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# 'Henry Moore's "open-air" sculpture: a modern, reforming aesthetic of sunlight and air'

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## Henry Moore's 'open-air' sculpture: A modern, reforming aesthetic of sunlight and air

*Robert Burstow*

Any one who has witnessed, from some vantage point on the hills, the smoke resting over such towns as Sheffield or Manchester on a calm fine day – the hideous black impenetrable cloud blotting out the sunlight, in which the very birds cease to sing, – will have wondered how it was possible for human beings to live under such conditions.

Edward Carpenter, 'The Smoke Plague and Its Remedy', 1890<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps what influenced me most over wanting to do sculpture in the open air and to relate my sculpture to landscape comes from my youth in Yorkshire; seeing the Yorkshire moors ... and also the slag heaps of the Yorkshire mining villages ... Perhaps those impressions when you're young are what count.

Henry Moore, 1964<sup>2</sup>

More than any other sculptor, Henry Moore is associated with the idea of exhibiting modern sculpture in the 'open air'. In the last fifty years Moore's sculpture has become an essential presence in the 'open-air museums of sculpture' and 'sculpture parks' which have opened around the world, from Otterlo to Tokyo.<sup>3</sup> Moore's ideas have played a central role in defining and giving currency to the idea of 'open-air sculpture'.<sup>4</sup> Although he included architectural works in his much-cited talk, 'Sculpture in the Open Air' of 1955,<sup>5</sup> thereafter he and others increasingly identified the idea of 'open-air sculpture' with gardens, parkland, or open country, paralleling a trend to use the 'open air' as a synonym for the countryside or for 'open' spaces within the town or city.<sup>6</sup> In this modern sense, the high noon of open-air sculpture in Britain lasted from 1948 until the mid 1960s, when a younger generation of modernist sculptors regained an interest in urban, architectural spaces, and the less value-laden term 'outdoor sculpture' came to predominate.<sup>7</sup> Although the origin of the open-air aesthetic is most commonly identified with the London County Council's first 'Open Air Exhibition of Sculpture' at Battersea Park in 1948 – where Moore was indeed pre-eminent – other modernist sculptors, notably Hans Arp and Alexander Calder, had

placed their sculptures in gardens from the mid 1930s and open-air exhibitions of modern sculpture had been held in London and abroad from even earlier. None of this, however, diminishes Moore's significance for the history of open-air sculpture since his works were among the earliest to be conceived for open-air sites and he demonstrated an unrivalled commitment to this form of display.

Today, when sculpture parks in Britain increasingly form part of the commercial leisure industries, it is timely to consider the political dimension of the open-air aesthetic. The recent Moore literature reveals striking disagreements: Richard Cork sees the open-air aesthetic as a socially progressive strategy which increased public access to sculpture, while, by contrast, the late Peter Fuller equated Moore's interest in landscape with a 'romantic', 'profoundly anti-modern', even nationalistic impulse. David Cohen has tried to bridge these positions by using Moore's belief in 'universal forms' to associate his 'landscape aesthetic' with a 'democratic spirit'.<sup>8</sup> The present essay will propose a more obvious, if hitherto overlooked, way of reconciling Moore's interest in the open air and his commitment to democratic socialism, by shifting the focus away from landscape and towards his conception of *the open air* itself. It will remind us that Moore had shown an enthusiasm for *working* and *recreating* in the open air since at least the 1920s and that he himself specifically linked his childhood experience of the Yorkshire countryside to his preference for *exhibiting* in the open air. Moore's love of outdoor life dates from a time when exposure to sun and air was widely believed to exert a benign physical and moral influence on the human body and mind, and thereby on the well-being of society. Such reforming, if idealistic, beliefs were as prevalent among the industrial working class from which Moore came, as among the circle of leftist-liberal Hampstead intellectuals into which he moved. This chapter will argue, then, that Moore's motivations for exhibiting in the open air are more complex, meaningful and long-standing than has previously been acknowledged and that by exploring Moore's relation to the cult of sun and air, we will gain a better understanding not only of his wish to exhibit and work in the open air but also of his professed desire to create 'sculpture in air', and perhaps even of the origin of his recurrent subject, the reclining nude.

#### Exhibiting in the open air

While Moore's reputation as the exemplary open-air sculptor is rightly associated with the LCC's 1948 open-air exhibition, the full extent of his involvement has not been properly recognised. Moore influenced the

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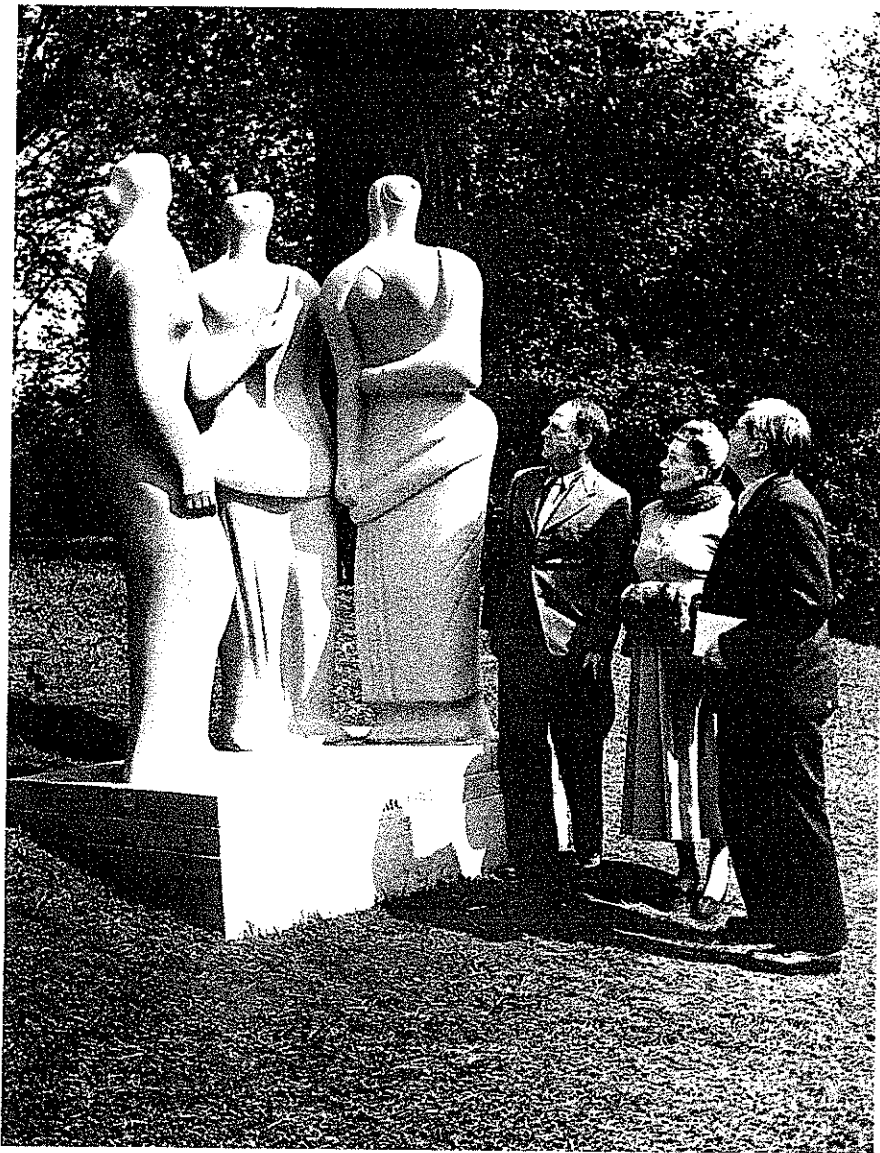
selection, placing and siting of the sculptures,<sup>9</sup> and his close friend and former stone-carving tutor at the Royal College of Art, Barry Hart, acted as the exhibition manager. Indeed, it is conceivable that Moore indirectly, or perhaps even *directly*, inspired the exhibition, since it was the brainchild of the chairman of the Parks Committee, Patricia Strauss, who was a collector of Moore's sculpture.<sup>10</sup> With an average of nearly 10,000 visitors per week, and extensive coverage in the press and broadcast media, the exhibition gave greatest prominence to two of Moore's sculptures – the 1938 *Recumbent Figure* (see Fig. 6.5) and the newly carved *Three Standing Figures* (1947–48, Darley Dale stone, H 84 in., LH 268) (Fig. 7.1) – achieving a degree of popular approval for modern sculpture which was unprecedented in Britain.<sup>11</sup> Thereafter, Moore was accorded a privileged position at each of the LCC's (later GLC's) triennial exhibitions in London parks until 1966, and at the Arts Council's open-air sculpture exhibitions which toured regional parks almost annually from 1957 to 1967. Moore was the only sculptor represented at every one of these major open-air exhibitions and his sculptures were frequently featured on the covers of the accompanying catalogues.

From the informal, picturesque, lakeside garden of Battersea Park, it was but a short conceptual step to the 'natural' landscapes which Moore came to prefer. Indeed, one prescient reviewer of the 1948 exhibition observed that Moore's sculptures 'would probably appear most impressive seen against a less civilised background – indeed, some of them might acquire a new life in the wilds of nature, on the top of some lonely hill'.<sup>12</sup> By 1951, according to his friend and apologist, Robert Melville, Moore's conception of open-air sculpture included 'open fields, downland, cliffs and forest clearings'.<sup>13</sup> It was in that year that Moore made his most famous pronouncement on open-air sculpture (ironically, in the catalogue of his *indoor* Tate retrospective):

Sculpture is an art of the open air. Daylight, *sunlight*, is necessary to it, and for me its best setting and complement is nature. I would rather have a piece of my sculpture put in a landscape, almost any landscape, than in, or on, the most beautiful building I know.<sup>14</sup> (Emphasis original)

Moore's vision required considerable financial investment and was first realised by the businessman and art collector William ('Tony') Keswick, who commissioned casts of several of Moore's sculptures for his 3,000-acre estate in the Scottish Southern Uplands, beginning with the *Standing Figure* (1950–51, LH 290) in late 1951 (see Fig. 6.7).<sup>15</sup> Despite its remote location, published photographs made this innovative venture well known and an important example for the spread of open-air sculpture.

