

***Sanctus Paederasta:***

**A Consideration of the Major Uranians:  
Hopkins, Pater, Wilde, Johnson and Dolben**

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— **Declaration by the Author** —

I declare that this dissertation is the result of my own independent investigation and that all sources are duly acknowledged in the bibliography and notes. I also declare that this dissertation has not been submitted for such a degree at this or any other university. I agree that the Library may lend or copy this dissertation upon request.

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## — Abstract —

Only Timothy d'Arch Smith's *Love in Earnest* (1970) has ever attempted a 'Uranian approach' to Victorian literature, though not engaging writers of the calibre of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Walter Pater, and Oscar Wilde. Otherwise, Victorian criticism has avoided these pederastic elements, quelling meaningful consideration by preferring silences, claiming anachronism, heightening the 'homosocial', or disguising as 'homosexual'. What follows is a corrective demarcation of the distinctly pederastic elements within a series of highly nuanced texts — Hopkins's 'Epithalamion', Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*, and Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray* — as well as a consideration of the influence of William Johnson (*later* Cory) on Digby Dolben. All educated at Eton and/or Oxford in a 'Greats curriculum' based upon Greek and Latin texts, these writers had a shared appreciation for a Greco-Roman world where pederasty was a valued aspect. Hence, even at their most oblique, these Uranians were allusive enough to have been understood by their Oxford-educated coterie, a coterie which constituted a 'fellowship of pederasts', even if only on the level of desire. In the face of stringent opposition, these Uranians established an eccentric positionality worthy of consideration.

The Uranian rejection of the system of controls over the body that Victorian culture instilled drew into question many of the tenants of that culture, and served as an affront which fronted issues normally considered categorical or which remained unnoticed. The dangers associated with this affront often led to the sublimation of desire into poetry and prose, and to a number of daring strategies for fulfilling what-cannot-be-fulfilled — a stylistic complexity, a multi-faceted psychology, an uncanny audience-awareness, and an ironic stance. These create unique scholarly problems, especially since

the Uranians often constructed textual puzzles, considered identity an expanse, refused to participate in Victorian earnestness, and burned much of their own biographical and literary details (or others did so).

In this dissertation, ‘Chapter One’ considers recent critical engagement of Hopkins in regard to homoeroticism and pederasty. ‘Chapter Two’ considers Hopkins’s distinct scholarly problematics — the chess-problem of his ‘Inversnaid’, the defiance of his ‘[I Wake and Feel]’, the lack of seriousness surrounding his ‘Dark Sonnets’, and the episodes of his manuscript burnings. ‘Chapter Three’ and ‘Chapter Four’ are close readings of Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’ and Pater’s *Marius the Epicurean*, respectively, displaying the techniques of close reading needed to unexpurgate the pederastic nuances of Uranian texts. ‘Chapter Five’ considers the breach between Pater and Wilde (partly facilitated by Pater’s review of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*), a breach which illustrates the two strands of Victorian pederasty — the elevated and the carnal — the latter culminating in Wilde’s ‘Young King’ and scandalous trials. The ‘Conclusion’ considers Johnson’s influence over the poems of Dolben, as well as his editorial and personal responses to those poems after Dolben’s death — a lesson in pederastic pedagogy, elevated friendship, erotic dalliance, and thwarted love — a lesson which serves to elucidate the pederastic continuum that stretches, unbroken, from the Greco-Roman period to our own, a continuum that is here contemporarised through the fiction of Guy Davenport.

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## — Preface —

Few modern writers, when they speak with admiration or contempt of Platonic love, reflect that in its origin this phrase denoted an absorbing passion for young men.

(John Addington Symonds, *A Problem in Greek Ethics* [1901])<sup>1</sup>

The title I have chosen — ‘*Sanctus Paederasta: A Consideration of the Major Uranians: Hopkins, Pater, Wilde, Johnson and Dolben*’ — is both controversial and intentionally provocative, prompted by my belief that literary criticism, particularly as it concerns these Victorians, has shied away from or distorted any direct engagement of the pederastic elements within their lives and works, even in those instances when literary criticism has been bold enough to consider the homoerotic elements. In what follows, I will attempt a corrective interpretation, hoping to demarcate the distinctly pederastic elements often hidden beneath the complex surfaces of their texts (or, in current phrasing, their formalised discourses), texts that are highly nuanced and intended primarily for a select group of readers (perhaps a subculture) fittingly labelled ‘Uranian’ by Timothy d’Arch Smith.

Although, from a sociological or anthropological perspective, the Uranians can be said to have constituted a distinctly subversive ‘subculture’ within Victorian society, I have deliberately eschewed this label, for reasons. ‘Subcultures exist’, explains Mike Brake, ‘where there is some form of organized and recognized constellation of values, behaviour and actions which is responded to as differing from the prevailing set of norms’.<sup>2</sup> From a distanced, less-Uranian, less-histrionic perspective, this group can be seen in this light, ‘a marginal group of writers, publishing in fringe journals’,<sup>3</sup> a group whose most cogent solidifier, Walter Horatio Pater (1839-94), established ‘a calculated affiliation of his aestheticism with homoerotic subcultures that still remain shadowy in recent social and literary histories of Victorian England’.<sup>4</sup> The problem with labelling the

Uranians a ‘subculture’ is that Pater and his fellows would have argued vehemently against such a label, histrionically believing that

the Hellenic element [which they represented] alone has not been so absorbed, or content with this underground life; from time to time it has started to the surface; culture has been drawn back to its sources to be clarified and corrected. Hellenism is not merely an element in our intellectual life; it is a conscious tradition in it. (Pater, *Renaissance* 1873, p.169)<sup>5</sup>

In essence, the ‘Uranians’ — whose Hellenic label derives from both the ‘heavenly’ love described in Plato and from Aphrodite’s birth as described by Hesiod — were marginal only in the sense of Anaxagoras’ audacious statement after being banished to Lampsacus: ‘It is not I who have lost the Athenians, but the Athenians who have lost me’. Not unlike Anaxagoras, the Uranians saw themselves as the proud, defiant maintainers of *the* culture — not a subculture — the maintainers of the Greco-Roman tradition, the very font of Western culture. Hence, it was not they who had ‘lost the Athenians’. Besides, the ‘Hellenic element’ had indeed ‘started to the surface’ during the Victorian period, its flow partly facilitated by far more famous advocates. Amidst their own attacks on bourgeois society and their attempts to institute university reform, Matthew Arnold, John Stuart Mill, and Benjamin Jowett had already altered public opinion, to some degree, towards Hellenic values:

The immense spiritual significance of the Greeks is due to their having been inspired with this central and happy idea of the essential character of human perfection [...] [It is] this wonderful significance of the Greeks [which has] affected the very machinery of our education, and is in itself a kind of homage to it. (Arnold)<sup>6</sup>

There is a Greek ideal of self-development, which the Platonic and Christian ideal of self-government blends with, but does not supersede. It may be better to be a John Knox than an Alcibiades, but it is better to be a Pericles than either; nor would a Pericles, if we had one in these days, be without anything good which belonged to John Knox. (Mill)<sup>7</sup>

Of the Greek authors who at the Renaissance brought a new life into the world Plato has had the greatest influence. The Republic of Plato is also the first treatise upon education, of which the writings of Milton and Locke, Rousseau, Jean Paul, and Goethe are the legitimate descendents. [...] He is the father of idealism in philosophy, in politics, in literature. And many of the latest conceptions of modern thinkers and statesmen, such as the unity of knowledge, the reign of law, and the equality of the sexes, have been anticipated in a dream by him. (Jowett)<sup>8</sup>

By such statements, this ‘Greek chorus’ — Arnold, Mill, and Jowett — unwittingly facilitated a ‘suspect’ aspect of the ‘Hellenic element’ which assisted in the emergence of

the Uranians as a group, a ‘suspect’ aspect which linked the ‘essential character’ and ‘wonderful significance’ of the Greeks to their celebration of pederastic love and its attendant pedagogical practices. Beyond these laudatory praises of Grecian values by Arnold, Mill, and Jowett, it is a statement by Arthur C. Benson, Pater’s first biographer, which captures the dilemma that not ‘losing the Athenians’ posed for the Victorians, and is tied to the educational value attached to the ‘essential character’ of the Greeks and their sanctioned practise of pederastic pedagogy:

But if we give boys Greek books to read and hold up the Greek spirit and the Greek life as a model, it is very difficult to slice out one portion [the pederastic], which was a perfectly normal part of Greek life, and to say that it is abominable etc. etc.<sup>9</sup>

The freshmen of Oxford — especially those Etonians just leaving the ‘Hellenic’ tutelage of William Johnson (*later* Cory) and Oscar Browning — often arrived with Grecian desires that would find further expression within their college walls or in the surrounding fields. At Oxford in 1880, Charles Edward Hutchinson anonymously published and circulated *Boy Worship*, a pamphlet which, although playfully chiding the activity, acknowledged how common this ‘one portion which was a perfectly normal part of Greek life’ was at Oxford and beyond:

