	2.09	4.49
C3	2.05	4.52
b_1^{++}	-0.45 *	0.52 **
$S_b^{-\ddagger}$	0.13	0.13
$r^2\ddagger$	0.95	0.95
Jubilee		4.02
Commander		4.49
Arrestor		4.23
LSD (0.05) #		0.29

+ Rating 1=extremely starchy, 5=extremely sugary.

*,** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

++ b_1 is the linear regression coefficient.

$\ddagger S_b$ is the standard error of the means.

$\ddagger r^2$ is the coefficient of determination for linear effects.

LSD over varieties and cycles.

Table 3. Mean squares from the analysis of variance for percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight from the cold test for five cycles of divergent selection over two years.

	df	Germination — % —	Seedling height — cm —	Seedling weight — g —
Environment	5	70.82 *	76.34 **	0.416 **
Rep (Envi)	30	27.82	3.09 **	0.009 **
Cycle	4	775.95 **	10.78 **	0.070 **
Linear	2	1536.77 **	18.80 **	0.136 **
Average	1	4.03	0.08	0.001
Between	1	3069.51 **	37.52 **	0.271 **
Deviation	2	15.13	2.76 **	0.004
Envi x Cycle	20	23.38	0.28	0.003
Pooled Error	120	24.33	0.35	0.002

*, ** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

Table 4. Mean percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight from the cold test for five cycles of divergent selection over two years.

Cycles	Germination		Seedling height		Seedling weight	
	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary
	%		cm		g	
C0	93.4	93.4	6.30	6.30	0.38	0.38
C1	96.7	89.3	6.94	5.80	0.41	0.34
C2	98.4	87.5	6.79	5.75	0.42	0.32
b_1 +	2.72 *	3.12 *	0.29	-0.35	0.02	-0.03 *
S_b ++	0.60	0.60	0.19	0.19	0.01	0.01
r^2 ‡	0.98	0.98	0.87	0.87	0.96	0.96
Jubilee		93.8		3.77		0.17
LSD (0.05) #		2.3		0.28		0.02

* Significant at the 0.05 probability level.

+ b_1 is the linear regression coefficient.

++ S_b is the standard error of the means.

‡ r^2 is the coefficient of determination for linear effects.

LSD over varieties and cycles.

Table 5. Mean squares from the analysis of variance for percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight from the cold test for seven cycles of divergent selection in 1989.

	df	Germination		Seedling height		Seedling weight	
		— % —	— cm —	— g —	— g —		
Environment	2	16.96	90.35**	0.388**			
Rep (Envi)	15	21.56	5.41**	0.015**			
Cycle	6	390.21**	4.61**	0.018**			
Linear	2	1084.73**	12.53**	0.0523**			
Average	1	13.63	0.72	0.0004			
Between	1	2155.83**	24.34**	0.1042**			
quadratic	2	49.42	0.75	0.0018			
Average	1	14.26	0.97	0.0016			
Between	1	84.58*	0.53	0.0020			
Deviation	2	36.48	0.56	0.0001			
Envi x Cycle	12	23.29	0.45	0.001			
Pooled Error	90	20.15	0.42	0.002			

*, ** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

Table 6. Mean percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight from the cold test for seven cycles of divergent selection in 1989

Cycles	Germination		Seedling height		Seedling weight	
	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary
	%		cm		g	
C0	95.9	95.9	5.9	5.9	0.34	0.34
C1	97.1	89.5	6.3	5.6	0.35	0.31
C2	98.9	90.5	6.2	5.3	0.36	0.29
C3	99.4	88.2	6.8	5.6	0.37	0.29
b_1 +	1.75	-2.39 *	0.3 *	-0.2	0.01 *	-0.02 **
S_b^- +	0.69	0.69	0.1	0.1	0.00	0.00
r^2 †	0.91	0.91	0.90	0.90	0.96	0.96
Jubilee		93.8		3.8		0.173
LSD (0.05) #		3.0		0.4		0.028

*,** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

+ b_1 is the linear regression coefficient.

++ S_b is the standard error of the means.

† r^2 is the coefficient of determination for linear effects.

LSD over varieties and cycles.

Table 7. Mean squares from the analysis of variance for percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight from the warm test for five cycles of divergent selection over two years.

	df	Germination — % —	Seedling height — cm —	Seedling weight — g —
Environment	3	9.48	39.97**	0.037**
Rep (Envi)	12	15.31	3.23**	0.006**
Cycle	4	21.88	2.07**	0.006*
Linear	2	43.30	3.57**	0.010*
Average	1	21.07	5.67**	0.019**
Between	1	65.53	1.47	0.001
Deviation	2	0.46	0.57	0.002
Envi x Cycle	12	2.71	0.30	0.002
Pooled Error	48	11.67	0.38	0.002

*,** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

Table 8. Mean percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight from the warm test for five cycles of divergent selection over years.

Cycles	Germination		Seedling height		Seedling weight	
	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary
	%		cm		g	
C0	98.8	98.8	7.56	7.56	0.33	0.33
C1	98.1	97.5	7.60	7.18	0.33	0.30
C2	98.8	95.9	7.03	6.76	0.29	0.29
b_1^+	-0.05	-1.33*	-0.26	-0.45*	-0.017	-0.023
S_b^{++}	0.29	0.29	0.12	0.12	0.01	0.01
r^2^\ddagger	0.94	0.94	0.88	0.88	0.77	0.77
Jubilee		98.8		6.13		0.19
LSD (0.05) $^\#$		2.35		0.44		0.03

*,** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

+ b_1 is the linear regression coefficient.

++ S_b is the standard error of the means.

‡ r^2 is the coefficient of determination for linear effects.

LSD over varieties and cycles.

Table 9. Mean squares from the analysis of variance for percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight from the warm test for seven cycles of divergent selection in 1989.

	df	Germination		Seedling height		Seedling weight	
		%		cm		g	
Environment	1	1.79		55.08**		0.081**	
Rep (Envi)	6	13.69		6.18*		0.006**	
Cycle	6	28.87*		2.69		0.002	
Linear	2		77.24**		3.89		0.0026
Average	1		85.85**		0.93		0.0004
Between	1		68.64*		6.80		0.0048
quadratic	2		0.11		2.23		0.0010
Average	1		0.08		3.57		0.0011
Between	1		0.14		0.89		0.0009
Deviation	2		9.25		1.94		0.0024
Envi x Cycle	6	3.07		1.01*		0.001	
Pooled Error	36	10.22		0.41		0.001	

*,** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

Table 10. Mean percent germination, seedling height, and seedling weight from the warm test for seven cycles of divergent selection in 1989.

Cycles	Germination		Seedling height		Seedling weight	
	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary
	%		cm		g	
C0	100.0	100.0	8.3	8.3	0.32	0.32
C1	98.1	98.1	8.5	8.2	0.33	0.32
C2	99.4	96.3	7.9	7.7	0.30	0.30
C3	97.5	94.4	9.5	8.1	0.34	0.30
b_1^+	-0.65	-1.76 **	0.30	-0.05	0.002	-0.007
S_b^{++}	0.30	0.30	0.21	0.21	0.006	0.006
$r^2 \ddagger$	0.90	0.90	0.48	0.48	0.414	0.414
Jubilee		98.8		6.96		0.19
LSD (0.05) $\#$		3.9		0.66		0.03

** Significant at the 0.01 probability level.

+ b_1 is the linear regression coefficient.

++ S_b is the standard error of the means.

‡ r^2 is the coefficient of determination for linear effects.

LSD over varieties and cycles.

Table 11. Mean squares from the analysis of variance for leakage for five cycles of divergent selection over years.

	df	MS
		ds m^{-2}
Environment	1	79.38
Rep (Envi)	8	76.90
Cycle	4	567.27 ^{**}
Linear	2	1066.80 ^{**}
Average	1	241.30 [*]
Between	1	1892.30 ^{**}
Deviation	2	67.74
Envi x Cycle	4	109.93
Pooled Error	32	56.48

^{*},^{**} Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

Table 12. Mean leakage of five cycles of divergent selection over years.

Cycles	Pseudostarchy	Sugary
	ds m ⁻²	
C0	62.8	62.8
C1	50.3	61.1
C2	47.9	64.0
b ₁ ⁺	-7.3*	1.4
S _b ^{- ++}	2.0	2.0
r ² [‡]	0.92	0.92
Check	1.0	1.0
LSD (0.05) [#]	6.85	6.85

** Significant at the 0.01 probability level.

+ b₁ is the linear regression coefficient.

++ S_b is the standard error of the means.

‡ r² is the coefficient of determination for linear effects.

LSD over varieties and cycles.

Table 13. Mean squares from the analysis of variance for leakage for seven cycles of divergent selection in 1989.

	df	MS
		— $ds\ m^{-2}$ —
Rep	4	75.11
Cycle	6	443.91 **
Linear	2	1194.65 **
Average	1	11.25
Between	1	2378.05 **
Quadratic	2	6.05
Average	1	3.75
Between	1	8.35
Deviation	2	131.03
Pooled Error	24	62.00

** Significant at the 0.01 probability level.

Table 14. Mean leakage of seven cycles of divergent selection in 1989.

Cycles	Pseudostarchy	Sugary
	ds m ⁻²	
C0	56.8	56.8
C1	50.8	61.6
C2	50.8	62.6
C3	41.4	68.4
b ₁ ⁺	-4.7**	3.6 *
S _b ⁻ ++	0.9	0.9
r ² †	0.96	0.96
Check	1.0	1.0
LSD (0.05) #	10.28	10.28

*,** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

+ b₁ is the linear regression coefficient.

++ S_b⁻ is the standard error of the means.

† r² is the coefficient of determination for linear effects.

LSD over varieties and cycles.

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CHAPTER TWO: Correlated responses to **divergent**
selection for endosperm phenotype in **sweet corn**

INTRODUCTION

Selection for a quantitative trait almost always results in changes in unselected traits. Changes in an unselected trait due to selection for another trait are called correlated responses. Pleiotropy and genetic linkage are two of the mechanisms that result in correlated responses.

It has been shown in chapter one that divergent recurrent selection significantly changed endosperm appearance. The changes were not only between directions of selection but also within directions. The changes in endosperm appearances resulted in significant changes in seed and seedling traits under cold stress conditions. Percent germination significantly increased as a result of the selection for pseudostarchy endosperm and significantly decreased for the selection of sugary endosperm. Average percent germination for C2 pseudostarchy over two years was 98.4% and 99.4% for C3 in 1989. Selection for pseudostarchy kernels resulted in taller, heavier seedlings, while seedling height and weight decreased over cycles of selection for sugary endosperm.

Many workers have evaluated the effect of seed vigor on the performance of the subsequent crop. However, there is no consensus regarding the relationship between seed vigor and

crop performance. Vigorous seedlings emerge rapidly and grow quickly and may have a higher yield potential than their slower growing counterparts because of increased light interception and higher photoassimilatory activity early in the season (Glenn et al., 1974). Burris (1974) defined seedling vigor as: "the summation of seed and seedling attributes that allow or promote rapid, uniform seedling emergence and development culminated in a sustained high rate of growth throughout vegetative development." He also pointed out that because of low correlations, seedling vigor was not a good predictor of field emergence. However, pronounced seedling vigor differences were observed at the early stage on vegetative development but the effect dissipated as the plant approached tasseling. He also detected differences in tassel and silking date due to differences in vigor (Adegbuyi and Burris, 1989). He concluded: "in general, genotypes which exhibit a positive correlation between vegetative development and yield will respond positively to increased seedling vigor."

Pollock and Roos (1972) cited the difficulties in estimating crop yield losses due to seed vigor problems because seed and seedling vigor can produce great differences in stand density and thus produce great differences in yield. Egli and Tekrony (1979) in their work on soybean, concluded that there was no advantage in the use of high-vigor seeds under equal stands. They also pointed out that overplanting

and thinning to obtain uniform population could result in biases if the method of thinning removed the weak plants from the low-vigor treatments.

It is shown in chapter one that pseudostarchy has better germination rates than sugary endosperm (glassy, wrinkled). The objective of this research was to determine the effects of divergent recurrent selection for endosperm type on yield and yield components under field conditions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Seed of C0 and six divergent selection cycles of pseudostarchy and sugary were planted on 14 and 27 May, 1988 and on 16 and 26 May, 1989 in Madison, Wisconsin. Seed was from balanced bulks from random-mated plants within each cycle produced the previous year. Three commercial hybrids, 'Jubilee', 'Commander', and 'Arrestor', were included in the trials. The experimental design was a randomized complete block design with four replications within each block. Two row plots were used. Each row was 5.3m long with 0.76m between rows. Plots were overplanted and later thinned to 20 plants per row. At thinning time (3-4 leave stage), ten seedlings were drawn from the thinned seedlings within each plot, dried to constant weight at 60°C, and dry weight was recorded.

Days to 50% pollen shed and 50% silk emergence were recorded. Plant height and ear height were measured from the soil surface to the ligule of the leaf subtending the tassel and ear, respectively. Data recorded prior to harvest included number of tillers, percent stalk lodging, and percent root lodging. Plants were considered stalk lodged if the stalk was broken at or below the uppermost ear bearing node. Plants that leaned more than 30 degrees from vertical were considered root lodged.

The plants were open-pollinated. Plots were harvested after the plants reached physiological maturity. Number of

ears and total ear weight were recorded. Ten good ears were drawn from the harvested ears of each plot and weighed. The ten ears were dried at 60⁰C to constant moisture. Ten-ear dry weight, ear length, ear diameter (with grain), cob diameter (without grain), kernel row number, and number of red cobs were recorded. From these data, grain moisture at harvest, yield per hectare, kernel depth, and kernel width were calculated. The data were converted to plot means for statistical analysis.

The procedure used for analysis was identical to the procedure used in chapter one. Analyses of variance were performed. The model used in analysis of variance was suggested by Eberhart (1964). Year and location effects were combined as environment effects, which was considered random. Cycle effects were considered fixed. Pooled error was used as the error term to test factor effects when the interaction between environment and cycle was not significant. If the interaction was significant, the mean square of the interaction was used to test environment, replication within environment, and cycle effects. Differences among cycles were compared using an LSD between selection cycles and commercial hybrids. Phenotypic correlations (n=7) among the traits were calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Environmental effects were significant for all traits except root lodging, kernel depth, kernel row number, and red cob number (Table 15). Replication within environment effects were significant for plant height and yield. Cycle effects were significant for all traits except pollen date, yield, and ten-ear dry weight. Environment by cycle effects were significant for root lodging, kernel width, ear diameter, ten-ear dry weight, and red cob number.

There were no significant linear and quadratic effects for seedling dry weight. However, the deviation effect was significant indicating that differences among cycles were random. The mean squares for deviation were large relative to those for linear effects for silk date and plant height indicating that differences among cycles were largely random. However the deviation effects, though significant, were relatively small for ear height, kernel dry weight, and kernel row number and the linear effects were important as indicated by the large r^2 values for each trait; 0.74, 0.91, and 0.93 respectively (Table 16).

Tiller number had significant linear and quadratic effects. The significance of average quadratic effect and non-significance of between quadratic effect indicated that one of the selection directions had a greater quadratic effect than the other. However, the differences between the two directions

were not significantly different. The selection for endosperm type resulted in a decrease in tiller number in both directions. However, the differences were smaller among cycles within selection directions.

Between linear effects were highly significant for stalk lodging, root lodging, kernel width, ear diameter, moisture, and red cob number. Kernel width also showed significant average linear effects, which indicated the asymmetric effect of the two selection directions. Between quadratic effects were significant for kernel depth, and ear length indicating that the two selection directions were significantly different from one another.

Mean seedling dry weights varied randomly over cycles (Table 16). Days to 50% silk ranged from 67.7 to 70.4 and only 40% of the variation could be accounted for by linear regression. Plant height ranged from 217.1 to 229.6. There were no significant selection effects within directions. The linear effect on ear height in selection for sugary endosperm was significant. However, because of the higher ears in C2 pseudostarchy, the linear effect was not able to account for more than 74% of the total cycle effect.

Linear coefficients of the sugary endosperm selection for kernel dry weight were significant, indicating that selection for endosperm types had greater effect in the direction of sugary endosperm. Kernel dry weight ranged from 16.7g to 21.7g. Kernel row number ranged from 12.8 to 16.3, and the row

number was highly increased in the selection for sugary endosperm. Linear regression accounted for 93% of the variation for kernel row number and for 91% of variance for kernel dry weight.

The linear coefficient for stalk lodging showed a symmetric relationship between the two directions and cycles accounted for 73% of the variation. Percent stalk lodging ranged from 9.5 to 16.0 (Table 16). Selection for pseudostarchy endosperm resulted in a significant decrease in root lodging (Table 16). Although the linear coefficient indicated slight increases in root lodging in the sugary selections, it was due to the high percent root lodging rate of C3 sugary.

Kernel width decreased in both selection directions. However, only the sugary selection had significant among cycle effects. The large coefficient of determination indicated that cycles of selection accounted for much of the variation in kernel width. Width ranged from 8.8 to 9.7 mm. Ear moisture decreased over cycles of selection for pseudostarchy endosperm. The greatest decrease in moisture was from C0 to C1 pseudostarchy and the greatest increase was from C0 to C1 sugary. There was a 18.71 g Kg^{-1} average difference among cycles of pseudostarchy selection. Eighty seven percent of the variation was accounted for by linear regression.

The selection for sugary endosperm resulted in the elimination of red cobs, and the selection for pseudostarchy

resulted in an increase in the percent red cobs to 25% (Table 16). Both changes were highly linear.

Selection for sugary endosperm resulted in deeper kernels. The result was symmetrical over directions. Although the coefficient of determination for linear regression was high, the distribution of cycle means indicated the effect of selection gradually decreased over cycles. Ear diameter changed symmetrically over the two selection directions. The selection for pseudostarchy endosperm resulted in a significant decrease in diameter and diameter increased for the sugary selection. Linear regression accounted for 93.5% of the cycle effects. Ear length changed the most from C0 to C1 in both directions. The selections within each direction were not significantly different, however, selection for pseudostarchy endosperm resulted in shorter ears, and selection for sugary resulted in longer ears. There were highly significant linear coefficients for both directions.

Yield and ten-ear dry weight were not affected by selection. For both traits, there were no differences between directions or among cycles within selections. However, selection for sugary endosperm resulted in a decline in one hundred kernel dry weight, and selection for pseudostarchy resulted in an increase, but kernel row number and ear length increased in the sugary selection resulting in more kernels per ear.

Traditionally, sweet corn has been selected for high row

number and white cobs. In this study, half of the source of the original population was sweet corn and half was dent corn, the source of the red cob genes. The correlation coefficient between row number and red cob number was -0.95 ($p=0.001$). Lindstrom (1931) reported that a highly significant correlation between cob color and row number was discovered in a large series of crosses, and he strongly believed that one of the major row number genes is located on chromosome near P (cob color).

Correlation coefficients measure the degree of association between certain traits. The cause of the correlations may be physiological or genetic. Certain correlation coefficients were highly significant (Table 17). The endosperm rating (chapter one) was significantly correlated with most of the ear and kernel traits. The relationships between endosperm rating and stalk lodging and root lodging were highly and positively correlated. The more sugary type endosperm was correlated with deeper, narrower kernels. The selected type also was significantly and negatively correlated with one hundred kernel dry weight. Ear length and ear diameter also were positively correlated with sugary endosperm. The correlation coefficient of moisture and endosperm rating was significant at the 0.05 level. The correlation between endosperm rating and kernel row number was highly significantly and positively correlated and highly significantly and negatively correlated with red cob number.

