The Pater Newsletter

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TREASURER
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Editor's Note

I appreciate the constructive comments readers of the newsletter have made regarding the changes in format and design introduced in No. 37. The goal of the publication staff is to make reading The Pater Newsletter both informative and visually enjoyable. Please let your friends and colleagues know of the newsletter. I would be happy to send a complimentary issue to anyone you know who might be interested in subscribing. Simply give me the name and address, and I will drop No. 38 in the mail.

For this issue, I have chosen a flower motif not only to commemorate spring but also to create visual unity with references to flowers sprinkled throughout this issue. For example, Ashton Nichols writes in his review of Martin Bidney's Patterns of Epiphany the following: "Pater . . . gives us recurrent 'red-yellow fire flowers' and 'dying birds.'" Nichols is referring to an "epiphanic pattern" Bidney notices in Pater's writing.

The following quote describing flowers is from Pater's "An English Poet" (Fortnightly Review 129 n.s. [April 1, 1931]: 439-40).

He felt with the vicissitudes of the whole year's round of the place upon him, the really dominant note of mere inclemency in a scenery supposed by summer visitors simply grand; and all through one exceptionally fine season which had brought thither more than the usual number of visitors, two things only of it all had coaxed out his capacity for liking—a red honeysuckle over the gateway of the grange, the one more stately habituation in the place, in remarkably free flower this year, and a range of metal screen-work, twisted with fantastic grace into wreaths of flames or flowers, noticed now for the first time, making fine shadows in the pale sunlight on the mellow white-washed wall of the old church as he sat there on Sundays, himself except that thing, the one touch of delicacy in its rudeness, and which seemed to him to hold somehow of that honeysuckle in flower and belong with it to a warmer heaven.

The honeysuckle was an exotic from France, the colour of its flower ripening from a peerless white to brown gold, with
a whole round of fragrant changes in the spirit of the tiny thing still fragrant in death. And that ancient metal handwork with its dainty traces of half-vanished gilding, an exotic that too from Augsburg where such metal flowers and flames are plenteous, really was a precious work of art, so that people of taste, though the boy did not know that, came from distant places to inspect it, and the pleasure in him at the fineness of a thing like that which made him think sometimes that he would be an artist in metal and be relieved of his dark heat of fancy in metal flower-work, marked already clearly enough his instinctive gift for the recognition of the seal of a master's hand. Afterwards, when he was understood to be a poet, this, a peculiar character as of flowers in metal, was noticed by the curious as a distinction in his verse, such an elastic force in word and phrase, following a tender delicate thought or feeling as the metal followed the curvature of the flower, as it seemed to indicate artistic triumph over a material partly resisting, which yet at last took outline from his thought with the firmness of antique forms of mastery.

Those two slight things, then, the French honeysuckle and its image in the old German's forge-work, had met half-way a certain graciousness in his nature, the happier complement or reverse of that peevishness which the reader does not fail to see and may think a mere ague of the mind in him.

I would like to thank Baylor University for enabling me to establish an agency account for the newsletter and the Department of English for absorbing mailing costs. I especially want to thank Leigh Ann Marshall of the Information Technology Center at Baylor for her technical assistance in creating a Pagemaker format and Designer Club clipart for the newsletter and Terri Smiley of the English Department for her assistance in creating mailing labels.
The Latin statement in the emblem is a headnote to Chapter III of *Marius*: "Lord, I love [or have loved] the habitation of thy house"—Psalm 26:8.

Jay Losey
Baylor University

Pater News
International Walter Pater Conference

The International Walter Pater Society announces the theme for the 2000 conference:

"Reading Pater at the Millennium"

The conference will be held in late July or early August 2000 at a venue in the U.K. (exact dates and venue to be announced in the fall 1999 number of the newsletter).

Program Chair is Carolyn Williams and Local Arrangements Chair Laurel Brake.

Suggested Session Topics

• Pater’s Lives
• Paterian Genres
• Pater, Gender, and Sexuality
• Paterian Politics
• Pater and the Profession of Letters
• Pater and the Nations (France, Italy, Germany)
• Pater’s Englishness
• Pater and Religion
• Pater and Popular Culture
• Pater and the Visual Arts
• Pater and Contemporary Critical Theory
• Romanticism, Modernism, Postmodernism: Pater and Periodization
• Pater’s Stylistic Strategies and Techniques in Specific Works
• Pater and Classical Antiquity
• Pater and Architecture
• Pater’s Archaeologies
• Pater and (his) Others
Abstracts should be 750-1000 words in length and should be submitted by 1 February 2000 to Carolyn Williams at the following address:

CCACC—Center for the Critical Analysis of Contemporary Culture
Rutgers University
8 Bishop Place
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903 USA

Counterpoise

(Responses to the following essay—counter arguments or corroborating arguments—are invited.)

The Young Pater and the Older Pater: Some Textual Differences

by Billie Andrew Inman

In his review of William F. Shuter’s Rereading Walter Pater (PN 37 [Fall 1998]), Ellis Hanson states: “By some invitingly perverse method of parthenogenesis, Pater seems to have sprung full grown from the head of one of his own sinewy and reposeful deities. The chronology of his texts never much matters, since we find him preoccupied with the same themes, the same ideas, even the same syntax in every book” (14). I disagree. As far as syntax is concerned, for refutation of the statement I refer Ellis Hanson, and others not at
tuned to the differences in Pater’s styles, to my “Pater’s Appeal to His Readers: A Study of Two of Pater’s Prose Styles” (Texas Studies in Literature and Language 14 [Winter 1973]: 643-665). In the first half of the essay, I show that Pater used two radically different styles of writing in the first two paragraphs of the “Conclusion” to The Renaissance and corresponding paragraphs of “Animula Vagula,” Chapter 8 of Marius the Epicurean, when developing the same ideas. Examining every sentence and word, I demonstrate how the two passages, written at different times, are quite unlike, not only in syntax, but also in sentence length and diction.

What I want to challenge here is the notion that Pater is “preoccupied with the same themes, the same ideas . . . in every book.” I would be the first to say that Pater did not change fundamentally as a person and a thinker and therefore as an author between 1866 and 1894. His unique DNA pattern (and therefore his self) did not change, and he did not suffer a physical trauma that deprived him of the particular set of mental and emotional powers that, I would say, constituted his genius. It seems to me also that because his religious crisis, which left him an agnostic, occurred in 1859-60, before his writing career began, one can find the strain of agnosticism, sometimes of a more hopeful variety than at other times, in his writings throughout his career. Still, Pater was always learning. Of course, because he had a unique genius at the center of a unique self, from boyhood through middle age he was sensitive to some stimuli, but not to others, and was ever storing some types of knowledge rather than others. But his growing knowledge, from experience, observation, and reading, and the new challenges posed by this knowledge, prompted him throughout the last twenty years of his career to take up subjects that he had not treated between 1866 and 1874, to introduce new motifs, and to alter the meaning of some of his key terms.

