EDITOR'S NOTES

Readers are invited to send the Editors notes, queries, comments on reviews, news of works in progress about Pater, and offprints of recently published articles and reviews.

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Pater Newsletter is seeking a contributor in Britain to compile and annotate the Recent Publications section of the annual Autumn/Winter number. Paterians with bibliographical interests and experience please contact the UK editor.

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Library subscriptions to PN continue to increase in number. The University of New Mexico Library has recently subscribed; please tackle your own library; subscriptions are very reasonably priced!

NEWS

Professor Ken Carpenter, Lecturer in Visual Arts at York University, Canada, is spending this academic session in Florence writing a book on Pater's art criticism.

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A Special Session on "Revitalising the Teaching of Victorian Non-Fiction Prose" was held at the 1984 MLA in Washington D.C. in December. Speaking were Curtis Dahl, "Integrating Nonfiction Prose with Poetry and Fiction in a Thematic Course"; James Harley, "Teaching Victorian Prose as Post-Romantic Art"; Avrom Fleishman, "Figures of Autobiography in the Classroom"; and Barbara Gelpi, "Enlarging and Enlivening the Canon: Victorian Women's Prose".

The Special Session on "Editing Pater" announced in PN13 did not take place because it was not approved by the MLA Program Committee.

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The Arnoldian (Dept. of English, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD 221402) is expanding its coverage with Volume 12 "to highlight scholarship on Victorian
non-fiction prose", including "articles, review essays, and reviews of Victorian prose".

*WORKS IN PROGRESS*

by Richard Dellamora (Trent University, Canada).

Subject: The book deals with the relationship between sexuality and culture in Walter Pater's writing from the early 1860s to 1886. Pater was the first English writer to develop a specifically gay critical discourse. He made explicit use of homoerotic aspects of Christian and Classical tradition as part of a continuing critique of contemporary culture.

Function: Pater's critics have usually regarded his homosexuality as a symptom or defect. His admirers tend to treat his sexuality as though it were invisible yet from the start of his career he argued that critical interpretation occurs from an erotic point of view. As well, Pater worked to bring about a social environment tolerant of a much wider range of behaviour, including sexual and specifically homosexual, than his contemporaries were prepared to even consider. This utopian ambition shaped much of his writing.

Audience: I have in mind three groups: scholars and students of Romantic and Victorian literature; gays interested in their heritage; and feminists and others interested in erotic issues in art and culture. Because Pater's views were often expressed in relation to painting, the book may also appeal to readers interested in the relation between literature and the visual arts.

Introduction: A survey and summary of the changing critical context that has made a study like the present one for the first time possible. K.J. Dover's Greek Homosexuality (1978) and John Boswell's Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality (1980) have established the necessary historical context by showing the importance of gay activity and awareness within the Classical and Christian traditions. Studies such as Michel Foucault's work in The History of Sexuality (trans. 1978) and elsewhere and those of Lillian Faderman in Surpassing the Love of Men (1981) and elsewhere those of Lillian Faderman in Surpassing the Love of Men (1981) and George Chauncey in a seminal essay, "Female Deviance" (1982) show that during Pater's early career scientists were for the first time distinguishing homosexuality as a discrete phenomenon. While they were concerned to denote homosexual behavior as pathological, growing public awareness of homosexuality, even in a negative context, allowed writers like Walt Whitman, Pater, and others an opportunity to develop a self-consciously gay approach to homosexuality. As well, and as Roland Barthes has shown in S/Z (trans. 1974), even apparently conventional texts by heterosexual writers subverted the stereotypes of 19th-century gender-coding. And Barthes' writing after S/Z specifies characteristic tropes of a gay discourse that figure prominently in Pater's writing.