Historical accounts of Moore's ventures in open-air sculpture prior to 1948 are invariably based on the sculptor's 1955 talk where he mentions just two works (excluding the architectural ones): the *Recumbent Figure* exhibited at



7.1 Henry Moore, *Three Standing Figures*, 1947–48, Darley Dale stone, H 84 in./218 cm, LH 268, photographed after the opening ceremony at Battersea Park, London, May 1948, with Moore, Patricia Strauss and Aneurin Bevan

Battersea in 1948, but conceived a decade earlier for the sun terrace of Serge Chermayeff's new house in Sussex, and the reclining *Memorial Figure* commissioned for the gardens of Dartington Hall. In addition to these early

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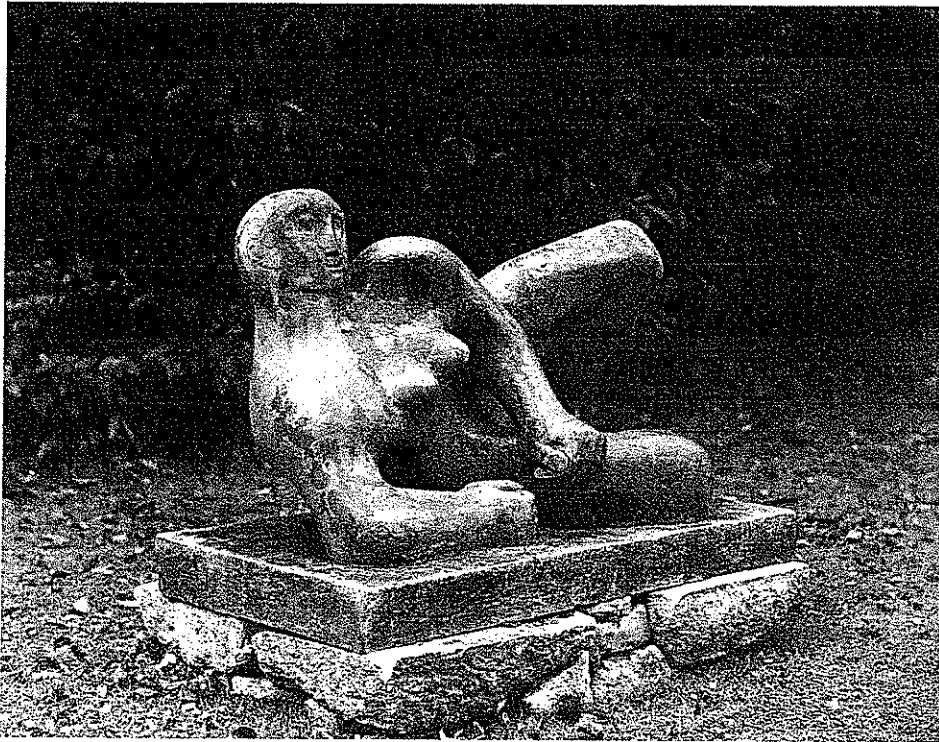
examples, commentators have explained the formation of Moore's open-air aesthetic using his retrospective observations about working in the five-acre garden of 'Burcroft', his bungalow in Kent, in the later 1930s.<sup>16</sup> Moore and his young assistant, Bernard Meadows, carved many pieces out of doors there, including Chermayeff's figure, but Moore's contemporary article in *The Listener* did not identify the moment so portentously. Indeed, nowhere did Moore acknowledge that several of his sculptures had already been placed in private gardens by other collectors. Concurrent with Chermayeff's commission, for example, Roland Penrose had installed one of Moore's sculptures in the front garden of his Hampstead house and some years before that, in late 1933, the educationalist and Master of University College, Oxford, Sir Michael Sadler, had placed Moore's *Reclining Figure* (1932, carved reinforced concrete, L. 43 in., LH 134) outside his official Lodgings, informing Moore enthusiastically: 'Your concrete reclining figure is now, on a low stone base, in this garden - in the open air.'<sup>17</sup> When in 1934 Sadler moved to a larger house on the outskirts of Oxford, he transferred Moore's sculpture to his new and much larger garden where it was photographed for the art review, *Axis*, and described admiringly as 'one of the few examples of contemporary sculpture which has an out-of-doors setting' (Fig. 7.2).<sup>18</sup> By the time Moore saw his sculpture in Sadler's garden in early 1937, his patron had already complemented it with two more of his sculptures.<sup>19</sup> In fact, the idea of placing modern sculptures in private gardens was explicitly recommended at this time by the landscape architect Christopher Tunnard (the designer of Chermayeff's garden) whose book, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* (1938), declared that 'the best of modern sculptors are designing for open spaces'.<sup>20</sup>

Prior to Moore's sculptures being installed in private gardens, his work had been included in several of the first open-air exhibitions, such as the London Group's 'Exhibition of Open-Air Sculpture' (1930) in the recently refurbished, ornamental roof gardens of Gordon Selfridge's Oxford Street department store.<sup>21</sup> The following year Moore participated with Eric Gill in an international exhibition of modern sculpture in Zurich, where many sculptures were exhibited outdoors in parks and streets around the city.<sup>22</sup> During the war, Moore's *Recumbent Figure* (exhibited at Battersea in 1948) was among those works displayed in the New York Museum of Modern Art's new 'sculpture garden', which opened in 1939 and which confirmed the importance of the aesthetic to modern sculpture. Moore's first retrospective exhibition, in the galleries of Temple Newsam House near Leeds in 1941, might even be said to have *aspired* to the condition of open-air display: the curator, Moore's friend Philip Hendy, claimed that the 'big windows' gave 'wide views', allowing the sculptures to be seen in relation to 'the rolling, wooded landscape' of 'Capability' Brown's parkland.<sup>23</sup> By 1948, then, the open-air display of modern



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7.2 Henry Moore, *Reclining Figure*, 1932, carved reinforced concrete, L 43 in., LH 134, photographed in Sir Michael Sadler's garden, Headington, Oxford, c. 1937

sculpture, and of Moore's sculptures in particular, was becoming more common, with initiatives coming from collectors, curators and garden designers. Moore seems increasingly to have seen open-air display as a fundamental constituent of a modernist sculptural aesthetic.

#### Working in the open air

Moore's 1937 *Listener* article suggests that he identified his desire to exhibit outdoors with his long-established practice of *carving* outdoors. This habit dated from his years at the RCA (though Moore characteristically claimed that it was prefigured by an incident in childhood when he had carved chalk on a Yorkshire beach).<sup>24</sup> Since the RCA curriculum had not officially permitted 'direct' carving,<sup>25</sup> Moore practised this method in the vacations, which he spent mostly in Norfolk, living in turn with two of his sisters. From as early as 1922, Moore carved stone in Mary's garden at Wighton, near Wells-next-

the-Sea (Fisher later explained that he could only place the garden in pleasure in pleasure in for these t patches of gardens in and Kent. during his direct carving. Skeaping. each year cottage' in Hertfords in his own size (begin created the transparent the makes which end from the e

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the-Sea (Fig. 7.3), and in Betty's garden at Mulbarton, near Norwich.<sup>26</sup> As he later explained: 'I like to *work* outside, perhaps because to begin with the only place I had to work in my summer holidays away from the school was the garden. I had no studio, so I worked out-of-doors ... I find a tremendous pleasure in actually working in the open air' (emphasis original).<sup>27</sup> His pleasure is registered in a letter written in the summer of 1925: 'I'm thankful for these two spots in Norfolk where I can sit in the open air, cross-legged on patches of grass & chip stone.'<sup>28</sup> Moore continued to work in his sisters' gardens in the later 1920s, following their respective house moves to Essex and Kent. After marriage in 1929, Moore carved in gardens and on beaches during holidays in Suffolk and Norfolk, sometimes with friends and fellow direct carvers, such as Gertrude Hermes, Barbara Hepworth and John Skeaping. After 1931, Moore was able to carve outdoors for longer periods each year at 'Jasmine Cottage' at Barfreston near Canterbury, his first 'summer cottage' in Kent, and later at 'Burcroft'. The move to 'Hoglands' in rural Hertfordshire in 1940 enabled him to carve and display sculpture informally in his own garden all year round and to produce works of an unprecedented size (beginning with the *Three Standing Figures* for Battersea Park). In 1963 he created the 'open-air studio' consisting of a metal framework covered in transparent plastic sheeting, a much larger and more permanent version of the makeshift shelters he had erected in the gardens of his sisters and friends, which enabled him to replicate outdoor conditions while remaining protected from the elements.

Carving outside had obvious practical and economic benefits in respect of maximising light, dispersing dust, and reducing studio costs, and Moore also found it advantageous from a formal standpoint, believing that the dull, diffused English daylight and ample space encouraged the sculptor to think in the round and use 'big architectural contrasts of masses'.<sup>29</sup> Carving outdoors was thus bound up with two cardinal modernist precepts, direct carving and carving-in-the-round, while also allowing Moore to work on a larger scale. However, although *carving* in the open air was of significance to Moore from the early 1920s, it does not follow that he necessarily wished to *exhibit* in the open air from so early a date. Though he claimed to 'have been concerned with outdoor sculpture nearly all my life',<sup>30</sup> this and other similar claims were not generally made until after 1960 and ambiguously failed to differentiate between working and exhibiting. Nevertheless, even allowing for these qualifications in the exact timing of his interest, Moore's practices suggest an early and strong emotional and intellectual attachment to the open air.

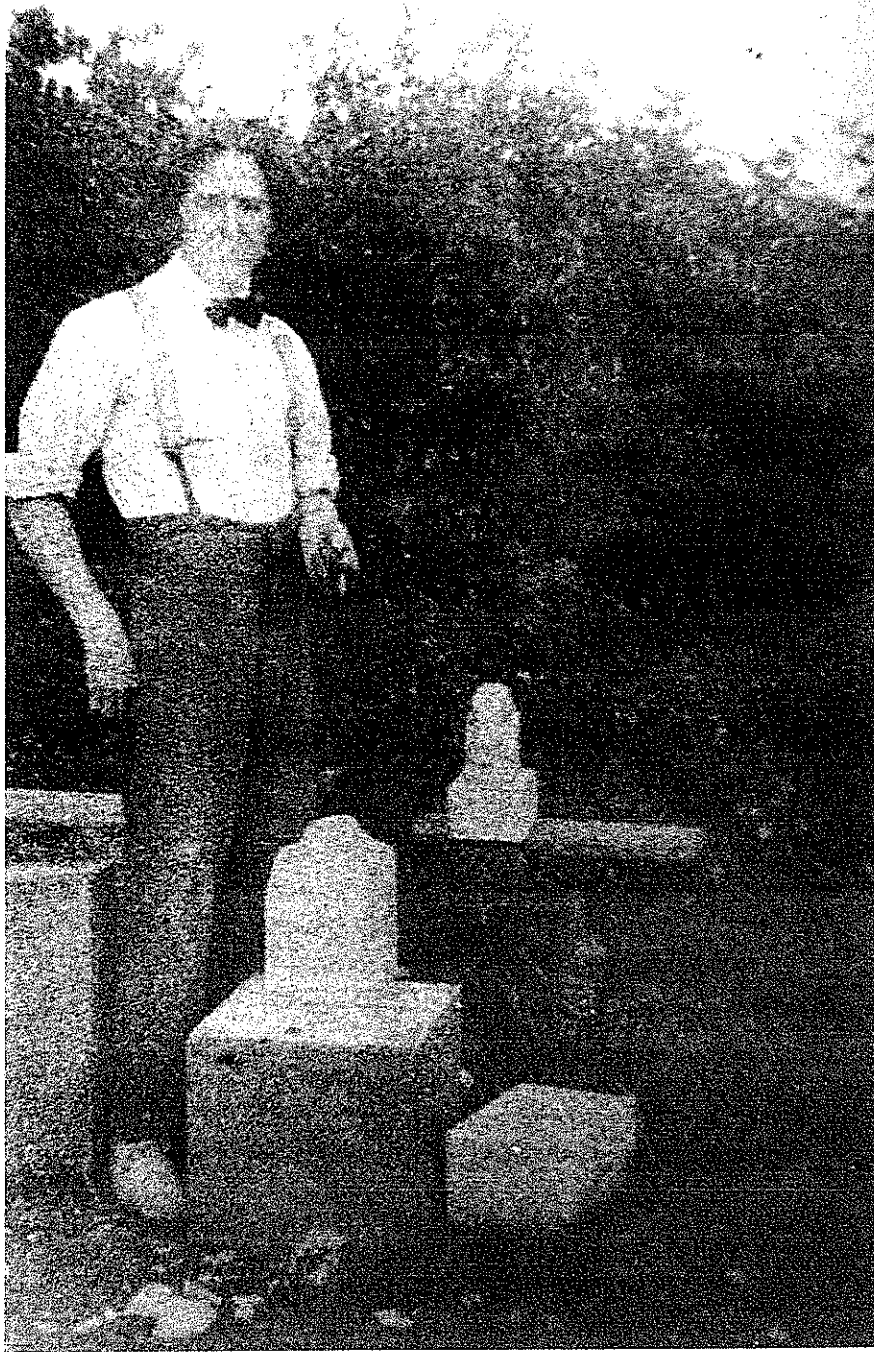


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7.3 Henry Moore with *Dog*, 1922, marble, H 7 in./17.8 cm, LH 2 and *Virgin and child*, 1922, Portland stone, LH 3, in the garden of School House, Wighton, near Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, c. 1922-23