The correlation coefficients were 0.99 and -0.98, respectively. Lindstrom (1931) found that the result of crossing between strains differing in endosperm type and row number tended to disprove any general or physiological correlation between the characteristics in question.

Yield and ten ear dry weight were not significantly correlated with rating.

The relations among endosperm rating and kernel and ear traits may explain some of the significant correlations. Since cob diameter was not significantly different between selections. The increases in kernel depth, ear length, and ear diameter compensated for the decrease in kernel width and kernel dry weight. It was not surprising that kernel row number was highly correlated with kernel width, kernel depth and ear diameter. Physiologically, when the cob diameter remains the same, the enlargement of kernel row number forces the kernel to develop thinner and longer. The decrease of one hundred kernel dry weight might be due to the reduction of starch in endosperm under sugary endosperm selection.

Cob color is controlled by a single gene. It was highly negatively correlated with kernel row number ($p=0.001$). Kernel row number is inherited polygenically. However, it has been proposed that one or two major genes might determine the threshold of kernel row number (Burdick, 1947). Under this circumstance, it is logical to deduce that in order to have a high correlation, there should be an important gene closely

linked to the gene for red cobs (P-wr). Kernel dry weight was highly correlated with red cob number and negatively correlated with kernel depth ($p=0.0007$), ear length ($p=0.025$), and ear diameter ($p=0.0003$). Stalk lodging and root lodging were also significantly correlated with red cob number at the 0.05 level. All of these traits are inherited quantitatively which means that they are controlled by more than one gene. However, the correlated relationship implied the same phenomenon as row number, that there was a high probability that one gene or a group of tightly linked genes for each trait might be close to P-wr on chromosome one. There might be a complex of genes controlled these traits in chromosome one near P.

Jones (1919) made an assumption that three factors affected the expression of pseudostarchy. One the which was an endosperm factor (gene) which prevents the characteristic shrinking of sweet seeds, and the other one was a dominant gene which controlled opaqueness. Due to the correlation among endosperm rating and the other traits, it is reasonable to assume that the two factors might be close to one another on chromosome one.

Selection for different endosperm appearance had a significant effect on field performance of the plants. The selection for sugary endosperm resulted in thinner and longer kernels and increased kernel row number and ear diameter. Red cobs were eliminated in the direction of selection for sugary

endosperm and the number significant increase in selection for pseudostarchy. The selection for sugary endosperm also significantly affected root and stalk quality. Stalk lodging, root lodging, kernel depth, kernel dry-weight, row number, ear length, and ear diameter were highly correlated with the percent red cobs, a trait controlled by a single gene (P) on chromosome one.

Table 15A. Mean squares from the analysis of variance for seedling dry weight, days to 50% pollen and silk, plant height, ear height, tiller number, stalk lodging, and root lodging for seven cycles of divergent selection over two years.

df	Seedling dry weight	Days to 50%		Plant height	Ear height	Tiller number	Stalk lodging	Root lodging
		pollen	silk					
		g	day	cm				
Environment	3	793.13 **	309.50 **	1311.34 **	734.39 **	1.20 **	1960.56 **	320.52
Rep (Env1)	12	3.54	2.10	88.01 *	44.48	0.04	52.30	212.44
Cycle	6	10.33 *	5.17	274.08 **	364.16 **	0.15 **	1805.75 *	4872.56 *
Linear	2	11.24	0.03	3148.64 **	811.88 **	0.25 **	2581.89 **	12981.73 **
Average	1	1.491	0.01	2780.26 *	743.12 **	0.40 **	1.88	375.01
Between	1	7.57	0.05	422.72 **	678.03 **	0.19	468.90 **	2146.5 **
Quadratic	2	4.26	8.41	81.66	945.5 *	0.24 *	12.10	117.77
Average	1	7.66	13.63	79.36	187.68 **	0.25 **	6.86	191.42
Between	1	0.85	3.19	83.84	1.44	0.03	17.34	44.12
Deviation	2	15.48 *	7.07	424.00 **	186.32 **	0.02	74.15	9.00
Env1 x Cycle	18	6.17	1.44	59.41	21.13	0.05	41.11	151.88 *
Pooled Error	72	3.89	2.44	42.97	24.33	0.03	42.99	73.99

*, ** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

Table 15B. Mean squares from analysis of variance for kernel depth, kernel width, kernel dry weight, kernel row number, ear length, and ear diameter for seven cycles of divergent selection over two years.

df	Kernel			Kernel			Kernel			Ear		
	depth	width	dry weight	row number	length	diameter	depth	width	dry weight	row number	length	diameter
	mm	mm	g		cm	mm					cm	mm
Environment	3	1.26	4.41 **	89.79 **	31.68	292.25 **						22.20 **
Rep (Envi)	12	0.69	0.33	3.87	60.34	48.15						1.06
Cycle	6	6.18 **	2.08 *	74.76 **	3938.43 **	310.29 **						38.50 **
L linear	2	15.28 **	5.41 **	204.27 **	10991.60 **	608.69 **						108.01 **
Average	1	0.11	4.21 *	6.34	432.48 *	39.57						3.17
Between	1	30.45 **	6.61 **	402.20 **	21550.72 **	1177.81 **						212.85 **
Quadratic	2	2.80 *	0.15	8.58	590.88 **	236.82 **						6.73
Average	1	2.44	0.26	0.42	277.44 *	40.55						0.82
Between	1	3.16 *	0.04	16.74	904.32 **	433.09 **						12.64
Deviation	2	0.46	0.68	11.43 *	232.81 *	85.36						0.76
Envi x Cycle	18	0.93	0.56 *	3.28	66.17	64.43						2.18 *
Pooled Error	72	0.71	0.30	2.76	62.24	44.51						1.16

*,** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

Table 15C. Mean squares from analysis of variance for moisture, ten ear dry weight, yield, red cob number for seven cycles of divergent selection over two years.

	df	Moisture		Ten ear dry weight		Yield		Red cob number
		— g kg ⁻¹ —	— Kg —	— Kg —	— Mg ha ⁻¹ —	— Kg —	— Mg ha ⁻¹ —	
Environment	3	51000.00 **	0.1182 **	51.47 **	1.65			
Rep (Envi)	12	500.00	0.0057	0.82 **	1.21			
Cycle	6	7967.22 **	0.0187	0.57	37.78 **			
Linear	2	20668.96 **	0.0026	0.85	107.41 **			
Average	1	14181.28 **	0.0037	0.84	0.20			
Between	1	27156.64 **	0.0015	0.86	214.62 **			
Quadratic	2	2703.36	0.0259	0.51	5.02			
Average	1	0	0.0048	0.47	8.33			
Between	1	5406.72	0.0470	0.55	1.71			
Deviations	2	529.34	0.0276	0.35	0.91			
Envi x Cycle	18	1000.00	0.0167 *	0.48	3.36 *			
Pooled Error	72	900.00	0.0077	0.28	1.55			

** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively

Table 16A. Mean seedling dry weight, days to 50% pollen and silk, plant height, ear height, tiller number, stalk lodging, and root lodging for seven cycles of divergent selection over two years and two planting dates.

Cycles	Seedling dry weight		days to 50%		plant height		Ear height		Tiller number		Stalk lodging		Root lodging	
	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy
C0	7.81	7.81	65.5	70.4	224.0	224.0	122.5	122.5	1.04	1.04	12.6	12.6	16.9	16.9
C1	8.32	9.27	64.3	67.7	223.9	226.8	122.0	123.6	0.89	0.90	14.4	15.7	11.2	14.6
C2	8.30	6.95	64.8	69.9	229.6	217.1	126.1	115.6	0.80	0.77	9.5	16.0	6.4	13.7
C3	7.69	7.06	65.4	67.7	221.9	220.2	119.1	112.5	0.89	0.77	11.3	16.0	3.9	13.9
D_1^*	-0.224	-0.484	-0.013	0.010	-0.553	-0.004	-0.359	-2.302	-1.104	-0.050	-0.079*	-1.110	0.000	-3.900
S_1^{**}	0.32	0.32	0.07	0.07	0.42	1.64	1.31	1.22	0.03	0.03	0.000	0.000	0.000	
r^2	0.363	0.363	0.868	0.391	0.391	0.395	0.654	0.743	0.665	0.665	0.720	0.720	0.720	
Jubilee	7.59	7.59	61.4	64.8	203.7	203.7	99.6	99.6	0.90	0.90	6.8	6.8	7.4	7.4
Commander	7.30	7.30	63.2	66.2	215.4	215.4	106.9	106.9	1.07	1.07	16.2	16.2	3.4	3.4
Arrestor	5.70	5.70	65.0	68.0	213.9	213.9	105.7	105.7	0.71	0.71	40.7	40.7	23.6	23.6
LSD (0.05)	0.363	0.363	1.1	1.4	46	46	35	35	0.11	0.11	4.6	4.6	6.1	6.1

*,** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively

* b_1 is the linear regression coefficient

** S_1^2 is the standard error of the means

† r^2 is the coefficient of determination for linear effects

LSD over varieties and cycles

Table 168. Mean kernel depth, kernel width, kernel dry weight, kernel row number, ear length, ear diameter for seven cycles of divergent selection over two years and two planting dates.

Cycles	Kernel depth		Kernel width		Kernel dry weight		Kernel row number		Ear length		Ear diameter	
	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary
	mm		mm		g		cm		cm		mm	
C0	7.0	7.0	9.7	9.7	19.52	19.52	13.9	13.9	155.2	155.2	41.3	41.3
C1	7.1	8.0	9.4	9.4	18.98	21.71	13.7	15.3	150.2	160.3	40.5	42.6
C2	6.7	8.1	9.6	8.8	16.71	21.35	12.8	16.6	148.0	156.2	39.4	42.9
C3	6.7	7.9	9.4	8.8	17.00	21.84	12.9	16.3	151.1	157.4	39.3	42.7
b_1^*	-0.232	0.290	-0.067	-0.310**	-0.717	-1.179*	-5.030	8.84**	-2.198	1.045	-0.853**	0.526*
$S_{b_1}^{**}$	0.13	0.13	0.07	0.07	0.33	0.33	2.09	2.09	1.31	1.31	0.20	0.20
r^2^{\dagger}	0.824	0.824	0.868	0.868	0.911	0.911	0.930	0.930	0.654	0.654	0.935	0.935
Jubilee		7.6		8.5		15.45		16.3		163.1		42.0
Commander		8.1		8.2		15.35		18.1		167.0		45.1
Arrestor [#]		8.0		8.1		15.69		18.6		162.6		43.6
LSD (0.05)		0.6		0.4		1.17		0.6		4.7		7.6

*,** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

* b_1 is the linear regression coefficient.

** S_{b_1} is the standard error of the means.

† r^2 is the coefficient of determination for linear effects.

LSD over varieties and cycles.

Table 16C. Mean moisture, ten-ear dry weight, yield, and red cob number for seven cycles of divergent selection over two years and two planting dates.

Cycles	Moisture		Ten-ear dry weight		Yield		Red cob number	
	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary	Pseudostarchy	Sugary
	g Kg ⁻¹		Kg		Mg ha ⁻¹		no	
C0	528	528	1.13	1.13	4.23	4.23	2.13	2.13
C1	497	538	1.10	1.19	4.35	4.56	2.44	0.44
C2	488	524	1.09	1.10	4.02	4.38	2.88	0.19
C3	478	513	1.14	1.12	4.07	4.17	4.00	0.00
b_1^+	-18.709 **	-3.137	-0.007	-0.004	-0.128	-0.040	0.734 **	-0.65 *
S_e^{**}	4.15	4.15	0.02	0.02	0.07	0.07	0.18	0.18
r^2	0.865	0.865	0.046	0.046	0.493	0.493	0.948	0.948
Jubilee		470		1.08		4.40		0.00
Commander		477		1.18		4.02		0.00
Arrestor		548		1.22		4.07		0.00
LSD (0.05)		20		0.06		0.80		0.88

*, ** Significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels, respectively.

+ b_1 is the linear regression coefficient.

** S_e is the standard error of the means.

+ r^2 is the coefficient of determination for linear effects.

* LSD over varieties and cycles.

Table 17. Correlation coefficients and probabilities for the traits examined in divergent phenotypic recurrent selection study. Correlation coefficients are above diagonal, probabilities are below.

TRAIT	RATE	SDWT	PD	SD	PHT	EHT	TILLER	SLOD	RLOD	KDEP	KWID	KDWT	ELENG	EDIA	CDIA	TEDWT	MOIS	YIELD	ROWNO	REDCOB
RATE																				
SDWT	-0.29																			
PD	0.53	0.06																		
SD	0.90	0.61	0.24																	
PHT	0.31	0.91	0.30	0.46																
EHT	0.20	0.03	0.62	0.73	0.01															
TILLER	0.13	0.03	0.95	0.99	0.89	0.48														
SLOD	0.45	0.39	0.33	0.83	0.52	0.27	0.63													
RLOD	0.01	0.71	0.88	0.81	0.15	0.85	0.06	0.00												
KDEP	0.03	0.68	0.65	0.10	0.48	0.35	0.85	0.00	0.08											
KWID	0.00	0.73	0.96	0.50	0.26	0.20	0.38	0.00	0.08	0.07										
KDWT	0.05	0.11	0.57	0.99	0.03	0.01	0.06	0.07	0.39	0.05	0.01									
ELENG	0.01	0.99	0.30	0.28	0.45	0.37	0.92	0.03	0.05	0.02	0.33	0.04								
EDIA	0.00	0.65	0.88	0.28	0.25	0.21	0.66	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.11	0.00	0.01							
CDIA	0.08	0.63	0.67	0.07	0.48	0.53	0.52	0.16	0.00	0.19	0.64	0.07	0.08	0.04						
TEDWT	0.59	0.21	0.05	0.75	0.71	0.80	0.36	0.54	0.68	0.51	0.73	0.86	0.10	0.52	0.73					
MOIS	0.04	0.79	0.61	0.13	0.74	0.82	0.64	0.09	0.02	0.05	0.67	0.08	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.28				
YIELD	0.15	0.39	0.88	0.95	0.78	0.99	0.76	0.05	0.26	0.07	0.68	0.39	0.09	0.09	0.30	0.23	0.04			
ROWNO	0.00	0.36	0.90	0.43	0.11	0.07	0.33	0.01	0.05	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.13	0.78	0.09	0.20		
REDCOB	0.00	0.69	1.00	0.23	0.38	0.24	0.40	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.09	0.69	0.03	0.14	0.00	

Prob > |R| under H0:Rho=0/N=7.
 Rate=Phenotypic rating, SDWT=Seedling dry weight, PD=Pollen date, SD=Silk date, PHT=Plant height, EHT=Ear height, TILLER=Tiller number, SLOD=Stalk lodging, RLOD=Root lodging,
 KDEP=Kernel depth, KWID=Kernel width, KDWT=Kernel dry weight, ELENG=Ear length, EDIA=Ear diameter, CDIA=Cob diameter, TEDWT=Ten ear dry weight, MOIS=Moisture,
 ROWNO=Row number, REDCOB=Red cob number.

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PAINTING THE GILDED CAGE
EVELYN DE MORGAN AND THE PLIGHT OF
THE VICTORIAN WOMAN ARTIST

by

LESLIE J. MORISON

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
(ART HISTORY)

at the
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Introduction

"All these infinitely obscure lives remain to be recorded..."¹

Virginia Woolf wrote these words to describe the responsibility she felt women have to record their heritage. In A Room of One's Own, she wrote that women suffer from inequality because they lack a tradition that began with women's omission from history, and called for a rewriting of the past which includes them.

In recent years there has been much art historical attention and feminist criticism focused on the models of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Jan Marsh and Griselda Pollock have especially drawn notice to the oppression and objectification of these women, often referred to as the "stunners" by the self-serving members of the PRB, and valued solely for their appearance. This, however, has been at the expense of a few women artists, clearly independent and with their own voice, who rose above Victorian oppression to create works of art that are successful and telling of the time in which they worked. These women did not derive their fame from men, and Evelyn De Morgan was among them. A significant artist of the late nineteenth century Pre-Raphaelite movement, she merits study of her art and life.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's art began with the most noble of intentions to expose the indecency the Victorian age had inflicted on many of its people, especially women. But

their works, that exploited these working class women as models, only served to sanction Victorian morality and objectify women. Contemporary art historians have paid particular attention to these women who revolved around the PRB: Elizabeth Siddal, Jane Morris, Annie Miller. Griselda Pollock wrote that representations of Siddal articulate definitions of masculine sexuality through representations of femininity; the Pre-Raphaelite representations of women were a complex system of gaining superiority through the portrayal of a vulnerable female.² Rossetti's paintings of Siddal objectify her, and even his most individual depictions leave her character mysterious. She, like most representations of women by the PRB, is a sign for certain characteristics such as passivity, beauty, illness, fragility and tragedy, and perpetuates the notion of female inferiority.³ Jan Marsh, in The Pre-Raphaelite Sisterhood, called attention to the models' lives and interests. Many had artistic talent, but they were overshadowed and discouraged by their oppressors. In Pre-Raphaelite Women, Marsh documented the various categories of characterization and objectification of these women depicted as Madonnas and magdalens, medieval damsels and evil temptresses.

But their subjugation to the PRB artists was not only in art, but in life. Hunt tried to mold Annie Miller, who posed for The Awakening Conscience and was his fiancé at the time,

from a working class girl into a lady and educate her in his own version of Pygmalion; she disappointed him with her rather loose morals and behavior.⁴

Ironically Evelyn De Morgan has suffered at the hands of this type of art history. The fact that she grew up wealthy and in a family that valued education has perhaps made her a less sexy study for feminists. But despite her wealth and social class, Evelyn De Morgan ran into the same glass ceilings that kept all Victorian women down. Victorian society was still not receptive to independent and ambitious women. Evelyn De Morgan endured her share of discouragement and rejection, but was relatively successful nonetheless. And, challenging notions of proper Victorian womanhood herself, she attempted to evoke sympathy for oppressed Victorian women by depicting their plight in her art.

She continues to be seen as derivative when she was quite radical, and suffers from being labelled a follower of her male contemporaries, particularly Edward Burne-Jones. Evelyn De Morgan, like many of her contemporaries, admired the early Italians and Botticelli. While her art and Burne-Jones's share similar stylistic qualities, Evelyn De Morgan was not merely a follower. Modern critics of the Victorian age actually invalidate their own criticisms that women artists follow men when they ignore an artist like Evelyn De Morgan who developed her own style independently of male influence

and painted works that speak clearly to women and their subjugation to men and Victorian morality. I hope to reexamine Evelyn De Morgan's art, convey her unique feminist message, and show that she deserves a place in the canon alongside other artists of the period, especially Burne-Jones.

CHAPTER ONE

Victorian Morality as Embodied in Art

The climate in which Evelyn De Morgan worked, during the second half of the nineteenth century, was particularly adverse to women, and especially to women who attempted to succeed in the male sphere.

Between 1840 and 1900 women were ascribed important, but restricted roles in society. Their individuality and personal ambition were subordinated to the care of men; their duties and lives relegated to the home. In this age women received greater attention in the arts, but as subjects, not as artists. The Victorians had a fascination with femininity and the impressions of women were varied. They were depicted as saints and whores, good and evil, and many images were propagandistic and moralizing.

In the age of industrialization and the rise of the middle class, Victorian viewers rejected the grand themes of romanticism and neoclassicism of the eighteenth century, in favor of a more literary art with bourgeois subjects, more earthbound and domestic. Art was made easier to read, in a narrative style, with accessible modern life subjects. It was made to evoke sympathy, to appeal to all races and classes, and to inspire them to improve their lives according to Victorian morality. It was intentionally didactic.