One of his new subjects was the problem of evil. Young Pater apparently regarded himself as too modern to be concerned about traditional distinctions between good and evil. In his earliest reference to the subject, in “Coleridge’s Writings,” he states: “There it [the relative spirit] has started a new analysis of the relations of body and mind, good and evil, freedom and necessity.
Hard and abstract moralities are yielding to a more exact estimate of the subtlety and complexity of our life" (Westminster Review 85 [Jan. 1866]: 107). Viewing Coleridge from the vantage point of an urbané “true humanist,” like Plato, Petrarch, Goethe, and Renan, who “holds his theories lightly” (111), Pater sees Coleridge as a noble but misguided warrior who waged a losing battle in defense of moral absolutes against the modern relative spirit. He proposes that relativism, with its “more elastic moral philosophy,” will engender a more “delicate and tender justness in the criticism of human life” (131-132). Confidently, he assumes that without religious belief and without belief in moral absolutes, one can retain from one’s earlier faith and earlier moral nature a “spiritual element,” “the passion for inward perfection,” indeed all the “mental states” of “the higher morality of the few” (126). There is no vision of evil here, nor in any of the other essays that Pater published before Studies in the History of the Renaissance (1873) nor in the essays published or republished in that book—not even in the long discussion of religions in “Winckelmann,” nor in the essays of 1874—“On Wordsworth” and “A Fragment on Measure for Measure,” nor in the only surviving unpublished manuscripts written before 1875—Houghton #21 [The young romantic] and #24 [Arezzo]. In “A Fragment on Measure for Measure” (Fortnightly Rev. 22 [Nov. 1874]), where moral judgment is an issue, Pater attributes to Shakespeare a “finer justice” than that exemplified in morality plays. His “moral judgments . . . are the moral judgments of an observer, of one who sits as a spectator, and knows how the threads in the design before him hold together under the surface; they are the judgments of the humorist [sic] also, who follows with a half-amused but always pitiful sympathy, the various ways of human disposition . . .” (658). Pater had already said of Botticelli, “His morality is all sympathy” (“A Fragment on Sandro Botticelli,” Fortnightly Rev. 14 [Aug. 1870]: 157); his assessment of Shakespeare’s moral judgment in Measure for Measure is the same.

However, it was not long before Pater expressed a moral judgment quite different from the type he had attributed to Botticelli and Shakespeare. In his review of J. A. Symonds’ The Age of the Despots, the first volume of Renaissance in Italy (Academy, 31 July 1875,
105-106), he praises Machiavelli as "a patriot devising a desperate means of establishing permanent rule in Florence, designing, in the spirit of political idealism not more ruthless than that of Plato's Republic, to cure a real evil, a fault not unlike that of ancient Athens itself, the constant exaggerated appetite for change in public institutions, bringing with it an incorrigible tendency of all the parts of human life to fly from the centre ..." (105; emphasis added). And as all readers of Marius the Epicurean know, Pater has Marius witness a scene of slaughter in the Roman Colosseum that shocks him out of his moral complacency. It is as if the "moral gaze" of Marius dissolves his perception of life as spectacle and discovers the real, unmediated by art or language. Marius acknowledges "a fierce opposition of real good and real evil, around him; the issues of which he must by no means compromise or confuse" (ME, 1st ed. [London: Macmillan, 1885]: 1.259; subsequent references are to this edition). This literal vision of behavior that "the loyal conscience in him" (1.259) judges to be evil motivates Marius to rethink his philosophy and work out a rapprochement between that philosophy and his moral sense. He concludes that Cyrenaicism, "in the gravity of its conception, in its pursuit after nothing less than a perfection, in its apprehension of the value of time" is "not so much opposed to the old morality, as an exaggeration of one special motive in it" (II.23). Everyone knows that Pater, at 29, wrote, "To burn always with this hard gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life" ("Poems by William Morris," Westminster Review 90 [Oct. 1868]: 311); but, apparently, few remember that at 46 he wrote: "Surely, evil was a real thing; and the wise man wanting in the sense of it, where[,] not to have been, by instinctive election, on the right side, was to have failed in life" (ME, I.260). So, Pater had decided by 1885 that whether one burns with a gem-like flame or not, one fails in life if one does not distinguish between real good and real evil.

Of course, it was not easy for an agnostic like Pater to find a theoretical basis for a distinction between absolute good and evil, but he tried. In Marius the Epicurean, he creates a discourse for his Cornelius Fronto to deliver from the point of view of a "Cyrenaic or Epicurean ... who yet experiences, actually, a strong tendency to moral assents, and a desire, with as little logical inconsistency as may be, to find a place for duty and righteousness, in his house of
thought” (II.7). Pater himself, during the period when he was writing *Marius*, composed a similar discourse, known now as Houghton MS #17 [Moral philosophy], fifty-one pages, many of which are in an almost finished state. In his own voice, he explains: “What we are looking for is a common or abstract principle of morals wide enough to include all right motives subtle enough to include effectively the most exceptional of those motives and with sanction with self-evidence enough to take from moral life as realised by the individual all its caprice and subjectivity” (19). There is not space in “Counterpoise” to follow Pater’s full exploration of this subject in MS #17. Suffice it to say that except in his explanations of Bentham’s, Kant’s, and Aristotle’s basic principles of morality and his comments on the assumption that “some constitutional instinct of the human mind” is the source of morality, his discussion is similar to Fronto’s discourse and Marius’s extension of it (8). He expresses the same respect for custom and tradition and acknowledges the same power of “an actual averted or approving face” (45). He finds, also, an “almost aesthetic attractiveness” in “various forms of right” (11-12). Although he grants to each philosophy of morals “its limited sum of truth” (15), he finds the persistent moral tendencies in various philosophies and religions, ideas that keep reappearing under different forms in different ages, to be the most instructive (27-28). He supposes that these recurring ideas may be called “the greater system of reason,” greater, that is, than “the minor reason of the finite and transient individual” (30), in other words, a kind of “common intelligence” belonging to humanity (31). He notes that the idea of “collective humanity”—called in *Marius* “a universal commonwealth of minds” (II.10)—“may now be said to be the central, illuminating thought of those opposite schools of philosophy which have divided between them the speculative activity of the present century of Hegel and of Auguste Comte” (36-37). And how does “each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world” escape to this collective humanity (*Renaissance* 235; Hill, ed. 188)? We may not understand Pater’s explanation, but it is as follows: “The idea of a sleep
less reason wh. assists and rounds our sleepy intermittent intelligence in wh. the eternal and [blank space left for a word] ideas of things have a durable permanent free independent existence lending itself & lifting for a little time our transient individual intelligence for us actually translates into that conception of collective humanity” (35). Surely, enough has been said to show that Pater in 1885 was concerned about the problem of evil as Pater in the late 1860s and early 1870s was not.

In the works of the young Pater there is no motif of mutilated bodies, no victimized and suffering human beings or gods. The procession of hapless victims who suffer great bodily abuse begins in 1876 in “A Study of Dionysus,” with Pater’s recreation of Dionysus Zagreus, literally Dionysus torn to pieces, with side references to human sacrifice by women worshipping Dionysus, “the actual sacrifice of a fair boy torn to pieces, fading at last into a symbolical offering,” and to the tearing apart of an infant of one of the daughters of Minyas by its mother and her two sisters (Fortnightly Rev. 26 [Dec. 1876]: 772, 770). The procession continues, with Amis and the children of Amile in “Two Early French Stories” (1877), Pentheus in “The Bacchanals of Euripides” (1878), Denys in “Denys l’Auxerrois” (1886), Duke Carl in “Duke Carl of Rosenmold” (1887), Hippolytus in “Hippolytus Veiled” (1889), Raoul in “Anteros,” Chapter 10 of Gaston de Latour (at some time between 1888 and 1892), Emerald Uthwart, post mortem (1892), and Hyacinthus in “Apollo in Picardy” (1893). Why did Pater not see the murder of Winckelmann as an opportunity to describe a victim abused? He depicts only the first step in the murder, in passive voice, using seven words, and then shifts to the little boy who found Winckelmann later. Then he reports, in general terms: “Winckelmann was found dangerously wounded, and died a few hours later, after receiving the sacraments of the Romish church.” He adds serenely: “It seemed as if the gods, in reward for his devotion to them, had given him a death which, for its swiftness and its opportunity, he might well have desired” (Westminster Rev. 87 [Jan. 1867]: 90). The answer to the question about Pater’s treatment of Winckelmann’s death is that Pater wrote “Winckelmann” in 1867, not after 1874. In “Estrangement and Connection: Walter Pater, Benjamin Jowett, and William Hardinge,” I have proposed that the emotional thrust of Pater’s textual evocations of suffering and victimization stemmed from his own suffer-
ing under disapproval and criticism of his relationship with Hardinge in 1874. Of course, the disapproval and criticism of the “pernicious” influence of ideas that he had expressed in the “Conclusion” contributed to his distress. A figure discussed in Studies in the History of the Renaissance who, like Winckelmann, could have been portrayed as a victim but was not is Abelard. You will not find the following comment on Abelard in the 1873 text: “The opposition into which Abelard is thrown, which gives its colour to his career, which breaks his soul to pieces, is a no less subtle opposition than that between the mere professional, official, hireling ministers of that system [the spiritual system then actually realised], with their ignorant worship of system for its own sake, and the true child of light, the humanist with reason and heart and senses quick, as theirs were almost dead, reaching out to and attaining modes of ideal living, beyond the prescribed limits of that system, though possibly contained in essential germ within it” (7-8; my emphasis). This revealing passage first appeared in The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry (1877) after Pater’s own encounter with a similar opposition.