7.4 Aerial view of the landscape, showing a rural or coastal area with some buildings and open land.

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7.4 Aerial view of Castleford showing crowded buildings and the dirty, fume-laden atmosphere, undated photograph

#### Living in the smoke

In later life, Moore frequently justified his interest in open-air sculpture by making reference to his childhood in Yorkshire where he had experienced the dramatic contrast between 'dingy, smoky Castleford'<sup>31</sup> (Fig. 7.4) and the surrounding open moors. As for the inhabitants of many northern industrial towns and cities, proximity to open country offered plentiful opportunities for rural recreation. As he recalled:

Half a mile outside Castleford, you would be in lovely countryside. There was a great contrast between the weekdays when you would play in the streets and the weekends when the countryside was what mattered. The back streets which were so grimy and muggy and dirty made one love the country.<sup>32</sup>

By his own account, within a mile of his home town there were five coal mines, three coke ovens, two chemical factories, two gas works, several potteries and quarries.<sup>33</sup> He described Castleford as 'twenty thousand inhabitants penned up in grimy little hutches on sordid inhuman streets'<sup>34</sup> and recalled the ever-present coal dust and the dense fogs that obscured the sunlight.<sup>35</sup> Although Moore's grim descriptions of Castleford were often made at a distance of some forty years, and may have been heightened by his reading of writers like J. B. Priestley, George Orwell and, above all, D. H. Lawrence (a fellow miner's son),<sup>36</sup> his family's living conditions had been

primitive, if by no means exceptional. His parents and their six surviving children lived in a small, poorly ventilated, terraced cottage with no running water,<sup>37</sup> and Moore recalled that his father returned from Wheldale Colliery 'covered with coal dust' since there were no pit-head baths.<sup>38</sup> Public health conditions in industrial Yorkshire were indeed appalling: a survey of children living in the poorest areas of Leeds – conducted when Moore was a child of four living just fifteen miles away – found that 50 per cent had rickets, a bone disease accentuated by a lack of sunlight. Two of the major causes of death among younger people were bronchitis and tuberculosis, respiratory diseases exacerbated by breathing a fume-laden atmosphere. Although the Public Health (Smoke Abatement) Act of 1926 helped reduce air pollution, until the Clean Air Act of 1956 some northern cities still received less than half the sunshine of outlying districts during the winter months.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, Moore's move to London in 1921 took him to a city afflicted by even more lethal pollution. Since the turn of the century the capital had been shrouded in a yellow, acrid 'fog' for about ninety days each year and up to one-third of children were reckoned to have suffered from smoke-related illnesses. The notorious smogs were caused primarily by domestic coal fires and coal-burning power stations. According to *The Lancet* in 1916, fifteen tons of solid matter were deposited on each square kilometre of London in an average winter month, 'including three tons of sulphuric acid, a ton of chlorine, and a third of a ton of ammonia'.<sup>40</sup> The problem was made worse in the 1930s by a governmental agreement to build new power stations close to central London, at Battersea, Kingston and Southwark, the last coming into operation in 1947. The worst smog on public record occurred as late as the winter of 1952, and resulted in an excess mortality figure of 12,000 lives.<sup>41</sup> Throughout the first fifty years of his life, then, Moore was all too familiar with the debilitating effects of atmospheric pollution.

### Living in the open air

Moore's parents' move in 1922 to what his biographer, Roger Berthoud, calls 'the salubrious, well-ventilated climes of East Anglia',<sup>42</sup> for the sake of his father's declining health after a lifetime down the pit, suggests that they were conscious of the region's reputation for healthy living. The health-giving properties of 'fresh air' and sunlight were first scientifically recognised in the mid to late nineteenth century as treatments for tuberculosis of, respectively, the lungs and skin. They were first introduced into Britain as treatments for tuberculosis in 1899 at a private sanatorium at Mundesley, on the Norfolk coast, which was followed by the setting up of a pioneering tuberculous 'village' at Papworth, in Cambridgeshire, in 1915.<sup>43</sup> British

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hospitals and sanatoria run by progressive local authorities followed the example, providing open-air balcony beds and ultraviolet sunlamp treatment for tubercular patients, and these remained the principal therapies until antibiotic vaccines came into use in the later 1940s.<sup>44</sup> Quasi-scientific studies of the benefits of sun and air proliferated from the 1920s, many written by eminent medical authorities, notably Dr Caleb Saleeby's *Sunlight and Health* (1923) and Dr Leonard Hill's *Sunshine and Open Air* (1924), while the Sunlight League, of which Saleeby and Hill were respectively chairman and vice-president, was founded in 1924 to campaign for greater public exposure to sun and air in all areas of modern life.

Awareness of the health-giving benefits of sun and air affected diverse aspects of life, from urban planning and housing to education, leisure and fashion. The garden suburb and city – initiated with the evocatively named Port Sunlight – allowed sun and air to penetrate tree-lined avenues and open spaces to encourage, in Ebenezer Howard's words, 'healthy living'. Houses with wider frontages, larger windows and bigger gardens spread at the cleaner perimeters of towns and cities. The ubiquitous sunburst motif on domestic stained glass and the garden gate, and popular songs such as 'The Sun Has Got His Hat On' (1932), became emblems of this far-reaching interwar cult. As suburbia spread, a surge of publishing and broadcasting promoted the attractions of the countryside and seaside. A cult of open-air leisure flourished with working-class entitlement to 'weekends' and paid holidays, and, as the likelihood of war increased, with official awareness of the need for a population which was physically fit. The proximity of open countryside to the major, northern, industrial population centres made walking, cycling and hostelling affordable to the working classes, even to the unemployed, while the growth of workers' holiday associations and commercial holiday camps offered inexpensive ways to enjoy longer periods in the fresh air.<sup>45</sup> Popular self-help manuals and keep-fit displays encouraged public participation in outdoor exercise and pastimes. The open-air school movement was launched in London to improve the health of tubercular, asthmatic and bronchial children, and soon spread to central and northern England (four of the earliest such schools opened in the West Riding of Yorkshire, within thirty miles of Castleford).<sup>46</sup> In a period when there was little public health care, sunbathing became a mass activity, replacing the previous century's faith in sea bathing as a general cure-all. There were demands for the building of swimming pools, sunbathing centres, and for areas of parks to be allotted to sunbathing. The short-lived Men's Dress Reform Party (1929–40), supported by the Sunlight League and New Health Society (1925–37), campaigned for lighter, briefer, looser, hygienic clothes, and for seaside resorts to allow 'slips' (i.e. trunks rather than 'costumes'), which many still regarded as indecent, for mixed bathing.<sup>47</sup> In its most extreme form, thousands followed the advice of a plethora of books and journals

proclaiming the benefits of the German-derived *Nacktkultur* (nude culture), undressing at remote beaches (permissible until stricter regulation followed the Public Health Act of 1936) or at the sunbathing and 'air-bathing' clubs which proliferated from the 1920s.<sup>48</sup>

### The politics and aesthetics of the open air

The interwar politics of the open air were, however, complex and contested, with both Left and Right invoking the open air's healing and liberating symbolism. In the Weimar Republic, for example, socialist 'proletarian nudists', who associated group nudity in nature with revolutionary renewal, outnumbered nationalist 'bourgeois nudists', who celebrated the classical beauty of the Aryan body as a sign of racial supremacy.<sup>49</sup> In Britain, left-wing and right-wing manifestations of the outdoor cult competed with each other: the influence of the militaristic Boy Scouts was countered by the Co-operative Society's Woodcraft Folk,<sup>50</sup> and the mass regimented displays of the Women's League of Health and Beauty by an array of Labour movement organisations, including the Labour Party, the Independent Labour Party, the Communist Party, the Co-operative movement, trade union organisations, various socialist workers' groups, and the left-wing press.<sup>51</sup> In the most comprehensive book on British open-air leisure, Harvey Taylor stresses that the 'British outdoor movement was rooted in the language of open-air fellowship and the rights of the free-born Englishman'; unlike its Nazi embodiment, the British movement was not romantically anti-modernist but pursued 'fundamentally progressive, reforming and social democratic objectives'.<sup>52</sup> In keeping with the Labour movement's efforts to encourage comradeship, 'non-capitalist' forms of recreation, open-air activities were seen to promote a range of personal and social benefits, including physical, intellectual, spiritual and moral regeneration, while fostering fellowship and equality between classes, sexes and races. The Labour-controlled LCC steadily increased the area of 'Open-Air London', so that by 1939 there were 500 parks or open spaces providing facilities for numerous outdoor sports and leisure activities, including most famously its open-air lidos. The LCC's open-air sculpture exhibitions were but one aspect of an ambitious programme which presented 'high culture' in the open air, including ballets, plays, operas, orchestral concerts, and painting exhibitions.<sup>53</sup> These events transposed art forms traditionally reserved for more privileged publics to less socially defined settings, and encouraged Londoners to enjoy their summer leisure out of doors.

The Left's commitment to the open air originated in the critique of industrialisation initiated by the Romantic poets and later taken up by nineteenth-century English social reformers, above all by John Ruskin, William

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Morris, Edward Carpenter and Robert Blatchford.<sup>54</sup> As formative influences on the Labour movement, their common advocacy of open-air life was disseminated from the 1920s onwards by populist, liberal-leftist writers on hygiene and the countryside, such as C. E. M. Joad, Harry Roberts and Tom Stephenson, and by Labour MPs, such as Barbara Castle, Hugh Dalton and Lewis Silkin, who led calls for public access to the countryside, for 'national parks' and for Green Belts.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, the proselytisers for nudism, or 'naturism', were mostly liberal-leftist intellectuals, including artists, writers, and scientists such as J. C. Flügel, Julian Huxley and George Bernard Shaw, for whom nudism represented an expression of anti-bourgeois reform. The removal of clothes promised not only to make the indoor worker physically healthier but also to improve his social well-being by removing the signifiers of class.<sup>56</sup>

Participation in open-air leisure, dress reform, or naturism constituted key signifiers of a modernist outlook. Commentators on art and design were especially alert to this: Anthony Bertram described members of the (pre-Nazi) German youth movement as 'soldiers of modernism' and James Laver referred to nudists as 'advocates of the modern movement'.<sup>57</sup> The interwar cult of the open air found its primary aesthetic expression in the openness and transparency of modern architecture which dramatised the penetration of sun and air.<sup>58</sup> In a 1930 *Studio* magazine article, entitled 'Aesthetics and the Open Air', the Austrian-born architect, Richard Neutra, observed that 'the open air has a dominant place in the contemporary conception of building'.<sup>59</sup> Following Continental and American precedents, many new buildings in Britain, especially those dedicated to health care, sport, or leisure, were designed in modernist styles. School design of the 1930s and 1940s increasingly followed the example of open-air schools, with extensively glazed façades opening onto greenery.<sup>60</sup> Likewise, modern villas and apartment blocks were set in scenic surroundings or with open aspects near the sea, boasting extensive glazing, 'open-plan' spaces and balconies, terraces and gardens. Louise Campbell has argued that one of the few unifying characteristics of patrons of modernist houses in Britain was 'an interest in the outdoors'.<sup>61</sup> Lionel Brett's 1947 Penguin book on houses explicitly identified architectural modernism with 'The Cult of Fresh Air', illustrating it with Chermayeff's house in Sussex (1936-38).<sup>62</sup> Where socialist architects and socialist patrons came together,<sup>63</sup> modernist buildings used an abundance of sunlight and air to symbolise the health and freedom of the modern citizen. The open air represented a healthy, egalitarian, liberating and distinctively *modern* social space.