The industrial revolution brought prosperity to many and progress to England. But hardship lay in the midst, with the working and lower classes subjugated to the increasingly wealthy middle class. With few regulations to protect the workers and the poor the chasm grew wider. The social ills of the day were well known, but art sought to mask them and to depict pleasant domestic scenes in order to uplift and inspire. Loaded narrative paintings showing sugar-coated scenes of daily life became popular in the 1840s and lasted through the 1860s. Thomas P. Hall's painting One Touch of Nature Makes the Whole World Kin (fig. 1), dated 1867, demonstrates this aim. A crowd gathers at a gallery's window. The group, representing all ages and classes of Victorian society, is united in single admiration of the work of art. The subject remains anonymous to the viewer, but is likely propagandistic and moralizing. And if only for one moment Victorian society is depicted as equal and harmonious.

These paintings of good behavior and happiness in daily life instilled a social code sanctioned by the Queen herself. The monarchy, unpopular before Victoria, came to promote modest qualities such as industry, domesticity, and virtue. All were thought to be inherent to happiness and success in nineteenth century England.⁵ Edwin Landseer's painting Windsor Castle in Modern Times (fig. 2), dated 1841-45, represents a gradual identification of the monarchy with the

people. Here the Queen is shown in domestic bliss standing faithfully at her husband's side. He has just returned from a hunting trip. The bounty is strewn about the elegant, but modest room for all to admire. Family dogs greet the young Prince, while the Princess Royal toys with the game as any happy youth would. The Queen is the epitome of the proper Victorian wife, attending her husband and attentively listening to Albert's every word. The scene is wholesome, accessible, and embodies all the qualities which became the standard. The doctrine of Ad Exemplum Reginae implied that strict adherence to Victorian morality assured merit and success.

It became a formula for much of the art produced, and advocates of the English school of painting claimed that rigorous attention to morality and propriety in English art distinguished it from the art of the other European schools.⁶ The art produced in this formula was to be a symbol for women, an icon, and it mostly depicted them as submissive and docile, representing the cult of wifeliness.⁷ Women had the duty of caring for the home and men's souls, but were oppressed in all other areas. Victoria represents this wifely ideal in Landseer's painting. Despite her political authority as Queen, she was also the symbol of Victorian morality and true womanhood at a time when women were completely subjugated to men.

Women upholding domestic virtue became the subject of many works of art. George Elgar Hicks's Woman's Mission: Companion of Manhood (fig. 3), dated 1863, is the central section of a triptych. It shows the devoted wife comforting her needy husband. Upon her pedestal, she is a saint, akin to the Madonna. She dutifully keeps the home and her husband's virtue. Directed by an ethic of self-sacrifice, she is the emotional mainstay of the family. This ideal made other marginal groups of women look deviant.⁸

Generally this moral virtuousness was only a facade, and many artists painted the antithesis, wayward or fallen women. But while these works were meant to depict the prospering country's success at the cost of so many of its people, they were often misread and served rather to maintain Victorian morality. They played on women's consciences, intending to scare them into virtuousness. For example, Richard Redgrave's The Outcast (fig. 4), dated 1851, shows a daughter and her illegitimate child returning home on a cold wintery night. While the stern patriarch turns her back into the darkness, family members sink in shame and pray for her redemption. The youngest daughter begs her father to forgive the errant sister, but to no avail. She has hurt the family, probably his business, and herself. Victorian women knew the story ended with poverty and death.

In the nineteenth century men had the ability to dictate women's world to them and tailored it as they saw fit. Women were not only bound to their husbands financially and spiritually, but legally. Before the Married Woman's Property Act of 1870, wives gave up all their property and earnings to their husbands. Women were not given freedom until the Matrimonial Causes Act in 1884. Through actions and laws, men sought to depict women as the weaker sex, physically and psychologically. Indeed, scientists attempted to prove this, going so far as to claim that women enjoyed being beaten.

Handbooks to teach women to be properly submissive abounded. The best known was Sarah Stickney Ellis's The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits, first published in 1839.⁹ Women were men's charms to tote around. They were ornamental, properly dressed in the latest fashion, and appropriately wan so as to appear weak, dependent, uneducated, and perfectly idle; women could never dominate.

Mary Wollstonecraft was ahead of her time, publishing A Vindication of the Rights of Woman in 1791, in which she fought for women's equality. She said:

...one power should not be thrown down to exalt another... I shall... [add] my firm persuasion that every profession, in which great subordination of rank constitutes its power, is highly injurious to morality.¹⁰

She questioned the idea of women's dependency on men:

Fragile in every sense of the word, they are obliged to look up to man for every comfort. In the most trifling dangers they cling to their support, with parasitical tenacity, piteously demanding succour; and their *natural* protector extends his arm, or lifts up his voice, to guard the lovely trembler -- from what?¹¹

Wollstonecraft sought to explode the fallacy that women need men's protection. In doing so, she hoped to show that the greatest threat facing women may be their unnecessary dependence on men, a dependence strengthened by a lack of social awareness and education. If women were educated, she felt, they would reject their submission and demand their rights.

Women believed themselves made from men (Eve from Adam's rib), and were thus subordinate, created for men's convenience and pleasure.¹² Over time men reinforced this by creating a system in which women remained dependent by denying them all opportunity and ability for independence. Wollstonecraft says that Christian paternalism taught women to believe in their own inferiority.

Women are told from their infancy, and taught by the example of their mothers, that a little knowledge of human weakness, justly termed cunning, softness of temper, outward obedience, and a scrupulous attention to a puerile kind of propriety, will obtain for them the protection of man; and should they be beautiful, everything else is needless...¹³

While men, including John Ruskin in his essay "Of Queen's Gardens," called for only enough education to render women more pleasing, Wollstonecraft saw the possibility to strengthen the female mind by enlarging it through education, and putting an end to blind obedience. Her ideas called into question the whole order of society.¹⁴

Art in nineteenth century England promoted Victorian morality. William Holman Hunt's painting The Awakening Conscience (fig. 5), dated 1854, worked to shock female viewers into virtuous conformity with its painted melodrama of sin and sudden recognition.¹⁵ It reinforced women's proper role in society as keeper of the home and men's souls. And any deviation from Victorian morality was perceived to lead to ruin.

Augustus Egg's triptych Past and Present, dated 1858, is not a mere illustration, "but an original story of contemporary life embodying a familiar [Victorian] moral and narrative pattern."¹⁶ In the first panel (fig. 6), he depicts

an adulteress wife, who has thrust herself on the floor of the parlor in shame. She lies at her despondent husband's feet, while their two startled children look on. The house of cards they are building, symbolic of their own, tumbles into ruin. Another panel shows the now grown daughters. One stares hopelessly out of the window at the dark night sky, and the other buries her head in her sister's lap in grief. They wonder about their wayward mother's whereabouts. She is depicted in the third panel staring at the same night sky from her new home under a bridge. She cradles her illegitimate child.¹⁷ The pathetic tragedy, the result of the wife's infidelity, reinforced to women the importance of virtue.

Wollstonecraft's thesis met with much anger and criticism. But further challenges to this tyranny against women evolved a century later. John Stuart Mill proposed much the same ideas as Wollstonecraft in The Subjection of Women, published in 1869. His essay met with success as Victorian society was apparently ready to embrace his radical ideas, albeit on a limited, step-by-step basis. Mill believed the legal subordination of one sex to the other should be replaced by a system of total equality.

While he admitted that the domination of one sex over the other did not appear unusual to anyone who possessed it, Mill believed the total obedience, fidelity, and service a married

woman owed to her husband as lamentable.¹⁸ He wrote, "...true is it that unnatural generally means only uncustomary, and that everything which is usual appears natural. The subjection of women to men being a universal custom, any departure from it quite naturally appears unnatural."¹⁹ Like Wollstonecraft he thought the means to women's equality was through education.²⁰

Women began to speak out for their rights now more than ever. A handful of women were accepted into traditionally male positions in society, but most were regarded as freaks. While the view of women began to change in literature in the second half of the century, as women played more significant roles and became heroines, in art they remained, for the most part, objectified and committed to positions of compliance and support. As artists many women were subjugated to the dictates of men like Ruskin, relegated to copying the Old Masters or flower painting. There were, however, a few radical women artists who fought the norm and attempted to succeed in the male sphere. Evelyn De Morgan was among them. At the time Mill published The Subjection of Women she was only fourteen years old. But she was wealthy and educated, and was most certainly exposed to his views. Her art and her life are a dramatization of them.

CHAPTER TWO

Details of the Life of Evelyn De Morgan; Her Development as an
Artist

Evelyn De Morgan successfully challenged prevailing notions of Victorian womanhood and was relatively popular in her own time, but she never achieved the status of Dante Gabriel Rossetti or Burne-Jones because she was a woman. Her gender and her talent were perceived inferior.

Evelyn De Morgan, born Pickering, descended from a family of artistic talents. Her success had much to do with her upbringing. Her uncle, the artist John Roddam Spencer-Stanhope, was a significant influence, always encouraging her to paint. Her mother had dabbled in the arts, mostly drawings and sketches. Mrs. Pickering's teachers found great talent in her work, but to her and so many of her generation, art was primarily a question of routine for young women. Art could make them more desirable to a mate, but was never to be taken seriously as a profession. Mrs. Pickering had an excellent education and an insatiable desire for knowledge. Her father was a fine classical scholar. Mrs. Pickering saw to it that her children received a complete education from the start. No governesses would teach them. She devoted herself to the development of their minds, writing early instructions in history, English, and science, and exposed the children to the

classics. She also studied classical literature and became richly versed in mythology. Finding many texts to be unsuitable to her children's needs, Mrs. Pickering rewrote them. She revised science into easily understood fairy tales.

Evelyn De Morgan received the same education as her brothers, learning Greek, and Latin in addition to French, German and Italian. The Pickering children, like their mother, developed a great thirst for knowledge. They loved to question facts, and were always doing and knowing.²¹ Each of the four children developed an individual aim at an early age. For Evelyn it was art. Her brother Spencer became a scientist, and Rowland became a doctor. Her sister, known later as A.M.W. Stirling, author of several books including two on Evelyn and William De Morgan, wrote that the only profession she could thus turn to was writing.

At a time when the lack of education for women was valued, as religion and moral principles were more important than book learning, the schooling that Evelyn De Morgan received was unusually comprehensive. Perhaps Mrs. Pickering recognized Wollstonecraft's belief that education rests with the parents.²²

The Pickerings were wealthy. Evelyn De Morgan's father was a lawyer and descended from ancient nobility. Her mother's ancestors were country squires. Both families were Tories. They lived most of Evelyn De Morgan's youth at 6

Upper Grosvenor Street, the most exclusive neighborhood in London.

Evelyn De Morgan began painting "as soon as she could hold a brush."²³ Stirling described, in the days before art lessons were a part of the school curriculum children were given boxes of paint to produce crude pictures, but because the paint stained clothes, water was taken away and art became a limited practice. Evelyn De Morgan would not be thwarted, and out on walks with the family nurses she would catch water from the gutters and puddles with her doll's teapot to sneak back into the house and continue her practice. At a very young age she showed determination and persistence in spite of opposition.

She also dabbled in poetry and writing early. She loved nature, especially the sea, and wrote numerous poems about it, later translated into allegories of nature in art. Her short stories were infused with a sense of gloom typical to a young girl's writings. Perceiving a need, at the age of eight she wrote The Child's Own Fairy-Book, followed immediately by Nora de Brant: a Novel, both are quite sophisticated. Her extensive writings were outlets for her unceasing energy. Stirling recalled how "...her whole personality, from childhood to age, conveyed an impression of virility, of restlessness, and of a mind eager to absorb and achieve,

combined with a temperament highly strung and perhaps abnormally sensitive to suffering and to joy."²⁴

But Evelyn De Morgan soon began to ignore all other areas of education in favor of drawing, and she resented anything that took time away from her creative pursuits. She became so absorbed in her work that her family feared for her health. She was painting in oils before the age of twelve. Soon a mandate was issued: she was no longer allowed to paint, and her drawing instructor was advised to tell her she had no talent. Her parents believed her devotion to art was not serious, but they also feared it might become so.²⁵ Nevertheless, her enthusiasm would not fade. Her canvases became harder to hide, so she took to painting on every available surface. She painted on the inside of box lids, or purchased wooden blocks with her meager allowance, and she always had a drapery ready to throw over her work. She resented endless family meals and the interruption of visitors, which kept her from her art. She was forced to use members of her household as models, particularly her sister and her nurse Jane Hales, referred to as Pretty Jane. For Evelyn De Morgan her work was the joy of her existence, and she laboured voluntarily, unceasingly, from the cradle to the grave.²⁶

Despite her wealth and social status, opportunity was not handed to Evelyn De Morgan. She was passionate and worked

very hard for her success. It was improper in Victorian society for any woman, presumably even the Queen, to have any serious commitments other than to home and husband. Not surprisingly, her family rejected her ambition. Her mother declared, "I have one artist, I do want one daughter," referring to Evelyn De Morgan's sister who was denied the opportunity to draw.²⁷

Evelyn De Morgan was so committed to her art she went to the extreme of filling in the cracks and holes in her bedroom walls, floors, and doorways with putty and paper so as to halt the smell of oils and turpentine flowing through the house in order to continue to paint. She went on like this for a while until one day she forgot to lock the door and her mother entered. Unable to cover her work in time, Evelyn De Morgan burst into tears and declared that she "had been forced into deception because she could not live without painting."²⁸ Happily her parents conceded. If she must paint she might as well do it well rather than poorly, they felt, and hired an instructor. But he would only train her in painting fruits and flowers. When she declared she wanted to study anatomy, he insisted such subjects were unsuited for a lady. Evelyn De Morgan went ahead and bought a wooden model of the human body and drew several sketches for his approval. But he was so enraged by her unladylike endeavor that he quit on the spot.

Art was seen as an accomplishment of the well-educated and a toy of the dilettante, but as a serious profession it was another matter. "It was linked with a Bohemianism which could not be tolerated in good Society. Artists were people who wore long hair and impossible clothes..."²⁹ The Old Masters were in a different category because they were old and represented accepted opinion, and to admire their work was evidence of a cultivated mind. Stirling wrote that she was brought up to consider that both Evelyn De Morgan and Spencer-Stanhope had strayed lamentably from the broad highway of the socially select.³⁰ Painting in her room, and going to Grosvenor Square to sketch, carrying a book bag with a fake bottom in which she hid her art supplies, Evelyn De Morgan outwardly acquiesced to her parents disapproval of art, but inwardly defied it.

William De Morgan experienced the same troubles growing up. Looking back on his life he wrote, "Art, however high on the slopes of Parnassus," was considered "socially low;" and that "the *Elite*... might be amateurs, but not professionals." The passing years had done little to modify this opinion; and the view that "Art was altogether unsuited for the son of a Gentleman" remained.³¹

Mrs. Pickering naturally wanted for herself a companion in her daughter. A daughter who would be a source of pride, educated and bred, with whom she could take part in the

innocent pleasures of Society. She would in due course come out, and become a model wife and mother, and finally go down to the grave beloved, revered, and quickly forgotten.³² Evelyn De Morgan wanted bigger things for herself. Stirling described her as like a thunderstorm, brilliant, restless, and frightening; "I felt dimly that at times she disturbed the Victorian placidity of our home like a flash from an alien world."³³

Evelyn De Morgan was so absorbed in her art she had no time for other things. She deplored idleness, and imagining her own laziness, she wrote frantically in her journal of time missed creating her art. After five hours of steady work she wrote on August 15, 1872, at age sixteen, that she had "wasted a great deal of time."³⁴ Similar entries continued days after. On the 17th she wrote, "At five, went out to tea. Changed my dress before going, which was unnecessary and wasted time."³⁵ Typically she rose at seven, working until breakfast at nine, spent three hours sketching in Grosvenor Square in the morning, and often four more in the afternoon, and spent all evening modelling. Her free time was spent reading.

Evelyn De Morgan had no time for Victorian etiquette. The time spent changing her clothes and visiting took away from her passion. She soon discovered it was impossible to be a "proper" lady and a professional at the same time. She refused to be presented at court, declaring "I'll go to the

Drawing Room if you like, but if I go, I'll kick the Queen!"³⁶
For her parents not being presented at court was a supreme embarrassment. After leaving the Slade Schools, where she studied, it was mentioned that she might like to go into Society and see the world. She responded, "No one shall drag me out with a halter round my neck to sell me!"³⁷

Unlike the women of her day, Evelyn De Morgan had no concern for Victorian dress. A fellow student at Slade wrote:

From the first she produced beautiful colours on her canvas, but if she attempted to match a ribbon for a dress, it was curious that she always bought the wrong shade and seemed unable to see this. She was full of mischief, told a story delightfully, and her laughter was irresistible; but where her painting was concerned she was all eagerness, seriousness and absorption.³⁸

To be marginally good at many things in the Victorian age was acceptable, but passion and brilliance in one area was anathema. On the contrary, Evelyn De Morgan felt that anyone who did not pursue their passion was a "born nincompoop."³⁹ Spencer-Stanhope, despite his gender, experienced many of the same difficulties as Evelyn De Morgan at an earlier age. His choice of profession was considered eccentric. And though devout, his pursuit was believed to be essentially

sacrilegious. He was well-kept and clean, but earned the reputation of a Bohemian.

However, the word bohemian, which came to mean those living within society who felt themselves outside of it, aptly describes Evelyn De Morgan.⁴⁰ Bohemians, a group which included the PRB, were considered radical. The word also meant gypsy-like. In Evelyn De Morgan's narrative painting the The Gilded Cage (fig. 7), dated 1919, the young woman depicted favors a life among the gypsies. It is perhaps symbolic of Evelyn De Morgan's choice to shirk off proper Victorian womanhood in favor of an artistic life-style.

She was known for her good humor and her strength, two qualities essential for the success of Victorian women artists. But her commitment to art came in spite of fame. She wrote:

It is the best thing on earth, that incessant struggle.... Art is more important than you think. But it must be earnest, grim life-earnestness that has no tincture of gain in it, or love of earth-fame: only the strength of one's arm, and the whole power of one's being are to be given to it; and to look neither to the right nor to the left, but go straight on doing the best that is in one.⁴¹

Evelyn De Morgan regarded everything in relation to art. An anecdote describes her at a risqué French play with her mother. When asked what she thought Evelyn De Morgan only remarked on the beautiful attitudes and draperies of the characters. She had completely ignored the crude plot.

Despite the opening of schools to women in the second half of the nineteenth century, many women artists were forbidden by their families to attend, and their education and encouragement, if any, was usually by male family members, such as fathers or brothers. Before attending the Slade Schools, Evelyn De Morgan was influenced by her uncle Spencer-Stanhope. His career paralleled Burne-Jones's. Initially influenced by Rossetti, he was also encouraged by G.F. Watts. Evelyn De Morgan and Spencer-Stanhope shared an interest in allegory and symbolism, a brilliant palette, and a love of early Italian art. He, too, is today often considered a follower of Burne-Jones, though the latter said of the artist, "he is the finest colourist in Europe."⁴² Spencer-Stanhope studied at Oxford with the Pre-Raphaelites and took part in the Union frescoes. He also shared studio space in the same building as Rossetti in the 1850s. In his time he was considered a follower of the early Italians.

It is difficult to measure Spencer-Stanhope's influence on his niece. She was considered a much better draughtsman, and achieved a greater sensitivity in form and content in her

works. His works are rather cartoon-like, and do not share Evelyn De Morgan's concern for depicting the social issues of the day.

The main challenge in the nineteenth century for women artists was access to the nude. It was feared that exposure to it would incite women's passion and thus destroy Victorian morality and the social order. It also prevented women from mastering the figure in art and effectively undermined their talent.