Pater was still developing new subjects and motifs in the late 1880s and early 1890s. In 1886 he first expressed a theory of prose style. In the early 1890s he first made subservience of males to males, sometimes accompanied by suffering, the main theme in his depiction of homoerotic relationships. I have discussed these new departures in “Reaction to Saintsbury in Pater’s Formulation of Ideas on Prose Style” (NCP 24 [Fall 1997]: 108-126) and “John ‘Dorian’ Gray and the Theme of Subservient Love in Walter Pater’s Works of the 1890s” (Comparative Criticism 17 [1995]: 85-107), respectively.

More could be said about the appearance of new subjects and motifs in Pater’s works, and much could be said about changes in the meanings of key terms, like aesthetic poetry, form, and decadence, and about stylistic strategies developed after 1874; in fact, one could write half a book on the differences between the texts produced by Pater before 1875 and those produced by him at various times after
1875—while writing the other half of the book on the constants in ideas, motifs, and style. Not to see the differences in Pater’s writings at different stages of his career is either not to know the chronological order of his publications or to suffer from what he called “roughness of the eye.”

Notes

1 I have argued in “The Emergence of Pater’s Marius Mentality: 1874-75” (ELT 27: 2 [1984]: 100-123) that Pater’s awakening to “real evil” and the necessity of confronting it in writing occurred in the fall of 1874 and winter of 1875 when he borrowed from the Taylor Institution Library, and presumably read, almost all of Prosper Mérimée’s fiction, which seemed to him devoid of the “spiritual element” and all other “mental states” that he had expected to linger in the minds of the “superior few” after belief had gone, as well as his “Lettres adressées d’Espagne au directeur de la Revue de Paris,” including a report by Mérimée on his repeated attendance at bull fights, where he discovered, to his surprise, that he liked “fights to the death better than those in which they merely torment the bulls” (“Letters from Spain,” trans. Emily Mary Waller and Mary Helena Day, in The Novels, Tales and Letters of Prosper Mérimée, ed. George Saintsbury, 8 vols [Philadelphia: Frank S. Holby, 1906]: II.242). Pater borrowed Nouvelles, 3rd ed.(Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1857), on September 17, 1874, and returned it on February 3, 1875; and borrowed “Colomba,” suivi de “La Mosaique” et autres contes et nouvelles, new ed. (Paris: Charpentier, 1860), presumably in early October, 1874, and returned it on February 3, 1875. For contents of the volumes borrowed, see my Walter Pater and His Reading, 1874-1877, with a Bibliography of His Library Borrowings, 1878-1894 (New York: Garland, 1990): 103-106, 109-117.


3 Passages from the Houghton Library’s bMS Eng 1150 #17 [Moral philosophy] are quoted by permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Book Review


Aha!

Martin Bidney wants us to reread Gaston Bachelard, the author of *The Poetics of Reverie* and other classics of a particular brand of French phenomenology. Bidney asserts that emphasis on Bachelard’s interpretive and rhetorical methods will help us to understand the epiphanic pattern found in so much Romantic and post-Romantic literature. Bidney also claims that Bachelard allows us to emphasize literary epiphanies as concrete verbal products (in texts), not as mysterious mental activities independent of their linguistic results. For the most part, Bidney is correct in his claims and accurate in his applications. At the same time, however, his argument raises important questions for our understanding of epiphany, of modern literature, and even of the way language works in a variety of contexts. Bidney wants us to pay careful attention to patterns of language and imagery as we to follow the epiphanic impulse though a series of authors as wide ranging as Wordsworth and Tolstoy, Pater and Barrett Browning. Bidney’s critical methods reminds us why certain kinds of moments of power have become important in poetry and prose during this period, but his readings also point up the limits of a criticism based on the idea of “phenomena.”

The point of departure for all emphasis on literary epiphany since the work of Robert Langbaum (*The Poetry of Experience*) and Morris Beja (*Epiphany in the Modern Novel*) is critical attention to “moments whose meaningfulness seems inexplicably out of proportion to their
observable features" (18). Wordsworth sees a woman whose garments are vexed and tossed by the wind, or Joyce’s alter-ego Stephen describes an ordinary clock tower in Dublin, and the language used in these accounts—while stopping short of the supernatural—rises clearly to the level of the epiphanic: something significant is revealed, even if that something remains elusive and enigmatic. Bidney wants us to pay close attention to these imagistic details but also to the wider textures of the works he discusses. His critical mode is characterized by a form of focused close reading that, at times, become almost epiphanic itself.

Bidney takes a generous approach to the question of what constitutes an epiphany. He wants to include numerous moments of “power” in all of the authors in his study, and he is willing to accept a wide range of elevations of the ordinary under the umbrella of his analytical method: dreams, waking visions, sudden awarenesses, strong emotions. For the most part, such inclusiveness does not weaken his interpretation. At times, however, individual readers will no doubt quibble with Bidney’s particular choices. The “slight shocks of love liking” that “tingled through the veins” of the young Wordsworth in Book IV of The Prelude, for example, are linked by Bidney to a characteristic Romantic epiphany. These same tingling shocks, however, have recently been critiqued by Kenneth Johnston as little more than Wordsworth’s hormonal impulses of adolescent longing for Lakeland girls. I suspect that Johnston is right here, even though his emphasis would make the “outflowing, diffusing motion” of Bidney’s literary epiphany into little more than a euphemism for “lusting after” a prospective sexual conquest. Of course, using poetry to make teenage sexual energy “manifest” might also be a legitimate use of Wordsworth’s epiphanic imagination.

The problem with epiphany is not what it is (we can continue to debate the definition of a literary term like this almost endlessly), but what it is good for, how we can make it into a valuable critical and interpretive tool. On this score, Bidney’s argument is pragmatic
and practical as an approach to interpreting the literature of the past two centuries. Read Wordsworth and Coleridge Bidney's way and we come to understand a source of their literary power while also gaining an insight into tensions in their works. Wordsworth's literary authority is embodied, for Bidney, not in an abstract "natural religion" but in the poet's epiphanic "fiery light" imagery. In a related way, the seeming stability described by Coleridge in his critical pronouncements about organic unity is undercut by the instability of his own epiphanic images: flakes, flashes, films, bubbles, shiverings, tremblings, and the like. Read "minor" authors (Pater and Barrett Browning) in this epiphanic way, Bidney argues, and such re-evaluations will produce an "unexpected richness." Phenomenological analysis can help rescue certain authors from the bane of "minor" status by revealing otherwise hidden epiphanic gems. Likewise, such a critical method can unfold psychological or feminist insights by directing us—via epiphanies—to the repressions of Tennyson and Pater or the social consciences of Tolstoy and Barrett Browning.