Men of all tastes become boy-worshippers. It is not only Sayge Greene who goes into ecstasies over a boy’s face and figure, (he may, it is true, express himself more eloquently than some of his more robust brethren,) but the devotees of the cricket and football fields have ere now furnished many an ardent follower.<sup>10</sup>

For the Uranians and those who shared their desires, there were primarily two forms of erotic positioning in relation to this ‘boy worship’ — as well as the fulfilment and outcome of such an erotic attachment — one ‘conciliatory with social orthodoxies’, the other ‘pervasively dissident’.<sup>11</sup> Not surprisingly, it was Walter Pater whose writings most cogently demarcated these two forms of erotic positioning, though he himself advocated the former. After the publication of his *Renaissance* in 1873 — for the Uranians, a quasi-sacred text — the Uranians diverged in opinion about its import, not its



importance, diverged into those like Gerard Manley Hopkins who imbibed from it ‘a sort of chivalrous conscience’, and those like Oscar Wilde, who imbibed from it ‘a madness for pleasure’. According to Denis Donoghue, ‘Pater’s [own] position [advocating conciliation with social orthodoxies] is consistent with his antinomianism, [for] the artist is neither for nor against the law, he stands aside from it’,<sup>12</sup> maintaining a conciliatory form of ‘discretion’ which often involves a conscious split into a private self and a constructed, public self: ‘In the middle world one may choose to live by nearly any values, so long as one doesn’t overtly challenge the dominant forces of law and government. Or one can divide one’s life into two parts, public and private, and live differently in each’.<sup>13</sup> This seeming ‘duplicity’ was necessary for the Uranians, for theirs was ‘a culture in which the inhabitants maintained a more than Masonic secrecy to survive in a hostile environment. Nevertheless, despite the intense hostility of the Victorian Moral Majority to anything which looked like unrespectable behaviour, discreet homosexuals [and pederasts] could follow their inclinations with few consequences’.<sup>14</sup> On the other side of this Uranian divide, Wilde and his coterie, finding little gratification in such a ‘discretion’, opted instead for a flamboyant dissidence which, although aggressively buoyant, nonetheless proved strikingly reminiscent of Nero’s fiddling while Rome was aflame: ‘Wilde’s trial [was] a tragedy we can conceive only as the sacrifice of male homosexuality to male homophobia’.<sup>15</sup> These two Uranian paths — the conciliatory and the dissident — are the concern of my present contemplations, though I have chosen to focus primarily on the more ‘elevated’, conciliatory path taken by Pater and Hopkins.

Let it be said from the outset that I am neither mounting an apologia nor aspiring to suggest that such pederastic desires are laudatory, necessarily unique, or represent a legitimate field for physical expression. In the pages to follow, I aspire merely to mark and elucidate the salient features, dynamics, disparities, considerations, avoidances, and

silences that surround an aspect of human existence, the aesthetic, emotional, and erotic expression of which, even today, properly warrants the title Lord Alfred Douglas bestowed upon it over a hundred years ago: ‘The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name’.

For obvious reasons, ‘the pederastic’ — whether actualised, textualised, or merely conceptualised — poses an inherent threat to our own ‘liberal’ society, for it posits a form of love, intimacy, and/or erotic expression which our ‘legitimate’ powers — social, medical, ethical, religious, legal, political, scholarly, and familial — have deemed maladjusted, psychotic, immoral, sinful, unlawful, fringe, objectionable, and/or intrusive. Put simply: it is utterly Decadent. The result is that ‘the pederastic’ remains ever an eccentric positionality which can be exploited and explored as a critique, variant, alternative, or challenge to more accepted modes of love or physical intimacy, more so than ‘the homoerotic’ or ‘the queer’ for which David Halperin constructs this very argument in his *Saint = Foucault*.<sup>16</sup> However, unlike the ‘homoerotic’ and the ‘queer’ — positionalities which have often, especially since Wilde’s trials in 1895, confronted marginality with forms of overt dissidence, posing a radical critique to normative values — the ‘pederastic’ has usually opted, simply and discretely and categorically, to refuse to engage normative values and their attendant dynamics of power. If a ‘positionality’ is, as A. M. Jaggar asserts, ‘a position in society from which certain features of reality come into prominence and from which others are obscured’,<sup>17</sup> then the Uranians sought their own obscurity and refused to accept ‘a position in society’.

In a passing comment on Matteo Palmieri’s poem *La Città di Vita* (1464), Pater demarcates a ‘position outside of society’ for himself and his Uranian followers by lending symbolic virtue to the human ‘incarnation of those angels who, in the revolt of Lucifer, were neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies’ (‘Sandro Botticelli’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.42), those scurrilous free spirits whom Dante relegates to the Vestibule of Hell as

‘unworthy alike of heaven and hell [...] [occupying instead] the middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals’ (p.43).<sup>18</sup> Dante, ever the acute taxonomist, seems bewildered by these angels whose antinomianism is embodied in a refusal to play the ‘spiritual game’; hence, the only option available is to banish them to that obscure vestibule, a grey space which disrupts Dante’s bland dichotomy between good and evil, white and black. The positionality of ‘that wicked choir of the angels who were not rebellious nor yet were faithful to God, but were for themselves’ is a conundrum in Dante’s *Inferno*, for ‘Heaven chased them out to keep its beauty unstained, and the deep Hell does not receive them, for the damned might claim some glory over them’ (*Inferno*, III, lines 37-42). As Pater fully recognised, the unique positionality of the Uranians would likely remain that of the ultimate outsiders (barring some monumental cultural shift, a shift greater than Michel Foucault’s ‘ruptures’ between ‘epistemes’): the Uranians would likely remain banished, partly of their own accord, to the vestibule of Western society, if not of Hell. Lionel Johnson, a Uranian poet and friend of Pater, impishly suggests a scenario in which this fringe positionality has become the centre:

But their excellent intentions, and remarkable inventions,  
 To a place of four dimensions turned the earth: and lo!  
 There was neither wrong nor right, there was neither black nor white,  
 There was neither day nor night, neither yes nor no.

And the glorious muddle grew, till the Devil himself looked blue;  
 There was nothing he could do, and his keen face fell:  
 With so strange a bag of tricks, he felt wholly in a fix;  
 For mankind were heretics both to Heaven and Hell.

’Tis a melancholy story — but the Thinkers and their glory  
 Went to neither Purgatory, Hell nor Paradise.  
 For the earth which they’d bedevilled, and indecently dishevelled,  
 By the Thought wherein they revelled, and their Virtuous Vice,

Floated off into the Void of the Cosmic Unemployed,  
 And in Chaos it enjoyed a pure Nothingness.

(‘A Sad Morality’, lines 33-46)<sup>19</sup>

However mischievous such a pederastic, Ptolemaic fantasy, Lionel Johnson and Pater were never deluded into countenancing its possibility, or even the possibility that pederastic sentiments would someday become ‘legitimate’. For this reason, I should forewarn my readers that my claim that *the Uranian positionality can serve as a critique, variant, alternative, or challenge to accepted modes of love or physical intimacy does not* imply that it does so in order to ‘illegitimise’ the normative values of standing powers — social, medical, ethical, religious, legal, political, scholarly, or familial. Nevertheless, this unique positionality does continue to challenge, by its very existence, those ‘legitimate’ powers *en masse*. By declining to participate in or even to recognise the normative values attached to the modern Western conception of love and intimacy, by declining to leave the Vestibule of Hell — ‘the Void of the Cosmic Unemployed’ — the Uranians and their ‘great refusal’ continues to fulfil Foucault’s defiant exclamation: ‘No! Let’s escape as much as possible from the type of relations which society proposes for us and try to create in the empty space where we are new relational possibilities’<sup>20</sup> — though these ‘new relational possibilities’ that the Uranians establish(ed) are, as Dante recognised about the neutral angels, ‘for themselves’ alone. This Paterian ‘No!’ is aptly elucidated by Donoghue (though I have inserted the adjective ‘pederastic’, recognising its blatant and crucial absence):

Pater interpreted [this] passage [about the neutral angels] in the *Inferno* differently [than George Eliot did] and turned it to another purpose. He did not share Eliot’s conviction that the work of politics must be displaced in favor of the work of religion. He had no interest in politics: ‘his blind side’, as [George] Saintsbury said of him. But he wanted to make space not for religion but for [pederastic] art and aesthetic criticism, both ‘undisturbed by any moral ambition’. The forms of personal and civil life he speaks up for are those in which [pederastic] art and aesthetic criticism have a chance of thriving. They cannot thrive in competition with the zeal of moral or political ambition. Pater’s aim is [...] the justification of ‘that middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals’. These are difficult issues, as we know from arguments about countries that remain neutral during an apparently just war, or about the validity of conscientious objection. It is easy to present the inhabitants of ‘that middle world’ as pusillanimous, like the neutral angels, and to drive them out of public recognition. In his quiet way, Pater set himself against that masculine rectitude. It is worth noting that in the passage I’ve just quoted, Pater insists on qualifying with the word ‘great’ each of the otherwise disparate nouns, ‘conflicts’, ‘causes’, and ‘refusals’. He is claiming for the refusals just as much respect as everyone gives to conflicts and causes.<sup>21</sup>

While considering an eccentric, Uranian positionality like Pater's, I recognise fully that our 'legitimate' powers prefer a pederastic subject upon a psychiatric couch or behind prison bars (or, dare I say, upon a morgue table) — Vestibules of Hell which are easily controlled — and that labelling Gerard Manley Hopkins, Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde, William Johnson (*later Cory*), and Digby Dolben as pederasts, even if only on the level of desire, is to heap opprobriums countless upon their heads — or, to embellish this with Christian phrasing, to tie millstones about their necks before casting them into a sea of infamy and transgression.