In 1873 Evelyn De Morgan entered the Slade where she studied under Edward Poynter. Begun in 1871 as part of the University of London, the Slade was significant for the development of women artists as Poynter announced from the outset the school's commitment to give equal claim to women's art education. The school promised to supply life and anatomical study to its female students. However, many parents, after realizing their daughters were working from nudes, made them quit. Scholarships were given equally among men and women. Evelyn De Morgan was sixteen when she entered the Slade. There she won prizes for her life drawing and the coveted Slade Scholarship in 1875. G.F. Watts said of her, "She is a long way ahead of all the women, and considerably ahead of most of the men. I look upon her as the first woman-artist of the day -- if not of all time."⁴³

While at Slade she was not allowed to walk to or from the school in Gower Street alone. Her family felt it would be improper since only "fast" women went anywhere alone in those days. They hired a chaperone for her which she resented. In rebellion she often escaped from the large maid by telling her to wait for her after class at one door while escaping through another. Chaperones were part of a larger system in Victorian society to control and defend women's reputation, of which Evelyn De Morgan would have no part.

She soon discovered there was little new to learn at the Slade. Women were still denied life drawing. She resigned her scholarship and moved to a studio of her own to devote herself more completely to her art. Stirling wrote, she soon attracted attention for her richness of colouring, fine brushwork, and the power of her work; in spite of immaturity "the critics united in praise of it; and no sooner were her pictures seen than they were sold."⁴⁴ Money earned from work meant freedom, and freedom meant the ability to work.

Evelyn De Morgan was determined to study in Rome and learn first hand about antiquity and the Old Masters. Despite the refusal of her family to finance the trip, she left in 1875 without a chaperone. There she lived poorly and worked hard, having saved some money to live on from her unused dress allowance. She admired the art of the early Italians and Botticelli and was overwhelmed by the beauty of Italy. Her

early, more severe works were now blended with a subtlety of Italian art.

She returned to England in 1877, and showed her first work, Ariadne in Naxos (fig. 8), at the opening of the Grosvenor Gallery. The Grosvenor Gallery, located on New Bond Street, was a new experiment in the world of art, devoted to "the untrammelled expression of individual aims."⁴⁵ An alternative to the Royal Academy, the gallery was eagerly awaited by some and mocked by the rest who rejected the new sect calling it the "Greenery-gallery, Grosvenor-Gallery."⁴⁶

Evelyn De Morgan was only twenty-one when she showed Ariadne in Naxos, and was not yet a follower of the Pre-Raphaelites: "Miss Pickering... had in those days barely scraped acquaintance with the most noted men of genius who had been influenced by the modern Pre-Raphaelite movement."⁴⁷ It wasn't until later that she became familiar with the work of Rossetti and Burne-Jones. Ariadne in Naxos is precise and well thought out, but immature. The painting was purchased at the private view by Right Hon. John Mundella, and was the first of many large works in her career to be sold. Her presence at the gallery is testimony to her success as an artist.

Sir Coutts Lindsay started the Grosvenor Gallery along liberal lines, and it probably would have never come into existence had the Royal Academy not been so exclusive and

conservative. The members of the Grosvenor Gallery were considered "rebel" artists, and the gallery favored those like the Pre-Raphaelites and others whose art was not in favor at the Academy. The Grosvenor Gallery became the showplace for the Aesthetic Movement, and the main attractions were Burne-Jones, Watts, James McNeill Whistler, and Albert Moore, each with a very distinct style, but sharing a unity of mood and a pervasive dreamlike atmosphere. Evelyn De Morgan's early art shown at the gallery had Aesthetic tendencies.

The Grosvenor Gallery resented the Royal Academy for its exclusiveness and failure to support young artists. Admission at the new gallery was by invitation only rather than selection by a committee. Space was allowed between works and paintings by a single artist appeared in one section, unlike the cramming at the Royal Academy.

Some Royal Academicians showed at the Grosvenor Gallery and vice versa, but this made for a strained environment as most of these artists saved their "best" work for the Academy. The gallery carried on for ten years, attracting major artists. It became increasingly associated with more popular facets of the Aesthetic Movement and the world of dreams and fantasy.

In 1887 The Portfolio wrote, the "Grosvenor Gallery claims position still as the open ground on which the 'freelances' of art display their powers, and Academic

dignitaries venture on erratic departures... [it] justifies its existence by certain distinctive features otherwise wanting in the art programme of the season."⁴⁸

Progressively the gallery lost its impetus and direction. Its directors resigned in 1887. Other members, namely Charles Hallé and J. Comyns Carr, left to start the New Gallery in Regent Street in 1888. Many of the Grosvenor artists, including Evelyn De Morgan, moved with them.

Evelyn De Morgan was popular in the art circles of the day, both critically and socially. She visited the houses of Royal Academicians Frederick Leighton and William Richmond. But despite her association, she continued to reject the Royal Academy. The elitism of the institution irritated her. The openings at the Academy, like the theater, were much looked forward to events in society. They encouraged tradition and adherence to Victorian morality, while Evelyn De Morgan favored bohemianism and the deliberate rejection of Victorian social conventions. William Frith's A Private View at the Royal Academy in 1881 illustrates the event. Victorian celebrities, properly dressed and mannered, are collected for this "see and be seen" painting. Oscar Wilde figures prominently at the right with his notebook in hand, gazing at the year's new work, while others gaze at him.

Most of the reviews of Evelyn De Morgan's work are favorable, some are critical, but they are testimony to how

extensively her work was shown. Over twenty-five works are listed in the Grosvenor Gallery catalogues. Her work also appeared at the New Gallery, the Dudley Gallery, the New Society of Painters in Water-color, and the Institute of Painters in Oil. Her art travelled as far as Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Berlin and the United States. She sold to galleries and private collectors through the Fine Arts Society. Her works at the Grosvenor Gallery were well noticed. Occasionally she painted poor works, and some critics thought her drawings were her best as they showed a greater sensitivity.

The Portfolio called her "a young artist full of promise,"⁴⁹ and noted an early Tuscan tradition in her art. The critics admired her ability for beautiful modelling, her poetic grasp, and excellent technique.⁵⁰

She was one of two women among twenty-five men at the Grosvenor Gallery exhibition of 1883, and among such esteemed company as Burne-Jones, Watts, and John Everett Millais. The criticism of her work shown, By the Waters of Babylon, was varied. The Athenaeum admired her effort, but thought the painting was incorrect compositionally and structurally. The Portfolio appreciated her "capacity for deliberate study and consistent invention" and noted the influence of the early Italians in her art; "...the artist's conception is imaginative and her study of attitude in many cases striking

for dramatic intensity, while her colouring is in its arrangement of isolated masses both rich and noble..."⁵¹ The Spectator delighted in the work, describing "much truth of feeling, with considerable beauty of colour; the figures are well grouped and well painted, the whole work is distinctly pleasant to look upon, and improves upon closer acquaintance."⁵² Clearly there was little critical consensus on her skill and talent. Overall they admired her commitment to art and thought the only thing preventing her from achieving the highest fame and recognition was her disdain for the cheap attractiveness of modern painting. She preferred the art of the PRB, truth in nature and a concern for the social issues of the day, and she refused to fall prey to petty trends.

Artistic fashion angled toward the late Pre-Raphaelites and the Victorian Olympians. Evelyn De Morgan's art suffered for being out of step with the romantic art of the time. She rarely sought or responded to criticism. The amount of critical attention she did receive indicates the seriousness with which the artist was treated.⁵³ Evelyn De Morgan believed in the uniqueness of the artistic vision.

Fellow artists and friends greatly admired her work. May Morris said of it:

She made her name as an artist of distinction. Her pictures have an epic quality and are spacious in

conception.... They are remarkable for the beauty of drapery design, for drawing vigorous and delicate and for sumptuous colour, for great enjoyment of textures. She had astonishing physical endurance and power of work, starting to paint early in the morning and going on swiftly and surely throughout the day. The output in consequence was very great.⁵⁴

After years of loneliness and hard work, but with great achievement, Evelyn De Morgan met William De Morgan at a fancy dress ball. Her family never thought she would marry. They thought her truly wedded to her art. "Evelyn would never look at any man unless it was a picturesque Italian organ-grinder!," her brother said; no one believed her.⁵⁵ William De Morgan was already an established ceramic artist in the Pre-Raphaelite tradition at the time and knew her uncle Spencer-Stanhope, and Burne-Jones and William Morris.

They were married on May Day 1887. As their life together, and many family and friends attested to, they were very happy and perfect for one another. Each gave the other inspiration and total artistic freedom. They were willing to sacrifice worldly advantage to their convictions. He was pro-suffragette and encouraged her to paint. William Richmond wrote, "Evelyn and William De Morgan were absolutely one: one in sympathy, in intelligence and its direction, one in tastes,

and in perfect companionship."⁵⁶ Stirling wrote, "Perhaps since the days of the Brownings there has been no more perfect instance of a husband and wife who shared a harmony of tastes and a happiness independent of external conditions, since no joy can equal that of the god-like gift of creation."⁵⁷ They were among the most eccentric artistic personalities of late nineteenth century England. Poynter called them "two of the rarest spirits of the Age."⁵⁸

Evelyn De Morgan devoted her childhood to art in defiance of her parents and notions of proper Victorian womanhood. Her struggle for recognition in a society that rejected women's agency had a significant effect on her work. She took pains to study the human form, she was admitted to the esteemed Slade Schools, but realizing that she would not achieve her artistic potential there, she travelled to Italy to study the Old Masters. Her radical nature, spurred on by her determination and love of art, and her refusal to be subjugated to Victorian morality informs her subjects. She refused to be subordinate.

CHAPTER THREE

Formal Qualities, New Forms and Rules for New Content

When Evelyn De Morgan entered the public eye it was natural for her art to be attributed to the Pre-Raphaelites since they were perceived as radicals too. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood emerged in 1848 out of the controlled Victorian climate. The artists did not all share similar technical and stylistic abilities, but they were united in their contempt for authority and the Royal Academy. They denounced Joshua Reynolds as "Sir Slosua," and rejected the dramatic chiaroscuro, pyramidal composition, histrionic gesture, and loose, open brushwork that the Academy promoted.⁵⁹ They believed earlier art, pre-Raphael, was more direct and realistic. They liberated themselves from tradition through private manifestos and were passionate about their art. Inspired by a book of engravings by Carlo Lasinio, based on the fourteenth century frescoes of the Campo Santo in Pisa, Italy, they adopted into their art the formal qualities of outline, sharp contour and flat, shaded area. The Pre-Raphaelite Brothers were also passionate in their pursuit of truth in nature with every detail painstakingly rendered.⁶⁰ Nature as sublime was seen as a humbling force. Direct imitation of it was, in their minds, naturally relative to the moral strictness and uprightness of the day as to paint nature

was to draw one closer to God, that which was ethical and true. They agreed art had a moral and social responsibility, but achieved this through symbolic rather than literal visual means. They couched their didacticism in classical, medieval, literary, and religious subjects. The PRB believed the concern for detail, truth in nature, and subjects drawn from a simpler time would teach, and in the words of Millais, "turn the minds of men to good reflections."⁶¹ But many found the extreme attention to detail, presumed lack of draughtsmanship, and gaudy palette offensive. The art brushed all standards of subtlety and good taste.⁶² Charles Dickens spoke for many when he criticized Millais's Christ in the House of his Parents, dated 1849, for its democratization of religion. The PRB's attempt to call attention to reality was misinterpreted as an attempt to evade it.

John Ruskin, the most prominent English art critic of the nineteenth century, with the ability to dictate artistic careers, became an apologist for the movement and justified the necessity of the new approach.⁶³ He despised classical art, favoring truth in nature. He wrote, "Pre-Raphaelitism has but one principle, that of absolute, uncompromising truth in all that it does, obtained by working everything down to the most minute detail, from nature and from nature only."⁶⁴ Anything formulaic and mannered was dreadful, he felt.

Among the PRB's more easily understood works were those that depicted wayward or fallen women. Prostitution was an unfortunate result of the social and economic pressures of the time. Often paid low wages and unable to support themselves, many women were forced to sell their bodies for survival. The plight of working class Victorian women is depicted in Rossetti's Found (fig. 9). Begun in 1854 and unfinished when he died, it shows a shepherd who has discovered his former country love has moved to the oppressive city and turned whore. She sinks in shame as he attempts to symbolically repurify her by pulling her to a standing position. She has become a slave to the society in which she lives, trapped, much like the calf who struggles enmeshed in the net. As this painting shows, Rossetti sought to paint women as victims of Victorian society.

But to look at this work and others like it is to assume that the PRB sanctioned Victorian morality. By exploring how economic and social forces victimize women, Rossetti, perhaps unwittingly, reinforces Victorian morality. The PRB's attempts to draw attention to the harsh realities of Victorian society were misconstrued as traditional statements about Victorian morality.

By 1853 the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was dissolved, but as late as the early twentieth century artists whose work bore some of the same stylistic

qualities was termed Pre-Raphaelite. With Ruskin's support many artists were attracted to the movement. But those who joined often misunderstood the movement's original intentions. While the PRB aimed to expose the inequality and problems of Victorian industrial society, later artists appeals to the past "in which class and gender antagonism might be obscured through the evocation of times when such issues were not perceived to exist, led, inevitably, to escapism."⁶⁵ Members of the PRB had themselves fallen into this escapism by concentrating too much on classical, medieval, literary, and religious subjects too difficult to comprehend. Their aim became more decorative than substantive, and women were increasingly ornamental. Percy Bate, chronicler of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, wrote that Rossetti and Burne-Jones were the two artists whose work gave rise to the popular use of the term Pre-Raphaelite:

The proper application of the word to express the aim of a group of artists who went straight to the fount of Nature for teaching and inspiration, rather than imbibing them from the polluted source of the convention of the schools, became perverted to express (and still does convey to the popular mind) the style of the two great poetic painters who respectively inaugurated and carried on a new and

individual kind of art. This is accounted for by the fact that in the case of these two artists (maybe the most original spirits of all who were connected with the movement) the principles of Pre-Raphaelism were applied to a class of picture but little known previous to their time, pictures of pure romance, of wonderland.⁶⁶

Burne-Jones said of his work, it was like "a beautiful romantic dream of something that never was."⁶⁷ Late Pre-Raphaelitism came to denote eclecticism and poetry, rather than didacticism and moral uplift. The reversion to a later time could be seen as nothing else but a preference for the past which had no moral or social relevance for the present.

In 1859 Ruskin gave up his Academy Notes because he no longer supported the new works, and he denounced the changes in Millais's and Rossetti's art. He maintained a fondness for Hunt who never abandoned the original PRB style and intent. Ruskin was further aggravated by the Aesthetic Movement which rejected the realism that he and the PRB sought. Bate thought the art should be termed Romantic, not Pre-Raphaelite.⁶⁸

Whistler, abandoned traditional craftsmanship and literal subject in favor of art-for-art's-sake abstractions. Ruskin, once a promoter of alternative kinds of truth in nature, found Whistler's work insulting, particularly Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket, dated 1875. He referred to the

work as no more than splashes of paint on canvas. The two engaged in a much publicized debate on the validity of an art that had no subject or meaning beyond beauty. The argument resulted in a trial, which Whistler won. Nothing definitive resulted from the farce, but it appeared that art was allowed, by the artistic community at large, to become more removed from the grasp of the public. Members of the Aesthetic Movement opposed the democratization of art, citing its appeal as to those with developed art faculties and tastes. It was an art for the educated and elite, not Philistines.

This new decorative romanticism characterized the art of the Aesthetic Movement comprised of the late Pre-Raphaelites and the Victorian Olympians. The search for ideal beauty and the objectification of women were the most predominant themes linking the two styles.

Rossetti's art is characteristic of the late Pre-Raphaelites. Putting aside any attempt at modern moral subjects, he favored the cult of feminine beauty.⁶⁹ In Lady Lilith (fig. 10), dated 1864, a beautiful damsel, clad in loose drapery, seductively leans toward the viewer, in a shallow space, combing her locks while looking into a mirror. The background, full of luscious vegetation and color lacks depth. She is a woman of desire, captivating the male viewer with her beauty and sexuality. The tempter of male virtue,

she waits to ensnare man in her long, flowing locks and to sap him of his energy.

By mid-century there was the perception that women, who were beginning to seek independence, were a threat to Victorian morality. They used their sexuality to seduce men and usurp authority. There was at the time the belief that too much sex depleted men's intellects. Thus expressions of women in art were no longer as virtuous keepers of the home and men's souls, but as evil, self-serving temptresses.

Burne-Jones emerged as the head of the late Pre-Raphaelites after Rossetti's death in 1882. He and others, Morris and Frederick Sandys, created a dreamworld based on legend and fantasy, and continued Rossetti's tradition of objectifying women as beautiful seductresses. Burne-Jones's Phyllis and Demophoön (fig. 11), dated 1870, is partly autobiographical. The Thracian princess, Phyllis, was loved and abandoned by Demophoön. She was subsequently turned into an almond tree. Here she reverts into human form embracing Demophoön as he passes. He struggles to get away as she pulls closer with a stare of evil possession and seduction. Maria Zambaco, with whom Burne-Jones had an affair between 1868 and 1871, is the model for Phyllis. By the time the work was painted their affair was coming to an end.⁷⁰ Perhaps he felt she stifled his creative ability?

The late nineteenth century was a time of intense artistic ferment, and the aesthetically appealing new style cut across all media, especially decorative arts, interior design and architecture. In 1862 Morris and Company was founded to produce art for domestic and ecclesiastical interiors and became the catalyst for the Arts and Crafts Movement.⁷¹ Evelyn De Morgan's husband, William, produced works for the company.

The Victorian Olympians of the late century felt their neoclassical art was more fit for a democratized society as beauty was seen in itself a moral force with the ability to improve people and society.⁷² Pre-Raphaelitism proved too radical. But the Victorian Olympian's art was as fantastic and elitist as ever, depicting a time and space far removed from everyday life.

This movement, its search for ideal beauty in antiquity, was characterized by the art of Leighton, Watts, Poynter, Moore, and Lawrence Alma-Tadema. A longing for the grand past of Greece and Rome permeated Victorian culture at the end of the century. It was a romantic style that saw antiquity as a golden age simpler, nobler and more inspiring than their own.⁷³ They admired Greek sculpture and rediscovered the Italian High Renaissance. Both Leighton and Watts had copies of the Parthenon frieze set into the walls of their studios.

Using classical forms, these artists created a fantastic atmosphere of the past, in which large, contemplative, and languid beauties waited for men to observe and become transfixed by their world. The paintings are titillating. As the moral ice-cap of Victorian life began to melt, male artists took the opportunity to depict women as seductive and erotic.⁷⁴ Leighton's Flaming June (fig. 12), dated c. 1895, is typical of the work of the Victorian Olympians.⁷⁵ In an antique space, built of marble and lacking depth, the image is similar to Rossetti's paintings of women. The viewer, presumably male, immediately focuses on the figure, lost in a world of sleep and dreams. She is indolent and carnal. In a cool setting she awaits the warmth of the male gaze. The rich color adds a splendor to the scene of an idyllic past now lost. Though sensual, these images reinforced Victorian women's dependency on men. These women are spineless and invalid reassuring superior male strength.⁷⁶

Alma-Tadema's In the Tepidarium (fig. 13), was likewise meant to excite the male viewer. It is a painting about absolute desire. A young woman, perfectly idle, reclines on a bed of soft fur holding a strigil in one hand and an ostrich feather in the other, hiding her pubic area. Her breasts are exposed and even highlighted to capture the viewers attention.