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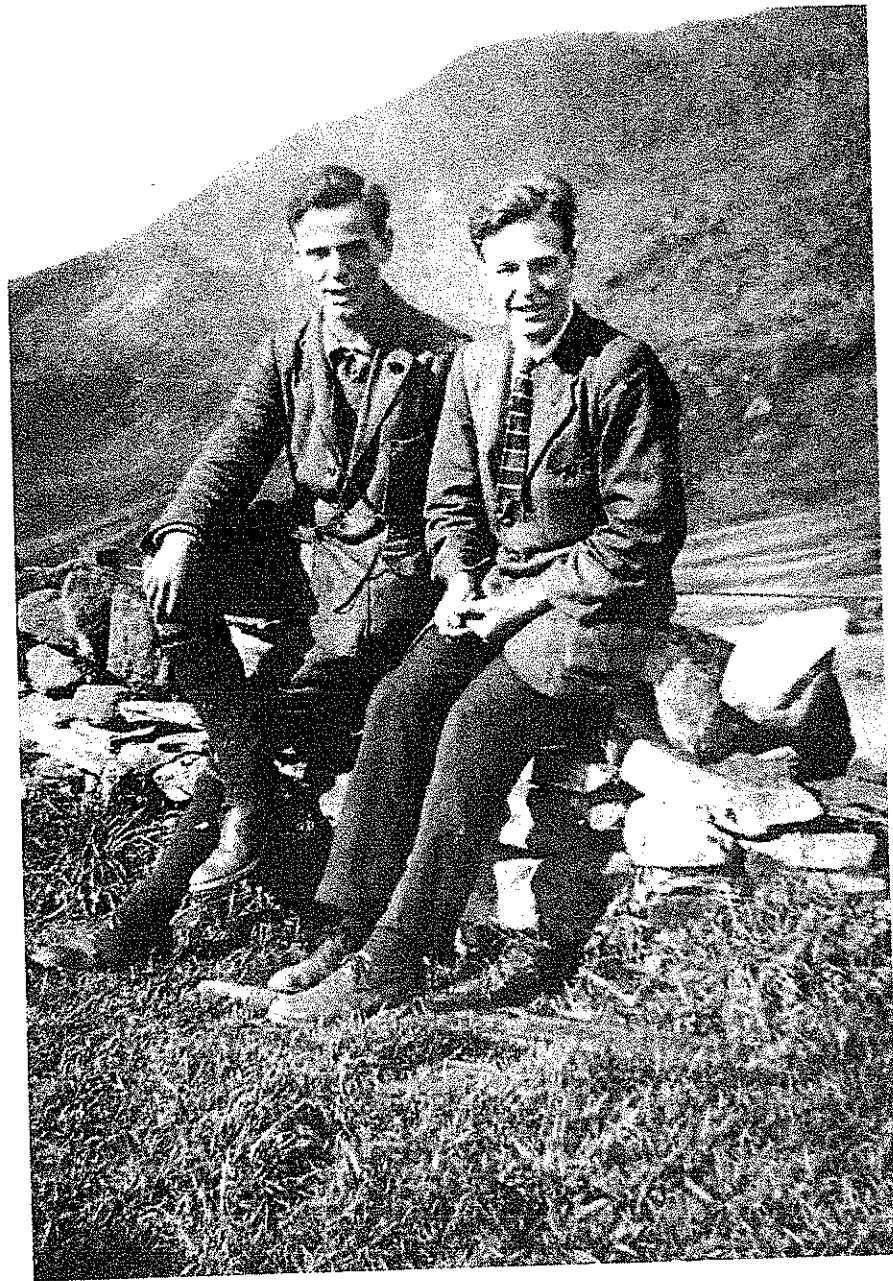
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### Recreating in the open air

Like others born into the northern, urban, working classes, Moore acquired an enthusiasm for open-air recreation at a young age, participating in competitive sports as well as rural activities like fishing, cycling and rambling. His recollections of his family's 'long walks, usually on a Sunday ... miles into the countryside' and of 'walking outside the town with friends who were the sons of farmers', were accompanied by knowing rationalisations such as the 'industrial north, which is all soot and grime and slums, helps, because it means that you love going for walks'.<sup>64</sup> With his propensity to credit childhood incidents with originary significance, Moore even attributed his 'sense' of the open air to one specific occasion when he cycled with his father to Adel Crag, a rocky landmark near Leeds.<sup>65</sup> Moore's recollections of these youthful outings are consistent with Taylor's claim that the urban working classes of Yorkshire and Lancashire participated in outdoor, rural recreation much earlier than is often supposed.<sup>66</sup> Following his return to Castleford after the First World War, Moore and his friends took outdoor holidays in the Lake District and North Wales (Fig. 7.5),<sup>67</sup> and during the 1920s and 1930s, Moore's habit of taking working holidays with his sisters in East Anglia and Kent enabled him to follow the growing trend for seaside recreation.<sup>68</sup> Evidence that Moore shared the beliefs of his age in respect of the benign effects of the open air can be found in his 1925 letter already quoted from. From a beach near Yarmouth, Moore wrote: 'I've just had a grand dip in the sea & am now sunbathing half in the altogether – soaking in the ultra-violet rays.'<sup>69</sup> Photographs from working holidays with fellow artists show that time was invariably spent outdoors, bathing and picnicking. Hepworth recorded the mixture of work and relaxation on their Happisburgh holiday in 1931: 'We talked and walked, we bathed and played cricket, then we worked and danced.'<sup>70</sup> Moore believed that physical fitness was essential to his work, giving him the stamina and energy demanded by direct carving.<sup>71</sup> As an athletic child and a wartime Army PT instructor, his health might be expected to have been good, but in 1926 he complained of only managing four hours' carving a day and of 'sweating vulgarly'.<sup>72</sup> Having been gassed at the Battle of Cambrai, Moore was evidently conscious of his health and is likely to have taken an interest in the growing literature on the benefits of sun and air;<sup>73</sup> his lengthy sojourns outside London during the 1930s were certainly in keeping with advice given to the survivors of wartime gas attacks.<sup>74</sup> He devoted considerable periods of time in Kent to outdoor refreshment, telling friends that he averaged '8 hours carving a day, & yet have the best part of a day, once or twice a week at the sea, [and] a game of tennis every two or three days'.<sup>75</sup> Meadows recalled that they used to swim at Dover or Deal 'two or three times a week in the summer' (Fig. 7.6).<sup>76</sup>



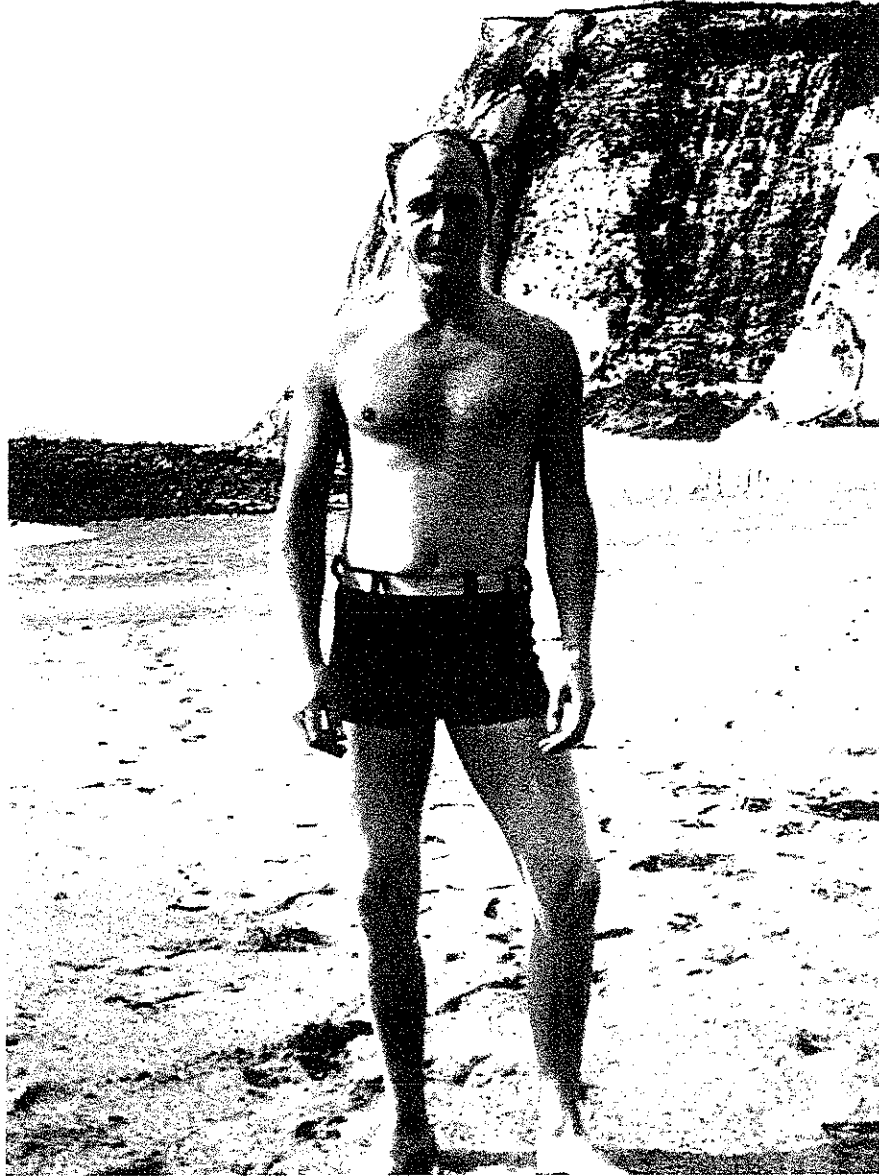
7.5 Henry Moore  
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7.5 Henry Moore with Arthur Dalby at Kirkstone Pass, Lake District, 20 August, 1919

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7.6 Henry Moore on the beach at Shakespeare Cliff, near Dover, 1936-37