Bidney's own form of analysis yields up consistent epiphanic patterns employed by each of these authors while simultaneously pointing up forms of verbal instability throughout their works. Thus Wordsworth employs a "radiant geometry" of "fiery light" imagery that is more apparently centered and stable than the fleeting and quivering epiphanies of Coleridge. Arnold mixes seemingly antithetical fire and water, perhaps best in the fire-water (lava) of Mount Etna’s eruption (“Empedocles on Etna”). Tennyson relies on “dawn-rose” and “wheel” image patterns to produce the great liminal epiphanies of In Memoriam and Idylls of the King; his word-pictures always tend skyward. Pater, by contrast, gives us recurrent “red-yellow fire flowers” and “dying birds” that anchor us to a more earthbound, chthonic realm. Tennyson's epiphanies strive for an airy eternity of spirit, but they never quite achieve it; Pater is satisfied with an epiphanic immortality of material elements that begin in, and return to, solid earth but offer nothing beyond a secular, aesthetic fulfillment.
Bidney is an extremely careful close reader of the texts he analyses. His critiques tend to begin in the precise verbal textures of images but then move out toward wider claims about the work—or the author—in question. So Tolstoy’s prose epiphanies offer an explanation for the terrors wrought by Napoleon while at the same time revealing the humanity of many of Tolstoy’s less “heroic” characters. By extension, War and Peace can be seen as a negative response to Carlyle’s On Heroes and Hero Worship; Bidney would have us call Tolstoy’s masterpiece On the Nullity of Heroes and the Vanity of Hero-Worship. Bidney’s method also produces generalized phenomenological formulae for epiphanies such as (in Bidney’s italics) “stone becomes fiery with the help of crystal” (Barrett Browning) or “birds are flowers are fire are pain” (Pater). These formulae take us beyond the analysis of single images into patterns that can help us unify otherwise disparate texts.

Here is a representative example of the way Bidney uses Bachelardian analysis as a comparativist tool for critiquing three different, but related, authors: “Carlyle and Tolstoy are monists, epiphanists of immanence, of unity: Carlylean history is fiery and eruptive; Tolstoyan, oceanic, with currents and tides. Barrett Browning’s vision is dual: spirit tries to transform dead matter, to transfigure it out of existence, or out of its unspiritual nonexistence, its rocky deadness, into fiery life” (131). The point for Bidney is that the tracing of epiphanic patterns of imagery avoids the dangers of critical emphasis on authorial intention (“what did this author think these words meant?”) while still managing to provide a unifying set of principles about images that matter to an author and the way those images cohere or resist each other, accentuate or deny potential meanings.

One limitation of a phenomenological method such as Bidney’s is that the language of experience is always conditioned by the subjectivity of the experiential “I,” whether fictional character, omniscient narrator, self-conscious author, or reflective reader. So epiphanies of fire do not necessarily resonate anger, or lust, or hatred, or destruction; they can equally easily evoke warmth, or power, or light, or the life-force. Of course Bachelard and Bidney would argue that we draw our own interpretation of an image’s resonance from the
complete context of its appearance and textual relations. Yet certain
descriptions of phenomena ("feminist fires . . . challenge all tradi-
tional mythic notions of womanly waters or masculine suns" [174])
can sometimes leave us wondering about exceptions to the meta-
phoric linkages they imply (what about "traditional" masculine
waters or womanly suns?).

Finally, of course, Bidney's emphasis on psychological language
to describe the epiphanic impulse in many of these authors, reminds
us how cognitive and physiological (in addition to linguistic) epipha-
nies may soon turn out to be. Once we know more about the way
our synapses fire, once we understand links between language and
neural transmission that are currently being explored in important
work by Antonio Damasio, Mark Turner, Daniel Schater, and oth-
ers, we will no doubt learn that a mind paying attention to itself in
the process of making meaning is a crucial part of the epiphanic
story. Epiphanies in Romantic and post-Romantic literature tend to
record the mind-brain of an author or character noticing itself com-
menting on the raw data of consciousness (brain activity) and the
resulting emotional response (in a character, author, or reader).

A flash, a shudder, a bright light, a recognition, a manifestation
of brain activity to a mind-brain that is being active: Aha! I'd call
that an epiphany!

Ashton Nichols
Dickinson College

Work in Progress

My recent monograph (Oxford University's Old Mortality Society:
A Study in Victorian Romanticism [Mellen Press, 1998] had as its prin-
cipal goal the diplomatic transcription and annotation of the extant
but incomplete Minute Book of the Society that previously had been
cited only fragmentarily (as fragments of a fragment, as it were).
Though there are several books on the Cambridge Apostles and also
on the Oxford Union, this is the first book-length study of the un-
dergraduate essay group to which Pater belonged. Such societies

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were not unusual; however, an astonishing number of Old Mortality members later attained eminence of the first order. This group included future poets, essayists, jurists, MPs, and (not surprisingly) a Noah's ark of future dons. It was probably more distinguished, member for member in the years that it flourished, than the better-known Cambridge Apostles (to which Tennyson had belonged earlier).

In the process of collecting and recasting my earlier scholarship on the background of the group (updating it with current secondary sources/editions, such as Sypher's facsimile of *Undergraduate Papers*), I also included several new details from the little-known Gosse Papers at the Perkins Library Archives, Duke University (one anecdote surely suppressed by virtue of what Gosse judged to be Swinburne's dissipation) and on the competing Hexameron Society's meetings and membership (from S. R. Brooke's diaries at Corpus Christi, Oxford). This data undergirds my current interest in the liberalizing or reactionary currents within nineteenth-century British higher education—emergent professionalism and canon formation, for example. Since I approach these issues through the lens of the essay societies, my current work takes the difficult form of hunting down the most deeply-hidden references and ruling out possible sources, a protracted (and possibly only a heuristic) enterprise with an uncertain timetable.

There was once a second Minute Book of the Old Mortality, no doubt lost—but is that absolutely certain? I've surveyed the famous members' papers (yet who can ever claim to have done so "exhaustively"?); nevertheless, the papers of the "obscure" members, if not lost, might contain important data. For example, John Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury (member of the OMS from circa 1862 and an early friend of Pater, who nevertheless in later years wrote him a devastating letter of reproach) refers to an OMS essay he worked on (reported in Edward Watson's *Life of Bishop John Wordsworth* [1915] 27). Where is that essay or where did Watson obtain his reference (i.e., where are Wordsworth's papers)? The other societies are equally relevant to my ongoing study of educational practice. John Conington was founder and patron of the Wise and Good essay society but also attended OMS meetings. Do Conington's papers exist
and do they contain further references, circa 1860s, to the OMS or his Wise and Good (also called the Essay Society, the Mutual Improvement Society, and the Jolly Pantheists)? A printed list of rules for what may be the fraternal counterpart at London University to Conington’s group does exist.

I would be delighted to hear from anyone with suggestions or relevant information. I anticipate my collection of factual data will be a slow accretion, just barely faster than the drip of calcareous water. But I hope I’ll be able to give a report later in a Newsletter note!

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Recent Publications

Compiled by Billie Andrew Inman and Annotated by Bonnie J. Robinson

Books

essays on Pater, annotated below. To be reviewed in TPN.)


Polonsky, Rachel. *English Literature and the Russian Aesthetic Renaissance*. Cambridge/ New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. (In part, an assessment of the influence of Pater, Ruskin, the Pre-Raphaelites, and Wilde on writers responsible for the “Russian renaissance” at the turn of the century; Polonsky states that “Zinaida Vengerova, who, in the mid 1890s, introduced Russian readers to [these British figures] . . . names Pater the father of ‘the second European renaissance’” [120-21].)


**Musical Score**

Paulus, Stephen. *Musiquotes: for Mixed Chorus (SSATB) and Piano*. St. Paul, MN: Paulus Publications, 1997. 36pp. $4.95. The words in this score are quotations about music from Pater, Diderot, Samuel Johnson, Shakespeare, Thomas Mann, and George Eliot—in that order. Pater’s contribution is “All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music”; Johnson’s, “It is the only sensual pleasure without vice.”
Essays

Bassett, Sharon. "‘Golden Mediocrity’: Pater’s Marcus Aurelius and the Making of Decadence." In Perennial Decay: On the Aesthetics and Politics of Decadence, eds. Liz Constable, Dennis Denisoff, and Matthew Potolsky. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1999. 254-267. Bassett points to the corrective intention of Marius the Epicurean in presenting Marcus Aurelius, admired in the Victorian age as a “pre-Christian,” as an analogous modern within his pagan context. "His words and actions reveal a mediocrity of thought” (257). The same mediocrity of thought is denounced in the "Conclusion" to The Renaissance as decadent, so Bassett argues. Further, Pater’s hero Marius offers a “technical example” of hedonism (258), of which Pater himself had been accused. Yet he dies as a martyr, a death which Pater’s critics would have admired and advocated. And stoicism further receives evaluation in Pater’s text. While Marius, as rhetorician and amanuensis, seems associated with superficial style, he nevertheless “binds together” his personality and his expression. Marcus Aurelius, on the other hand, does not. Further contrasts in the text highlight Marcus Aurelius’s “golden mediocrity”: his golden book imitation versus the Golden Ass, which teaches the ideal of personal self-development; reading versus the manly enjoyment of animal slaughter. Having established this opposition which reverses Victorian opinion regarding Marcus Aurelius, Pater offers the “alternative” of style as truth, style ascertained as color—golden—a “fertile . . . trace” of color which offers what Bassett, quoting Charles Riley’s Derridean phrase, as the “‘pregrammatical, prerhetorical cry of presence and irreducible meaning’” (266).