Distinct in subject matter, the Aesthetic Movement's two trends had the same artistic philosophy. Both the late Pre-

Raphaelites and the Victorian Olympians favored the forms of the past in their conscious attempt to create ideal works of art devoid of moral content. They intended to create a world of beauty and escapism, and in doing so objectified women. Their art reinforced the differences between the sexes. Evelyn De Morgan's art challenged these representations of women, and called for their equality. Her female subjects are not depicted as evil, seductive, or helpless, but as powerful or as unfortunate victims of Victorian morality. She painted sympathetic images of women subjugated to men and the home, but capable in mind and body, and longing for escape.

Germaine Greer asserted that the Pre-Raphaelite movement attracted women artists because the archaic postures, bodies covered by period costumes, and backgrounds simplified by patterning, were within their competence. Their training had been strong on patterning and portraiture and weak on construction, movement and dynamic.⁷⁷ This seems an understatement of women artists's capabilities.⁷⁸

For Evelyn De Morgan Pre-Raphaelite art was not a compromise. She admired the precision and attention to detail that the Pre-Raphaelite style offered, but derived her style from the early Italians and Botticelli, though the PRB offered a medium in which she could symbolically express her social concerns. Bate noted it is almost always the fate of a painter to be classed an imitator who finds that the method

and style best adapted to the embodiment of her ideas have been used and developed by a predecessor.⁷⁹ In addition, changes in artistic taste toward an escapist style of art and the loss of interest in the moral questions that Evelyn De Morgan's art implied, made full appreciation of her work difficult.⁸⁰ However, contemporary art historian Andrea Rose carried on the Victorian tradition described by Bate and superficially identified Evelyn De Morgan as an imitator of Burne-Jones, calling her art decorative and morally pointless, "...a far cry from the committed work of the original Pre-Raphaelites."⁸¹

Evelyn De Morgan's use of classically draped female figures, such as Dejanira (fig. 14), dated 1878, identified her early in her career as an Aesthete and a follower of her male contemporaries, but the work is wholly different from the sensual portrayals of her male contemporaries. It depicts the wife of Herakles, who killed him for his infidelity, standing in a long, vertical canvas. She is seen in profile, walking to the right, behind her is an Italianate landscape with tall cypress and a low horizon. She is dressed in clinging, classical drapery; her robe takes flight over her head. It appears a sheer gust of wind has come from behind. She holds her head in shelter or in grief, perhaps having just realized her deadly action. The work bears some sentiment, but it lacks the predominant sexuality in the work of her male

contemporaries. Her art is symbolic rather than Symbolist, and shows the pain women have historically borne at the hands of men.

While much of the literature of the late nineteenth century exposed the social ills of Victorian society, prostitution, illiteracy, disease, hunger, the art of the time turned its back, preferring instead to create a world of fantasy and escape. I hope to show that Evelyn De Morgan's art was unique in its attention to the issues of the day and should not be mistakenly identified with the art of her male contemporaries. She was deeply committed to her work and had tremendous integrity. She worked ceaselessly, and her art never molded to the latest trends. While art moved toward Modernism, she remained true to her own style preferring truth in nature, precision, and moral import, favored by the early Italians, Botticelli, and the PRB. Her paintings had an original and specific message. They were meant to invoke sympathy and to inspire women to seek freedom from their oppressive situation. They were also signs to men of the injustice of Victorian morality. Evelyn De Morgan's paintings are a reflection of her own life as a woman with ambition subjugated to the oppressive dictates of Victorian morality and her struggle to break free of them. By the turn of the century her symbolic works were considered out of step with the times. But they stand as documents of Victorian women's

unhappiness with their situation and are examples of the feminist reaction to Victorian morality.

CHAPTER FOUR

Assessing Evelyn De Morgan's Style and Character as an Artist

Evelyn De Morgan was politically progressive and rejected the traditionally subordinate role of women in Victorian society. One of a select group of women who made women the center of their art, she placed the daring heroine in direct conflict with the traditional values and feminine ideals of conservative Victorian society. In several works she portrayed women as a symbols of power, perhaps during a time of youthful enthusiasm when she felt invincible and thought she could change currently held perceptions of women. In others works, mostly late, she painted women as victims of Victorian society.

Despite the apparent difference in subject matter in the art of Evelyn De Morgan and her male contemporaries, particularly Burne-Jones, critics and art historians always look for what is the same rather than what is different between artists and works of art. Mill noted the only thing holding women back from success was a perceived lack of originality.⁸² He held that women were uneducated, had no knowledge of past genius, and, therefore, lacked ability. Women could never be more than dabblers. While Ruskin encouraged women to paint, he believed they could offer nothing original as art. He encouraged them to copy the Old

Masters. He commissioned some women artists, namely Anna Blunden, to make copies for organizations like the Arundel Society.⁸³ With the great art critic of the age refusing to recognize women as significant artists there was little hope for progress. Furthermore, this practice of copying undermined women's creative powers, relegating them permanently to amateur status.

Given the obstacles in her way, it is remarkable that Evelyn De Morgan achieved the respect and notoriety that she did. But, because she has not received enough critical attention, despite her highly individual achievement, she may always remain subordinate to Burne-Jones.

Evelyn De Morgan's influences were varied. Stylistically her art is said to combine the brilliant palette of Rossetti with the draughtsmanship of Burne-Jones.⁸⁴ When she exhibited Ariadne in Naxos, at the Grosvenor Gallery, her work appeared alongside Burne-Jones's with which she was not familiar. She had already been in Italy for two years, 1875-77, having left the Slade Schools. In Italy she travelled the country and stayed with her uncle Spencer-Stanhope whose encouragement of her in her youth was significant. Her traditional art training had been at the Slade under Poynter, and only later did she know the work of the PRB and Burne-Jones.

However, the most profound influences on Evelyn De Morgan's art were the early Italian painters, and especially

Botticelli. Her fondness for their art was most certainly acquired during her time in Italy, though she had long admired their work in the collection of the National Gallery. Rich colors and the love of the sun and warmth of the Italian landscape are ever present in her work. While Rossetti, likewise, used deep reds and greens, this warmth of color is absent from the work of Burne-Jones.⁸⁵ Social content came later to Evelyn De Morgan and this was most certainly influenced by the moral concerns of Ruskin and the PRB.

Shaw Sparrow noted that when Evelyn De Morgan showed Ariadne in Naxos, although the work possessed many Pre-Raphaelite characteristics, close drawing, precise composition, style and character, she hardly knew the work of Millais, Rossetti, and Burne-Jones.⁸⁶ She had not seen Millais's early paintings in the Pre-Raphaelite style until they were brought to public exhibition in 1886, and although she knew Rossetti's poems, his art was unknown to her until she visited a show of his work held after his death in 1882. Evelyn De Morgan probably had seen a few of Burne-Jones's paintings, but his art had not influenced her work. Sparrow added, her style came to her first hand, a natural expression of her spiritual nature; she understood the great predecessors of Raphael.⁸⁷

Stirling described Evelyn De Morgan as seeking "to express the qualities of truth and directness, of honesty and

definite inspiration which they discerned in the work of the early Italian Masters;" she believed in faithful adherence to accuracy of fact and detail.⁸⁸ The word "they" referred to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. She was drawn at an early age to an art in which she could apply her excellence in draughtsmanship.

Some critics have noted a similar fondness for androgynous figures in the work of Evelyn De Morgan and Burne-Jones. The assertion seems somewhat unfounded. They both used rather elongated figures, but gender is readily apparent in Evelyn De Morgan's figures. They are clearly women, and symbols of female power. They are robust and Italianate, while Burne-Jones's figures are mystical and wan.⁸⁹

After Rossetti's death, Burne-Jones became the leader of the Aesthetic Movement, and anyone who approximated his style, despite many individual artistic qualities, was named a follower. Ironically an early painting by Evelyn De Morgan, Aurora Triumphans, dated 1877-78, was for twenty years thought to be by Burne-Jones, as the signature E.P. (for Evelyn Pickering) was forged to read E.B.J.

Stirling wrote, "only a superficial inspection can link such dissimilar work; for the art of Burne-Jones, with its calm, passionless beauty, is more Byzantine in character, while that of Evelyn never wavered from her early allegiance to the glowing and more animated Italian School..."⁹⁰ Burne-

Jones frequently painted the nude, a sign of idealism prevalent in the late nineteenth century. Evelyn De Morgan rarely did.

A similarity in figures cuts across all Pre-Raphaelite art. And many of the artists shared models. In Evelyn De Morgan's youth it is known that she made members of her household, her sister and the nurse Jane Hales, pose. But her figures have the stock large eyes with drooping lids, strong though not big nose, and full lips. The elongation of the body is also common. These same qualities mark the figures in many Pre-Raphaelite works.

Maria Zambaco was a popular model among Rossetti, Morris, and Burne-Jones. See Rossetti's sketch of the model, dated 1870, and Burne-Jones's dated a year later, (figs. 15-16). In the 1870 sketch Zambaco looks very much like Jane Morris, Rossetti's most famous obsession of his late career.

While Evelyn De Morgan's figure for Medea (fig. 17), dated 1889, looks very much like Jane Hales who sat for The Dryad (fig. 18), dated 1884-85, she is similar to both Zambaco and Jane Morris who sat for Evelyn De Morgan's The Hour Glass (fig. 19), dated 1904-05. Morris was then quite old, but Evelyn De Morgan transformed her into a much younger woman. See the sketch, dated c. 1904, (fig. 20). The painting was a tribute to Morris and symbolically alluded to her fondness for music and skill as an embroiderer. The viewer is aware of

Morris's interests, unlike in Rossetti's objectifying paintings of her. Eternal Life stands piping in the doorway behind the seated figure who contemplates the Sands of Life running through the Hour Glass at her side. The figures in the tapestry behind are symbolic of the past joys of life.⁹¹ She knew Jane Morris through her husband's close personal and professional association with William Morris, and the painting is an example that Evelyn De Morgan used the same models as her male contemporaries. She did not copy figures directly from their works.

Shortly after William De Morgan's death, Evelyn De Morgan set to work on a tombstone for his grave, (fig. 21). Two female figures appear on it, one representing grief, extinguishing her lighted torch in sorrow and broken heart, and the other a winged and joyous Psyche.⁹² Isabel McAllister, in her memorial article on the artist, noted the figure of grief's strong likeness to Evelyn De Morgan.⁹³ And while carved in stone, the figure looks very much like those in Evelyn De Morgan's paintings. It is like the figure in Luna (fig. 22), dated 1885, which is a self-portrait. Perhaps the artist used herself as a model.

Botticelli was popular in the late nineteenth century, and many painters looked at his art. He was a painter of grace and movement. Burne-Jones was early influenced by him and attempted to treat his elongated figures, the three

graces, in the painting The Mill (fig. 23), dated 1870, with the same delicacy as Botticelli.⁹⁴ Burne-Jones however denied them movement. Save for the rather stilted blowing drapery of the figure in the middle, the figures' feet remain firmly planted on the ground.⁹⁵ In The Garden of Opportunity (fig. 24), similar in composition to The Mill, Evelyn De Morgan captured Botticelli's liveliness. Her figures appear to literally glide across the Italian landscaped stage of this painting. It is likely that both artists took from Botticelli's work and arrived at a similar result. The assumption that women naturally follow men is unfair and too many critics, both Victorian men and modern feminists have perpetuated this myth. While Evelyn De Morgan and Burne-Jones were both influenced by Botticelli, she captured his essence more effectively.

Flora (fig. 25), dated 1894, is drawn from Botticelli's Primavera (fig. 26), dated c. 1482, in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence. In her love of detail, Evelyn De Morgan painstakingly rendered each flower, each leaf, and each blade of grass. Flora's face is delicate and her hair and dress dance with her every step. Her gentle, elongated fingers disperse roses across the already flower-laden lush grass she stands lightly upon. Behind her is a Nespolo tree hanging with ripe fruit, which with the figure makes for a painting with little depth. Peeking through the tree is the hint of a

landscape, mostly sky and far off mountains. The new sun shines in the upper left of the sky. The decorative elements and setting are indebted to Botticelli. The landscape is nearly exact and the dynamic figure dancing lightly is indicative of his work.⁹⁶ Evelyn De Morgan's Flora appears almost an amalgam of Botticelli's Venus and Flora in Primavera. Her pose and the tenderness of her expression are like that of Venus, but the detail of the garment is like that of Flora. Evelyn De Morgan painted Flora entirely in Florence where she saw Botticelli's work at the Uffizi.

Her Flora is also very similar to the central figure in Botticelli's The Birth of Venus, dated c. 1484-86, in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence. And Boreas in Boreas and the Dying Leaves could be drawn from the zephyr in the same painting, with his expression, furrowed brow, and swept back hair.

But Evelyn De Morgan derived more than modelling from the work of Botticelli. She also admired his use of perspective and that of the early Italians Fra Filippo Lippi and Andrea Del Castagno. The mathematical perspective ostensibly created by the early Italian masters Donatello and Ghiberti, made it possible to represent three-dimensional space on a flat surface in a way that all distances remained measurable.

The space recedes rather dramatically in The Soul's Prison House (fig. 27). Lines in the brickwork of the wall and floor cast the eye back to a single vanishing point in the

landscape beyond the confines of the cell. The tomb-like seat the female figure sits on is canted, and the viewer looks down on the scene, almost as if from a bird's eye view. It is similar to Fra Filippo Lippi's fresco The Banquet of Herod (fig. 28), dated c. 1452-66, Duomo, Prato, in which all the architectural elements, the mouldings, arches, doorways, tiled floor, and coffered ceiling create the illusion of space.

The seated figure in Evelyn De Morgan's painting appears like many fifteenth century Madonnas, sitting on a pedestal and facing the viewer. Proper Victorian women were often compared to the Virgin, and both were elevated to sainthood. She holds a scroll with the words of St. Augustine rather than the Christ child.

Evelyn De Morgan also admired the early Italian's love of decorative motifs. The rich tile work and decorative mouldings in Medea were probably influenced by Andrea Del Castagno's fresco The Last Supper (fig. 29), dated c. 1445-50, S. Apollonia, Florence.

Perhaps Donatello's sculpture, which recaptured classical contrapposto after the Gothic period influenced Evelyn De Morgan's figures too. His work showed movement and articulation, fluidity and elasticity, and a subtle elongation, similar to the figures of Botticelli. Stirling told of Evelyn De Morgan's frequent forays throughout

Florence. She adored Italy and the influence of these artists on her work was profound.

Evelyn De Morgan knew Burne-Jones and his work later in her career. He was a close friend through William De Morgan. But there are more than just stylistic differences in the work of Evelyn De Morgan and Burne-Jones. She favored emotion and contemporaneity, and Burne-Jones preferred the world of imagination and the past. He wrote: "I mean by a picture a beautiful romantic dream of something that never was, never will be -- in a light better than any light that ever shone -- in a land no one can define or remember, only desire..."⁹⁷ Art, particularly the imaging of women, had become increasingly remote in the pursuit of pleasure and flights of fancy. One critic in the 1883 Spectator may have paid Evelyn De Morgan a backhanded compliment when he wrote, "...perhaps her chief fault is that she disdains almost too entirely, all the cheap attractiveness of modern painting."⁹⁸

The mistake critics made that Evelyn De Morgan followed Burne-Jones technique led them to misread the content of her work as vacuous and morally pointless. She was a radical and very much aware of her situation as a Victorian woman artist. She sought to depict her own plight and that of her sisters in her art. In both content and style, her art is distinct from her contemporaries'.

Evelyn De Morgan despised the life dealt Victorian women. She favored equal opportunity and refused to exist as a servile, complaisant woman herself. For her, life, work and art were beckoning "and" she said rather irate "I have to sit in the drawing-room and listen to idiots talking about dressmakers and servants! This enforced idleness is insupportable."⁹⁹ That Evelyn De Morgan's concerns were not those of traditional Victorian women, is reflected in her art and life. The art of the PRB proved women could not live up to Victorian morality. Evelyn De Morgan's art calls the standards into question.

Evelyn De Morgan's work shows an interest in classical and medieval, allegorical and literary themes without the sentiment of the late Pre-Raphaelites or Victorian Olympians. She avoided the religious themes of her uncle and the PRB, although a spirituality pervades her late art.

Her knowledge of these themes was drawn from her early and extensive education. As a child she dabbled in writing. Between the ages of nine and thirteen, she wrote poetry of her love of nature and longing for the shore; "...so keenly did she hunger for the tonic to brain and nerve which she found in the dancing waves and the brine-drenched air."¹⁰⁰ This would significantly affect her later work in painting. And such allegorical works on the power of nature as Aurora Triumphans, Boreas and the Dying Leaves, and The Storm Spirits, are

typical of her early period. An excerpt from an early poem by Evelyn De Morgan about a child whisked away by the spirit of lightning may inform her painting The Storm Spirits (fig. 30):

Far behind the woodlands leaving
 Swift they scour the Heaven's dark brow,
 Then, with sudden fury turning,
 On the earth they lighten now.¹⁰¹

Her earliest known work, Ariadne in Naxos, painted in secret in her bedroom at 6 Upper Grosvenor Street, shows her early concern for classical themes and is the beginning of her work that focuses on women as subjects. Though the painting shows Evelyn De Morgan's fondness for the antique, her Ariadne is not the docile, sexual creature who appears in the art of the late Pre-Raphaelites and the Victorian Olympians.

There was a revival in myth and historical subjects among women artists in the 1870s.¹⁰² They painted mostly famous women, including, Rosamund, St. Cecilia, Cassandra, Medea, and Ariadne, and it was common for these subjects to have contemporary meaning.¹⁰³ There were few ways in which women could free themselves from their plight. In the late nineteenth century, the most effective way to achieve release, as John Langdon Davies pointed out, was for women to throw off the garments provided them by greater forces, men, and stand up naked as women themselves, primitive, uncivilized, worshippers and dispensers of fertility.¹⁰⁴ Women identified

with ancient goddesses and sorceresses. For them female sexuality became a symbol of power, and for men it was threatening.

Evelyn De Morgan showed her artistic latitude by sculpting a bronze bust of Medusa (fig. 31). Executed in Italy between 1875 and 77, it was not shown until 1882 at the Grosvenor Gallery. She depicted the mythical woman known specifically for her female power. A victim of male circumstances, she was transformed from a beautiful woman into a repulsive monster after sleeping with Poseidon. But she turned her misfortune on the enemy by changing him to stone. This led to the use of her face on warriors shields as a protective talisman. The Studio referred to the sculpture as "as largely handled as it is strong and noble in conception."¹⁰⁵

The massive head is majestic in its pose; its gaze is full of a brooding melancholy. The snaky locks entwined above its brow are full of a nauseating lissomeness, while to add to the realism, one reptile has become detached and lies, apparently writhing, at the base of the neck. The whole conveys a sense... of strength, of relentless force...¹⁰⁶

Evelyn De Morgan depicted Medusa as a symbol of female power and legend, while Burne-Jones depicted the myth in four panels with Perseus as the hero. Perseus's, and perhaps Burne-Jones's, mission was to slay Medusa, the symbol of female power. In a drawing, dated c. 1875, Frederick Sandys preferred to depict a wild and mad Medusa, (fig. 32). Her abundant tresses were synonymous with the beguiling and damnation of innocent men.¹⁰⁷ His Medusa is not the image of female power, but of crazed destroyer. Sandys favored half-length figures of beautiful women of destructive force.

Evelyn De Morgan painted several other similarly powerful women of classical myth. She painted Cassandra, dated 1898, the priestess of Apollo and prophetess who foretold the destruction of Troy to unheeding citizens. A companion piece to Helen of Troy (fig. 33), Cassandra is depicted as beautiful and strong. Troy is seen burning in the background.¹⁰⁸ She is contrasted with Helen, and depicted as smart, not vain. Sandys also painted Cassandra, dated c. 1895. His image is like that of Medusa.