Gay discourse and feminism are different but related responses to general social and cultural conditions. Accordingly, in discussing homosexuality in relation to the dominant culture, I draw on work by feminist critics during the 1970s that shows how desire, gender-codes, and personal preferences may shape an artist's imagination. On the historical side, Faderman, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Sharon O'Brien, and others have shown how the experience and norms
of feminine friendship and love developed between 1850 and 1900. I suggest that the erotic language and imagery which critics like Helene Cixous have found in writing by women have analogues in Pater's style. And I further suggest that the models that Elaine Marks has found to characterize the literary representation of lesbians have close analogues in Pater's narratives of homosexual and gay experience in The Renaissance (1873) and Marius the Epicurean (1886). Elaine Showalter has recently discriminated two emphases in current feminist writing: one, a "reformist" position that emphasizes "sexual equality" and the other a "radical" position which "asserts the difference, the power, and the superiority of the feminine" (Raritan Fall, 1983, 40). In The Renaissance and Marius the Epicurean Pater developed a gay point of view that includes two similar emphases.

In the Introduction and again in the context of other current discussions, I define terms such as gay, homosexual, homoerotic, and various forms of androgyny. This last is a key word for historical reasons. In attempting to resist and revise conventional gender-codes, 19th-century writers used androgynous language in a number of specific ways.

Finally I distinguish between feminist writing and homosexual writing on the basis of their different relation to dominant culture. Feminists like Gilbert and Gubar in The Madwoman in the Attic (1979) have emphasized the tendency of dominant culture to exclude women's points of view. Homosexuality, on the other hand, has long stood in an internal relation to dominant culture. This culture has fed on homosexual desire while at the same time silencing or denigrating it. Hence, one needs to distinguish homosexual writing (which can be homophobic and which can occur in heterosexual contexts) from a self-consciously gay discourse. In this last connection, I have found especially useful Felix Guattari's interview in Homosexualities and French Literature (1979). Guattari relates homosexuality to the place of desire, the body, and women in dominant culture.

List of Chapters

Introduction


Establishes context for Pater in earlier legal and social practice and in Romantic literary tradition. Includes discussion of Bentham's unpublished writing on homosexual legislation and a discussion of the coding of homosexual content in published writing of the time.

2. Chapter 2. Literary Conceptions of Masculinity at Mid-Century.

Deals with attempts to resist and revise current stereotypes of masculine behavior. Some of the attempts are heterosexual in context; others are homosexual. Writers included are Coventry Patmore, Tennyson, Hopkins, and Whitman.

3. The Erotic Colour of Pater's "Diaphaneite".

Discusses covert homosexuality in this early lecture. Also examines how deviant poetry in Swinburne's Poems and Ballads (ex: "Anactoria", "Itylus", "Hermaphroditus") exerted pressure on Pater to use material from the lecture in shaping a self-consciously gay critical discourse.

Discusses brotherhood in a number of poems by William Morris and sisterhood in "Goblin Market" by Christina Rossetti. Also deals with a number of Pre-Raphaelite paintings with female subjects. Related texts by Pater are his early review of Morris's poetry (later published in part as the Conclusion to The Renaissance) and the opening chapter of the book.


Pater's discovery of the gay critic and historian, Johann Winckelmann, helped him in developing a critique of anti-erotic aspects of Matthew Arnold's writing.


In a context of classic discussions of the Renaissance by Michelet, Burkhardt, and Ruskin, I consider how transgression (including sexual) is intrinsic to the idea of the Renaissance. Related text by Pater: his portrait of "Leonardo da Vinci".


Examines how the 1886 novel resumes and reconsiders Pater's earlier social and cultural polemic.


Makes the case for Pater's influence in establishing the gay novel as a literary form in England. Examples are James's Roderick Hudson, Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray, and Forster's The Longest Journey. Also argues that Pater's ideal of self-development influenced James and Hardy in their approach to women's issue (e.g., in The Portrait of a Lady, and The Mayor of Casterbridge). Discussion uses George Eliot as a figure whose experience and interests are cognate with Pater's.

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ARTICLES & NOTES

Walter Pater and the Fine Art of Murder

Devotees of detective fiction are fully aware of the erudition and high degree of aestheticism that inform the genre. Sherlock Holmes, as I have recently suggested in "The Case of the Domesticated Aesthete" (see Recent Publications below), was no less than the haut vulgarisateur of bas estheticisme. In the tradition of De Quincey, Sherlock considered murder among the fine arts;

* indicates that some of the material has already been published in article form.
he used the "jargon" of art, the language of Swinburne and Whistler, to
describe a murder as a "study in scarlet"; and his famous method, as I have
explained, is closely related to the principles of what Pater defined as
"aesthetic criticism".