Byerly, Alison. “Coda—Aestheticism: The Erasure of the Real.” In Realism, Representation, and the Arts in Nineteenth-Century Literature. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge UP, 1997. 184-195. Byerly examines authors’ desires to embody reality in either subjectivist or objectivist ways. She notes the entirely new direction of aesthetic novels, which do not intend to
embody reality, but move in the direction of the fantastic, the detached, the theatrical, the pageant-like. She maintains that other Victorian novelists expose their characters to aesthetic experiences in order to create "a representational system" that seems "a reflection of the primary world constructed by the novel as a whole," but that aesthetic novelists make aesthetic experiences "equivalent to life itself" (193). She points to the use of music especially as characteristic in such aesthetic novels, music as amoral, non-didactic, and non-discursive, but with the power to influence its listeners powerfully. This use of music and the idea of aesthetic influence is especially explored in Du Maurier's *Trilby*.

She further declares that because the central aesthetic experience of Pater's and Wilde's aesthetic novels (*Marius the Epicurean* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*) is reading a novel, "It does not . . . have the effect of deepening the representational space of the novel. On the contrary, it confirms the novel's assertion of its own autonomy . . ." (192). This lack of dimension or perspective, according to Byerly, culminates in the use of epiphany, or the moment, as a narrative device, since moments, rather than a continuum, remove aesthetic experience from a moral perspective. This use of the epiphany for Byerly constitutes the final and most profound distinction of these aesthetic novels from other Victorian novels that depict art.

Guy, Josephine M. "Aesthetics, Economics and Commodity Culture: Theorizing Value in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain." *English Literature in Transition: 1880-1920* 42:2 (1999): 143-171. This essay examines the validity of Regenia Gagnier's equating the "economic man" with the "aesthetic man," economic man being defined "by marginal utility theorists in general and by Manchester economist William Stanley Jevons in particular" (144). Guy considers how someone as "retiring, as ascetic and donnish as Pater" could "converge" with "consumerist models of value" (144). She proceeds by asking such questions as what is the nature of such a convergence, was this convergence more than a coincidence or accident, and how should a literary historian approach the venue of economic historians? She considers the language of aestheticism and economy to conclude that specialization
and competing discourses came into being from the 1860s onward. This change would have brought economic issues to the forefront of cultural concerns—so that Pater would address them—but such concomitant attention need not prove these concerns to be universal.

Jevons's "specialized theory of economics" depended on the relationship—of desire and pleasure—between the individual and the commodity or object. What could be measured was the relationship "between an individual's desire for a commodity relative to the quantity of the commodity which that individual already possessed" (154). His theory thus legitimates all forms of consumption, all kinds of pleasure. Guy points out that it seems to relate to culture/aesthetic self-culture in that "economic activity" refines the individual's taste. However, Jevons's theory does not distinguish the quality of reception or pleasure, for, according to Guy, it cannot measure individual responses to art. For Pater, however, aesthetic pleasure is ascertainable only through the individual, the concrete, the particular, the elite few: "his shared acknowledgment with Jevons that states of mind are 'inscrutable'—that we are all 'solitary prisoners' in our own 'dream of a world'—leads him down a wholly different and anti-consumerist path" (160). Guy supports this observation with this example: even though "mass copies of Shakespeare's Measure for Measure" are available, the aesthetic response, the true appreciation of this work as a work of art, as far as Pater is concerned, will be experienced by only a very few. Guy concludes with the sound and useful observation that both Pater and Jevons were complex and "far from fixed" in their views and that literary historians ought to be alert to "the 'difference' of other 'non-literary' domains of knowledge" (167).
"Introduction" to "Art and Culture." In The Victorian Age: An Anthology of Sources and Documents. London/New York: Routledge, 1998. 313-323. This "Introduction" methodically reviews the function of art in society, from its expanding accessibility to the middle classes in the early 1830s, to its split commodification between high and popular art at the turn of the century. Guy notes the effects of the "growing public participation in art" in its normative status, in its "primary function ... to socialise individual readers and spectators into the moral values of their culture" (314). This normative function destabilizes through various political agitations and dissidence, through the erosion of a clear hegemony in British culture, through the evolving privileging of the individual. Emerging individualism led to the countervalue of aestheticism and decadence, "extremes" which effect a reassertion of normative values in art at the turn of the century. But the debate over art's function, according to Guy, continued with critics such as William Courthope and William Morris, who expressed opposing concerns of reinscribing the status quo and revolutionizing society through art, respectively. This split heralded the diversity of reception and function of art of the early twentieth century.

Hachisu, Izumi. "'Centrifugal Attitudes': Walter Pater and Charles Darwin." Journal of Kawaguchi Junior College 12 (December 1998): 71-85. This essay features a compendium of quotations on evolution and its assimilation by Victorian culture. It evokes the multivalent quality of the theory of evolution apparent in its use by biologists, historians, and authors like Pater. Pater's use of the theory conversely reveals his multidisciplinarity. His use of the theory especially appears in his focus on flux and relativity. Darwin's theory confirmed for Pater the concept of Heracleitian fire. Darwin's elucidation of environmental factors involved in evolution connect, for Pater, with Platonic aesthetics, that is, what the eyes and ears and hands of humans incorporate into their environment develops their "moral" being, or effects their progress as individuals. Hachisu points to "The Child in the House" and Marius the Epicurean as works which reveal the combination of sensations and ideas in this "Darwinian" development of the individual.
Kaye, Richard A. “‘Determined Raptures’: St. Sebastian and the Victorian Discourse of Decadence.” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 27:1 (1999): 269-303. Kaye discusses various Victorian authors’ and critics’ interpretations of images of St. Sebastian in art and literature, from the Renaissance to the nineteenth century, and some Victorian authors’ and critics’ uses of Sebastian to express sentiments that would be objectionable to Victorian audiences if presented directly. He refers to Pater only twice, most notably as follows: “Walter Pater first signaled Sebastian’s late-Victorian role as a self-annihilating masochist, a pathological ‘case,’ rather than an emblem of idolatrous sensuality. The writer’s 1886 story ‘Sebastian van Stork’ . . . mythologized a doomed Sebastian characterized by a ‘curious, well-reasoned nihilism.’ . . . An aloof virtuoso of renunciation, Pater’s Sebastian is too sensitive for this or any world, dying (as the family physician puts it) of a ‘disease then coming into the world . . . [affecting] people grown somewhat over-delicate in their nature by the effects of modern luxury’” (81, 83). That a doctor offers the last word on Sebastian indicates the new processes whereby medical science now must calibrate what once had been traits associated with sensitive males of poetic temperament. (BAI)