Flora is the patron of prostitutes, the ancient Italian goddess of the flowers and the spring, the giver of life and regeneration. One wonders how deeply Evelyn De Morgan intended these images of myth to be read, but they are all female subjects. She had an impressive knowledge of classics and presumably knew mythology well thanks to the rounded

education provided her by her mother at a very early age. And to the public who knew mythology, these works certainly carried a potent message.

But without knowledge of mythology, these images of beautiful women still exude authority. Evelyn De Morgan's figures are not sexual, erotic or evil. They are powerful in their femininity, independent and self-assured. Her image is very unlike Francois-Pascal-Simon Gerard's salon painting Flora (fig. 34), dated c. 1802. Nearly naked, save for a bit of diaphanous clothing, the figure has a very aroused way of barely covering her breasts. She is not the evil temptress depicted by so many late century male artists, but she invites the viewer to satisfy her sexual desire. John William Waterhouse's early Flora (fig. 35), dated 1870, is similar. Naked from the waist up, her breasts bare, the figure plays the cymbals and dances to enchant the viewer.

Women, like paintings, were to be ornamental and never a threat to Victorian morality and the social structure. But by mid-century men were losing control over women in the home. Becoming increasingly less isolated and taking action for women's rights into their own hands, they developed circles for women, support systems. These groups, sisterhoods, threatened to undermine the control and superiority of Victorian men, who defensively referred to these progressive women as witches. It is reflected in the art of Evelyn De

Morgan's male contemporaries. Burne-Jones's Beguiling of Merlin (fig. 36), dated 1874, shows Vivien shameless and serpentine attempting to imprison Merlin with her savage womanhood.¹⁰⁹ In Waterhouse's La Belle Dame Sans Merci (fig. 37), dated 1893, Keats's "fairy's child" entwines a knight in her hair like a spider catching her prey. Spiders are often associated with witchcraft and the occult. These works, like the images of wayward and fallen women, were cautionary.

Evelyn De Morgan painted women as witches and recognized their constructive, rather than destructive, power. Like Mill she called attention to women's intelligence and cunning in images such as The Love Potion (fig. 38), dated 1903, and Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosamund (fig. 39). The latter is dated c. 1888. Evelyn De Morgan did not keep a record of her works, and in many cases the date is not recorded on the painting. A painting similar in its technique and treatment of shadowy dragons, The Captives (fig. 40) is also mistakenly dated c. 1888, but it is known to have been painted after 1914.¹¹⁰ Thus I suspect Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosamund is a later work.

The works have a medieval, decorative quality, but Evelyn De Morgan rejects the image of the evil temptress in favor of a positive image of female power. The Love Potion depicts a single figure in the act of mixing a potion which she may intend to use on the lovers outside the window. In Queen

Eleanor and Fair Rosamund, the witch, guided through the labyrinth by a red thread, holds a cup of poison meant for Rosamund.

In Medea, Evelyn De Morgan again painted the lone female figure of classical mythology. Medea especially rejected the traditional female role and spoke out against the subjugation of women. Her words, as recorded by John Langdon Davies, in her famous speech are fitting even centuries later:

Of all things that have life and sense, we women are most wretched. For we are compelled to buy with gold a husband who is also -- worst of all! -- the master of our person. And on his character, good or bad, our whole fate depends. For divorce is regarded as a disgrace to a woman and she cannot repudiate her husband. Then coming as she does into the midst of manners and customs strange to her, she would need the gift of divination -- unless she has been taught at home -- to know how best to treat her bedfellow. And if we manage so well that our husband remains faithful to us, and does not break away, we may think ourselves fortunate; if not, there is nothing for it but death. A man when he is vexed at home can go out and find relief among his friends or acquaintances; but we women have none to look to but him. They tell us we live a sheltered

life at home while they go to the wars; but that is nonsense. For I would rather go into battle twice than bear a child once.¹¹¹

Perhaps Evelyn De Morgan identified with Medea and was attempting to speak to other women like herself who rejected traditional Victorian womanhood. She never had children and married late at the age of thirty-two. Whitney Chadwick wrote of Medea, "...[it] replaces conventional male representations of Medea as a cruel temptress and the murderer of her children with an image of a woman skilled in sorcery."¹¹²

Sandys's Medea (fig. 41), dated 1868, is evil and destructive. She is a madwoman who scratches at herself. She is not the cunning woman who helped Jason win the golden fleece from the Kingdom of Colchis, but the murderer of her children.¹¹³ Waterhouse's Jason and Medea (fig. 42), dated 1907, shows a calculating and demented sorceress mixing her death potion as her husband innocently looks on. Jason is the sympathetic character here and not the oppressor that drove Medea to her desperate act.

Mermaids, like nymphs, were also popular as evil temptresses. The sleek fish in Waterhouse's A Mermaid (fig. 43), dated 1901, waits on shore. As she combs out her salty tresses, she is poised ready to snare mortal man. Woman as mermaid in Burne-Jones's The Depths of the Sea (fig. 44), dated 1887, pulls man unconscious to the bottom of the ocean

floor. She looks wickedly at the viewer, presumably male, with her arms wrapped around his loins. But mermaids, an exclusively female species, can also represent sisterhood and alliance, and the shameless independence and freedom that men feared. Evelyn De Morgan's The Little Sea Maid (fig. 45), shown in 1888 at the New Gallery, is characteristic of her literary works and illustrates Hans Christian Andersen's fairy-tale "The Little Mermaid."¹¹⁴ It shows a sea king's daughter who has sold her beautiful voice for feet rather than a tail, all for the love of an earthly prince. The little mermaid is a victim of Victorian tradition. She sits alone, a sad mortal woman, on a rock cooling the feet that give her stabbing pain when she walks. Evelyn De Morgan may have been attracted to Andersen's story because it shows the cruel lengths to which women had to go to please men. On the other hand, her sisters, The Five Mermaids (fig. 46), represent female solidarity. They stand arm in arm, united against the tradition of female sacrifice to men and Victorian society. The two paintings are pendants.

In Victorian England middle class women were trapped in lives lived according to men's self-serving assumptions about feminine virtue, sequestered with no hope of promise or escape.¹¹⁵ In the words of Wollstonecraft, women were "taught from their infancy that beauty is woman's sceptre, the mind shapes itself to the body, and, roaming round its gilt cage,

only seeks to adore its prison."¹¹⁶ Though Evelyn De Morgan refused to live such a life, she did many paintings of captive women calling attention to the plight of her female contemporaries. The Soul's Prison House, The Prisoner, and Hope in the Prison of Despair, all undated and medievalizing, depict women cloistered in dungeon-like cells hungering for escape. The theme was also present in literature. Emily Brontë's poem The Prisoner of 1846, about a real-life prisoner, was a metaphor for the plight of Victorian women.¹¹⁷

In The Soul's Prison House a young innocent, clad in classical drapery sits in a cold, dank cage. Fungus grows through the flooring, and the seat is suggestive of a tomb.¹¹⁸ She faces the viewer. A small window behind the figure lends a hint of the faraway outside world. The large, affecting eyes of the young beauty stare at the viewer as if quietly begging for help. She holds a scroll inscribed with the words of St. Augustine: "Illuminate, oh illuminate my blind soul/Which sitteth in darkness, and the Shadow of Death."¹¹⁹ This work is perhaps derived from a poem by William Morris.¹²⁰

The Prisoner (fig. 47) shows the profile of a woman from the shoulders up. She stands at the barred window contemplating the incredible freedom of the outside world from which she will forever remain apart. She appears to be praying for her savior. Her wrists are shackled. She is clad in rich, medieval dress. The peacock feather which adorns her

robe is a symbol of Victorian vanity, or perhaps the mark of her male oppressor. But it is all she has left of the material world.

In Hope in the Prison of Despair (fig. 48) the captive woman is being freed. She has been released from the shackles at the lower right. A female figure, the deliverer, carries the light of independence. She shines it on the woman who mysteriously recoils from it.¹²¹ Perhaps she is not quite ready to face the world, although she faces the window to the outside. As death often promised hope for a new life, perhaps this is the angel of death. Evelyn De Morgan painted a work by that title, dated 1890. It is possible that these three paintings are meant to be read in succession.

The idea of salvation was also portrayed in the painting SOS (fig. 49) in which a woman stands upon a bed of writhing dragon-like creatures that appear to symbolize men. She looks toward heaven, the light above, for safety and relief from her grim life on earth. Conversely Evelyn De Morgan painted a man, richly clad, seated on a stone bench in a beautiful, blooming landscape, but with a tormented look on his face; he dwells in the inferno of his own making in a painting titled A Soul in Hell.

Evelyn De Morgan continued to paint the cloistered woman theme throughout her life. Perhaps these were the seeds for later paintings. She attacked the theme in two works known to

have been painted in the last ten years of her life. They show, with a greater spirituality and sensitivity, women as victims. They likely reflect Evelyn De Morgan's life of long hard work in which recognition was significant, but minor in comparison to the success of her male contemporaries. Though Evelyn De Morgan committed to defy it, she was herself a victim of Victorian morality and the social structure. Perhaps Evelyn De Morgan felt a certain melancholy about the future for women and vowed to boldly expose their plight. She remained determined. These later works reveal the idea of spiritual development, of growth and struggle towards a better world.¹²²

The late paintings are still very much Pre-Raphaelite in their rich detail, fondness for line and contour, and patches of bold color. While the works remain symbolic, Evelyn De Morgan's message is clear. Even the titles of the works are telling. These late works are unfortunately little known since she rarely showed her work after the turn of the century, and upon her death nearly all of her work went into private collections.

The Captives by title alone suggests its import. It is dated by some as c. 1888, but Stirling dated the work after 1914. It is similar in technique to Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosamund. Large, weighty female figures are mired among an illusory, cave-like setting, surrounded by devious, serpentine

monsters of a translucent quality. The five pretty and docile women clad in colorful, diaphanous drapery are caged in a dank lair by ever growing stalactites, like the bars of a prison cell. Dragons charge at them like angry lustful males. Three of the women recoil from the ugly monsters, one attempts to flee, and the other calmly accepts her fate. She is the protector, in the center, and provides maternal security for her sisters. In accordance with Evelyn De Morgan's late interests in Spiritualism, the scene was not an imaginary flight of fancy, but a symbol of contemporary society and its treatment of women. The dragons represent "the oppression of the outerworld, the fearsome demons of patriarchy, whose chief victims are young women."¹²³

This work contrasts neatly with Joseph Clarke's The Labourer's Welcome (fig. 50). A pretty young wife appears imprisoned in a cave-like space, dark and enclosed. She tends happily to her wifely duties, and awaits the return of her husband who appears in the mirror over the cupboard. She is the captive keeper of the home and his soul, but appears quite happy with her fate. She represents the docile and virtuous Victorian woman. Paintings like this abounded, perpetuating the notion of women's dependency on men.

The women in The Captives are unhappy and appear very much like odalisques in a seraglio, a curiosity for many male artists during the colonial period. The Victorian Olympian,

Albert Moore, depicted a similar scene in A Summer Night (fig. 51), but one in which women appear content with their hollow, inert lives. The work is the epitome of the male fantasy of Victorian women, languid and submissive. The subjugated women await their master, in this case the male viewer. The women sit idle, sleep, or quite literally stare out at the viewer and beg for attention.

The Gilded Cage is the last and most literal work by Evelyn De Morgan on the subjugation of Victorian women. Dated to 1919, it was unfinished at the artist's death. It depicts a restless, discontented young woman married to a much older man. She stands at the window yearning for the outside world. She looks enviously upon a group of gypsies who dance in the open air. A bird soars freely above them, contrasting with the one in the gilded cage, symbolic of the woman's own fate.¹²⁴ An allegory of youth and age, it is also about pre-arranged marriage and captive femininity.¹²⁵

The medieval setting of The Gilded Cage is typically Pre-Raphaelite, rich in detail and color, with a love of line and contour. Like Flora, it lacks depth. The viewer immediately focuses on the scene and the intended message is at once apparent. The couple is married. They each wear rings on the finger of their left hands. The man in Evelyn De Morgan's work is an academic, or at least has the pretenses of one. He sits at his desk, the shelf filled with books on poetry,

music, the arts and medicine. He stares blankly into space and either contemplates the loss of his wife or is oblivious to her. He symbolizes the typical Victorian male, and she his younger wife. In Victorian England the unhappy prospect of betrothal to an older man was common. Although William De Morgan was sixteen years Evelyn De Morgan's senior, the painting is not autobiographical as Jan Marsh suggested. They were notoriously happy with each other, and neither longed for the freedom from one another that The Gilded Cage depicts. Nevertheless, the work illustrates the lot of many women in Victorian England. The wife longs for the freedom of the outside world, and wants to be among the men, women and children reveling under the clear, open sky. The landscape was probably inspired by the Italian view she both admired and experienced. Similar renditions of the landscape appear in her other paintings. The woman is separated from the outside world by a vine of thorny roses that act like barbed wire. They keep her imprisoned in the pure garden of the home. At her feet jewels lie broken and strewn. A book rests open on its binding. These material items are the symbols of Victorian vanity, adornment and false intellect, which this woman casts off. They will no longer satisfy her. While vanity was thought to be the major concern for Victorian women, Evelyn De Morgan rejected it. She thought materialism

the root of all evil and subsequently completed works on this subject.

Birds were a typical symbol for women in Victorian painting because the bird was thought to be indicative of women's "imitative" behavior. Wollstonecraft in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman described women as literally bird-like, and there are countless paintings of women depicted as such.¹²⁶ In The Gilded Cage the caged bird and the bird which soars high above the clouds outside are certainly symbolic of who this woman is and who she longs to be. The painting is similar to Hunt's The Awakening Conscience. Both works depict women wakening to their fates. But while the figure in Evelyn De Morgan's painting is the virtuous Victorian woman longing for escape from her cloistered, oppressed life, Hunt shows the wayward or fallen woman realizing she has sinned and seeking redemption. Both scenes take place in an enclosed parlor, but Evelyn De Morgan's setting is a wealthy, elegant home, and Hunt's takes place in a brothel in St. John's Woods, London.

Even Spencer-Stanhope treated the subject of wayward or fallen women as victims of Victorian society suffering from their moral failings in his painting Thoughts of the Past (fig. 52), dated 1859. The Gilded Cage exposes the plight of the virtuous Victorian woman, guiltless, yet punished.¹²⁷

In nineteenth century England women were perceived to be the weaker sex, physically and mentally. They were considered

inherently the imitator and the mirror of men's souls, not creators or originators.¹²⁸ The representation of women as bird-like was only one view of this notion. They were thought to be like the moon, the reflector of the sun. Women had great intuition, but never creative ability. Women had no light of their own and were only the passive reflection of male creativity.¹²⁹ Ruskin wrote of women's role in society in his essay "Of Queen's Gardens:"

Each has what the other has not: each completes the other, and is completed by the other: they are in nothing alike... The man's power is active, progressive and defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest, wherever war is just, wherever conquest necessary. But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle, - - and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision. She sees the qualities of things, their claims, and their places. Her great function is Praise: she enters into no contest, but infallibly judges the crown of contest. By her office, and place, she is protected from all danger and temptation.¹³⁰

Men were the sun, the god of light Apollo, and women were the moon, Diana, Apollo's pale reflection in the night.¹³¹ This theme became all pervasive in Victorian society as scientists began linking women's minds and bodies to the moon, for example, linking menstrual cycles, to lunar cycles.

Artists adopted the imagery to describe contemporary cultural ideology.¹³² Women as moon came to represent women as malleable to male invention. They remained keepers of the home and men's souls. Rossetti took up the imagery in Dantis Amor (fig. 53), dated 1859. He painted the work for the newly married couple William and Jane Morris. It was the central panel of a triptych illustrating Dante's Vita Nuova and the Divine Comedy. An angel as the figure of love stands in the center holding a bow and arrow and a sundial.¹³³ In opposite corners Christ appears as the sun and Beatrice as the moon. Their worlds intersect at the center of the painting.

Evelyn De Morgan took up the theme of woman as moon. In Luna (fig. 22) a female figure, a self-portrait, reclines on the end of a crescent moon. Clad in drapery that is falling away from her breast, the figure is bound by ropes. Her left hand rests on her head and her face expresses pain. The painting is "suggestive of captivity."¹³⁴ The figure longs to break free from the bondage and oppression of the moon, the symbol of traditional Victorian womanhood, that surrounds her. She represents Evelyn De Morgan's and other women artists's

plight, confined by Victorian men to copy, rather than create, significant art. Luna is one of the most sensitively portrayed of Evelyn De Morgan's figures. It reflects life study.

Several years later she painted Sleeping Earth and Wakening Moon (fig. 54), dated c. 1900. The figures of both earth and moon are fairy-tale-like, dematerialized versions of women. Moon is depicted full-figure in her translucent sphere. Her "golden locks trail away into light clouds."¹³⁵ In contrast to depictions by male contemporaries, Evelyn De Morgan showed women not as mischievous nymphs riding on the moon or stretched along the edge, but as real women imprisoned by the moon and struggling to escape from that bondage; she is awakening to the destructive import of the symbolism which encloses her.¹³⁶ Earth sleeping is not alert, buxom and the evil, sexual temptress as in many contemporary male depictions.¹³⁷ This figure is quite unhappily caught, like a latter day image of Emily Brontë's prisoner, among the harsh, aggressive spear points of a barren, inhospitable mountain range.¹³⁸ Woman as earth, as natural giver of life, like moon tries to break free from the symbolism that imprisons her. The mountain range is the reverse of the stalactites which imprison the women in The Captives.

The moon was to be isolated and fed with as little light as possible, unlike the sun which was allowed to shine and

conserve its energies of a higher order. Thus the late nineteenth century male saw to it that a process of starvation was initiated, and women as moon perpetuated the idea of women as compliant and still.¹³⁹

Evelyn De Morgan refused to be an imitative moon reflecting the work of Burne-Jones, or any other artist. Rather, she acted like the metaphoric sun, creating original, serious works of art from a genuinely female perspective. She used the same subjects as her male contemporaries, but turned them on their heads. Instead of depicting women as evil destroyers or happily subservient, she used her talent to depict the victimized women she knew and the heroic women she hoped to see.

CHAPTER FIVE

Attitudes Toward Women Artists, Some Contemporaries of Evelyn
De Morgan

Do women artists bring a particularly "female" sensitivity to their art? It is a question that has been probed by art historians at length. The creative power of women differs from that of men, wrote Virginia Woolf in A Room of One's Own.¹⁴⁰ Gender, in the past, has often been the most significant connection among women artists, rather than relationships to contemporaries and the historical circumstances under which the artist worked. But Evelyn De Morgan's art reflects a clear female approach.

In the past the majority of women artists were relegated to portraiture, landscape, still-life, and flower painting, and their art was often referred to as decorative, precious, minor, sentimental and feminine. Historical and allegorical works were traditionally male subjects. Women artists were also encouraged to copy the Old Masters if they had talent. For this reason their art was regarded as unoriginal and imitative. Women artists, like Evelyn De Morgan, who sought to break free from these restrictions were considered untalented.

In the first four decades of the nineteenth century, working class women were taught composition and color for use

in domestic creations such as embroidery. Women of the upper classes were taught art to fit them for society and make them more attractive to potential husbands. This excluded study of the nude as the idea of women becoming serious or professional artists was never considered. Octavius Oakley's A Student of Beauty (fig. 55), dated 1861, depicts the woman artist confined to copying antiquity.