All subsequent detectives owe something to Holmes--right on down to
Umberto Eco's recent Sherlockian invention, William of Baskerville in The Name
of the Rose, whose aesthetic acumen is typical of the cultivated sleuth.
Perhaps the most obvious example of this type is Philo Vance, created in the
1920s by Willard Huntington Wright, under the nom de plumes of S.S. Van Dine.
Himself an aesthete, painter, art critic, and one-time editor of The Smart Set,
Van Dine moulded Philo Vance into the aesthete par excellence, who embellished
the aesthetic principles of the prototypical Holmes. In his hands Vance
becomes a connoisseur and collector of art who is forever visiting museums and
galleries or remarking on art. Endowed with a prodigious wit and immensely
cultivated, he is in his aesthetic capacity to solve the most difficult
problems as an aesthete's hero. For Vance a crime is a "work of art," and like a
painting by Giorgione, it "bears the indelible imprint" of the criminal's
"personality and genius--and his alone". The problem of The Benson Murder Case
(1926, and reprinted last year by Scribners) presents to Vance "the same
difficulties as the Concert Champetre affair--a question of disputed authorship,
as it were." (Whereas this painting--so beautifully "recreated" earlier by
Pater--had been often ascribed to Titian, Vance, according to Van Dine,
convinced the curator at the Louvre, M. Lepelletier, that the work was by
Giorgione. More recently art historians, including the Pateresque S.J.
Freedberg, have generally reascribed the painting to Titian, and Vance's
attribution is no longer cited in the literature.) Seeking to identify the
"personality" of the criminal, Vance used the critical methods of Bernard
Berenson. If my researches in the archives at I Tatti have failed to establish
evidence that Sherlock Holmes and Bernard Berenson were acquainted, Philo Vance
did indeed know Berenson, and their discussion of Cellini plays an interesting
role in The Benson Murder Case.

Van Dine's extensive experience of paintings is reflected in his
descriptions of characters and corpses. Like Stendhal, he is reminded of
pictures by faces. Thus in The Benson Murder Case Miss St. Clair "possessed
that faintly exotic beauty that we find in the portraits of the Carracci, who
sweetened the severity of Leonardo and made it at once intimate and decadent".
In The "Canary" Murder Case, the strangled song bird, Margaret Odell, "had the
traditional courtesan's full, red lips, and the wide, mongoose eyes of Rossetti's
'Blessed Damozel'". Pater's harmonies too are his harmonies, as Van Dine
wittily sees "in her face that strange combination of sensual promise and
spiritual renunciation with which the painters of all ages have sought to endow
their conceptions of the Eternal Magdalene". "Hers is the head," said Pater
of the Mona Lisa, "upon which 'all the ends of the world are come!'", and
Van Dine's is the pen that transforms her "lust" and "mysticism", her "fantastic
reveries and exquisite passions", her association with the "sins of the Borgias"
into those of the Aspasia of Broadway; "Hers was the type of face, voluptuous
and with a hint of mystery, which rules man's emotions and, by subjugating his
mind, drives him to desperate deeds".

Diverse in kind from the highly aestheticized fiction of Van Dine are the
detective novels of the similarly cultivated Raymond Chandler. The touch talk
of Chandler's Philip Marlowe is of a different order from the preciosity of
Philo Vance's speech. In his essay, "The Simple Art of Murder", Chandler
celebrates the "spare, frugal, hard-boiled" manner of Dashiell Hammett at his
best, which he sets apart from the "formalized" prose in Marius the Epicurean. We get a splendid sense of what Chandler means in the following passages from his The High Window (1942), brought to my attention in relation to Pater by the distinguished scholar of Indian art and connoisseur of crime fiction, Professor Daniel Ehnbom:

I went over and opened the single drawer of the reed desk and took out the photo that lay all alone in the bottom of the drawer, face up, looking at me with cool dark eyes. I sat down again with the photo and looked it over. Dark hair parted loosely in the middle and drawn back loosely over a solid piece of forehead. A wide cool go-to-hell mouth with very kissable lips. Nice nose, not too small, not too large. Good bone all over the face. The expression of the face lacked something. Once the something might have been called breeding, but these days I didn't know what to call it. The face looked too wise and too guarded for its age. Too many passes had been made at it and it had grown a little too smart in dodging them. And behind this expression of wiseness there was the look of simplicity of the little girl who still believes in Santa Claus.