Maxwell, Catherine. “From Dionysus to ‘Dionea’: Vernon Lee’s Portraits.” *Word and Image* 13 (July-September 1997): 253-269. This essay ultimately examines Vernon Lee’s female protagonists in her collection of short stories. These *femmes fatales* owe a debt, according to Maxwell, to Pater’s portraits of Dionysus and of La Gioconda as a Venusian figure (rising out of the waters), portraits which themselves owe a debt to Heinrich Heine’s stories about Greek gods in exile. They contrast with such conventional portraits of dead women as Robert Browning’s Duchess in “My Last Duchess”; i.e., Maxwell evokes a tradition of the female sublime—dangerous women, Maenads, and vampires—as a parallel to portraits of male power figures who embody the masculine sublime, violent, uncontainable. These figures draw upon Pater’s an-
drogynous Denys and vampiric La Gioconda who dangerously cross the boundaries of time and space. Lee's androgynous Zafforino of "A Dangerous Voice" resembles the Orpheus who is torn apart by Maenads, embodying the haunting, possessive power of song. Zafforino, a castrato, foreshadows Lee's dangerous women, the titular character Dionea and Medea da Carpi of "Amour Dure." These women demand male worship and the sacrifice of male victims. Maxwell points out how they thus represent the power of living women who must channel their ambitions into male activity: "Able only to influence men through her erotic power, Medea's tactic is to entrance and slay them by their very susceptibility—a survival strategy which secures her independence at the same time as it is an act of revenge" (267). The female sublime, then, "rewrites the femme fatale with a feminist purpose" (267). Henry James's use of the same portrait to represent Milly Theale in *The Wings of the Dove* that Lee had used in "Amour Dure" to represent Medea, for Moran, returns the female sublime to the beautiful dead woman. Supposing that Lee and Medea coalesced in James's mind, Moran sees this use of the portrait as possibly an act of revenge, born of anxiety caused by the "female power" that Lee not only "celebrates in her writings," but also "displays as a writer and in her relations with male authors" (269).

McNeilly, Kevin. "A Fragment of Perfect Expression: Yeats Rewrites Pater's Mona Lisa." *Yeats Eliot Review* 14 (Winter 1997): 2-9. McNeilly asserts that Yeats reveals the subtext in Pater's dictum "to burn always with this hard gem-like flame": its physicality. Yet he claims that Pater fails to realize this physicality, to "make real . . . that enviable intensity" (3). Blurred, imprecise, phantasmagoric, Pater's work for McNeilly lacks the "hardness" of Yeats's modern poetry. Nevertheless, Yeats begins his anthology of modern poetry with Pater's "La Gioconda." According to McNeilly, Pater "sets in motion [for Yeats] a radical interrogation of the relationship between temporality and knowledge, and articulates . . . the terms of epistemic crisis which was to inform modernist and postmodernist writing" (5). A doubled sense of eternity and timelessness within the passing moment is modernity for
Yeats, a modernity which the “La Gioconda” passage exemplifies. His free verse rendering of this passage interestingly “solidifies” as tetrameter. The passage is doubled, then, also in “the rhythmic tension which Yeats describes . . . between the ‘ghostly voice’ of metrical absolutes and the energy of ‘passionate, normal speech’” (7). Yeats’s sense of embracing multiple selves within one’s single self, the universal being in Unity of Being, also receives its first and best expression in this “poem” by Pater. McNeilly’s interesting conclusion claims that Yeats historicizes himself self-consciously in a new understanding of history in his “history” of the modern which begins with Pater.

Potolsky, Matthew. “Pale Imitations: Walter Pater’s Decadent Historiography.” In Perennial Decay (see Bassett, above): 235-253. For Potolsky, “Imitation—in the varied forms of allusion, citation, translation, and tribute—is the very stuff of decadent writing, its basic narrative and structural principle” (235-36), but decadent writing is not therefore weak and contemptible. Also, “decadent texts . . . do not merely practice imitation, they explicitly thematize it” (236). Having established this context, Potolsky examines “the uses of imitation” in Pater’s “Apollo in Picardy.” He states: “This story is made up almost entirely of imitations: allusions to, and translations of, both ancient and more modern works, as well as near-citations from Pater’s own earlier texts” (236); but he argues that each, instead of being a “‘pale’ imitation,” is actually a “resignification, a representation with a difference” (237), a difference which may open the subject to various interpretations. He explains how the narrator’s telling of the story of Apollyon and Hyacinthus differs in its details from Ovid’s story of Apollo and Hyacinthus in Metamorphoses (245); and he states in regard to Pater’s using again his earlier motifs: “. . . all of these revived interests take on a significantly darker quality in their new context. They are associated here not with renewal, as in their original versions in Pater’s work, but with danger. The ‘outbreak of the human spirit’ that Pater had earlier found in the classical revival of the Renaissance here becomes the image of Apollyon ‘scattering the seeds of disease’ on
his way north, and the
Prior's confusion and self-
division. (Miscellaneous
156)” (244). Potolsky finds
a larger significance in the
dark fates of Hyacinthus
and the Prior: “The course
of history becomes a series
of inevitable repetitions
that mere mortals (indeed
even immortals) can nei-
ther control nor alter”
(250). He seems to say,
however, that the reader is
led to this conclusion be-
cause of “the narrator’s in-
terpretative intervention”
(250). The fact that Pater
has the Prior’s “old manu-
script volume” emerge
from a library during the
French Revolution (interpreted by Potolsky not to be a fated
event) seems to belie such an interpretaion of history—“so
Pater questions the fatalistic historiography that would find
only madness and death where it might also find anticipa-
tions of a revival” (251). (BAI)

Rajan, Gita. “Oeuvres Intertwined: Walter Pater and Antoine
Watteau.” In Textual Bodies: Changing Boundaries of Literary
Representation. Ed. Lori Hope Lefkowitz. Albany: State Uni-
versity of New York, 1997. 185-205. Asserting that Pater
critics de-materialize his text, Rajan counters this tendency
with her analysis of “A Prince of Court Painters,” an analy-
thesis that points to Pater’s “theatricaliz[ing] textuality, offer-
ing different sites of representation, revealing a fluidity that
we have come to associate with drama” (186). The mate-
riality of this portrait, according to Rajan, derives from its his-
torical accuracy and its channeling of desire through its
narrator’s journal entries. This objectivity/subjectivity high-
lights the portrait’s revelation of “conflict between desire and
authority . . . he holds his text within the margins of an ex-
pressive, private discourse, which is saturated with emotional
responses, and . . . he stretches the limits of constraints that
Victorian culture imposed on public utterances” (186).

Following the Goncourts’ delimiting “three concurrent
fields of aesthetic value in Watteau’s art: image, music,
Rajan delineates the "political success [of desire] and failure [of unrequited love]" recorded in Pater's text which likens Watteau's images to music, to chamber music (190). The boundaries between fiction/fact, author/subject "fade" when Pater articulates Marie-Marguerite's suppressed desires for Watteau (192). This articulation "rebels" against Victorian (rather than eighteenth-century French) prudery (193). Similarly, the differences between Pater and Watteau seem to dissolve. Rajan points to the "fusion" of art forms in Watteau's art, of comedie, danse du corde and fetes, which "disrupted [the] established hierarchy of art forms" (Crowe 82) (196). Similarly, Pater "uses Watteau to question Victorian ideologues for moralizing and demarcating the form and content of artistic expressions" (196). Rajan concludes that "Pater's textual body can be recovered only through reticence, gaps, and elliptical gestures of 'discontinuity,"' strategies that she finds "microcosmically represented in 'A Prince'" (201).

Schweik, Robert. "Bringing Images to Life: Persistent Rhetorical Strategies in Art Commentary from the Nineteenth Century to the Present." Prose Studies 20 (December 1997): 49-63. In this essay, Schweik addresses the continuities of "rhetorical features in art writing in English from the nineteenth century to the present" (49). He points to three common characteristics of nineteenth-century English art writing: "situating the picture in the flow of time" (52), "conferring action and sound on pictures" (53), and "dramatizing the viewer's response" (57); and he shows that these characteristics carry over into art writing in the twentieth century, even the late twentieth century. Even abstract art receives comparable commentary in the twentieth century, either straightforwardly or through "displacement" of sound and action from figures to color and form (52). Woolf on Sickert, Steinberg on deKooning, Maher on Matisse, Golding on Duchamp, Breslin on Rothko, each used these strategies just as Pater, Ruskin, and Thackeray did before them. Schweik states: "twentieth-century prose commentators shifted activity and agency from the artist's brush strokes to the lines, pigments, grounds, edges, and other elements of painting themselves" (55). For example, "Harold Rosenberg characterized..."
Mondrian’s *Victory Boogie-Woogie* as ‘dancing motes of pigment on a diamond-shaped canvas’” (55). Schweik supports his claims with example after example. He thus indicates how the medium of words-discourse—has its own expectations of sound, movement, response, and of practical tasks and audience. “It appears that the mundane practical goals of twentieth-century art commentators serving the needs of a middle-class audience and a competitive art market have played a more influential role in preserving, expanding, and adapting the ekphrastic practices of nineteenth-century art critics than might have been expected,” Schweik interestingly concludes (60).