Opportunities for women artists increased after 1850. Schools opened to women. The Female School of Art was begun in 1851, and also the Head Government School of Design. In 1871 The Slade Schools opened. It was for both men and women, and was seen as progressive in the study of antiquity, and the draped and nude model. But many restrictions still applied. Women were not admitted to the Royal Academy until 1860, and even then their education was limited. The popular magazine Punch often derided women artists in cartoons as homely, incompetent and spinsterish.¹⁴¹ Art was a predominantly male profession, and women artists who sought success in the field were thought to possess characteristically male qualities in appearance and behavior. They were often called amazons. Victorian morality prevailed.

Women had no recourse. Perhaps their only option was to paint their situation, the subject with which they were most familiar, though Linda Nochlin wrote in the essay "Why have there been no great women artists?," that art cannot express a

personal experience in order to be truly great. She feared women would look at themselves with pity, rather than regard themselves as equal.¹⁴² Evelyn De Morgan never considered herself subordinate.

Due to increased consciousness of gender in the second half of the nineteenth century, it is possible female artists were more aware of discussing their own kind. Evelyn De Morgan explicitly or implicitly rejected the prevailing view of weak and dependant women, and her career attempted to challenge contemporary definitions of femininity.¹⁴³ She combatted female oppression by portraying both women as symbols of power and women as victims of Victorian society. Her art is sympathetic and exists as an excellent example of the situation for women in the Victorian age.

Emily Osborn was likewise concerned with women's issues when she painted Nameless and Friendless (fig. 56), dated 1857. It is a narrative work, depicting the plight of the female artist, the "commodification of women in the art trade and the isolation and helplessness of the single woman in patriarchal society."¹⁴⁴ A young destitute woman and a boy, enter an art dealer's shop with works of art to sell. The dealer studies the painting as older men turn from their print of a dancing girl to look at her. The work was intended to arouse moral feeling in which clear distinctions between class, wealth, and sex are made. Osborn was criticizing the

fact that women have no place in the art world as creators, only as subjects.¹⁴⁵ The work was well received and her execution and drawing were considered better than typical women artists. A twentieth century male art historian mistakenly identified the young boy as the artist rationalizing that women did not paint seriously in those days.¹⁴⁶

Like Evelyn De Morgan's paintings the subject challenges the traditional notion of women as the happy keepers of the home and men's souls, the pillars of Victorian morality, and expresses them rather as victims.

Evelyn De Morgan's early painting The Thorny Way, may carry a similar message about the struggle of the female artist. Stirling described it as showing a Princess standing on the steps of a Palace, clad in a lovely robe of gold, richly adorned with jewels. Behind her, through an archway, is a vista of the lovely flower-bedecked country she is leaving; before her lies the path at which she is gazing, beset with cruel, giant briars on which she is about to tread with bare feet.¹⁴⁷ Perhaps this is a metaphor for Evelyn De Morgan's own situation, leaving the safety of her comfortable home and traditional Victorian womanhood in favor of a life of abject poverty, uncertainty, and freedom.

But not all Evelyn De Morgan's female contemporaries were interested in painting their own situation, and did not share her feminist agenda.

The most successful woman artist of nineteenth century England was Lady Elizabeth Thompson Butler (1846-1933). She turned to typically male subjects. Her epic painting Calling the Roll After an Engagement: Crimea (fig. 57), dated 1874, was critically successful. But the words of Ruskin describing her similar work Quatre Bras aptly illustrate the restricted environment for women artists that continued at the time: "I never approached a picture with more iniquitous prejudice against it than I did Miss Thompson's: partly because I have always said that no woman could paint; and, secondly, because I thought what the public made such a fuss about must be good for nothing."¹⁴⁸ In the same passage Ruskin referred to Thompson as an amazon. Surprisingly overwhelmed by the quality of her work, he felt she must be masculine.

When women attempted anything more ordinarily done by men, it was thought they desired to emulate or rival men. It was never thought that women could enjoy such activities for their own sake, and without competition.¹⁴⁹ This added to the late nineteenth century view of women as competitive, evil destroyers of men.

Ruskin, believing there was no such thing as a woman artist, suggested, in his admiration of Thompson's work, that

her success was due only to the masculinity of her work. Men were productive and women reproductive. Burne-Jones also believed women could not make significant art. He did not encourage his wife Georgie's artistic talent. Towards the end of his life a studio assistant raised the subject of women artists. He replied, "There aren't any." "Well," said the assistant, "those who profess to be." "They don't count," Burne-Jones said.¹⁵⁰ He, like so many of his age, believed it was a pity to educate women, as it "only spoils them, takes away all their charm."¹⁵¹

Thompson's military paintings on a heroic scale have a ferocious energy and masculine forcefulness.¹⁵² She is described as self-assured, and authoritative, with passion and unending energy, qualities traditionally masculine. But despite her incredible popularity and success, she failed to gain entrance to the Royal Academy. She was born of money, received an education, and married a military man, Rt. Hon. Sir William Francis Butler, from whom her accurate depictions of military life come. But, like Evelyn De Morgan, Thompson rejected conventional female roles and refused to limit herself to painting flowers and copying the Old Masters.

Another woman who rose above female oppression was artist and philanthropist, Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon (1827-1891). Her father was a Unitarian and radical member of Parliament who believed in her education and encouraged her art. A

welcome member of his circle, she was well aware of the social issues of the day. She was also from wealth and received an annual income of £300, which allowed her to pursue her art rather independently. Later in life, she married Eugene Bodichon, a radical interested in social reform.

Although she was a friend of the PRB and studied with Hunt, she preferred landscapes, like The Sea at Hastings (fig. 58), influenced by Corot and Daubigny.¹⁵³ Her art was accorded little recognition. She expressed her feminist, social reform statements in her writing rather than her art. She wrote on slavery after a trip to the United States, and became an abolitionist, and she wrote extensively on the political, educational, and legal handicaps of women. Like Mill she opposed the subjugation of women. She addressed marriage in an 1854 pamphlet, how it held women in the dubious position of "perpetual infant," and how a couple's separated legal identity was merged into that of one person, the husband.¹⁵⁴ Like Butler, her struggles and opportunities were similar to Evelyn De Morgan.

Several women artists shared Evelyn De Morgan's taste for Pre-Raphaelite art. Marie Spartali Stillman (1843-1927) painted and also modelled for the PRB. Her works seem to favor literature, and classical and medieval subjects, but lack social significance. Though she credited Ford Maddox Brown as an influence, Rossetti affected her work greatly.

Her single images of women are compositionally the same as Rossetti's and offer nothing of the inner life of the sitter. The fact that she copied his painting Joli Coeur (figs. 59-60) is testimony to his impact on her art.

Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-79) tackled the Pre-Raphaelite genre through photography. Like Evelyn De Morgan, she embraced all the regular subjects in literature and allegory, but also, using Stillman as her model, depicted women as symbols of power. In Hypatia (fig. 61), dated 1867, the Alexandrian mathematician and philosopher martyred by Christian zealots is the symbol of female learning.¹⁵⁵

Thus there are no specific stylistic features which are associated with women's art. With a few exceptions, most of Evelyn De Morgan's female contemporaries painted like the male artists of the day or turned to "male" subjects. Their works are for the most part ornamental, and a host of women artists, painting scenes of traditional Victorian domesticity, never challenged Victorian morality. Evelyn De Morgan created her own art with a unique subject. Because she rejected traditional Victorian womanhood, her depictions of women are derived from her own experiences. Likewise, her art sought to inspire women to seek freedom and equality.

CHAPTER SIX

Evelyn De Morgan, Later Events in her Life

Although Evelyn De Morgan never stopped painting throughout her life, she rarely showed her work after 1900. Some are quick to assume that William De Morgan had an oppressive hand in this, but he always encouraged her. Before she married she painted and sold her work to maintain freedom from family money. Afterwards she sold her work to help finance his failing pottery business which folded in 1903. But with the publication of Joseph Vance in 1906, William De Morgan embarked on a new career as a novelist. He was tremendously successful critically and financially. Thus Evelyn De Morgan took the opportunity to relax. She continued just as she had before but without the pressure to exhibit and sell. It was after this time that she painted The Captives and The Gilded Cage.

While she had put much of her own money into saving the pottery business, theirs was a marriage based on equality, spiritually and otherwise. Few people mentioned them "without a smile... their delightful irresponsibility, their dauntless pluck, their complete lack of worldly wisdom and their selfless absorption in their work, their unvarying knack of viewing the great things and the small life from a standpoint all their own, rendered them refreshingly unique."¹⁵⁶

Wollstonecraft had called for equality and respect in marriage, but Evelyn and William De Morgan were one of the rare couples in Victorian England who heeded that advice.

They moved to Florence between 1893 and 1908, ostensibly to cure an ailment from which William De Morgan was suffering. It later turned out to be a misdiagnosis. Nonetheless both were happy to be there. They adored the Italian landscape, the warmth of the sun and the deep, intense colors it revealed. A visitor to Florence wrote in a diary, "I went to call on the De Morgans; both are working from dawn to dusk -- he writing, she painting glorious pictures. The novels don't get published and the pictures don't get exhibited; but both author and artist seem supremely happy!"¹⁵⁷

The success of Joseph Vance was astounding. William De Morgan began the book in 1901, but had tucked it away. After he became ill, Evelyn De Morgan encouraged him to write, and through both their efforts the work was published. She was his inspiration. The Spectator reviewed the work and described it as not like modern literature, thin and anemic, but in the method of Dickens and Thackeray.¹⁵⁸ It is thought to be semi-autobiographical, and many fans read Evelyn De Morgan into the characters of Janey and Lossie. She was his spiritual partner and completely devoted to him. He published several more novels in his lifetime, but died in 1917 before completing his last work The Old Mad House. It was published,

however, when she condensed the remainder of the long complex plot he had discussed with her into a conclusion.

These years were not completely selfless for Evelyn De Morgan. In 1900 The Studio devoted a twelve page article to her, and in 1909, she had a solo exhibition at Bruton Street. The two events are testimony to her success as an artist. She also appeared in articles in the United States, attesting to her international appeal. It is difficult to date many of Evelyn De Morgan's works. In some cases it is recorded on the painting. Even worse for a modern student, she kept no record of what she produced or sold. Her most socially conscious works, particularly those that portray women as victims of Victorian society, date after 1900. At the same time she painted works about materialism and war, which reveal her interest in and depiction of the social issues of her day.

It is unfortunate that most of her late, more socially conscious works went unseen. But perhaps because of this they were more personalized. She had a disdain for the public eye. All celebrity was hateful, and she valued appreciation only as it proved an incentive to greater effort.¹⁵⁹

This was also an intensely disembodied time for the couple. Stirling told of numerous small supernatural experiences which led them to become interested in Spiritualism. They engaged in nightly experiments in automatic writing. With one hand placed on each others

wrists, they each wrote aimlessly, describing meaningless gyrations. Words evolved, then broken sentences, then a mass of correspondence as if they were inhabited by some other being. As they continued they got phrases written in entirely different hands. They later abandoned the practice, but a theme evolved out the experiments which both artists embraced -- that life is one phase of a great whole, and the growth of a soul is the greatest good.¹⁶⁰

Women's souls were perceived to be superior in Victorian society, but were prevented from developing. Stirling noted that in Evelyn De Morgan's late work can be traced the paramount idea of struggle and growth, the battle for attainment to a rarer atmosphere, a finer development, and her work is penetrated with a wealth of spiritual insight apparent to those whose minds are attuned to interpret it.¹⁶¹

Perhaps her interest in Spiritualism made Evelyn De Morgan more attuned to her situation and that of women like her in Victorian society. Her female subjects themselves exhibit either a spiritual growth, or the stress and agony of self-realization and development. Others show spiritual stagnation and blindness.¹⁶² In The Gilded Cage the young prisoner has been enlightened and is awake to the injustice of her fate. In The Captives the pain that Victorian society has inflicted on the caged women is clear. The painting Realities

described by Stirling tells of so many of Evelyn De Morgan's female contemporaries:

Four female figures are seated upon the shore, while about them hover bat-like larvae of evil appearance. The women are depicted fair of form, graceful of pose, and clad in draperies so exquisite and exhibiting such lovely gradations of colour that this vivid beauty accentuates to a point of horror the contrasting ugliness of their features. For their faces are the faces of those spiritually -- even mentally -- deficient, sodden with the crass stupidity of a mind dead to higher things. And as they sit there, deaf and blind to the glory of the spheres, above them -- *close to them* -- in the translucent ether are floating a bevy of angelic forms, radiant in celestial light, song breathing from their joyous lips, bliss expressed in their glancing wings, their airy flight, their lovely faces. 163

These women were prevented from achieving higher intellect and states of consciousness by Victorian men, symbolized by the bats, who deprived them of education. The withered and ugly women themselves symbolize traditional Victorian women and

show the evils of idleness and vanity that shrink the female mind.

William De Morgan's novels were nearly identical thematically. Several of their automatic writings coincided with the ideas expressed in their art: "You are not to think the only reason for doing Art is to make life beautiful. The ugliness in modern life is a blindness to existing things most necessary to the growth of the human soul."¹⁶⁴

They also wrote: "Art is hard, and the flesh is a burden and many are swept back by the flood of adverse criticism. It is best to do as you do, to work in the shade till you catch the distant echo of the music you must repeat to others; to shun the public with its ever-vacant stare, to hide your innermost thoughts from view till they grow and become strong. Continue. Farewell!"¹⁶⁵

Her earlier work made her reputation in the marketplace.¹⁶⁶ Her later work is far superior and is overlooked today. It is mature, Pre-Raphaelite, and intensely personal. It pays attention more than ever to the social issues of the day. Perhaps she avoided such subjects in her early career favoring less volatile subject matter, such as women as symbols of power, and was not yet ready to exhibit the works portraying women as victims.¹⁶⁷ In her early work she was conscious of sales.

Evelyn and William De Morgan were notoriously irresponsible with money, he worse than she, and both despised materialism and those who placed high value on money. Victorians thought a great deal about money, as it meant security, respectability, and opportunity.¹⁶⁸ Artists often illustrated it. While William Frith's works depicted wealth and high society, Evelyn De Morgan's criticized it. Earthbound (fig. 62), dated 1889, set in a desolate country, shows an aged king brooding over his hoard of gold, while the Angel of Death approaches. A cloud-like mantel floating around her, she comes to enshroud him. The scene is strewn with stars, and a moon shines dimly. Away in the distance a freed spirit rises into the sky.¹⁶⁹

Mammon epitomized the evils of wealth. In The Worship of Mammon (fig. 63), dated 1909, a young woman gropes at the heels of the towering man of riches. She pleads for his sack of gold. Wollstonecraft wrote, one can not worship both God and Mammon, and that one must either pursue the road of virtue or of greed.¹⁷⁰ Evelyn De Morgan did several other works on this theme including The Marriage of St. Francis and Holy Poverty, St. Christina Giving her Father's Jewels to the Poor, Blindness and Cupidity Chasing Joy from the City, and The Poor Man who Saved the City.

Her last works were a series of pictures about WWI, which greatly distressed both her and William De Morgan. He wrote

in a 1916 letter to his cousin, "I try to write but don't succeed. How can one do anything with the world as it is?"¹⁷¹ Evelyn De Morgan put her emotion into painting. These works are among her least successful. Our Lady of Peace, dated 1907, was painted in Italy and brought to England just before the outbreak of the war. It depicts a soldier in a cathedral, who suddenly sees a vision of Our Lady of Peace. He kneels in an agony of mind, striving to renounce his ambition.¹⁷² The Red Cross (fig. 64), dated 1918, shows Christ clad in red drapery ascending from an ominous landscape above a field of decaying crosses that mark soldiers graves. He is carried by five angels.

She exhibited these works in her studio in 1916. None were for sale, but the considerable amount of money taken at the door was donated to the English and Italian Red Cross charities. And upon her death she bequeathed all her pictures to be sold at public auction, and the money raised went to benefit St. Dunstan's, a home for soldiers blinded in the war, perhaps an ironic charity for a visual artist to patronize.

She painted up until the day she died, the last of her symbolic works being A Scrap of Paper, The Coming of Peace, and Moonbeams Dipping into the Sea. Her love of the sunny sky and warm air inspired her work. In her last year she complained that the perpetual darkness made work impossible. It was as much her mood after the death of her husband as the

weather.¹⁷³ She died May 2, 1919, the year English women finally earned the right to vote.

Evelyn De Morgan's name has faded into obscurity since her death in 1919. Most of her art was gathered by her sister, A.M.W. Stirling, at Old Battersea House. Committed to her sister's reputation, Stirling vowed to set up an institution in Evelyn and William De Morgan's honor. At auction Stirling purchased Evelyn De Morgan's works, and, arranging life tenancy at Old Battersea House, installed the art collection there. It also includes some work of William De Morgan and Spencer-Stanhope. Stirling personally conducted the tours until her death in 1968. The same year renovation was planned on the house, a historical landmark, and the works went into storage for over ten years. While many paintings are still at the now named De Morgan Foundation, presently located in Windlesham, Surrey, others have been distributed to various locations. Several are now at the home of Lord Armstrong, Cragside in Northumberland, and replace the loss of his Pre-Raphaelite collection sold at auction in 1910. Several of her paintings were also sold at Sotheby's in the 1980s for respectable prices, between £800 and £3,700. Works by Millais and Rossetti have been sold at £11,500 and £22,000, while Burne-Jones's work is recorded between £2,800 and £7,000. Evelyn De Morgan's works such as Ruth and Naomi are estimated by Sotheby's to be worth between \$25,000 and \$35,000

and The Crown of Glory between £40,000 and £60,000. All are very impressive sums for female, late Pre-Raphaelite painter now thought to be obscure.

In her last years Evelyn De Morgan was more conscious than ever before of the social issues of her day and expressed them in her art. However, her artistic social documents were considered out of step with the times. She never bowed to the latest trends and was beyond conformity. Around the turn of the century she visited many exhibitions of Cubist and Futurist painters. She was bewildered by the new idealist forms in art, and likened their work to the Emperor's new clothes. She remarked "if that is what people like now, I shall wait till the turn of the tide."¹⁷⁴ Unfortunately, it never did.

An admirer wrote to royal academician Luke Fildes shortly after her death, "Her fame must now wait, as far as I can see, upon the future operations of speculative dealers, as happened with Millet, Corot, M. Maris, and their fraternity. Some day, perhaps not far distant, when a big 'corner' has been made, the doubtful Gainsborough and dubious Hals will be removed from the galleries of docile millionaires and replaced by De Morgans, where they will hang, let us hope, as a standing rebuke to the vulgarity of the buyers and their motives for buying...."¹⁷⁵ These words seem fitting in today's art market.

Conclusion

Evelyn De Morgan's work is the clearest expression of her soul. To look back on her life and career is to know that her character and independence would not permit her to copy the popular male artists of the day. She rejected the escapism of the late Pre-Raphaelites and the Victorian Olympians in favor of an art with social content. Her work was most affected by the refined style of the early Italians and Botticelli, rather than life study, or the imitation of her male contemporaries. She admired the social content of the work of the PRB, but infused her art with a sympathy for Victorian women that the PRB failed to convey.

It is not my purpose to determine whether Evelyn De Morgan is a better artist than her contemporaries. Rather, I seek to show that while the escapist works of the late Pre-Raphaelites and Victorian Olympians are lovely to look at, Evelyn De Morgan's work is worthy of note because it is a distinct social commentary on the Victorian period. Furthermore, she refused to be a mere follower of other artists and attempted to make her own reputation in the marketplace. Through this examination of Evelyn De Morgan's work and life I hope to have challenged the assumption that women naturally follow men, artistically and otherwise. Evelyn De Morgan easily could have fallen victim to the

artistic trends of the time, and created a world of fantasy and escape in which women are objects of beauty, subjugated to the artistic inventions of men. But instead she recognized the need and had the creativity and will to use her art as a forum for her feminist viewpoint. She infused her art with a social message that exposed the plight of Victorian women. She would not be discouraged by Victorian society's subordinate view of women. Her import is particularly poignant in the painting The Prisoner. The subject, a young woman yearning to be released from Victorian captivity, is unique to Evelyn De Morgan. She does not illustrate moral problems such as Hicks, Redgrave, Egg, and Rossetti, but brings a moral dimension, a feminist understanding, to her works that might initially strike the viewer as decorative or escapist. Curiously, she adopted the stylized forms of the early Italians and Botticelli to convey this message. But it is the tension between this refinement and the feminist content in her work that makes it important and different than Burne-Jones's. Medea is perhaps Evelyn De Morgan's most beautiful, rich, and sensitively handled subject. The figure glides gracefully across the surface of the painting in a manner typical to Botticelli and wholly different from Burne-Jones's grounded, static figures.