However, the writers named above were all fluent in things Greek — and the Greek heritage, both theirs and ours, tells other tales, makes other claims, posits other realities than we do. As the Uranian poet and art historian J. A. Symonds (1840-93) observes in his *A Problem in Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion*: in contrast to our current view, for the ancient Greeks 'it was reckoned a disgrace if a youth found no man to be his lover'.<sup>22</sup> Symonds's observation is indeed problematic — an observation deemed best banished to a discrete footnote in an archaeology or history book, or a principled warning in a university lecture or Sunday sermon; or, better still, expurgated completely from our thoughts, texts, and lives — an implicit cultural command to 'Dare Not Speak Its Name'. What we 'Moderns' find most problematic and irreconcilable is that, as Symonds dares to remind us, 'what the Greeks called paderastia, or boy-love, was a phenomenon of one of the most brilliant periods of human culture, in one of the most highly organised and nobly active nations'.<sup>23</sup> Especially in 2004 CE, as our media heralds that 'all eyes are turned to Athens' for the Olympic Games, we hope not to be reminded 'that paderastia at Athens was closely associated with liberty, manly sports, severe studies, enthusiasm, self-sacrifice, self-control, and deeds of daring, by those who cared for those things'.<sup>24</sup> We 'Moderns' bare some things, drape

others, and can conceive of neither the motive nor the relevance for an ancient Athenian in his enjoyment of the Olympic spectacle as a blend of pederasty and manly sport, as a voyeuristic spectacle of nude, oiled youths ‘sporting about’ while garlanded by his admiring gaze and the gazes of his contemporaries from the farthest reaches of the Hellenic world. These appreciative gazes, a garland of laurel, and the immortality of sculptured marble — the Greek form of pederastic permanence — marked fame for such youths. For us, on the other hand, such an Olympic spectacle and its attendant residues would be beyond maladjusted, psychotic, immoral, sinful, fringe, objectionable, and/or intrusive: it would be unthinkable.

Nevertheless, the Victorian Uranians did think of such things, did celebrate them, did make them laudatory, did consider them stable, reflective, honourable, pure, pivotal, innocuous, and/or welcome. In the face of stringent opposition — social, medical, ethical, religious, legal, political, scholarly, and familial — this group established an elaborate *Weltanschauung*, a way of being in the world which told other tales, made other claims, posited other realities than those of their contemporaries or of our own. This is their eccentric positionality worthy of consideration: it is also the eccentric positionality of the pages to follow, as I attempt to engage their lives and writings from a ‘Uranian’ perspective.

My reason for doing so is eight-fold: firstly, except in the scholarship of d’Arch Smith over thirty years ago, a ‘Uranian approach’ has never been attempted, and certainly not with writers of the calibre of Hopkins, Pater, and Wilde.<sup>25</sup> Secondly, current scholarship employs four strategies which blatantly attempt to quell any meaningful consideration of ‘the pederastic’, strategies which attempt to forestall a ‘Uranian approach’: scholarship engages in absolute avoidance of this form of love, intimacy, and/or eroticism; claims its anachronism; heightens its ‘homosocial’ aspects; or disguises

it as 'homosexual'. These rather misleading strategies need to be reconsidered and perhaps jettisoned. Thirdly, the voyeuristic posturing of the Uranians — a proximity to the object of desire without that distance being defeated, at least artistically — constitutes a distinct temperament unique in English letters, a temperament worthy of exploration on purely aesthetic and psychological grounds. Fourthly, the arguable immorality and assured illegality of their desires resulted in a form of self-fashioning no less marked than that of their Elizabethan predecessors, though taking a different stance, a stance gilded by an astonishing degree of secrecy, a secrecy which makes the Uranians a scholarly challenge to engage. Fifthly, the Uranian rejection of the system of controls over the body that Victorian culture attempted to instil (and ours still does) served to draw into question many of the established tenants of Victorian culture (and of our own).<sup>26</sup> Hence, the Uranian affront serves to front issues that would normally be taken as intrinsically categorical and would remain unnoticed. Sixthly, the frequent Uranian sublimation of sexuality into poetry and prose (which, in the case of Hopkins, is acute)<sup>27</sup> reveals a number of strategies for fulfilling what-cannot-be-fulfilled amid denials, scrupulosities, and beliefs; amid ethical, legal, and religious restrictions; amid the concern of Western culture (in general) and Victorian culture (in particular) to limit physical intimation and actualisation of homoerotic and pederastic desires.<sup>28</sup> These Uranian strategies — a continual movement between what Hopkins labels 'overthought' and 'underthought' — lend to Uranian writing a stylistic complexity, a multi-faceted psychology, an uncanny audience-awareness, and a sense of daring and irony uncommon for English letters of that time. Seventhly, since these writers were all educated at Eton and/or Oxford in a 'Greats curriculum' based upon the close reading of Greek and Latin texts, they had a shared appreciation for a Greco-Roman world in which 'paiderastia, or boy-love, was a phenomenon of one of the most brilliant periods of human culture'. Hence, even at their

most oblique, these Uranian writers and their texts were Classically allusive enough to have been understood by their Oxford-educated coterie, a coterie to which they were often responsive, a coterie that could rightly be said to have constituted a ‘fellowship of pederasts’. The importance of this ‘fellowship’ to what follows is that, by elucidating the pederastic elements in one of these writers and his texts, the lives and expressions of the others become less oblique in turn. And finally, a point more practical than academic: Hopkins, Pater, Wilde, Johnson, and Dolben are neither dull nor facile, personally or aesthetically, which is important in a lengthy project or a lengthy read. For this reason, in all eight of its aspects, a ‘Uranian approach’ suggests a rather apt method of engaging an unploughed-yet-fertile field, a field which — despite its weeds and stones, inherent or planted there by others — can yield unique insights into a little tended aspect of the human condition.

Now, for a few comments about my scholarly apparatus: this dissertation conforms to the *MHRA Style Guide: A Handbook for Authors, Editors and Writers of Theses* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2002). In the ‘Notes’ following each chapter (directly before the first endnote of each), I have included publication declarations where necessary. The ‘Notes’ for each chapter are often explanatory (not merely a catalogue of citations), a liberty necessary for a work in which allusions are continually at play and where legions of scholarly avoidances need to be addressed and borrowings acknowledged. If these had been folded directly into the body of my text, it would have been arduous for a reader to follow my argumentative line. I have also included multiple appendices (forty-five to be precise), most of which are pictorial, necessary because ‘Uranian’ denotes a score of Victorian artists and art historians as well as poets and prose writers. The Uranians were often influenced by (or influenced in turn) paintings, sculptures, and photographs<sup>29</sup> — and the images included



within my appendices appear as scholarly support for various points within the body of my text, with my reader directed to them when needed. These appendices are crucial to my overall argument, and I hope that none of them (often illicit in their own day, as in our own) elicit questions of impropriety, pruriency, or insensitivity on my part.