Tucker, Paul. “The Use of the Definite Article in the Fiction of Walter Pater.” *Rivista di Studi Vittoriani* 2 (July 1997): 105-124. Tucker finds previous critical attempts to reevaluate Pater’s fiction according to its “symbolic or structural coherence or transgressive technique” deficient in that they overlook the fiction’s “mimetic force” (108). This mimesis depends on “models of reality” grounded in the narrative’s language, in its “language and semantic[s]” (108). Tucker corrects this deficiency by analyzing Pater’s use of the definite article in his fiction. His thesis is that Pater’s use of the definite article incorporates “the narratee” into the text: “the narratee becomes a virtual percipient of the [fictive] world and as though situated within it” (109). He proceeds with his argument by delineating the syntax and semantics of the definite and indefinite article, specifically anaphoric as cohesive and cataphoric as structural. He further explicates narration and description as knowledge conveyed by the narrator to the narratee wherein definite articles signify knowledge shared by the narrator and narratee. He then analyzes in depth Pater’s description of Marius’ house “White-nights.” In this analysis, Tucker demonstrates how Pater conveys very little information directly to the narratee. Rather, he conveys information indirectly, through “indirect anaphoric uses of ‘the,’ introducing noun phrases whose referents must successively be associated by inference” and “including a noun phrase expressive of a quality or attribute to the referent of an antecedent noun phrase” (116). These indirect methods force the narratee actively to participate in constructing Pater’s narrative universe.
Tucker also points out how the definite articles in the passage refer to concrete particulars rather than to general referents. This concrete particularity enforces imaginative immediacy for the narratee. Two further methods affect this imaginative immediacy: “isolating a noun phrase, in such a way as momentarily to obscure its referent” and listing “definite descriptions introduced by ‘the’” (119, 120). Tucker relates these latter two methods to Pater’s “frequent use of ‘displaced deixis’” (122). All of these methods result in a “diegesis... which ‘mimes’... a shared... experiental stance” (123).

Woods, Gary. “Muscular Aestheticism.” In A History of Gay Literature: The Male Tradition. New Haven/London: Yale UP, 1998. 167-180. Woods traces a line of same-sex desire from Pater to Edward Carpenter, noting the homoerotic significance of Pater’s “Winckelmann,” “Two Early French Stories,” and Plato and Platonism. The uniting thread among the writers Woods discusses is their debt to Greek ideals and/or Roman Catholicism. “It was through Walter Pater that Wilde felt able to lay claim to both the Renaissance and ancient Greece—the Rome of paganism, as opposed to Catholicism, did not interest him very much” (167). Greek culture and Roman Catholicism, as modeled by these authors, articulates passion for male physicality. Woods claims that “[t]he more one reads Hopkins, the more one becomes convinced that his particular torture was to have realised the intensely carnal nature of his own spirituality” (172). Hopkins’s poetic innovations, Woods contends, stem from this stress on physicality: “Sprung rhythm... introduced a degree of physicality to texts which Hopkins never wanted to seem merely intellectual” (175).

Wilde’s work, according to Woods, evinces a desire to express his same-sex ideals coincidentally with his desire to suppress them. This thematic may be detected in Wilde’s ambivalent response to Whitman: though Wilde detected “something Greek” about Whitman, Whitman only parenthetically connected homosexuality with democratic or republican ideals. But these parenthetic ideas, according to Woods, are significantly hearkened to and expanded on by J. A. Symonds and Carpenter in their work.
Reviews

Baïssus, Jean-Marie. *The Pre-Raphaelite Body/Fear and Desire in Painting, Poetry, and Criticism*, by J. B. Bullen (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1998). In *Cahiers Victoriens et Edouardiens* 48 (October 1998): 236-241. While acknowledging his scholarship, Baïssus de­plores Bullen’s “exaggerated emphasis on one side of Pre­ Raphaelite painting” (237). This emphasis uses feminist criti­cism in an attempt to reveal social neuroses and stresses. However, this attempt lacks “rigour” in both defining “op­erating concepts” and in “controlling logical conclusions” (238). It fails, for instance, to define such terms as “Pre-Raphaelite art” and “body” to Baïssus’s satisfaction. And its analysis of erotic/pornographic ele­ments in Pre-Raphaelite art seems too heavy-handed. Despite these “flaws” (238), Baïssus recommends the book for its “basic and reliable information” regard­ing Pre-Raphaelite art (238).

Beaton, Tara. *Secret Selves: Confession and Same-Sex Desire in Victorian Autobiography*, by Oliver S. Buckton (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1998). In *Victorian Review* 24 (Winter 1998): 218-220. Beaton encapsulates the purpose of this text as analyzing the intersection of se­crecy and the subject of secrecy in same­sex desire in the autobiographical writings of Cardinal Newman, Symonds, Wilde, and Carpenter. Beaton indicates Buckton’s sensitivity to the “complex relationship between sexuality and gender” by delineating the tensions in Newman’s autobiographical writing, tensions caused by “gender, sexual, and religious anxieties” (219), by giving ex­amples of “desire and displacement” with Carpenter and his “working-class lover” Merrill (219), and by noting Buckton’s attention to the “diversity of [Symonds’s and Carpenter’s] expressions” (220). Beaton especially admires the text’s em­phasis on “understudied” material and Buckton’s “new inter­pretations” of this material (220). This interpretation in­terestingly complicates the Foucauldian “emphasis on gov­ernmental discourse” in writings on same-sex desire (220).
Hadley, Elaine. *The Vulgarization of Art: The Victorians and Aesthetic Democracy*, by Linda Dowling (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1996). In *Modern Philology* 96 (November 1998): 277-280. Hadley notes Dowling’s “useful” contribution to a growing body of work on “New Aestheticism.” Dowling’s usefulness derives, according to Hadley, from its “resituation aestheticism in politics,” particularly in Shaftesbury’s Whig writings, in “the newly consolidated liberal polity” (277). Dowling traces the “inclusive community” inherent in aestheticism and the consequentially “political” agenda of Pater’s writing, particularly *The Renaissance*, which “sought to liberate individuals through their moments of concrete experience” (278). Hadley points to the book’s ironies, however, because of the limit of its focus on the elite few, “the standard bearers of Victorian Aestheticism” (278), in generalizing from the individual, and in its “oscillation between the terms of that same binarism, the opposition between an abstract aesthetic notion of ‘democratic endowment’ and Romantic conceptions of exceptionality” (279).

Machann, Clinton. *Secret Selves: Confession and Same-Sex Desire in Victorian Autobiography*, by Oliver S. Buckton (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1998). In *Biography* 22 (Winter 1999): 129-131. In his review of Buckton’s text, Machann notes the “unevenness” resulting from Buckton’s focus on “the rhetorical and interpretive strategies of writers and readers as they relate to same-sex desire in specific historical and cultural circumstances” (129). Machann criticizes Buckton’s failure to relate his study to heterosexual autobiographies with similar strategies of “secrecy and concealment” (131). Yet he confirms Beaton’s observation that Buckton offers new interpretations of overly worked material in his focus on the Newman-Kingsley controversy, Symonds’s self-protective secrecy, Wilde’s narrative reconstruction of identity in *De Profundis*, and Carpenter’s utopian visions of “healthy homosexuality” (130). He therefore recommends the text as a “significant addition to men’s studies and the study of ‘masculinities’ as represented in Victorian literature” (131).
Martin, Philip W. *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Masculinity*, by James Eli Adams (Ithaca/London: Cornell UP, 1995). In *Modern Language Review* 93 (April 1998): 481-482. Martin acknowledges Adams's overly ambitious aims in this text. Yet he asserts the value of this "lucid, scholarly, and fascinating account of Victorian masculinity" (481). This masculinity is performative, "historicized as a theatricality enacted through specific social and cultural forms" (481). Adams's analysis, according to Martin, concretizes strategies of "self-preservation" in ways that are both precise and wide ranging (in that it includes psychoanalysis and rhetorical analyses). The "rhetorical restraints" of self-discipline as defining masculinity provides coherence to the "impressive scope" of the text (482).