Paterians will at once recognize Chandler's revision of Pater's exquisite description of the Mona Lisa. The Leonardesque face that reflects "all the thoughts and experiences of the world" is now delivered to us as "too wise and too guarded for its age". The Florentine lady "expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire", becomes the face at which "too many passes have been made". If Pater's "Mona Lisa" is the pinnacle of sapience, Chandler's lady, with her "go-to-hell mouth", is "a little too smart". Chandler's delightful spoof of Pater conjures up a scene from an imaginary Humphrey Bogart movie. Playing a detective à la Marlowe trailing a suspect through the Louvre, Bogart stops before the Mona Lisa and, without taking his eyes off her, says to a companion out of the side of his mouth (and one can almost hear the inimitable nasal baritone): "This doll's been around". The "embodiment of the old fancy" has indeed become "the symbol of the modern idea".

Paul Barolsky
(University of Virginia)

A Pater Concordance

In his introduction to the recent ELT special number on Marius the Epicurean, Ian Fletcher argued that what Pater criticism needed at the present was more precise textual scrutiny. The textual and stylistic analyses of Pater's work that have so far been available are, as Billie Inman pointed out in Texas Studies in Language and Literature in 1973, misdirected, inaccurate or insufficiently substantiated by evidence. In particular, accounts of Pater's vocabulary, that stylistic feature to which he himself directed the serious critic, have often been simply ill-informed. There has been a good reason for this state of affairs. The basic tools for a comprehensive study of textual features like vocabulary, lexical richness, and type and token frequency are alphabetical and word-frequency concordances. Hitherto these have been simply unavailable. (I discount Edmund Chandler's rather naive efforts in 1958). Investigation into more complex stylistic matters, like Pater's uses of parentheses and gerund forms, the two examples that I shall describe briefly in this essay, has been handicapped by the absence of a sufficiently comprehensive collocation analysis of the texts in question.
The English Language Research group at Birmingham University and Collins the publishers have for a number of years been producing a computational lexicography of current English usage. Apart from the software that has been developed to handle and process very large corpora of text, the technical centre of this research programme is the Kurzweil Data Entry Machine (KDEM), a device for scanning printed texts, storing them and eventually transferring them to magnetic tape and hence computer files. The Kurzweil's daily fare at Birmingham has been, for a machine of its useful but limited ability, a varied but predictable diet of contemporary English texts: newspapers, periodicals, and the like. Recently, though, I have introduced an element of connoisseurship or Epicureanism into its daily consumption and changed all this. Kurzweil has been reading Walter Pater. 'Reading' is of course a deliberately inaccurate and misleading term. The Kurzweil machine combines the quality of unflagging reliability and comprehensiveness that its Germanic name connotes with the intelligence level of the average reader of the British tabloid press. That is to say it 'reads' or 'notices' everything; but understands absolutely nothing at all.

By the time of writing the KDEM machine has scanned and stored all of Pater's fiction. (I ought to confess here though, that I am aware of the imprecision of this category description.) By the end of the (calendar) year I should have been able to transfer the complete oeuvre to magnetic tape (although, again, I am aware that what constitutes an œuvre is a moot point; in practice, however, both problems are not important). In working terms this means that the production of very detailed statistical and lexical descriptions and analyses of all Pater's texts, collectively and individually, and comparisons between them is now possible. Alphabetical concordances, word-lists by frequency, collocation analysis and statistical accounts of individual texts, types of texts (i.e. fiction and criticism, literary and art criticism, and so on) will probably be the most useful tools for the critic or stylistician. I have already produced an alphabetical concordance and a word frequency concordance of Marius the Epicurean (hereafter ME) and Imaginary Portraits (hereafter IP). By the end of October full concordances and full collocation analysis for all Pater's fiction, taken both as individual texts and as a fictional corpus, will be finished. Shortly afterwards, full concordances of all Pater's fictional and non-fictional prose should be completed too.