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## Notes for the Preface

- <sup>1</sup> John Addington Symonds, *A Problem in Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion* (London: Privately printed, [1901]), p.54.
- <sup>2</sup> Mike Brake, *Comparative Youth Culture: The Sociology of Youth Cultures and Youth Subcultures in America, Britain, and Canada* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), p.8.
- <sup>3</sup> Julia F. Saville, 'The Romance of Boys Bathing: Poetic Precedents and Respondents to the Paintings of Henry Scott Tuke', in *Victorian Sexual Dissidence*, ed. by Richard Dellamora (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp.253-77 (p.254).
- <sup>4</sup> James Eli Adams, 'Gentleman, Dandy, Priest: Manliness and Social Authority in Pater's Aestheticism', *ELH*, 59 (1992), pp.441-66 (p.454).
- <sup>5</sup> Walter Pater, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (London: Macmillan, 1873); abbreviated as *Renaissance* 1873.
- <sup>6</sup> Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (London: Smith, Elder, 1869), p.23.
- <sup>7</sup> John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859) (Kitchener, ON: Batoche, 2001), p.58.
- <sup>8</sup> Benjamin Jowett, *The Dialogues of Plato Translated into English with Analyses and Introductions by B. Jowett, M.A. in Five Volumes*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn rev. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892), III: *The Republic, Timaeus, Critias*, p.iii.
- <sup>9</sup> David Newsome, *On the Edge of Paradise: A. C. Benson: The Diarist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p.192.
- <sup>10</sup> As quoted in Billie Andrew Inman, 'Estrangement and Connection: Walter Pater, Benjamin Jowett, and William M. Hardinge', in *Pater in the 1990s*, ed. by Laurel Brake and Ian Small (Greensboro: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp.1-20.
- <sup>11</sup> Peter Swaab, 'Hopkins and the Pushed Peach', *Critical Quarterly*, 37.3 (1995), pp.43-60 (p.50).
- <sup>12</sup> Denis Donoghue, *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (New York: Knopf, 1995), p.132.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.317.
- <sup>14</sup> Trevor Fisher, 'Oscar Wilde: The Myth of Martyrdom', *Historian*, 77 (2003), pp.30-38 (p.32).
- <sup>15</sup> William F. Shuter, 'The "Outing" of Walter Pater', *Nineteenth Century Literature*, 48.4 (1994), pp.480-506 (p.506).
- <sup>16</sup> David Halperin, *Saint = Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.62:  
 Unlike gay identity, which, though deliberately proclaimed in an act of affirmation, is nonetheless rooted in the positive fact of homosexual object-choice, queer identity need not be grounded in any positive truth or in any stable reality. As the very word implies, 'queer' does not name some natural kind or refer to some determinate object; it acquires its meaning from its oppositional relation to the norm. Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. [...] 'Queer', then, demarcates not a positivity but a positionality vis-à-vis the normative — a positionality that is not restricted to lesbians and gay men but is in fact available to anyone who is or feels marginalized because of his or her sexual practices.
- <sup>17</sup> A. M. Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), p.382.
- <sup>18</sup> See Donald L. Hill's explanatory notes for this passage, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); abbreviated as *Renaissance* 1893 — pp.336-38.
- <sup>19</sup> Lionel Pigot Johnson, *Poetical Works of Lionel Johnson* (London: E. Mathews, 1915).
- <sup>20</sup> For its context, see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 3 vols, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1986), vol. III, pp.50-54.
- <sup>21</sup> Donoghue, pp.316-17.
- <sup>22</sup> Symonds, *Greek Ethics* [1901], p.14.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p.1.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p.44. For this link between pederasty and sport, see also Thomas F. Scanlon, *Eros and Greek Athletics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), chapter 3.

<sup>25</sup> It should be noted that, in the introduction to his anthology of pederastic and homoerotic writings, *Sexual Heretics: Male Homosexuality in English Literature from 1850 to 1900* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), Brian Reade does provide much the same 'Uranian approach'. Since Reade's introduction was published in the same year as d'Arch Smith's volume, and by the same publisher, my point that 1970 was the last time such an approach was attempted still holds.

<sup>26</sup> At least aesthetically, Saville makes this point as well: 'Whether we, as readers, are comfortable with the particular form of eros proposed by the Uranians is perhaps less to the point than how the dialogue between poetry and painting circulating around the image of the adolescent boy gradually opens up a space in Victorian aesthetic culture in which the nude male figure can become the subject of a homoerotic discourse' ('Romance', p.272).

<sup>27</sup> In 'Motives for Guilt-Free Pederasty: Some Literary Considerations', *Sociological Review*, 24.1 (1976), pp.97-114, Brian Taylor argues that, for the Uranians, this is less a sublimation than a justification: 'Far from writing their verses in order to sublimate their love [as d'Arch Smith has argued], I want to consider the possibility that they were written to justify and to motivate the enactment of that love' (p.101).

<sup>28</sup> In 'Jowett and Pater: Trafficking in Platonic Wares', *Victorian Studies*, 37.1 (1993), pp.43-72, Lesley Higgins writes: 'Reading Pater, one can quickly become aware of his various strategies for articulating what would seem to be directly unsayable' (pp.59-60).

<sup>29</sup> About this link between the textual and the pictorial, Saville writes that '[Henry Scott] Tuke captures a peculiarly rare and forbidden form of beauty: the ephemeral, supposedly aboriginal, boyish grace that has heightened allure when embodied in the working-class lad' ('Romance', p.269). In *Masculinities in Victorian Painting* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Scholar Press, 1995), Joseph A. Kestner writes that 'the most important practitioner of painting the male nude [was] Henry Scott Tuke' (p.239), and that 'canvases such as *Playmates* or *Noonday Heat*, therefore, reflect the artist's consciousness of Uranian culture' (p.264). In fact, Tuke was personally acquainted with several of the Uranian poets, including Symonds: 'Subsequently, in various letters, [Symonds] refers with admiration to Tuke, and in August 1892 visited [Tuke in] Falmouth for several days, bringing with him his close companion of some eleven years, the Venetian gondolier Angelo Fusato' (Saville, 'Romance', pp.262-63). I trace this link between the Uranian poets and their corresponding artists more fully in 'Chapter One' and 'Chapter Three'.

— List of Abbreviations —

- Appreciations* Walter Pater, *Appreciations: With an Essay on Style*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910)
- Balloon* Guy Davenport, *The Jules Verne Steam Balloon: Nine Stories* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1987)
- Desire* Frederick Rolfe (Baron Corvo), *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole*, ed. by Andrew Eburne (New York: Braziller, 1994 [1934])
- Dolben 1915* *The Poems of Digby Mackworth Dolben*, ed. with ‘Memoir’ by Robert Bridges, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1915)
- Dorian 1890* Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in *Lippincott’s Monthly Magazine: A Popular Journal of General Literature, Science, and Politics*, 46 (July – December 1890) [Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott], pp.3-100
- Dorian 1891* *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994 [1891]), pp.17-159
- Facsimiles I* *The Early Poetic Manuscripts and Note-books of Gerard Manley Hopkins in Facsimile*, ed. with annotations, transcriptions of unpublished passages, and intro. by Norman H. MacKenzie (New York: Garland, 1989)
- Facsimiles II* *The Later Poetic Manuscripts of Gerard Manley Hopkins in Facsimile*, ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (New York: Garland, 1991)
- Greek* Walter Pater, *Greek Studies: A Series of Essays*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910)
- Ionica 1891* William Johnson (*later Cory*), *Ionica*, by William Cory (London: George Allen, 1891)
- Ionica 1905* William Johnson (*later Cory*), *Ionica* [Parts I and II], by William Cory, with biographical intro. and notes by Arthur C. Benson (London: Allen & Unwin, [1905])
- Journals* *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Humphry House, completed by Graham Storey (London: Oxford University Press, 1959)

- Letters I*                    *The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, ed. by C. C. Abbott, 2<sup>nd</sup> imp. rev. (London: Oxford University Press, 1955)
- Letters II*                    *The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon*, ed. by C. C. Abbott, 2<sup>nd</sup> imp. rev. (London: Oxford University Press, 1955)
- Letters III*                    *Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Including His Correspondence with Coventry Patmore*, ed. by C. C. Abbott, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, rev. and enlarged (London: Oxford University Press, 1956)
- Maisie*                        Henry James, *What Maisie Knew*, New York edn (New York: Scribner, 1908)
- Marius*                        Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1885)
- Miscellaneous*              Walter Pater, *Miscellaneous Studies: A Series of Essays*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910)
- OED*                            *Oxford English Dictionary*, 12 vols, and *Supplement* with 4 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927-86)
- OET*                            *The Poetical Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990)
- Platonism*                    Walter Pater, *Plato and Platonism: A Series of Lectures*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910)
- Renaissance 1873*            Walter Pater, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (London: Macmillan, 1873)
- Renaissance 1893*            Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980 [1893])
- Sermons*                    *The Sermons and Devotional Writings of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Christopher Devlin, SJ (London: Oxford University Press, 1959)
- SM*                             Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*, in *Leaves of Grass: Comprehensive Reader's Edition*, ed. by Harold W. Blodgett and Sculley Bradley (New York: New York University Press, 1965), pp.28-89

**Unless placed within brackets, all ellipses are original.  
Notes appear at the end of each chapter and are often detailed.  
For a full list of works used, see 'Bibliography'.**

— Introduction —

**‘During My Long Studies I Have Come to Admire’:  
Penetrating Intimate Victorian Passages**

Is Boy-Love Greek? Far off across the seas  
The warm desire of Southern men may be:  
But passion freshened by a Northern breeze  
Gains in male vigour and in purity.  
Our yearning tenderness for boys like these  
Has more in it of Christ than Socrates.  
(Edwin Emmanuel Bradford, from *The New Chivalry*)<sup>1</sup>

In his ‘Postscript’ to *Appreciations*, Walter Horatio Pater writes that ‘the habit of noting and distinguishing one’s own most intimate passages of sentiment makes one sympathetic, begetting, as it must, the power of entering, by all sorts of finer ways, into the intimate recesses of other minds’ (p.254).<sup>2</sup> One of the individuals whose ‘recesses’ Pater enters most fully is Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-68), the German archaeologist and art historian.