Michie, Elsie B. *Sexualities in Victorian Britain*, eds. Andrew H. Miller and James Eli Adams (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1996). In *Albion* 29 (Summer 1997): 326-328. Michie emphasizes the coherence of this anthology in her summary of the essays' subjects: Homans's naturalization of middle-class values as human, Nord's analysis of "the moral and physical contamination that threaten to enter the middle class through fallen female sexuality" (327), Moscucci's equation of cleanliness with circumcision, Jann's analysis of Darwin's conflation of the middle-class family with the animal kingdom, Dollimore's discussion of how "degeneration works as a movement toward decadence and as a regression toward the primitive" (327), several essays' exploration of femininity in male poetics, and several essays' discussion of masculinity in female writing. Michie concludes that "the various excellent essays in [this text] show us the richness and multiplicity of the social meanings that accrue around, but also displace, the ideal of sexuality in Victorian Britain" (328).

his ascesis aims” (273). Adams shows that, through placement in their historical context, hero-worship, exclusivity, athleticism, and aestheticism are related methods of asserting “mainstream Victorian masculinity” (276). This successful method of analysis leads Morgan to conclude that “we need to know social, political, economic, and religious contexts in order to theorize about gender and sexuality” (277).


Potolsky, Matthew. *Rereading Walter Pater*, by William F. Shuter (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge UP, 1997). In *Victorian Studies* 41 (Spring 1998): 512-514. Potolsky concludes that this book “makes a solid contribution to Pater scholarship” (513). He appreciates Shuter’s thorough knowledge of Pater’s works, including unpublished manuscripts, as well as his knowledge of anthropology, German philosophy, and classical writings, sources of elements of Pater’s thought. This “fine scholarship” gives credence to Shuter’s views of Pater’s stance on religion, such as his opinion that Pater’s “late apologies for Christianity draw upon the same ideas about religion that mark his presumably apostate early writings” (512). It also
illuminates Pater's "compositional practice," such as his strategies of self-quotation. However, Potolsky is less favorable toward "the theoretical conceit that shapes the book" (513). The "new' account of Pater's work" that Shuter's rereading provides relates to "'old' Pater criticism" and does not question the assumptions on which both readings are based. Shuter "nowhere challenges the assumption that such essentially arbitrary chronological designations ['early' and 'late'] offer a reliable means of accounting for either changes or continuities in Pater's writings" (513). (BAI)


ideological trends throughout the century" (129). The essays which themselves use cross-disciplinary approaches to their subjects seem to Samuelian as most valuable. She cites two essays on Wordsworth which point to Wordsworth's self-accommodation to the marketplace, in the 1829 Keepsake book, and the various editions of Wordsworth's poetry published after his death, editions which complicate our notions of Wordsworth's reception in the Victorian era. The marketplace is itself complicated by the periodical press which "influence[d] . . . narrative structure and the iconography of the author" (130). Samuelian finds this subject the main focus of the anthology, with "nearly half of the essays touch[ing] on or explor[ing] these related phenomena" (130), and with "more than a third" on Charles Dickens (130). Among the most interesting of these is Robert Patten's "Serialized Retrospection in The Pickwick Papers," which points to the "backward looking appeal of the novel" (131). Conversely, Linda K. Hughes and Michael Lund in "Textual/Sexual Pleasure and Serial Publication" locate this pleasure in anticipation of the future. Samuelian mentions Laurel Brake's essay on the "influence of the periodical press on the development of . . . [Pater's] career" (132). Samuelian cautions the reader, however, that the "multiplicity of approaches" in this text does not "respond to the critical need met by such single-topic studies as Feltes's Modes of Production or Gaye Tuchman's Edging Women Out" (132). Yet, through its very scope, "it may make longer interventions, given the state of the current academic publishing market, harder to realize" (132).

**Dissertations**

Berry, David Rhodes. "The Body of Art: Style and Skepticism in Pater." Ph.D., Harvard University, 1998. DAI 59 (November 1998), 1580-A. Berry reveals a contradiction in Pater's differentiating mind and body, his "alliance" with both the empirical and the idealist tradition, that is, his skeptical attitude towards material entities which nevertheless acquire attributes of the human being. This dissertation ultimately says that reception or receptivity, while a mental action, is yet a passive "acknowledgment" of the other/art object.
Camlot, Jason Evan. "Sincere Mannerisms: Style and Critical Identity in British Letters, 1830-1900." Ph.D., Stanford University, 1998. DAI 59 (February 1999), 2998-A. According to Camlot, “This dissertation examines changing conceptions of the critic’s identity from the early Victorian period to the end of the nineteenth century by approaching the prescriptive and theoretical essay on style [by Mill, DeQuincey, Ruskin, Pater, and Wilde] as a locus of the Victorian author’s attempt to formulate how he may communicate authentically in response to new conditions of writing and publishing.”

Doylen, Michael R. "Homosexual Askesis: Representations of Self-Fashioning in the Writings of Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde, and John Addington Symonds." Ph.D., University of California, Santa Cruz, 1998. In DAI 59 (February 1999), 2998-A. In order to validate same-sex impulses in Victorian society, critics have often noted that Pater, Wilde, and Symonds formulated “self-fashioning” in such a way as to give positive value to homoeroticism. Doylen points out, however, that this self-fashioning does not automatically subvert patriarchy since such self-culture develops these artists as “men.” Other homosexual writers, however, contest both their marginalization within patriarchy as homosexuals and the privileging of men. Doylen asserts: “Rather than characterize Pater’s, Wilde’s, and Symonds’s representations of self-fashioning as unambiguously subversive, I explore how they either support or oppose both the masculinist ideologies of Victorian culture and the gendered prerogatives of the narrative subject.”

Duquette, Elizabeth Marie. "Hanging at the Crossroads: The Rhetoric of Exemplification in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Philosophy (Immanuel Kant, Herman Melville, Soren Kierkegaard, Walter Pater).” Ph.D., New York University, 1998. DAI 59 (October 1998), 1163-A. Duquette notes the relationship between literature and philosophy in the focus on matter, concrete particularity, examples. She relates the narrative, concrete particularity of such texts as Moby Dick and Plato and Platonism to Kant. “Instead of striving for an ideal exemplar, these texts demonstrate a repeated concern for the normal experience,” with the individual as the measure of normalcy.
Emilsson, Wilhelm. "Epicurean Aestheticism: DeQuincey, Pater, Wilde, Stoppard." Ph. D., University of British Columbia (Canada), 1998. DAI 59 (November 1998), 1581-A. Emilsson differentiates escapist or "Platonic Aestheticism" from an aestheticism that engages with modernity, or "Epicurean Aestheticism." Not searching for absolutes, Epicurean aesthetes accept relativity as the modern condition "by viewing life as an aesthetic spectacle to be observed and experimented on. With playful detachment they become Epicureans of the flux of modernity."

Sulcer, Robert Phillips, Jr. "Ten Percent: Poetry, Pathology, and Literary Study at the Fin de siècle." Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin, 1997. DAI 59 (July 1998), 185-A. Sulcer conflates the emergence of the "homosexual" in Victorian culture with the emergence of "close reading" in criticism. He argues that "[t]he homosexual ... emerges as the arbiter of literary value, as his own experience of the closet and the private authorizes him to participate in a reading practice unearthing the closeted secrets of texts."

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