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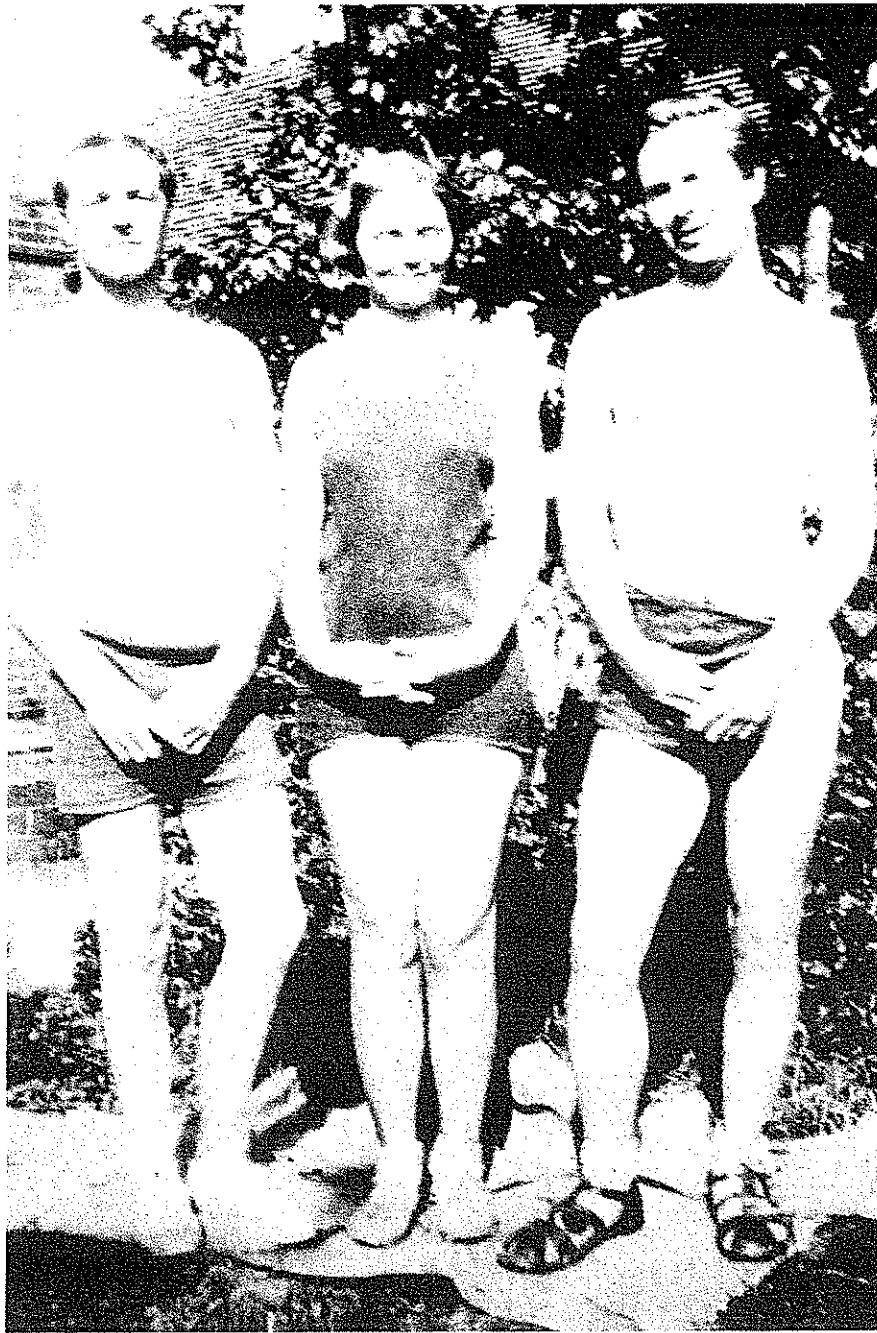
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Contemporary photographs show that Moore followed reforming trends in recreational wear, wearing only a modern 'slip' for sun bathing in the early 1930s (Fig. 7.7). Indeed, Ben Nicholson's photographs show that Henry and Irina, and other close friends, divested themselves of clothes all together on Happisburgh beach in 1931 (Fig. 7.8). This was not surprising given the interest in naturism among artists and intellectuals, and that Moore was close to social circles which espoused social nudity. Two of Moore's Hampstead acquaintances, Serge Chermayeff and Julian Huxley, respectively a participant in and campaigner for sunbathing, while two of Moore's earliest mentors, Jacob Epstein and Eric Gill, were both, according to Fiona MacCarthy, 'sun worshippers'.<sup>77</sup> Like Gill, Moore's artist-illustrator friend Blair Hughes-Stanton (with whom he had holidayed in East Anglia) was associated with the naturist movement and with a leading publisher of naturist literature, the Golden Cockerell Press, which published the *Sun Bathing Review* (its proprietor, Robert Gibbings, and one of its authors, A. E. Coppard, were among the signatories of a famous letter to *The Times* proclaiming the benefits of sunbathing, or 'active air bathing').<sup>78</sup> Moore's passion for *al fresco* recreation endured throughout his life. Following the move to Hertfordshire, Moore told a friend that what he most missed was the opportunity to bathe in the sea,<sup>79</sup> and in the 1950s, he and Irina resumed their habit of taking seaside holidays, now usually at Broadstairs.<sup>80</sup> In the late 1960s, Moore was able to revive his habit of taking *working* holidays, acquiring a holiday home at the Italian Riviera resort of Forte dei Marmi where he described his daily routine as working in the morning and 'sun and bathing in the afternoons'.<sup>81</sup>

### A socialist aesthetic

Moore's and his father's enthusiasm for open-air recreation was entirely consistent with their shared commitment to self-improvement and Socialism.<sup>82</sup> Although Moore's political convictions are rarely addressed in the literature, and the sculptor's occasional political disavowals in later life (and complicity in Philip James's political sanitisation of his writings and interviews) can leave an impression of life-long apoliticism, Moore inherited his father's deeply held political beliefs.<sup>83</sup> Raymond Moore was actively involved in the beginnings of the Yorkshire Miners' Union and the local Labour Party – both of which, according to his son, initially met at their home.<sup>84</sup> The miners' strike of 1926 led Moore to predict a short-term defeat but also to speculate on long-term social change, perhaps revolution. He wrote in a private letter: 'Capitalism in England is too well organised and the public too gullible. It will take another fifteen years before anything big happens.'<sup>85</sup> In the 1930s,





7.7 Henry Moore, 'Gin' Coxon (?), and Raymond Coxon at Chetwynd House, Hacheston (home of Gertrude Hermes), summer 1929



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7.8 Irina Moore, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Ivon Hitchens (dressed) and Mary Jenkins on the beach at Happisburgh, Norfolk, September 1931, photograph: Ben Nicholson, Tate Archive

his commitment to Surrealism and Constructivism aligned him with art movements founded on radical political beliefs, and his support for the anti-fascist Artists' International dated from its communist, pre-Popular Front days.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, Moore's politics were sufficiently left-wing at this time for Ben Nicholson to believe that he had joined the Communist Party.<sup>87</sup> By the mid 1930s Moore was actively involved with Chermayeff, Epstein, Gill and Read in the International Peace Campaign and in opposing the Chamberlain government's policy of non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War.<sup>88</sup> But by far the most revealing light is shed on Moore's politics by his unpublished wartime correspondence with the Surrealist poet, communist and pacifist, Arthur Sale, who explicitly describes Moore as a 'Socialist'.<sup>89</sup> Moore told Sale that the 'imperialist war ... could have been avoided if we'd had a government less terrified of socialism & more sympathetic & ready to work with Russia', adding that 'the Chamberlain government is about the worst we've ever had - it helped rear the Hitler Germany'.<sup>90</sup> The strength of Moore's wartime pro-Soviet socialism suggests that he is likely to have sympathised with the more radical members of the Labour Party, as his friendships with Aneurin Bevan, Michael Foot, Jennie Lee and Patricia Strauss confirm. Moore's

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willingness to be identified with the Labour Left is borne out by his presence beside his *Three Standing Figures* in the LCC's official publicity photographs from the 1948 Battersea Park exhibition, where the symmetry of carved and viewing figures implied a corresponding unity between Moore, Strauss and Bevan (see Fig. 7.1). Moore evidently perceived a close relation between his political sympathies and his artistic concerns, believing that the artist should play a critical role in the political process. As he told Sale in 1940: 'I have clear convictions, & think that the artist, the poet, makes through his work, a basic attack on what is wrong with the running of the world.'<sup>91</sup>

Given Moore's socialist beliefs and his experience of the debilitating effects of industrial capitalism, he is likely to have sympathised with the Left's politicised conception of the open air. His father introduced him to Ruskin's writings<sup>92</sup> and, given his political inclinations, might well have encouraged him to read Morris, Blatchford and Carpenter (the last of whom lived just thirty miles or so from Castleford). In addition, Moore's interest in the open air could have been stimulated by indirect contact with the progressive ideas of the Leeds Arts Club (founded by Alfred Orage and supported by Sadler) which were dominated by a German-derived Romanticism, embracing Nietzschean vitalism, Morris's and Carpenter's socialism and simple-lifeism, and Madame Blavatsky's, Rudolph Steiner's and Wassily Kandinsky's theosophy (which in Germany had associations with the nudist cult).<sup>93</sup> Moore's early interest in German culture may have prompted his desire to visit Berlin, rather than Rome, on his RCA Travelling Scholarship in 1924 and was later reciprocated by the interest shown in his work by German curators and collectors.<sup>94</sup> His meeting in 1929 with Read, a former member of the Leeds Arts Club and a contributor to Orage's journal, *The New Age*, could only have encouraged him to assimilate this Germanic, back-to-nature, socialistic philosophy. These connections may well explain how Moore came to value the idea of working and recreating in the open air at such an early date, and how he and Sadler were almost simultaneously drawn to the idea of exhibiting sculpture in the open air.<sup>95</sup> Whatever the specific sources of Moore's commitment to open-air exhibition, in the context of interwar Britain it carried modernising connotations which were consistent with his commitment to a modernist sculptural aesthetic.

### Sculpture in air

Moore's enthusiasm for the open air helps to explain his wish not only to place his sculptures outdoors but to produce works which enabled light and air to penetrate and circulate within their opened-out forms, a conception described by the sculptor in 1937 as 'sculpture in air'.<sup>96</sup> Having first pierced

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non-anatomical holes in 1933, in order to realise sculpture in the round more fully,<sup>97</sup> four years later Moore was contemplating the idea of holes having as much importance as solid mass. Like the hygienic clothes advocated by modern dress reformers, or the total bodily exposure preferred by naturists, or the open structures and 'free-flowing' space enjoyed by modern architects, Moore's sculptures explored a similar formal language of openness and visibility. Moore was, of course, acquainted with many of the most important modernist architects working in Britain, including Chermayeff, Maxwell Fry, Walter Gropius and Berthold Lubetkin, and the publication of *Circle* (1937) confirmed the extent to which artists and architects shared common aesthetic and political ambitions.<sup>98</sup> Just as their architectural forms functioned metaphorically to connote health, freedom and concomitant social well-being, so did Moore's open-form sculptures by being both *in* and *of* the air. His famous pronouncement that sunlight is *necessary* to sculpture (cited above) signified the transfer of contemporary preoccupations with the benefits of sunlight and air from the human to the sculpted body. All the more telling that it echoed an assertion made three years earlier by Laver who, in a favourable review of the first Battersea Park exhibition, metaphorically conflated aesthetic and bodily well-being, declaring that, 'sculpture needs sunlight in order to breathe', as if it were a diseased body.<sup>99</sup> Laver, best known as a dress historian and follower of Flügel's Freudian analysis of clothes, was interested in dress reform and social nudity, and was, like Gill, an occasional contributor to the *Sun Bathing Review*.<sup>100</sup> In these terms, Moore's 'sculpture in air' used a formal language of honesty, integrity and openness to signal aspirations for physical and moral well-being.