Pater observes that ‘[the] key to the understanding of the Greek spirit, Winckelmann possessed in his own nature’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.175),<sup>3</sup> later suggesting that a nature, including a nature like Winckelmann’s, has laws which must be respected — for ‘natural laws we shall never modify, embarrass us as they may’ (p.185). In fact,

that world in which others had moved with so much embarrassment seems to call out in Winckelmann new senses fitted to deal with it. He is in touch with it; it penetrates him, and becomes part of his temperament. [...] [Winckelmann] seems to realise that fancy of the reminiscence of a forgotten knowledge hidden for a time in the mind itself, as if the mind of one, lover and philosopher at once. (pp.154-55)



These ‘new senses’, senses that constituted a new ‘temperament’, took on an almost phrenological dimension which others could easily recognise in Winckelmann: ‘the quick, susceptible enthusiast, betraying his temperament even in appearance, by his olive complexion, his deep-seated, piercing eyes, his rapid movements, apprehended the subtlest principles of the Hellenic manner, not through the understanding, but by instinct or touch’ (p.154). Instinctively, Winckelmann longed ‘to touch’ — but in a ‘Hellenic manner’ — and was fully cognizant of this: ‘The protracted longing of his youth is not a vague, romantic longing: he knows what he longs for, what he wills. Within its severe limits his enthusiasm burns like lava’ (p.148), lava that needs must find an outlet, for ‘the Hellenic element alone has not been [...] content with this underground life; from time to time it has started to the surface’ (p.158). Pater explains that this enthusiasm, ‘in the broad Platonic sense of the *Phaedrus*, [is] [...] dependent [...] to a great degree on bodily temperament, [and] has a power of reinforcing the purer emotions of the intellect with an almost physical excitement’ (p.152). Initially, Winckelmann found the ‘object of his longing’ amid the titillations of poetry: ‘Hitherto he had handled the words only of Greek poetry, stirred indeed and roused by them, yet divining beyond the words some unexpressed pulsation of sensuous life’ (p.146). Later, Winckelmann was stirred and roused by sculptural depictions of that ‘sensuous life’: ‘Suddenly he is in contact with that life, still fervent in the relics of plastic art’ (p.146), for ‘Greek sculpture deals almost exclusively with youth, where the moulding of the bodily organs is still as if suspended between growth and completion’ (p.174). Still later, Winckelmann found this ‘moulding of the bodily organs’ in something far more solid than poetry, far less frigid than marble:

That his affinity with Hellenism was not merely intellectual, that the subtler threads of temperament were inwoven in it, is proved by his romantic, fervent friendships with young men. He has known, he says, many young men more beautiful than Guido [Reni]'s archangel. These friendships [brought] him into contact with the pride of human form. (p.152)

As to the manner of Winckelmann's 'contact with the pride of human form', it must be remembered that 'nothing was to enter into his life unpenetrated by its central enthusiasm' (p.144). Especially because of the intrusive 'he says', Pater seems to suggest that Winckelmann had 'known [...] many young men', had 'known' them in a rather biblical sense, with Pater employing the language of Genesis 19.5 — 'And [the men of Sodom] called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them' (KJV) — or, in more modern phrasing, 'Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them' (NIV). The implication of this is that Winckelmann had been 'bringing him[self] into contact' with these youths in a very penetrative way, for apparently 'nothing was to enter into his life unpenetrated', including these youths.

Whether Pater had only surmised this actualised pederasty from Winckelmann's art criticism<sup>4</sup> or had had access to the anecdote from Jacques Casanova's memoirs in which Casanova 'claims to have entered Winckelmann's study in Rome in December 1760 and discovered him in a sexual encounter with a young boy (un jeune garçon)'<sup>5</sup> will probably never be known. One thing is certain though: Pater was right. After Casanova had burst unwittingly into the room and Winckelmann 'had straightened his trousers and the young man he had been surprised with had beat a hasty retreat',<sup>6</sup> Winckelmann provided Casanova, his *coitus interruptus*, with the following explanation:

You know I am not only not a pederast, but for all of my life I have said it is inconceivable that such a taste can have so seduced the human race. If I say this after what you have just witnessed, you will think me a hypocrite. But this is the way it is: During my long studies I have come to admire and then to adore the ancients who, as you know, were almost all buggerers without concealing it, and many of them immortalized the handsome objects of their tenderness in their poems, not to speak of superb monuments [...] I found myself, at least as far as my love life was concerned, as unworthy of esteem, and not being able to overcome this conceit by cold theory, I decided to illumine myself through practice. [...] Thus determined, it has been three or four years that I have been working at this business, choosing the cutest Smerdiases of Rome.<sup>7</sup>

‘The cutest Smerdases of Rome’ is an allusion to an exquisite Thracian boy given by his ancient Greek captors to Polycrates,<sup>8</sup> and J. A. Symonds’s description of the poet Anacreon’s fascination with that particular boy, among others, is equally befitting of Winckelmann: ‘Of the genuine Anacreon we possess more numerous and longer fragments, and the names of his favourites, Cleobulus, Smerdies, Leucaspis, are famous. The general tone of his love-poems is relaxed and Oriental, and his language abounds in phrases indicative of sensuality’.<sup>9</sup> Whether Casanova, frequenter of a legion of bedrooms, accepted Winckelmann’s explanation for his own ‘Smerdases’ or not is irrelevant here: what *is* relevant is that Walter Pater has demonstrated, through his essay on Winckelmann, an ability to penetrate ‘the intimate recesses of other minds’, in this case the mind of a pederast who frequently penetrated *un jeune garçon*.<sup>10</sup> Winckelmann, as Jeff Morrison explains, left behind a residue of similar materials, a blend of art and life which allows for such Paterian penetrations:

At times it can be difficult to distinguish whether Winckelmann is talking about art or life, such is the degree of shared vocabulary. Many of the benchmarks for art and life appear to be shared. I am thinking here of Winckelmann’s interest in the boy Niccolo Castellani. [The boy] was based in Naples and Winckelmann asked his friend [Baron Johann Hermann] Riedesel to report back to Rome on the current state of his looks. The boy is presented almost as an art-historical phenomenon — his beauty analysed in stylistic and historical terms — and yet the subtext is clear enough for it to be hard to accept, as Winckelmann would have us believe, that ‘keine Neigung war so rein als diese’ [no inclination was as untainted as this].<sup>11</sup>

Despite similar appeals to clarity and untainted motives (appeals to Hopkinsian ‘overthought’), Pater shared Winckelmann’s textual and subtextual techniques (a relish in ‘underthought’), as well as the desires which infused those techniques and which those techniques strove to render opaque. This is understandable; for, as David Hilliard notes, ‘It is unrealistic to expect documented proof of overt homosexual behaviour [during the Victorian period], for if sexual activity of any kind occurred between male lovers in private the fact is unlikely to have been recorded’.<sup>12</sup>

To penetrate Pater's own opaque passages, to enter into the recesses of Pater's own mind in order to discover the pederastic and homoerotic elements concealed there, one must tease from his texts 'the subtler threads of temperament [...] inwoven in [them]', the hidden lines of argument and 'underthought' which lead through the labyrinth of his own desires (as I have partially done, in the preceding paragraphs, with the labyrinth of fifty pages of 'Winckelmann').<sup>13</sup> This task is not a straightforward one, nor did Pater intend it to be, as Kenneth Burke suggests in his *Counter-Statement*:

Pater's audience is expected to bring somewhat the same critical appreciation to bear, watching with keen pleasure as the artist extricates himself from the labyrinths of his material — a process which Pater loves so greatly that he often seems to make his labyrinths of his extrications.<sup>14</sup>

Unlike Winckelmann, but like most Victorians of his 'inclination', Pater was unlikely to be caught with his pants down by an intrusive Casanova, providing that much-desired 'definitive proof' for modern scholars and biographers: Pater hid his own arousal beneath 'the labyrinths of his material'. As Denis Donoghue asserts: 'Pater approached these themes ["boy-love, pederasty, and 'the early Greek enthusiasm'"] far more obliquely than [John Addington] Symonds did; he chose to write about Winckelmann rather than about himself, while enjoying the warmth of homosexual motifs'.<sup>15</sup> In *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*, Linda Dowling elucidates the challenge that Pater's obliqueness provides:

To uncover the full homoerotic implicativeness of Pater's writings would thus be to comb the complex surfaces of his prose with an analytical patience and insight at least equivalent to his own deliberate brilliance in its composition. The larger significance of such an undertaking, however, would be to reveal the way in which Pater accepts the transcendent Plato of the Greats curriculum [at Oxford] but does so on thoroughly 'critical' or historicist terms, allowing his readers to see that the pederastic dimension to Plato's thought is no mere figure of speech, as [Benjamin] Jowett had been wont to maintain, but instead a constitutive element of that thought, and thus of the Western tradition itself.<sup>16</sup>

Taking Dowling's comments as my spur, I will, in the pages to follow, 'comb the complex surfaces' of a number of oblique literary texts with 'analytical patience', though without the assurance of an 'insight at least equivalent to [their writers'] own deliberate brilliance' — for Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89), Walter Pater (1839-94), Oscar Wilde (1854-

1900), William Johnson (*later* Cory) (1823-92), and Digby Mackworth Dolben (1848-67) were masters of ‘complex surfaces’, and needed to be. For these writers, ‘the paiderastic dimension [...] is no mere figure of speech’ — and neither their time period nor our own is particularly congenial to the homoerotic, let alone the pederastic, even as a ‘mere figure of speech’. About some things, we prefer silences.