All of this material is part of an ambitious project to examine computationally a substantial corpus of nineteenth-century critical and fictional writing. The establishing of such a corpus and the direction of the research involved in it are large issues that will require long and careful thought. It seems to me, however, both niggardly and unprofessional to withhold from interested parties the initial fruits of this research programme - that is the full concordance of Pater's oeuvre. (Readers who are interested in the project in full, and some of the attendant problems, are directed to an account by me in Prose Studies, 1985.

Non-computational analysis of texts as lengthy as ME usually work by sampling. Typicality is claimed for the samples and generalisations are made from them. Computational analysis is fundamentally different. Two or three brief demonstrations will make the point that such an analysis discovers data simply unavailable to other kinds of investigation. (I draw my examples entirely from ME.)
1. It has been a truism, almost a commonplace, of Paterian criticism that the word 'white' and its related compound forms are crucial lexical items in the novel. In fact 'white' occurs in ME with approximately the same token frequency (and certainly the same order of frequency) as in any corpus of modern texts that I have examined. (I have at the moment an insufficiently large and insufficiently representative data base to make the same claim about its frequency relative to nineteenth-century literary language; but, again rather surprisingly in view of the received wisdom of Paterian scholarship, 'white' occurs also with broadly the same token frequency in IP as in ME). Clearly any account of why the term 'white' has consistently been seen as a crucial lexical item in ME has to now accommodate two disparate kinds of data: why, stylistically, given its relatively average frequency (but not distribution), the term so impresses itself upon the reader; or, second, what particular historical conjunctions have produced readings of the text that so emphasise that particular lexical item.

2. The KDEM scanner denominates any mark surrounded by a sufficiently large blank space as a word. Hence in its scanning of ME it recorded as raw data that the em-dash was the twelfth most frequent lexical item (with, for the statistically minded, 1069 occurrences against the 44 uses of 'white'). Broadly Pater's use of the em-dash in ME can be sub-divided into four quite distinct categories. These are (a) the emphatic point (-.-); (b) the emphatic colon (:-); (c) as a dialogue marker; and (d) as a simple parenthesis. The first category accounts for the largest number of uses. But the last, the use of parenthesis, accounts for over a quarter of the total occurrences. Generally, as the following table will make clear, they are used as markers for appositional noun phrases. So the em-dash collocates with the following items:

- 'a/an'   90 times
- 'his'    7 times
- 'in'     20 times
- 'the'    122 times
- 'those')  9 times
- 'this'    24 times
- 'to'      5 times

Clearly any account of Pater's use of co-ordinating and sub-ordinating clauses and appositional phrases, long held also to be a staple element of his style, has to take into account the stylistic functions of the em-dash (as well as compare those functions with contemporary usage).

3. To enlarge upon Pater's idiosyncratic use of nouns: 'by' is the twentieth most frequent lexical item in ME (this, in fact, is broadly the frequency occurrence that one would expect). But of the 607 uses only 3 (i.e. .49%) collocate with a gerund-form. The other 604 occurrences collocate with simple nouns. (In fact, the three exceptions I referred to take the form of 'by the -ing'.) This is clearly one of the significant ways that Pater's use of prepositions differs from modern English usage and, I suspect (but, again, am unable at the moment to prove), from contemporary usage also. As far as I know, the way that nouns and verbs collocate with prepositions - or, for that matter, the whole body of closed set items in Pater's work - has not evinced any comment from critics, although it clearly has something to do with the peculiarly static quality all critics notice in the work.
These are only examples of the kind of information that can be produced by concordance and collocation work. At the moment I am not sure in what form the material would be most useful to fellow-scholars. However I would welcome suggestions and enquiries from interested parties. In the meantime I will be examining the practicality of producing alphabetical and frequency lists on magnetic tape. To produce printout is of course technically possible, but it is a massive operation. The collocation analysis of ME, for example, produces the seven lexical items preceding and succeeding every word in the novel. The final document is over a million and a quarter words in length and in a form bulky enough to fill a small suitcase. But nonetheless I shall be happy to share with interested parties my data and its analysis as and when it becomes available, and hope to announce, perhaps in a future issue of 

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS
(compiled by Laurel Brake)

Books


Lord Alfred Douglas, by H. Montgomery Hyde. Methuen, 1984. The early part of this biography treats 1890 ff, the last years of Pater's life, and provides insight into issues of the decade after Pater's death which help explain why his biography failed to be written at that time.