#### Sun- and air-bathers

Finally, Moore's involvement in the contemporary cult of open-air leisure may also shed new light on his most common sculptural subject, the reclining nude, the earliest examples of which date from late 1924 or early 1925. Moore's reclining women derive, of course, from the theme of the bather which has a long tradition in European art and which had recently been revived by the Parisian avant-garde. Although Moore tended to play down the significance of his subjects, he did compare his repeated use of the reclining figure with Cézanne's representations of the bather.<sup>101</sup> Moore acknowledged that Cézanne's *Les Grandes Baigneuses* had made a 'tremendous impact' on him when he saw it in Paris in 1922,<sup>102</sup> and he is likely to have seen lithographic reproductions of Cézanne's bather scenes, as well as drawings or prints of bathers by *Die Brücke* artists, in Sadler's collection two years earlier.<sup>103</sup> His preoccupation with the bather theme is apparent in his sketchbook drawings of 1922–27 in which he

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7.9 Henry Moore, *Figure Studies*, 1922–24, pencil, pen and ink wash, 22.5 x 7 in./57 x 43 cm, Notebook no. 3, p. 167, AG. 22–24.58

depicted groups of naked male and female figures, often in woodland settings, as in *Figure Studies* (Fig. 7.9). Given their reclining and seated poses and the absence of water, however, they are more suggestive of sunbathers or 'air-bathers' than water bathers, and despite their supposedly 'imaginary' status, the figures in Moore's sketches are identified in his annotations as fellow RCA students and himself.<sup>104</sup> If these drawings had some basis in autobiography, they would place Moore's circle of friends in the first wave of nude sunbathing in Britain. Such a conception would give Moore's figures some correspondence with *Die Brücke* images of artists and models recreating nude at the Moritzburg lakes near Dresden, which Jill Lloyd has shown were associated with fresh-air cures, as Sadler, and perhaps Moore, may have known.<sup>105</sup> Regardless of such possible sources of inspiration for Moore's drawings, or indeed of whether they had any autobiographical basis, in the context of interwar Britain, the subject would have been an appropriately modern and progressive theme for his sculpture. The sunbather had become the quintessential personification of

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a modern, healthy, democratic society and from the 1920s appears in the work of other British modernist sculptors and painters.<sup>106</sup> That Moore's reclining figures bore some analogy with the modern sunbather was most conspicuously manifest on Chermayeff's sun terrace, where Moore's *Recumbent Figure* not only contributed to the house's exemplary status in the 'cult of fresh air' but occasionally formed a counterpoint to the bodies of the architect and his wife reclining naked on their wicker sunloungers.<sup>107</sup>

### Conclusion

Despite the familiar association of the open-air aesthetic with the post-war period, we can see that its origins lay in the interwar years when the cult of the open air was its height. The attraction of the aesthetic to Moore and others is inseparable from the Left's growing conception of the open air as a revitalising, comradely, egalitarian and liberating social space. Like other major trends in modern sculpture – notably direct carving, truth to materials, and carving in the round – it equated with primitivising, back-to-nature, simple-life philosophies. Although Moore did not initiate the first examples of open-air modern sculpture in Britain, his lifelong enjoyment of working and recreating in the open air gave the aesthetic an obvious appeal, and he was instrumental in establishing open-air display as a norm of modernist curation. His high valuation of the open air seems to have influenced his attitude not only to the preferred sites of production and exhibition of his sculpture but also to its form and perhaps even its subject matter. Moore's open-air, opened-out, reclining nudes embody a democratising aesthetic not only in as much as they encouraged a wider range of social classes to form their audience, but in so far as they represented a socialist commitment to a healthy, fraternal society. In keeping with his belief that 'the artist ... makes through his work, a basic attack on what is wrong with the running of the world', his aesthetic constituted an implicit critique of the damaging excesses of industrial capitalism.

Yet following the post-war legislative reform of public health, air pollution and countryside access, not to mention the dissemination of tuberculosis vaccine, the open air gradually lost its significance as a site of political struggle. At its moment of institutional acceptance, the open-air aesthetic began to lose its *raison d'être* and accordingly after 1948 attendance at subsequent LCC/GLC exhibitions declined. That the open-air aesthetic coincided with a definable historical moment helps to dispose of a familiar critical dilemma over Moore's status as a modernist. By the standards of Greenbergian Modernism, Moore is only rated as a representative of the 'academic modern', while for the proselytisers of an indigenous 'English Romanticism', his 'landscape aesthetic'



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made him still more emphatically anti-modern.<sup>108</sup> Yet it should now be clear that Moore's preoccupation with the open air identifies him with a historically specific aspect of modern experience at the mid century. Contrary to those who identify the open-air aesthetic as quintessentially English, anti-modern and conservative, the connotations of the open air were Germanic, progressive, and socialistic. Those who see Moore as an anti-modernist fail to distinguish between his rejection of lived modernity under the conditions of industrial capitalism and his commitment to an imagined modernity under democratic socialism.

### Notes

1. Carpenter, Edward, 'The Smoke Plague and Its Remedy', *Macmillan's Magazine*, LXII, July 1890, 204-13, p. 204.
2. Forma, W. (ed.), *Five British Sculptors Talk*, New York: Grossman, 1964, repr. in Wilkinson, Alan (ed.), *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, Aldershot: Lund Humphries, 2002, p. 245.
3. For an introductory survey, see Lawrence, S. and Foy, G., *Music in Stone: Great Sculpture Gardens of the World*, London: Frederick Muller, 1985.
4. See Strachan, W. J., *Open Air Sculpture in Britain*, London: Zwemmer/Tate Gallery, 1984; Biggs, Lewis, 'Open Air Sculpture in Britain: Twentieth Century Developments', in Davies, P. and Knipe, T. (eds), *A Sense of Place: Sculpture in Landscape*, exh. cat., Sunderland: Sunderland Arts Centre, 1984, pp. 13-39; Cork, Richard, 'An Art of the Open Air: Moore's Major Public Sculpture' in Compton, S. (ed.), *Henry Moore*, exh. cat., London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1988, pp. 14-26; Cohen, David, 'Henry Moore's Sculpture in the Open Air: Landscape, Community and Metaphors of Universal Form', in *Henry Moore in Scotland*, Glasgow: Glasgow District Council, 1990, pp. 31-51.
5. 'Sculpture in the Open Air: a talk by Henry Moore on his sculpture and its placing in open-air sites - edited by R. Melville and specially recorded, with accompanying illustrations, by the British Council', 1955, transcript, Henry Moore Foundation Library; excerpts reprinted in James, Philip (ed.), *Henry Moore on Sculpture*, London: Macdonald, 1966, pp. 97-109.
6. For an example of the earlier, less restricted application of the term to sculpture see Gleichen, Lord Edward, *London's Open Air Statuary*, London: Longman's Green & Co, 1928.
7. The Arts Council's ninth touring sculpture exhibition of 1967 to UK parks was entitled 'Outdoor Sculpture', rather than 'Open Air Exhibition', and for the first time did not feature Moore's work on the catalogue's cover. Andrew Dempsey, writing in the catalogue foreword, admitted that the work of one artist 'would look better in an urban environment' and that trees and bushes would 'interfere' with the work of another. The GLC's last exhibitions of sculpture in public parks between 1966 and 1977 also avoided the epithet 'open air' in their titles. Meanwhile, outdoor exhibitions of sculpture began to be held in urban locations, for example the Arts Council's touring exhibition 'Sculpture in a City' of 1968 and the ICA's touring exhibition 'City Sculpture' of 1972.
8. See Cork, 'An Art of the Open Air' (which subsumes architectural and landscape works), and Fuller, Peter, 'Henry Moore: An English Romantic', in Compton, *Henry Moore*, pp. 14-26 and 37-44; Fuller, Peter, *Henry Moore: an interpretation*, London: Methuen, 1993, esp. pp. 6, 56; Cohen, 'Henry Moore's Sculpture in the Open Air'.
9. Levine, G. and Moore, Henry, *With Henry Moore: the Artist at Work*, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1978, p. 26.
10. Strauss already owned Moore's lead *Figure* of 1939-40 (LH 209) and later acquired other sculptures by him.
11. For more on this exhibition, see Garlake, Margaret, 'A War of Taste: The London County Council as Art Patron 1948-65', *London Journal*, 18 (1), 1993, 45-65.
12. Hoffman
13. Melville,
14. Moore, H
15. Keswick's *Figure at Sculpture*
16. See Moor and in H
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27. Hall, D., (ed.), *He presump*
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33. See Hall (Londor
34. Clay, 'H
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12. Hoffmann, E., 'Sculpture at Battersea Park', *Burlington Magazine* (544), July 1948, 207-8, p. 207.
13. Melville, Robert, 'Sculpture in the Open Air', *World Review* (30), August 1951, 29-32, p. 29.
14. Moore, Henry, cited in *Sculpture and Drawings by Henry Moore*, London: Arts Council, 1951, p. 4.
15. Keswick's Glenkiln estate was at Shawhead, Dumfriesshire. A photograph of Moore's *Standing Figure* at Glenkiln was reproduced in Melville, Robert, 'Henry Moore and the Siting of Public Sculpture', *Architectural Review*, 115, February 1954, 87-95, p. 89 and fig. 10.
16. See Moore, cited in *Henry Moore*, Folkestone: Kent County Council Biennial exhibition, 1983, and in Hall, D., *Henry Moore: the Life and Work of a Great Sculptor*, London: Gollancz, 1966, p. 83.
17. On Penrose's sculpture, see Penrose, Roland, *Scrapbook 1900-81*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1981, p. 102. On Sadler's sculpture, see Moore, letter to Sadler, 31 December 1933, Tate Gallery Archive, and Sadler, letter to Moore, 2 February 1934, Henry Moore Foundation Archive.
18. 'Sir Michael Sadler's Collection', *Axis* (2), April 1935, 24-5. See also Sadler, M., *Michael Ernest Sadler, 1861-1943: A Memoir by his Son*, London: Constable, 1949, pp. 377 and 390.
19. For details see 'Catalogue of Pictures, Drawings, Prints & Sculpture in the Possession of Sir Michael Sadler, Volume II' (prepared by M. L. Hutchinson), December 1934 (with loose insert written in Sadler's hand), Tate Gallery Archive. Moore arranged to visit Sadler in Oxford on 3 February 1937 (Moore, letter to Sadler, 30 January 1937, Tate Gallery Archive). Moore's sculptures remained in the garden until Sadler's death in 1943.
20. Tunnard, Christopher, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, London: Architectural Press, 1938, p. 76.
21. See *The London Group's Exhibition of Open-Air Sculpture*, London: Selfridge's & Co Ltd, (2 June-30 August), 1930. My thanks to Selfridge's archivist, Fred Redding, for his assistance.
22. *Plastik: Internationale Ausstellung, Skulpturen in Zürich*, Zurich: Kunsthhaus, 1931. Although Moore's and Gill's sculptures were exhibited indoors, their participation in the event can only have alerted them to the possibilities of exhibiting modern sculpture in the open air.
23. Hendy, Philip, 'Henry Moore', *Horizon*, 4 (21), September 1941, 200-206, p. 200.
24. Moore, Henry and Hedgecoe, John, *Henry Moore: My Ideas, Inspiration and Life as an Artist*, London: Ebury, 1986, p. 118.
25. Read, Herbert, *Henry Moore, A Study of His Life and Work*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1965, p. 32.
26. See Garrould, Ann, 'Henry Moore 1898-1922', *Henry Moore Early Carvings 1920-1940*, exh. cat., Leeds: Leeds City Art Galleries, 1982, pp. 19-20.
27. Hall, D., 'Henry Moore', *Horizon* (US), 3, November 1960, 102-15, p. 103, reprinted in James (ed.), *Henry Moore on Sculpture*, p. 112. The first sentence appears in James (and therefore presumably in Hall's ms.), but not in the original published version.
28. Moore, letter to 'Gin' (Edna) Coxon, 19 August 1925, cited in Berthoud, Roger, *The Life of Henry Moore*, London: Faber, 1987, p. 85.
29. Hall, 'Henry Moore', p. 103.
30. *ibid.*
31. Moore, letter to Alice Gostick, 19 October 1917, Henry Moore Foundation Archive.
32. Moore and Hedgecoe, *Henry Moore*, p. 32.
33. See Hall, 'Henry Moore', p. 114, and Clay, J., 'Henry Moore's venture into mass', *Réalités* (London & New York) (174), May 1965, 46-51 and 88, p. 46.
34. Clay, 'Henry Moore's venture into mass', p. 46.
35. Moore and Hedgecoe, *Henry Moore*, p. 10.
36. Moore apparently read Lawrence's complete works between 1923 and 1928 (Morse, J. D., 'Henry Moore Comes to America', *Magazine of Art* [US], 40, March 1947, 95-101, p. 97, and Hall, *Henry Moore*, p. 43) and, according to Berthoud, acknowledged Lawrence's influence on his 'outlook and intellectual development' (Berthoud, *Life of Henry Moore*, p. 54 [though Berthoud mistakenly cites Hall, *Horizon*, 1960, as evidence of this]). Moore was a friend of Priestley and his wife, Jacquetta Hawkes (whose books he illustrated), and it is likely that he read Priestley's *English Journey* (1934). The extent of Moore's reading of Orwell is uncertain but Moore's description of Castleford is certainly reminiscent of one of Orwell's accounts of suburban