Although rich in analysis of this Victorian world (or underworld) of Hellenism tinct with the homosocial and homoerotic, even Linda Dowling’s writings exhibit a tendency towards an avoidance of ‘the pederastic’, a tendency which she shares with Denis Donoghue, though his tendency manifests itself in a different way. In *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls*, after making the pregnant suggestion in chapter three that ‘mostly [Pater] saw in those [Renaissance] paintings an ideal human image, the love of a man for a beautiful boy’,<sup>17</sup> Donoghue ends the chapter and abandons the idea forever. Given the import of Donoghue’s passing comment, one envisions Pater standing before Agnolo Bronzino’s *Allegory with Venus and Cupid* (placed in The National Gallery of Art, London, in March 1860), contemplating its naked Cupid with more interest than most, though with enough discretion not to expound textually on this ‘beautiful boy’ whose posterior is exposed erotically for all posterity (see ‘Appendix One’ for this painting).<sup>18</sup> Pater often exercised such discretion in choosing the subjects he would consider textually. One of the most salient of Pater’s discretionary avoidances involves the painter Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610), an avoidance which is especially noteworthy given that Pater would have recognised in Caravaggio and his oeuvre the potential for a grand Paterian contemplation of beautiful boys, music, Greco-Roman imagery and mythology, shadow and greyness, as well as the portrayal of an adventuresome life which blends Roman Catholicism with pederasty, the sacred with the profane (see ‘Appendix Two’). However, engaging Caravaggio was unfeasible:

Caravaggio would have entered Pater's published pantheon far too soiled from trodding the paths of scandal, as John Ruskin liked to emphasise on every available occasion. As the foremost Victorian art historian and critic — hence, the principal formulator of Victorian aesthetic perceptions — Ruskin was a formidable aesthetic opponent, and Pater had to choose either to engage (perhaps enrage) him or to avoid him. Pater chose avoidance, recognising that expressing a laudatory or sympathetic view of Caravaggio and his art would have been impossible without overly scandalous repercussions. To appreciate the taint Pater avoided by leaving Caravaggio untouched, consider six of Ruskin's expressions of antipathy towards this Baroque painter:

We find others on whose works there are definite signs of evil desire ill repressed, and then inability to avoid, and at last perpetual seeking for, and feeding upon, horror and ugliness, and filthiness of sin; as eminently in Salvator and Caravaggio, and the lower Dutch schools, only in these last less painfully as they lose the villainous in the brutal, and the horror of crime in its idiocy.<sup>19</sup>

[In his ranking of artists, Ruskin consigns Caravaggio to Hell:] Teniers and Salvator, Caravaggio, and other such worshippers of the depraved [are] of no rank, or as we said before, of a certain order in the abyss.<sup>20</sup>

Vulgarity, dullness, or impiety, will indeed always express themselves through art in brown and grey, as in Rembrandt, Caravaggio, and Salvator.<sup>21</sup>

Poussin is really a great man, but wickedly, or rather brutally, minded, and therefore approaches a sacred subject with utter distaste and incapacity for it. I call him brutally rather than wickedly minded, because he has none of the love of crime and pain for their own sake which Salvator and Caravaggio have.<sup>22</sup>

[In a review of Lord Lindsay's *Christian Art* published in the *Quarterly Review* in June 1847, Ruskin quips:] Does he [Lord Lindsay] — can he for an instant suppose that the ruffian Caravaggio, distinguished only by his preference of candlelight and black shadows for the illustration and reinforcement of villainy, painted nature — mere nature — exclusive nature, more painfully or heartily than John Bellini or Raphael? Does he not see that whatever men imitate must be nature of some kind, material nature or spiritual, lovely or foul, brutal or human, but nature still? Does he himself see in mere, external, copiable nature, no more than Caravaggio saw?<sup>23</sup>

There are some ideas of vulgarity or of crime which no words, however laboured, would succeed in suggesting to a gentle heart or a pure mind. But the brutal painter has the eyes at his mercy; and as Kingliness and Holiness, and Manliness and Thoughtfulness were never by words so hymned or so embodied or so enshrined as they have been by Titian, and Angelico, and Veronese, so never were Blasphemy and cruelty and horror and degradation and decrepitude of Intellect — and all that has sunk and will sink Humanity to Hell — so written in words as they are stamped upon the canvasses of Salvator and Jordaens and Caravaggio and modern France.<sup>24</sup>

Ruskin would never have envisioned that, in the twentieth century (prior to architectural Euros), Caravaggio's portrait and artwork would adorn Italy's 100,000 Lire banknote: had

Ruskin known, he would certainly have altered his own definition of ‘filthy lucre’. Particularly in the case of a figure like Caravaggio — the practitioner of a ‘crime which no words, however laboured, would succeed in suggesting’ (Ruskin making a clear allusion to Caravaggio’s pederasty) — such an avoidance was an act of necessary discretion, and hence understandable, for Pater. Such an avoidance was very ‘Victorian’. On the other hand, Donoghue’s avoidance of lingering with Pater while he contemplates such ‘beautiful boys’ and their artist-admirers (artists with pederastic desires similar to those of Caravaggio) is not: Donoghue’s avoidance is less an act of scholarly discretion than an act of scholarly evasion, evasion of the pederastic import vital to an understanding of Pater’s life and writings — as well as the lives, writings, and artworks about which he wrote and of those who constituted his literary and artistic circle.

Regarding Pater and his circle, Dowling handles her own evasions a tad differently than Donoghue does. Seemingly unable (or more likely, unwilling) to differentiate adult homoeroticism from pederasty, she blurs the two as though they were interchangeable, apparently hoping to hide the more ‘suspect’ pederastic in the shadow of the larger homoerotic, though not in total darkness, as Donoghue does. Dowling’s surface argument seems to be that Benjamin Jowett (1817-93), Regius Professor of Greek, redirected the Tractarian tutorial at Oxford towards a Platonic Hellenism for which he himself provided the impetus *via* his persona, his translations, and his expansion of Oxford’s ‘Greats curriculum’. Hence, wittingly or not, Jowett assisted in the emergence of the early ‘homosexual’ apologetics by providing ‘a space for its discourse’, a space that encouraged his former students Symonds and Pater to propose a more pederastic tutorial.<sup>25</sup> In her analysis of Pater’s prose style — Pater’s own ‘space for its discourse’ — Dowling writes:

Pater’s mode is never that of outright statement or even suggestion. It is one, rather, of a constantly beckoning and receding suggestiveness, as homoerotic themes — most often Platonic ones — are constantly either raised to visibility or veiled in their explicitness within the richly various materials of Pater’s prose.<sup>26</sup>

But, ‘veiled in their explicitness’ best describes Dowling’s own prose style (not Pater’s), a prose style which constantly displays a subtle-yet-striking shift in argumentative centre of gravity, an attempt to veil Pater’s explicitness through a shift in primary terms, a shift from those terms denoting ‘the pederastic’ (boy-love) to those denoting ‘the homoerotic’ (man-love). Dowling’s veiling is evident in the following oblique passage, a passage I would like to consider in some detail:

The rebellion against this crucifixion of the senses would be given symbolic expression, most significantly, in the Oxford cult of ‘boy-worship’ which was already beginning to surface, as we have seen, by the time of William Johnson’s classic paean to romantic paiderastia, *Ionica* (1858). With its rites of admiring contemplation and pursuit — whether at Magdalen Chapel or the river bathing spot known as Parson’s Pleasure — and its attendant conventions of epistolary address — by which the fervors of public-school romance merged into the headlong emotional avowals of Tractarian friendship — the cult of boy-love would find its literary expression in ‘Uranian’ poetry. This poetry, celebrating that Uranian or ‘heavenly’ love between males described in Plato’s *Symposium* 180e, first appeared at about the time in Oxford and, as Timothy d’Arch Smith has so extensively documented, would continue to be written there and elsewhere in England into the 1930s.<sup>27</sup>

A précis of this passage might appear thus:

By 1858, the Oxford cult of ‘boy-worship’ (‘boy-love’) had begun to symbolically express ‘the rebellion against the crucifixion of the senses’ through ‘admiring contemplation’ and ‘pursuit’ and ‘epistolary address’ and ‘Uranian’ poetry celebrating that ‘heavenly’ love between males described in Plato’s *Symposium*.

Dowling’s core claim seems to be:

By the 1860s, some at Oxford had begun to express banned pederastic desires through voyeurism, flirtation, letters, and Classically inspired verse.

This core claim will also be one of mine: by the 1860s, some at Oxford had begun to express pederastic desires through voyeurism, flirtation, letters, and Classically inspired verse (though I will claim far more physicality than that). Nevertheless, Dowling adjusts this straightforward claim, attempting to minimise the pederastic content at its core. She achieves such a minimising in a multitude of ways, seven of which are illustrated below.