Victorian Literary Critics, by Harold Orel. Macmillan, 1984. This uneven and rushed book consists of seven essays on Lewes, Bagehot, Hutton, Stephen, Lang, Saintsbury, and Gosse; its "principles" of selection are never stated, nor can they be inferred.

Nineteenth-Century English Literature, by Margaret Stonyk. Macmillan History of Literature. Macmillan, 1983 (appeared 1984). The 2½ pages on Pater are strewn with cliches, generalizations, and potted information. We learn that "Pater's criticism at the end of the century lacks the authority of Arnold, who had assured external standards..."

1. I have to record my gratitude to Jeremy Clear of COBUILD at Birmingham University, whose advice has been invaluable and also the help I have received from the Computer Centre, Birmingham University. I discussed the project with Ian Fletcher over the summer. To him, too, I am immensely grateful.
A life which marginalises Pater's relationship with Gosse, but gives useful
detail of the close friendship between A.C. Benson (Pater's biographer) and
Gosse.

Articles

Paul Barolsky. "The Case of the Domesticated Aesthete". VQR 60 (Summer 1984)
438-52.
Barolsky's aim is to place Sherlock Holmes, until now allegedly relegated to the
margins of literature, "squarely in a literary context"; he decides that "Holmes
is a closet aesthete" linked to "the notorious aestheticism of his day".
The works and habits of Flaubert, Baudelaire, De Quincey, Des Esseintes, and in
more detail Pater, Wilde, Berenson, and Nabokov, are invoked as analogous to
specified details of Holmes's character and projects. This race through one
thematic context of the Holmes fictions is headlong, but some sidelong glimpses
of interest emerge.

Paul Barolsky and Norman E. Land. "The 'Meaning' of Giorgione's Tempesta"
In an attempt to explore the intelligence and intentions of form, aspects of art
allegedly neglected by other art historians and critics, the authors invoke
Pater's emphasis on form and his critical vocabulary in the Giorgione essay to
discuss the meaning of form in Giogione's painting, "Tempesta". For Barolsky and
Land "interpretative impressionism" remains "art history's greatest strength"
unaffected at all, it would appear by "structuralism, semiotics, and post-
structuralism" perfunctorily alluded to in the penultimate sentence of this
article.

Pater's interest in the androgynous body in "Winckelmann" is viewed as Pater's
reinterpretation in "an erotic light" of Arnold's imaginative reason as
expressed in "Pagan and Mediaeval Religious Sentiment": the Winckelmann essay,
Dellamora claims, "is a humanist polemic for sexual tolerance".

168-78.
Linda Dowling notes the general interest to scholars of the question of the influence
of Pater's younger contemporaries on Pater, and looks closely at the
influence of George Moore's Confessions of a Young Man, published in March 1888,
on "Style", published in December, 1888. "In 'Style' Pater revised or rewrote
Moore", tacitly repudiating his sensualist reading of Marius as a fatal book.
Pater's method of argument is through atmosphere - association and illustration -
rather than through demonstration and proof; "especially characteristic of
Pater's later style", this atmosphere is associated by Dowling with a sexual
presence, which constituted one form of response to a historical period of
"linguistic anxiety" concerning the status of written language. Dowling's
thesis is interesting and invites further thought.

A fluent and lively critical biography in miniature which introduces Pater
twice, once as an influence on Wilde, the new undergraduate, and then as the
sender of love letters to an undergraduate. The Pater of Ellmann's first
paragraph is precious, filtered through Wilde's reading of the 1873
Renaissance; the subsequent Pater is the homosexual, allegedly an influential
model for the young Wilde who, Ellmann concludes, "writes his work out of a
debate between doctrines rather than out of doctrine".