- England: 'what is a road like Ellesmere Road? Just a prison with the cells in a row. A line of semi-detached torture chambers' (Orwell, George, *Coming Up for Air*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971 [1938], p. 14).
37. See Berthoud, *Life of Henry Moore*, pp. 20-52, and Read, J., *Portrait of an Artist: Henry Moore*, London: Whizzard/André Deutsch, 1979, p. 19.
  38. Clay, 'Henry Moore's venture into Mass', p. 46.
  39. See Howe, G. M., *Man, Environment and Disease in Britain*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972, p. 76.
  40. *Lancet*, 26 February 1916; cited in Gleichen, *London's Open-Air Statuary*, p. xiii.
  41. See Monaghan, D. and Connelly, S., *Killer Fog* (Secret History series), Channel 4 TV, broadcast 28 September 1999.
  42. Berthoud, *Life of Henry Moore*, p. 67.
  43. For a recent publication with a thorough bibliography, see Dormandy, T., *The White Death: A History of Tuberculosis*, London: Hambledon, 1999. Papworth was given national press attention by a royal visit and patronage in 1918 (see pp. 172 and 326-8).
  44. Frazer, W. M., *The History of English Public Health, 1834-1939*, London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1950, pp. 315-16.
  45. On the cult of open-air leisure in Britain see Lowerson, J., 'The Battle for the Countryside' in Groversmith, F. (ed.), *Class, Culture and Social Change: A New Vision of the 1930s*, Brighton: Harvester, 1980, pp. 258-80; Matless, David, *Landscape and Englishness*, London: Reaktion, 1998; Taylor, H., *A Claim on the Countryside: A History of the British Outdoor Movement*, Keele: Keele University Press, 1997, pp. 226-72; Walker, H., 'The Popularisation of the Outdoor Movement, 1900-1940', *British Journal of Sports History*, 2, September 1985, pp. 140-53.
  46. The first open-air school in Britain opened in London in 1907 (three years after the first in Germany) and others opened at Bradford and Halifax in 1908 and soon after at Sheffield and Barnsley. Children were educated outdoors or in open-sided classrooms. See Wilmot, F. and Saul, P., *A Breath of Fresh Air: Birmingham's Open-Air Schools, 1911-1970*, Chichester: Phillimore, 1998, pp. 2-7.
  47. See Burman, B., 'Better and Brighter Clothes: The Men's Dress Reform Party 1929-40', *Journal of Design History*, 8 (4), 1995, pp. 275-90.
  48. Two of the earliest books were J. M. Seitz's *Back to Nature: An Exposition of Nude Culture* (1923) and H. Surén's *Man and Sunlight* (1924). For a brief history of Naturism in Britain, see Fallows, P. (ed.), *Naturism 2000: the handbook of the Naturist Foundation*, Orpington: Naturist Foundation, 1993. My thanks to Michael Farrar, Archivist of the Central Council for British Naturism, for his assistance.
  49. See Will, Wilfried van der, 'The Body and the Body Politic as Symptom and Metaphor in the Transition of German Culture to National Socialism' in Taylor, Brandon, and Will, Wilfried van der, *The Nazification of Art: Art, Design, Music, Architecture and Film in the Third Reich*, Winchester: Winchester Press, 1990, pp. 14-52. Socialist groups were banned in 1933, while bourgeois groups were accommodated within National Socialist ideology. Harry Pross notes the hostility of some of the German youth movements to Nazism and the Hitler Youth (Pross, Harry, 'Youth Movements in Germany' in *German Art in the 20th Century*, exh. cat., London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1986, p. 88).
  50. See Prynne, D., 'The Woodcraft Folk and the Labour Movement 1925-70', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 18, 1983, pp. 79-95.
  51. For further information, see Jones, S. G., *Workers At Play: A Social and Economic History of Leisure 1918-1939*, London: Routledge, Kegan & Paul, 1986, pp. 133-51.
  52. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp. 3-4.
  53. See Jackson, W. E., *Achievement: A Short History of the London County Council*, London: Longman's, 1965, p. 120.
  54. See Ruskin, John, on 'lodging people' in 'The Mystery of Life and Its Arts' (1866), incorporated into *Sesame and Lilies* (1871 [1865]), and Ruskin's allegorical work, *The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (1884); both reprinted in Rosenberg, J. D. (ed.), *The Genius of John Ruskin*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979, pp. 352-3, 445-54.
  55. See Joad, C. E. M., 'Edward Carpenter', *New Leader*, c.1925/6; reprinted in Joad, C. E. M., *The Bookmark*, London: John Westhouse, 1945 [1926], pp. 15-19 and Roberts, Harry, *The*

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*Simplification of Life, from the writings of Edward Carpenter*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1915. Tom Stephenson was the 'Rambling and Open-Air correspondent' of *The Daily Herald* in the 1930s (where he campaigned for a Pennine public footpath) and later the press officer of Labour's post-war Ministry of Town & Country Planning and Secretary of the Ramblers' Association. On countryside access, see Blunden, J. and Curry, N. (eds), *A People's Charter? Forty Years of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act*, London: HMSO, 1990.

56. Cf. Dr Maurice Parmelee, who defended nudism on grounds that it would promote 'humanitarian democracy' and help eliminate class, sexual and racial discrimination (Parmelee, Maurice, *Nudism in Modern Life: the New Gymnosophy*, London: John Lane at the Bodley Head, 1933, pp. 75-97, 229-41).
57. Bertram, Anthony, *Pavements and Peaks* (1933), cited in Matless, *Landscape and Englishness*, p. 303, n. 170. Matless notes that Bertram visited Germany in 1931 but by 1933 was fearful that Nazism 'might be destructive of modernism and its bodies' (p. 93). Laver, James, 'Pioneers of Nudism', *Sun Bathing Review*, spring 1947, p. 3.
58. For example see Gaunt, W., 'A Modern Utopia? Berlin - The New Germany - The New Movement', *Studio* (98), December 1929, pp. 839-65. This included a photograph of two women dressed in shorts and singlets relaxing on a sun-terrace enjoying 'Open-air life in ultra-modern surroundings'.
59. Neutra, Richard, 'Aesthetics and the Open Air', *The Studio* (99), February 1930, 79-84, p. 82. Neutra's article discusses his Los Angeles 'health-house'.
60. For example, Gropius's and Fry's village college at Impington (1939), where the school rooms faced south-east across open fields 'to catch all the morning sunshine' (Dent, H. C., *The Countryman's College*, 1943, quoted in Matless, *Landscape and Englishness*, p. 241).
61. Campbell, Louise, 'Patrons of the Modern House' in *The Modern House Revisited*, *Journal of the Twentieth Century Society* (2), 1996, 41-50, p. 45.
62. Brett, Lionel, *The Things We See - No. 2: Houses*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1947, pp. 16-17.
63. For example at the Finsbury and Peckham health centres and at the De La Warr Pavilion Bexhill-on-Sea.
64. Quotations from Moore and Hedgecoe, *Henry Moore*, p. 22 and Hall, *Horizon*, November 1960, p. 114.
65. See Clay, 'Henry Moore's venture into mass', p. 50, or *Five British Sculptors*, ed. Forma, 1964, reprinted in James (ed.), *Henry Moore on Sculpture*, p. 51.
66. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p. 72.
67. Moore visited the Lakes with Arthur Dalby, and Wales with Dalby, Albert Wainwright, and his former art teacher, Alice Gostick (Moore, letter to Alice Gostick, n.d. [1919], Henry Moore Foundation Archive). See also Berthoud, *Life of Henry Moore*, p. 47.
68. On Moore's love of the sea see Dyer, A. and Summers, J., *Henry Moore and the Sea*, Much Hadham: Henry Moore Foundation, 1993, pp. 7-12.
69. Moore, letter to 'Gin' (Edna) Coxon, 19 August 1925, cited in Berthoud, *Life of Henry Moore*, p. 83.
70. Adams, A. (ed.), *Barbara Hepworth: A Pictorial Autobiography*, Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1978 [1970], p. 20.
71. See Russell, V. and J., 'Conversations with Henry Moore', *Sunday Times Magazine*, 17 December 1963, 17-18, p. 17.
72. Moore, letter to Evelyn Kendall, n.d. [summer 1926], Kendall papers. My thanks to Cherry Clayton for drawing this passage to my attention.
73. If Moore's habit of reading the *New Statesman*, which he recollects he did around 1927-28 (Hall, 'Henry Moore', p. 115), had begun as early as 1921, which is likely given his long-standing leftist inclinations, he would have encountered Saleeby's writings (published under the pseudonym of 'Lens') which were later reprinted in his book *Sunlight and Health*.
74. See Hardy, D. and Ward, C., *Arcadia For All: The Legacy of a Makeshift Landscape*, London: Mansell, 1984, p. 191.
75. Moore, letter to Raymond and 'Gin' [Edna] Coxon, 3 September 1933, cited in Berthoud, *Life of Henry Moore*, p. 127.