Firstly, Dowling attempts rhetorically to spiritualise these pederastic desires by framing the passage with the words ‘worship’ and ‘heavenly’: the ‘cult of boy-worship’ becomes the ‘cult of boy-love’ becomes the “‘heavenly’ love between males’. The more



suspect ‘boy-love’ is mitigated both before and after by ‘cult’, ‘worship’, and ‘heavenly’ — phrasing which minimises its inherent erotic potential. Secondly, these pederastic desires are seen as merely the ‘symbolic expression’ of what she vaguely calls ‘the rebellion against this crucifixion of the senses’ — in essence, she diminishes all of its acts to merely symbolic ones, a rebellion against Christian morality and its modern offshoots. Thirdly, by placing rhetorical emphasis upon the ‘cult’ of pederastic desires and by suggesting that its ‘rites’ were mostly voyeurism (‘admiring contemplation’) and flirtation (‘pursuit’), Dowling stresses that these desires could never have moved much beyond voyeurism and flirtation, especially in the public settings she has chosen to allow them outlet, ‘whether at Magdalen Chapel or the river bathing spot known as Parson’s Pleasure’. Hence, the pederastic Uranians are transformed into a group of voyeurs merely flirting with choristers and young bathers. Fourthly, its ‘rites’ also included the writing of romantic letters (‘epistolary address’), letters held within the ‘conventions’ of a literary form which allowed the ‘fervors of public-school romance’ to combine with ‘the headlong emotional avowals of Tractarian friendship’ — the passions of the first developing into the religious sentiments of the second, becoming passionate friendships, both intellectual and emotional, based on ‘avowals’ (including, undoubtedly, certain Tractarian vows, internal or expressed, not to debase ‘heavenly’ friendship by physical expression). Fifthly, according to Dowling its ‘rites’ also included ‘literary expression’, Uranian verse ‘celebrating’ a love that, because its name derives from the ‘heavenly’ love of Plato’s *Symposium*, must have been a spiritual or ‘heavenly’ love, not a love aimed primarily at providing sexual stimulation or gratification. In his *A Problem in Greek Ethics*, Symonds, one of those Uranians, suggests a disparity between the elevated rhetoric of pederastic love and its actual practise, a disparity that reveals Dowling’s naiveté:

[The Greeks] worshipped Erôs, as they worshipped Aphrodite, under the twofold titles of Ouranios (celestial) and Pandemos (vulgar, or *volvivaga*); and, while they regarded the one love with the highest approval, as the source of courage and greatness of soul, they never publicly approved the

other. It is true [...] that boy-love in its grossest form was tolerated in historic Hellas with an indulgence which it never found in any Christian country, while heroic comradeship remained an ideal hard to realise, and scarcely possible beyond the limits of the strictest Dorian sect. Yet the language of philosophers, historians, poets and orators is unmistakable. All testify alike to the discrimination between vulgar and heroic love in the Greek mind.<sup>28</sup>

With the baser form of pederastia I shall have little to do in this essay. Vice of this kind does not vary to any great extent, whether we observe it in Athens or in Rome, in Florence of the sixteenth or in Paris of the nineteenth century; nor in Hellas was it more noticeable than elsewhere, except for its comparative publicity.<sup>29</sup>

(For an example of ‘Pandemotic’ erotica by an anonymous late-Victorian, see ‘Appendix Three’.<sup>30</sup>) Sixthly, Dowling further mitigates the pederastic by shifting rhetorically from ‘boy-worship’ to ‘boy-love’ to ‘love between males’, even though the last term, given pride-of-place by appearing last, is not necessarily synonymous with the earlier two and is more commonly used to denote man-man desire (the homoerotic), not man-boy desire (the pederastic). These six adjustments display Dowling’s technique for blurring the homoerotic and the pederastic, for hiding the pederastic in the shadow of the larger homoerotic, and for diminishing its sexual component by attempting to spiritualise its discourse. Lastly, this passage makes reference to Timothy d’Arch Smith’s monumental work on the Uranians, Dowling attempting to bastion her argument by referential proximity, though d’Arch Smith does not support her arguments, as he expresses in a letter to myself:

I think you have treated the Uranian motif most carefully and I am in thorough agreement with your footnote 18 [in your article in *Victorian Poetry*]. The gay scholars have completely ignored the facts and turned the writings to their advantage. ‘Uranian’ is now synonymous with ‘gay’ which, to avoid just such a conflation, is the reason I (historically incorrectly) labelled them ‘Uranian’. Never mind. The other myth that has got about is that ‘earnest’ was a code-word for ‘gay’ when all I said was that Wilde and Nicholson used the same pun on a name. Ah these academics (yourself excluded and Jim Kincaid who talks admirable sense). (Letter from Timothy d’Arch Smith to myself, 14 October 2001; included as ‘Appendix Four’).<sup>31</sup>

Although much of the content of my ‘footnote 18’ (to which d’Arch Smith refers) has already appeared in the pages prior, I present that footnote in full below to display exactly which parts of my argument concerning Donoghue’s and Dowling’s distortions d’Arch Smith considers himself to be ‘in thorough agreement with’:

A clear elucidation of the relationship between *eromenos* and *erastes* ('hearer' and 'inspirer') can be found in K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1989), p.91. For an analysis of this relationship dynamic as used by Oxonians like Pater, see Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1994), particularly pp.83, 102. Dowling's book is rich in analysis of Jowett, Symonds, and Pater, as well as their world of Hellenism tinct with the homosocial and homoerotic. The book is well written and often insightful. Nevertheless, Dowling exhibits the same tendency as Denis Donoghue in *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (New York: Knopf, 1995). After making the pregnant suggestion that 'mostly he saw in those [Renaissance] paintings an ideal human image, the love of a man for a beautiful boy' (p.31), Donoghue leaves the chapter and the idea forever, a textual technique reminiscent of that used to cloak young Miles's seduction of his governess at the end of chapter 17 of *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James, whose chair at New York University Donoghue holds. Erotic love in relation to a boy often breeds such silences, though more befitting of a novel than a scholarly biography. In the case of Dowling, we have evasion of another kind. Seemingly unable — or more likely, unwilling — to distinguish adult homoeroticism from pederasty, she blurs the two as though they were interchangeable, hoping to hide the pederastic in the shadow of the larger homoerotic. This seems a fashion among Gay Studies critics, since pederastic labels are politically and morally destructive, given the present environment, to their arguments for Hopkins and other Decadents as early 'homosexual liberators'. To those readers aghast at my classification of Hopkins as a Decadent, let me ask where they would have placed the poem [Hopkins's 'Epithalamion'] — if it had been published directly after being written — otherwise than beside 'Ballade of Boys Bathing' by Fr. Rolfe (Frederick Baron Corvo), appearing in the first instalment of *Art Review* (April 1890), that Decadent vehicle, often of pederastic expression, published just two years after the 'Epithalamion' was written? Rolfe would have had no hesitation in classifying Hopkins's poem with his own, so why do we?<sup>32</sup>

It has been a prevailing custom among Gay Studies critics (not that Donoghue or Dowling could be properly bracketed as such) to transform the pederastic Uranians and those like them into homosexual 'founders' or 'liberators' or 'martyrs', a transformation which has led to many things, though not to much scholarly honesty, as d'Arch Smith relates: 'In an age saturated with adult homosexuality, the boy-lover has, perforce, to be quietened for the sake of the reputation of the adult invert'.<sup>33</sup>

It must be admitted that, for the Victorians themselves, there *was* a rather blurred overlap between 'the pederastic' and 'the homoerotic'; and that often, as in Hopkins's 'Epithalamion', their literary and other discourses included elements of both, a feature acknowledged by both James Kincaid and d'Arch Smith.<sup>34</sup> However, what John Pollini notes about Greco-Roman pederasts is equally true with their Victorian counterparts: 'What mattered most was not so much the chronological age of an adolescent but how long he was able to maintain his boyish good looks and, most important, a smooth and hairless body and face'.<sup>35</sup> As the Uranian Frederick Rolfe relates about one boy:

He'll be like this till Spring, say 3 months more. Then some great fat slow cow of a girl will just open herself wide, and lie quite still, and drain him dry. First, the rich bloom of him will go. Then he'll get hard and hairy. And, by July, he'll have a moustache, a hairy breast for his present great boyish bosom, brushes in his milky armpits, brooms on his splendid young thighs, and be just the ordinary stevedore to be found by scores on the quays.<sup>36</sup>

This attraction to the qualities of 'boyishness' rather than the qualities of 'manliness' was (and probably still is) the principal distinction between 'the pederastic' and 'the homoerotic', a distinction that is central to the arguments to follow. For the Uranians, a nineteen-year-old who retained the qualities of a twelve-year-old was far more desirable than a twelve-year-old who was nineteen in all but age.