In a controversial if thoughtful essay Wendell V. Harris proposes an "alternate" view of the aesthetic movement through denoting "six tendencies" from which the submovements which comprise the amorphous aesthetic movement are blended: "the medievalizing, the botanical, the ornamental, the omnibeautiful, the demand for art for the artist's sake and the dreamily melancholic". The principal source for Harris's concise discussions of each of the six "tendencies" is a thirty-eight volume Victorian anthology by Peter Stansky and Rodney Shewan of "Forty-eight of the Most Important Books" of "The Aesthetic Movement and the Arts and Crafts Movement". Harris's illustrations from this unfamiliar material are interesting.

Pater doesn't figure in the first five categories, and then appears only fleetingly in Harris's dismissive view of the PRB which is wholly defined by the last category, "dreamily melancholic", and dominated for Harris by D.G. Rossetti. This reductive account chooses to ignore what is known about the chronology, personages, and complexity of the group. In this context Imaginary Portraits is subsumed under a category of "smoothly flowing but nerveless prose". Harris's high puritanical tone and unwonted spleen in this section are notable, and they mar what is a fairly useful critical structure with which to understand and probe the "aesthetic movement".


In a substantial article Lubbock argues that Marius is "not a concealed autobiography except in the most trivial sense, but the most extended of Pater's essays in cultural history". He rehearses the basis for the autobiographical reading, and replaces it with one which emphasises the historiography of Marius, but contends that the extent of Pater's debt to Hegel has been "vastly exaggerated": while Pater had read Hegel and respected him, Pater's sympathies lay with the historical relativists whom Hegel condemned. Lubbock skilfully cites specific passages of Marius to illustrate his more general argument about the kind of history Pater was writing, and its function for Pater. Placing Pater in a tradition of cultural history – of Montesquieu, Sir Henry Maine, Sir Frederick Pollock, and F.W. Maitland, Lubbock regrets the relegation of Pater by historians to "pure 'literature'".


In a short article which does not make use of the unpublished portions of the novel, Isobel Murray argues that Pater abandoned the novel when he realised that he had "virtually short circuited it" in his sympathetic response there to Montaigne, and not only because of commitment to other projects.
Gerald Monsman. "'Definite History and Dogmatic Interpretation': The 'White-nights' of Pater's Marius the Epicurean". Criticism (Spring, 1984). 171-91.

Gerald Monsman ingeniously demonstrates that the process of interpreting the dream scenes in Marius consists of a translation or substitution of one name or sign for another without any final closure, or a movement from dream to vision. Medusa's head in The Renaissance and its echoes in Marius, Pater's description of the Mona Lisa, and the unpublished parts of Gaston de Latour figure in this oblique text.

Reviews


Dissertations


Pater's writings are works of reconciliation and synthesis. Employing the image of the Greek god, Dionysus, as an archetype -- just as Ruskin celebrated Athene -- Pater examines examples of artistic and historical tradition. The three stages of the god's life, his early wanderings in Asia, his return to Greece and his assumption to godhead in Olympus (a threepart movement reflected in many other ways, eg. seasonal dormancy, burgeoning, and decline, or viticultural growth, fermentation, and consumption) reflect the dialectic nature of artistic tradition.

The essay traces Pater's use of the Dionysus myth through the Greek Studies, the Imaginary Portraits, and the art criticism of The Renaissance. (J.F.J.)

Stephen Paul Regan. Univ. of Toronto, Ph.D., 1983. (can be ordered from Univ. of Tor.) DAI 45:3. "The Idea of the Beautiful in Late Victorian Literature: John Ruskin, Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde, and the Poets of the Eighteen Nineties".

Writers and critics in Victorian England felt compelled to reconcile the scientific and the metaphysical theories in order to achieve a unified aesthetic concept based on the evidence of the senses without abandoning belief in spiritual ideals. Against this philosophical and cultural background, the thesis examines the writings of Ruskin, Pater, Wilde, and poetry of the 1890s. The final chapter considers a number of early twentieth century revisions of theory, and attempts to explain why the word "beauty" was largely dismissed from literary criticism.