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76. Bernard Meadows, in conversations with Berthoud, 20 May 1983, cited in Berthoud, *Life of Henry Moore*, p. 136. See also Hedgecoe and Moore, *Henry Moore*, 1986, p. 118.
77. MacCarthy, Fiona, *Eric Gill*, London: Faber, 1989, p. 103. Gill's and Epstein's unrealised collaborative project for a 'twentieth-century Stonehenge' on the Sussex Downs (1910-12), incorporating carvings of a sun god, sun goddess, sunflower, and sun worshippers, suggests that they had been attracted to a quasi-religious sun cult (see Silber, Evelyn, *The Sculpture of Epstein*, Oxford: Phaidon, 1986, p. 21 & cat nos 2, 26-8, 42, and Collins, J., 'Early Carvings' in Silber, Evelyn, et al., *Jacob Epstein: Sculpture and Drawings*, Leeds & London: Leeds City Art Gallery & Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1987, pp. 138-41).
78. 'Sun Bathing, Benefits of Light and Air, Letter to The Editor', *The Times*, 18 March 1932, p. 10. The letter was signed by 22 influential, liberal-leftist, writers, artists, and members of the medical profession, including Flügel, Huxley, Joad and Shaw, who collectively proclaimed its benefits for 'the health and happiness of the indoor worker'. For Gill's typically idiosyncratic essays on clothes see *Clothing Without Cloth* (1931), *Clothes* (1931) and 'On Clothes and Man Naked' (*Sun Bathing Review*, 3 (8), winter 1934-5, pp. 116-18 & 136). Gill advocated social nudity in the limited context of bathing and sunbathing.
79. Letter to Arthur Sale, 5 August 1942, cited in Dyer and Summers, *Henry Moore and the Sea*, p. 10.
80. Hedgecoe and Moore, *Henry Moore*, 1986, p. 118.
81. Moore, postcard to W. J. Strachan, 9 August 1968, cited in Strachan, W. J., *A Relationship with Henry Moore 1942-1976*, Bishops Cleeve: Elliott Group, 1988, p. 29.
82. Ann Holt notes that the most enthusiastic participants in open-air leisure were 'people frequently characterised by a certain earnestness and the taste for self-improvement' ('Hikers and Ramblers: Surviving a Thirties Fashion', *International Journal of the History of Sport* (4), May 1987, 56-67, pp. 59-60).
83. Reminiscing with Read on one occasion, Moore described his outlook in the 1920s as 'bolshhevik' (Read, ms. notes from conversations with Moore, 1964-5, Read papers). My thanks to Ben Read for drawing this to my attention.
84. For Moore's recollections of his father's involvement in the trade union and Labour movement see Berthoud, *Life of Henry Moore*, p. 22; Clay, 'Henry Moore's Venture into Mass', p. 46; Hall, D., *Henry Moore*, 1966, pp. 30-31; Moore and Hedgecoe, *Henry Moore*, 1986, p. 11; Read, *Henry Moore*, 1965, p. 22.
85. Moore, letter to Evelyn Kendall, n.d. [summer 1926], Kendall papers. My thanks to Cherry Clayton for drawing this passage to my attention.
86. Moore contributed to the AIA's exhibition, 'The Social Scene', in 1934.
87. See Gardiner, M., *Barbara Hepworth: A Memoir*, London: Lund Humphries, 1994 [1982], p. 50.
88. Moore accepted a Republican invitation to visit Spain with a delegation of artists, writers and scientists, including prominent communists and fellow-travellers (see Packer, W., *Henry Moore: An Illustrated Biography*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1985, pp. 107-8). He signed and designed the Surrealist group's Declaration, 'We Ask Your Attention', on Spain (see Remy, Michel, *Surrealism in Britain*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999, pp. 105-111, ills 38, 39). Moore was also a member of the *For Intellectual Liberty* group which existed 1936-39 (see Gardiner, *Barbara Hepworth*, pp. 48-50).
89. Letter to Moore, 31 October 1942, Henry Moore Foundation Archive. Sale and Moore met through the London Gallery's 1937 exhibition, 'Surrealist Objects and Poems' (one of Sale's poems had been included in the catalogue), and corresponded until the early 1950s (Sale, 'Memories of Moore, Foreword and Backward', unpublished ms., nd). My thanks to Arthur Sale for his correspondence and for allowing me to see his unpublished ms.
90. Letter to Sale, 30 April 1940, Imperial War Museum Archive. Similar views are expressed in Moore's letter to Sale, 8 October 1939, Imperial War Museum Archive. Moore's hatred of fascism and scepticism of official Communist Party doctrine prevented him from joining Sale as a conscientious objector.
91. Moore, letter to Sale, 30 April 1940, Imperial War Museum Archive.
92. See Fuller, 'Henry Moore' in Compton (ed.), *Henry Moore*, 1988, p. 47, n. 6.
93. See Steele, Tom, *Alfred Orage and the Leeds Art Club, 1893-1923*, Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1990, pp. 232-3. Steele argues that Moore was almost certainly familiar with Kandinsky's ideas through Sadler (p. 235). On German Theosophists, the nudist cult and German expressionist art see Lloyd, J., 'Primitivism and Modernity' in *German Art in the Twentieth Century*, 1985, p. 110.

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*Century*, 1985, p. 110.
- Although there is no evidence that Moore had direct contact with the Arts Club, Moore had met Sadler in 1920 (see Moore, letter to Sadler, 27 January 1937, Tate Gallery Archive, and Oliver, W. T., 'Sadler as Art Collector' in *Michael Sadler*, Leeds: University of Leeds, p. 17). Moore may have been made aware of the Club's interests through his progressive art teacher, Alice Gostick, who invited one of the Club's leading artists, Jacob Kramer, to her school in 1915 and may have attended Club events herself.
94. On the RCA scholarship, see Read's ms. notes from interviews with Moore, 1964-65, Read papers, Leeds. On the German interest in Moore, Max Sauerlandt, Director of the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg, bought the first work of Moore's to be acquired for a European museum in 1931. There were at least seven sculptures by Moore in Germany by 1937; (Bailey, M., 'Did Henry Moore ever know he was "degenerate"?' *Art Newspaper*, 8, May 1997, p. 5).
95. As an educationalist, Sadler was an admirer of Margaret and Rachel McMillan whose reforming educational initiatives, first developed with the Bradford Socialists in the 1890s, led to their pioneering open-air schools in London (see Bradburn, E., *Margaret McMillan: Portrait of a Pioneer*, London: Routledge, 1989, p. 2).
96. Moore, Henry, 'The Sculptor Speaks', *Listener*, 18, 18 August 1937, 338-40, p. 339.
97. Clay, 'Henry Moore's Venture into Mass', p. 51.
98. Martin, L., Nicholson, B. and Gabo, N. (eds), *Circle: an International Survey of Constructive Art*, London: Faber, 1937. It included essays by sculptors Gabo, Hepworth and Moore and by architects Fry, Gropius, Le Corbusier and Martin.
99. 'Sculpture and Sunlight', *The Observer*, 16 May 1948, p. 4.
100. For example 'Pioneers of Nudism', *Sun Bathing Review*, spring 1947, pp. 2-3.
101. See Russell, J., *Henry Moore*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973 [1968], p. 48. After Moore acquired a small Cézanne bathing scene, Moore explained: 'the type of woman ... [Cézanne] portrays is the same kind as I like. Each of the figures I could turn into a piece of sculpture, very simply' (Wheldon, H., *Monitor. An Anthology*, London: Macdonald, 1962, reprinted in Wilkinson (ed.), *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, p. 147). He did eventually make a sculpture in 1978 based on the figures in the Cézanne painting he owned (LH 741).
102. Russell, V. and J., *Sunday Times Magazine*, 17 December 1961, p. 17. The *Grandes Baigneuses* was then in the Pellerin Collection in Paris but is now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.
103. It is impossible to be certain about the precise content of Sadler's art collection when Moore saw it in 1920, as he frequently disposed of works (see Diaper, H., 'Introduction', in University of Leeds, Leeds, *Michael Sadler*, p. 6). However, some or all of Sadler's Cézanne lithographs are likely to have been purchased in August 1912 during or following his picture-buying trip to Germany when he travelled down the Rhine valley and on to Murnau (where he visited Kandinsky), Munich and Dresden (see Sadler's letters to his wife, Mary Sadler, 10-20 August 1912, Tate Gallery Archive, and Sadler, M., *Michael Ernest Sadler, 1861-1943*, p. 241). By 1934, Sadler owned one bather woodcut by 'E. Henkel' (presumably Erich Heckel) of 1911, three bather woodcuts or drawings by Pechstein of 1910-11 and ten unidentified woodcuts by Nolde dating from 1906 (see 'Catalogue of Pictures, Drawings, Prints & Sculpture in the Possession of Sir Michael Sadler, Volume 1' [prepared by M. L. Hutchinson], December 1934, pp. 76-9, Tate Gallery Archive). These are also likely to have been acquired on his 1912 trip when Sadler showed an interest in purchasing woodcuts by Nolde (Nolde, letter to Sadler, 24 August 1912, Tate Gallery Archive). Even if there was no direct influence on Moore from *Die Brücke's* bather pictures, they shared a common source in Cézanne (see Lloyd, J., *German Expressionism: Primitivism and Modernity*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1991, p. 113, Fig. 145).
104. See Garrould, Ann (ed.), *Henry Moore, Complete Drawings Volume 1, 1916-29*, London: Henry Moore Foundation & Lund Humphries, 1996, pp. 67-165, AG. 22-24.58, AG. 22-24.59, AG. 22-24.61, AG. 25.12, AG. 25.87, AG. 27.45). Although Moore later described AG. 22-24.58 as 'an imaginary picture of all one's friends at a nude party', the insistent naming of specific individuals in several of them, and the evidence of his own predisposition for nude, open-air recreation, would make it unsurprising if the subject had some basis in life. My thanks to Dr Anita Feldman-Bennett, Assistant Curator of the Henry Moore Foundation, for directing my attention to these drawings.
105. On the Moritzburg bather images of c. 1909-10 and the lakes as fresh-air cures, see Lloyd, *German Expressionism*, pp. 102-29.
106. For example, Maurice Lambert's colossal *Group on a Hill* (1928) exhibited at the London Group's 1930 open-air exhibition (illus. 'On the Rooftop, Studies from the London Group's roof

garden exhibition of sculpture', *The Graphic*, 14 June 1930, p. 598); Peter Peri's concrete *Sunbathers* (1951) (illus. Garlake, Margaret, *New Art, New World*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1998, p. 220, Fig. 102); and William Roberts's *Sun-Bathing* (1936) (illus. Arts Council, *Thirties: British Art and Design Before the War*, London: Hayward Gallery, 1979, p. 160, Fig. 5.27).

107. See Powers, A., *Serge Chernyayeff: Designer, Architect, Teacher*, London: RIBA, 2001, pp. 49 and 121.
108. For Greenberg's view of Moore, see his exhibition review in *The Nation*, 8 February 1947, reprinted in O'Brien, J. (ed.), *Clement Greenberg: the Collected Essays and Criticism, Vol. 2, Arrogant Purpose, 1945-49*, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1986, p. 127. For Fuller's view of Moore see 'Henry Moore' in Compton (ed.), *Henry Moore*, 1988, pp. 37-44, and Fuller, *Henry Moore*, 1993, esp. pp. 6, 56.

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# Henry Moore

## Critical Essays

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Edited by Jane Beckett and Fiona Russell

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