Evelyn De Morgan's preference for precise draughtsmanship, rather than life study, raises the issue of

the relative importance of the study of the nude in art. Women artists were denied life study in the Victorian period, and Evelyn De Morgan saw it as central to the study of art, but her art is more captivating to this modern critic for its stylized forms. These forms more dramatically convey her commentary on female oppression.

Evelyn De Morgan's reputation continues to suffer from the criticism of both her contemporaries and present day art historians who misread them as imitative and empty. I suspect that her wealth and social position may lead to the mistaken impression that she did not suffer from oppressive Victorian society like Siddal, Morris, and Miller, working-class women economically and socially dependent on the men of the PRB. But despite Evelyn De Morgan's relative advantages, a woman at the top of the ladder, she was marginalized by her society and not immune to these pressures. For this reason her art is a stronger reaction against the subjugation of women in Victorian England. As Virginia Woolf suggested in A Room of One's Own, it is time to write Evelyn De Morgan into history. The feminist content of her art, all the more potent given her wealth, has been largely missed. It bears reexamination.

END NOTES

- ¹Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own (New York: Harcourt Brace Javanovich, 1981), 89.
- ²Griselda Pollock, "Woman as sign in Pre-Raphaelite literature: the representation of Elizabeth Siddall," in Vision and Difference (New York: Routledge, 1988), 92.
- ³Ibid, 96.
- ⁴Susan P. Casteras, Images of Victorian Womanhood in English Art (Rutherford: Associated University Presses, 1987), 140.
- ⁵Christopher Wood, Victorian Panorama (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1976), 22.
- ⁶Lynda Nead, Myths of Sexuality (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 57.
- ⁷Casteras, Images of Victorian Womanhood in English Art, 21.
- ⁸Whitney Chadwick, Women, Art and Society (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 166.
- ⁹Bram Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 11.
- ¹⁰Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1967), 45.
- ¹¹Ibid, 106-07.
- ¹²Ibid, 59.
- ¹³Ibid, 49-50.
- ¹⁴Ibid, 56.
- ¹⁵Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity, 3.

- ¹⁶Martin Meisel, Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-Century England (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 25.
- ¹⁷The painting is thought to have been inspired by William Holman Hunt's The Awakening Conscience. Egg was sometimes considered a follower of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, though he primarily painted literary and historical works. Martin Meisel in Realizations deduced that the triptych was meant to be exhibited in pyramidal form with the parlor scene, the scene from the past that caused the other two, at the top, and the adulteress mother under the bridge below on the left and her now older daughters below on the right. The figures in the bottom two scenes face one another and look at the same night sky.
- ¹⁸Casteras, Images of Victorian Womanhood in English Art, 27.
- ¹⁹John Stuart Mill, The Subjection of Women (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1970), 14.
- ²⁰*Ibid*, 3.
- ²¹A.M.W. Stirling, Life's Little Day and Other Reminiscences (London: Thornton and Butterworth Limited, 1924), 22.
- ²²Mary Wollstonecraft in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman wrote: "The mother, who wishes to give true dignity of character to her daughter, must, regardless of the sneers of ignorance, proceed on a plan diametrically opposite to that which Rousseau has recommended...." Wollstonecraft wrote of Rousseau's belief in male superiority and his mistaken notions of female beauty and excellence, 78-79.
- ²³*Ibid*, 23.
- ²⁴A.M.W. Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1922), 146.
- ²⁵*Ibid*, 173. Excellence in any one area, rather than some knowledge of many areas, was considered negative in Victorian society. Sarah Stickney Ellis warned against this in her book of etiquette, The Daughters of England.

It is likely that Evelyn De Morgan's family used the fear for her health as an excuse. Rather, they were more afraid of her becoming a serious artist and an embarrassment to the family.

²⁶Ibid, 12.

²⁷Stirling, Lifes Little Day and Other Reminiscences, 104.

²⁸Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 175.

²⁹Ibid, 173.

³⁰Ibid, 209.

³¹Ibid, 174.

³²Ibid, 174-75.

³³Stirling, Life's Little Day and Other Reminiscences, 27.

³⁴Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 177.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid, 180. Was Evelyn De Morgan protesting simply the societal ritual of coming out, or did she want to inflict pain on the woman who most represented Victorian morality? This question was raised by my friend Matt Kinservik.

³⁷Ibid, 181.

³⁸Ibid, 179.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Leonore Davidoff, The Best Circles (London: Croom Helm, 1973), 78.

⁴¹Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 358.

⁴²Ibid, 143.

- 43Ibid, 193. G.F. Watts comment was meant to be favorable, but he labelled Evelyn De Morgan a "woman-artist," and therefore subordinate to her male contemporaries.
- 44Ibid, 185.
- 45Ibid, 189.
- 46Ibid.
- 47W. Shaw Sparrow, "The Art of Mrs. William De Morgan," The Studio 19 (1900), 221.
- 48The Portfolio, 1887, 104.
- 49The Portfolio 1879, 91.
- 50The Portfolio 1880 vol. 12, 103-4.
- 51The Portfolio 1883, 125.
- 52Spectator, June 9, 1883, 738.
- 53Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nunn, Women Artists and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement (London: Virago Press, Ltd., 1989), 109.
- 54Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 192.
- 55Ibid, 194.
- 56Ibid, 11.
- 57Ibid, 201-2.
- 58William Gaunt, Victorian Olympus (London: Jonathan Cape Publisher, 1952), 105.
- 59Andrea Rose, The Pre-Raphaelites (Oxford: Phaidon, 1977), 4-5.

- ⁶⁰Robert Rosenblum and H.W. Janson, 19th-Century Art (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1984), 256.
- ⁶¹Wood, Victorian Panorama, 16-17.
- ⁶²Rose, The Pre-Raphaelites, 4.
- ⁶³Ibid, 4.
- ⁶⁴John Ruskin, The Works of John Ruskin, Vol. XII, ed. E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London: George Allen, 1904), 157.
- ⁶⁵Marsh and Nunn, Women Artists and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, 18.
- ⁶⁶Percy H. Bate, The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901), 103.
- ⁶⁷Rose, The Pre-Raphaelites, 5.
- ⁶⁸Bate, The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters, 103.
- ⁶⁹Marsh and Nunn, Women Artists of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, 19.
- ⁷⁰Christopher Wood, Olympian Dreamers (London: Constable, 1983), 181.
- ⁷¹Ibid, 19.
- ⁷²Ibid, 17.
- ⁷³Ibid, 17.
- ⁷⁴Ibid, 48.
- ⁷⁵The painting, now featured on the cover of Robert Rosenblum's 19th-Century Art, was found in the 1960s in a junk shop in Battersea. Wood, Victorian Panorama, 35.
- ⁷⁶Dijkstra, 70.

- ⁷⁷Germaine Greer, The Obstacle Race (New York: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1979), 128.
- ⁷⁸While study of the nude does not insure great art, it was seen as critical to good artists and was essential for the members of the Royal Academy. Forbidding women to study the nude became an effective tool used by men to undermine their art. However, Evelyn De Morgan was probably a better artist for having studied Botticelli.
- ⁷⁹Bate, The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters, 111.
- ⁸⁰Frances Spalding, Magnificent Dreams, Burne-Jones and the Late Victorians (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978), 56.
- ⁸¹Rose, The Pre-Raphaelites, 13.
- ⁸²Mill, The Subjection of Women, 69.
- ⁸³Pamela Gerrish Nunn, "Ruskin's Patronage of Women Artists," Woman's Art Journal, 2 (Fall 81/Winter 82), 10.
- ⁸⁴Spalding, Magnificent Dreams, Burne-Jones and the Late Victorians, 56.
- ⁸⁵Evelyn De Morgan, 1855-1919, Hartnoll & Eyre Ltd., London, Feb. 2 - Feb. 14, 1970, unpaginated.
- ⁸⁶Sparrow, "The Art of Mrs. William De Morgan," The Studio, 221. While contemporary critics of the nineteenth century are often regarded as more adulatory than critical, Sparrow scrupulously examined Evelyn De Morgan's art for his 1900 article, and accurately assessed her work. He noted her original style and dismissed her as a follower of Burne-Jones.
- ⁸⁷Ibid. Her style is an amalgam of much of her training to this date. She had been encouraged by her uncle, John Roddam Spencer-Stanhope, an artist in the Pre-Raphaelite tradition, her early training was at the Slade under Edward Poynter, and her admiration for the early Italians and Botticelli began at the National Gallery, London. But her time in Italy between 1875 and 77 certainly had the deepest, most lasting impression on her art. Her

severe works embodied a greater subtlety after her time abroad, and her lively and dynamic, elongated figures are directly influenced by Botticelli, and her love of deep, rich colors derived from the Italian landscape.

- ⁸⁸Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 188.
- ⁸⁹Theodore Crombie, "Paintings from the De Morgan Foundation at Cragside," National Trust Studies (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1981), 18.
- ⁹⁰Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 191.
- ⁹¹Jan Marsh, Pre-Raphaelite Women (New York: Harmony Books, 1988), 132.
- ⁹²Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 379.
- ⁹³McAllister, Isabel, "In Memoriam: Evelyn De Morgan," The Studio 79 (1920), 28.
- ⁹⁴The figures in Phyllis and Demophoön are thought to be drawn directly from the embracing figures in Botticelli's Primavera. Wood, Olympian Dreamers, 181.
- ⁹⁵Timothy Hilton, The Pre-Raphaelites (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970), 194.
- ⁹⁶Evelyn De Morgan's Medea is another example in which she captures Botticelli's essence. The figure is similar to the Virgin in Botticelli's Annunciation, dated 1489-90, in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Rather reluctantly receiving the angel Gabriel's news, the Virgin gracefully withdraws and almost dances out of the scene. Evelyn De Morgan's Medea assumes a similar position; with her delicately swayed stance and subtly tilted head, she glides across the rich marble floor.
- ⁹⁷Spalding, Magnificent Dreams, Burne-Jones and the Late Victorians, 42.
- ⁹⁸Spectator, 1883, 738.
- ⁹⁹Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 177.

- 100Ibid, 164.
- 101Ibid, 166.
- 102Ibid, 130.
- 103Marsh and Nunn, Women Artists and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, 181.
- 104John Langdon Davies, A Short History of Women (New York: The Viking Press, 1927), 298.
- 105Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 186.
- 106Ibid, 186.
- 107Casteras, Images of Victorian Womanhood in English Art, 167.
- 108Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 310.
- 109Marsh, Pre-Raphaelite Women, 112.
- 110Stirling wrote of The Captives that it was painted during Evelyn De Morgan's spiritual period, known to have been after the turn of the century.
- 111Speech of Medea, in Davies, A Short History of Women, 173.
- 112Chadwick, Women, Art and Society, 189.
- 113Patricia Monaghan, The Book of Goddesses and Heroines (St. Paul: Llewellyn Publications, 1990), 231. An ancient version of the myth says the children were sacrificed by the Corinthians while under the care of Hera.
- 114Charlotte Yeldham, Women Artists in Nineteenth-Century France and England (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1984), 148. The use of literary themes was a device to infuse art with greater emotional content, to give it power with which the great literature of the world has spoken. Often phrases from literature or poetry were used as titles.

- 115Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity, 22.
- 116Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, 82-3.
- 117Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity, 22.
- 118Stirling, Life's Little Day, Some Tales and other Reminiscences, 232.
- 119The Soul's Prison House was painted in a method invented by William De Morgan called "The Process." Evelyn De Morgan described it: "The colours were ground in glycerine and spirit, and the ground used to paint on was a porous gesso preparation on canvas; the glycerine of course never dried and when the picture was finished it was removed from the paint by means of a sucker plastered on the back of the canvas. The sucker drew out the matrix, that is to say the glycerine with which the picture had been painted; the surface of the picture was then flooded with oil or oil and varnish, to replace the glycerine. It was a ticklish business and I only completed two pictures in this method as, tho' it has a great attraction in the working and superiority in the tone, the hygrometric quality of the glycerine was very troublesome and obliged one to keep the studio at an even temperature day and night." Stirling, Life's Little Day, Some Tales and other Reminiscences, 233.
- 120The poem by William Morris is not indicated. The Principal Oil Paintings of the Armstrong Collection and the De Morgan Pictures & Pottery at Cragside, The National Trust, Northumbria, unpaginated.
- 121The figure at the right recoils in much the same way as the Virgin, reluctantly receiving the angel Gabriel's news, in Rossetti's Ecce Ancilla Domini, dated 1850.
- 122Penny Dunford, A Biographical Dictionary of Women Artists in Europe and America since 1850 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, c. 1989), 207.
- 123Marsh, Pre-Raphaelite Women, 152.

124 Ibid.

125 Ibid.

126 In some societies women were literally kept in cages, as in Dr. Fordyce's eighteenth century observation of African savages which approved a custom to prep young women for marriage by locking them in cages for three months prior and fattening them up with all sorts of food brought by their intended mate. This was thought to make them more desirable, physical appearance of course being of central importance in this society too. Davies, A Short History of Women, 344.

127 In 1972 Kate Millet wrote a fitting essay titled "The Debate over Women: Ruskin vs. Mill" that appears in Martha Vicinus' book Suffer and Be Still, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972. In it she juxtaposed John Ruskin's essay "Of Queen's Gardens" with John Stuart Mill's The Subjection of Women. Both prescribed education for women as a means to better themselves, but Ruskin called for it only in so much as it aided the comforts of men. Mill argued for equal opportunity among the sexes that were increasingly separated in the nineteenth century. Ruskin thought the differences between the sexes were natural. "The woman, we say, is not to guide, nor even to think for herself. The man is always to be the wiser; he is to be the thinker, the ruler, the superior in knowledge and discretion, as in power." Sesame and Lilies, p. 79. He also believed proper Victorian women relied on the whore to reaffirm their purity and standing in society. Mill called for the challenge of all that was perceived natural and the education of women. Ruskin approved a sentimental education and Mill approved an intellectual one. The differences in the views of Ruskin and Mill are analogous to the manner in which the PRB and Evelyn De Morgan portrayed women in art. Though both strove for social and moral import, the PRB effectively sanctioned Victorian morality, while Evelyn De Morgan exposed it. Evelyn De Morgan painted the virtuous woman longing for freedom from her captivity in The Gilded Cage. It calls to mind Mill's plea for female equality in a man's world. In paintings such as Found, The Awakening Conscience, Past and Present, and Thoughts of the Past the wayward or

fallen woman contemplates her misfortune and becomes the icon for Victorian morality. She begs for salvation and return to the life of virtue. She hopes to become Ruskin's ideal.

- 128 Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity, 121.
- 129 Ibid, 122.
- 130 John Ruskin, Sesame and Lilies (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1894), 81-82.
- 131 Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity, 122.
- 132 Ibid.
- 133 Christopher Wood, The Pre-Raphaelites (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1981), 29.
- 134 Stirling, Lifes Little Day, Some Tales and Other Reminiscences, 237.
- 135 McAllister, "In Memoriam: Evelyn De Morgan," The Studio, 31.
- 136 Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity, 124.
- 137 Ibid.
- 138 Ibid.
- 139 Ibid, 127.
- 140 Woolf, A Room of One's Own, 87.
- 141 Casteras, Images of Victorian Womanhood in English Art, 103.
- 142 Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" in Women, Art and Power and Other Essays (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1988), 151.
- 143 Marsh and Nunn, Women Artists and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, 178.

- 144Chadwick, Women, Art and Society, 174.
- 145Ibid, 175.
- 146Casteras, Images of Victorian Womanhood in English Art, 104.
- 147Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 193.
- 148Ruskin, The Works of John Ruskin, Vol. XIV, 308. He wrote in an 1858 letter to Miss Sinnat, "You must resolve to be quite a great paintress; the feminine termination does not exist, there never having been such a being as yet as a lady who could paint."
- 149The Countess of Jersey, The Nineteenth Century, January, 1890, quoted in Dijkstra, Idols of Perversity, 215.
- 150Rooke Notes, p. 180, a copy by Georgiana Burne-Jones of notes by Thomas Rooke in the Lance Thirkell Collection, London, in Jan Marsh, The Pre-Raphaelite Sisterhood (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 201.
- 151Ibid, 201.
- 152Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin, Women Artists 1550-1950 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), 309. Evelyn De Morgan painted allegorical scenes of war, but her works were not documentaries of it. Unlike Thompson's, they were personal evocations of the pain she felt for the soldiers of WWI. Thompson's works depict the Crimean war.
- 153Elsa Honig Fine, Women and Art (Montclair, New Jersey: Allanheld & Schram/Prior, 1978), 81.
- 154Casteras, Images of Victorian Womanhood in English Art, 27.
- 155Marsh, Pre-Raphaelite Women, 127.
- 156Stirling, Life's Little Day and Other Reminiscences, 233-4.
- 157Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 237.

158 Ibid, 246.

159 Ibid, 12.

160 Ibid, 356.

161 Ibid.

162 Ibid, 357.

163 Ibid. Professor Robert Beetem has noted a similarity between Realities and Botticelli's painting The Mystical Nativity, dated 1500-01. Botticelli's work refers to the Apocalypse and the artist's own feelings that Italy at the time was passing through its own apocalypse because the church was sunk in its last days of corruption and decay. On the roof of the shelter over the nativity are three angels, good and fallen, who reconcile with each other. They are symbolic of the church which Botticelli felt would be renewed in unsullied peace and beauty. Perhaps Evelyn De Morgan's work is similarly apocalyptic calling for an end to Victorian morality and the tyranny against women.

164 Ibid, 358.

165 Ibid.

166A Mr. Imrie of Liverpool was perhaps Evelyn De Morgan's greatest patron. He admired her early work, and commissioned eight successive works, and several later works.

167 Simeon Solomon was a friend of Rossetti and Burne-Jones and, like Evelyn De Morgan, is considered a Pre-Raphaelite "follower." He was encouraged by Rossetti and Swinburne to explore the forbidden subjects of lesbianism and homosexuality. On February 11, 1873 he was arrested for homosexual offenses. In the age of Victorian morality, he was condemned. Perhaps Evelyn De Morgan's subjects of middle class women as victims of Victorian morality were perceived to be equally volatile. Wood, The Pre-Raphaelites, 133.

- 168Wood, Victorian Panorama, 37.
- 169Sparrow, "The Art of Mrs. William De Morgan," The Studio,
231.
- 170Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, 162.
- 171Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 370.
- 172The De Morgan Foundation (London: The Wandsworth Borough
Council, 1983), 13.
- 173Stirling, William De Morgan and His Wife, 383.
- 174Ibid, 309.
- 175Ibid, 386.

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Fig. 1 - One Touch of Nature Makes the Whole World Kin.
Thomas P. Hall



Fig. 2 - Windsor Castle in Modern Times, Edwin Landseer



Fig. 3 - Woman's Mission - Companion of Manhood, George Elgar Hicks



Fig. 4 - The Outcast, Richard Redgrave



Fig. 5 - The Awakening Conscience, William Holman Hunt