Even if there was, for the Victorians, a blurred overlap between 'the pederastic' and 'the homoerotic', a distinction between them needs and must be (re)drawn — especially since present discourses (social, medical, ethical, legal, political, and scholarly) either stigmatise, criminalize, or ignore the pederastic side of this overlap. This is true even with its earliest manifestations, except perhaps for cultures labelled as 'ancient' or dismissively as 'primitive'.<sup>37</sup> In the case of the scholarly (for purposes here, Victorian scholarship), the choice has almost always been avoidance, an avoidance that has taken four forms: absolute avoidance, claims of anachronism, dismissal as 'homosocial', or adjustment and incorporation into the 'homosexual'. The result of this overall avoidance in the critical sphere (a sphere Pater would have described as 'that world in which others had moved with so much embarrassment') is that the first major analysis of this 'Hellenism [...] not merely intellectual' — Timothy d'Arch Smith's *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* — still remains, thirty years after its publication, the most comprehensive and daring study of what Dowling dubs 'the paiderastic dimension'. I hope in what follows to expand exponentially the relatively minor 'Uranian' canon which d'Arch Smith considers, by including within its bounds writers of major standing, particularly Gerard Manley

Hopkins, Walter Pater, and Oscar Wilde. About the lives and writings chronicled in his book, d'Arch Smith admits:

The dichotomy has to be borne between the uniqueness of the [Uranian] theme and the poverty of the verse, but the latter does at least give an insight into a little-known aspect of human psychology. Moreover, I find no other cohesive group nor such well-expressed philosophies as in England between 1880 and 1930, and these are my reasons for concentrating on such a short period and on such minor literary figures, without attempting, usually, to compare the work with others greater than they.<sup>38</sup>

In what follows, I hope to do just that: to consider the work of ‘others greater than they’ who also embraced, experienced, and expressed the ‘Uranian theme’.

Since each of the texts I am about to engage — Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’, Pater’s *Marius the Epicurean*, Wilde’s *Picture of Dorian Gray*, Johnson’s *Ionica*, and Dolben’s *Poems* — was written by either a significant Victorian personage or, in the cases of Johnson and Dolben, someone rarely considered in the critical sphere, a consideration of how each has been dealt with in regard to various issues relating to homoerotic and pederastic desires (or supposed homoerotic and pederastic desires; or mistakenly supposed homoerotic and pederastic desires) would be beyond the scope of this dissertation, especially since it needs to be bound in boards. Because of this, in the initial section I have limited my bounds to criticism surrounding issues of homoeroticism and pederasty in the life and works of Hopkins, though I have delineated connections to the others where appropriate. In skeletal form, what follows are five chapters divided in the following way: ‘Chapter One’ considers recent critical engagement of Hopkins in regard to homoeroticism and pederasty; ‘Chapter Two’ considers Hopkins’s unique, scholarly problematics; ‘Chapter Three’ and ‘Chapter Four’ are close readings, in the traditional literary sense, of Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’ and Pater’s *Marius the Epicurean*, respectively; ‘Chapter Five’ considers the breach between Pater and Wilde, partly facilitated by Pater’s review of Wilde’s *Picture of Dorian Gray*. To draw together my general ‘Conclusion’, what follows is a consideration the influence of William Johnson (*later Cory*) over the poems of Digby

Mackworth Dolben, as well as Johnson's responses to those poems after Dolben's death — a lesson in pederastic pedagogy, elevated friendship, erotic dalliance, and thwarted love — a lesson which serves to elucidate the pederastic continuum that stretches, unbroken, from the Greco-Roman period to our own, a continuum I will contemporarise through the fiction of Guy Davenport.<sup>39</sup>

## Notes for Introduction

<sup>1</sup> Edwin Emmanuel Bradford, *The New Chivalry and Other Poems* (London: Kegan Paul, 1918), p.31, as quoted in Timothy d'Arch Smith, *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p.3.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Pater, *Appreciations: With an Essay on Style*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910); abbreviated as *Appreciations*.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); abbreviated as *Renaissance* 1893.

<sup>4</sup> In 'The Discreet Charm of the Belvedere: Submerged Homosexuality in Eighteenth-Century Writing on Art', *German Life and Letters*, 52.2 (1999), pp.123-35, Jeff Morrison provides a description which helps explain how Pater may have deduced this from Winckelmann's art criticism:

More interesting from our point of view is then the matter of how Winckelmann presents his material in his well-known purple passages; it is certainly clear that his presentation of art is substantially different from that of his contemporaries. The language has a different character, partly because he was inventing a German language for aesthetics as he was going along, but above all because it was driven by a different force: sex. (p.124)

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Paul Bonfiglio, 'Winckelmann and the Aesthetics of Eros', *The Germanic Review*, 73.2 (1998), pp.132-44 (p.141). See also Jeff Morrison, *Winckelmann and the Notion of Aesthetic Education* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp.34-68.

<sup>6</sup> Denis M. Sweet, 'The Personal, the Political, and the Aesthetic: Johann Joachim Winckelmann's German Enlightenment Life', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 16 (1988), pp.147-62 (p.149).

<sup>7</sup> As quoted in translation in *ibid.*, pp.149-50.

<sup>8</sup> See Maximus Tyrius, *Dissertationes*, ed. by Michael B. Trapp (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1994), diss. xxvi.

<sup>9</sup> John Addington Symonds, *A Problem in Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion* (London: Privately printed, [1901]), p.25. For a modern translation of Anacreon by an author given to pederastic expression, see *7 Greeks* [Archilochos, Sappho, Alkman, Anakreon, Herakleitos, Diogenes, Herondas], trans. by Guy Davenport (New York: New Directions, 1995). Davenport is considered in my 'Conclusion'.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Dellamora has also traced the erotic implications of Pater's 'Winckelmann'; see *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), pp.113-16.

<sup>11</sup> Morrison, pp.131-32. 'The documentary evidence of Winckelmann's sex life / sexual preferences is not plentiful but is clear. His preferences ranged from young adults like von Berg through young boys such as Niccolo Castellani to prepubescent girls such as a young dancer mentioned on a number of occasions' (p.124, note). The translated passage is my own.

<sup>12</sup> David Hilliard, 'Unenglish and Unmanly: Anglo-Catholicism and Homosexuality', *Victorian Studies*, 25 (1982), pp.181-210 (p.186).

<sup>13</sup> In *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), Linda Dowling writes: 'The crucial text for any account of Pater's tacit recovery of the pederastic dimension of Western culture thus becomes "Winckelmann"' (p.95).

<sup>14</sup> Kenneth Burke, *Counter-Statement*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Los Altos, CA: Hermes, 1953), p.12. In *A Commentary on the Complete Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1970), Paul Mariani describes Hopkins's poetry with the same term, labelling it 'labyrinthine coils of gold' (p.xxvii). This textual complexity has also been observed in Wilde's novel. In 'The Picture of Dorian Gray: Wilde's Parable of the Fall', in *The Picture of Dorian Gray: Authoritative Texts, Backgrounds, Reviews and Reactions, Criticism*, ed. by Donald L. Lawler (New York: Norton, 1988), pp.422-31, Joyce Carol Oates asserts: 'While in one sense *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is as transparent as a medieval allegory [...] in another sense it remains a puzzle: knotted, convoluted, brilliantly enigmatic' (pp.422-23).

<sup>15</sup> Denis Donoghue, *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (New York: Knopf, 1995), p.42.



<sup>16</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.95. In 'Pater, Wilde, Douglas and the Impact of "Greats"', *English Literature in Transition (1880-1920)*, 3 (2003), pp.250-78, William F. Shuter stresses: 'Moreover, it proves more difficult to divorce Pater the man of letters from Pater the don when we recognize the extent to which his published writings reflect, or have their origin in, the intellectual culture of which Greats was the centerpiece and the formal embodiment' (p.251).

<sup>17</sup> Donoghue, p.31.

<sup>18</sup> I am thankful to Isobel Siddons, Archivist, The National Gallery of Art, London, for providing me with details regarding the acquisition and exhibition of this painting (e-mail from 27 July 2004).

<sup>19</sup> John Ruskin, *The Works of John Ruskin on CD-ROM* ['Library Edition', originally in 39 vols, ed. by E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London: George Allen, 1903-12)] (Cambridge: Ruskin Foundation, Cambridge University Press, 1995); abbreviated as *Ruskin* — this quote is from vol. 4, p.213. The 'General Index' of *Ruskin*, vol. 39, p.101, reveals this antipathy very cogently:

*Caravaggio* (painter), 4, xxxv.; black slave of painting, 15, 202; blackguards, painting of, 1, 147, 12, 202; features and shadow in, 8, 237; morbid brutality of, 4, 213, 12, 458; renders evil only, 10, 223; sombre colour of, 5, 328; ugly subjects of, 5, 56, 12, 202.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p.56.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p.328.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p.324, note.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, p.202.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 12, p.458.

<sup>25</sup> For a consideration of how this 'Hellenism' provided various opportunities for 'homosexual' apology, see Dowling, *Hellenism*, pp.28, 31, 35, 66, 73, 76, 78-80, 97, 115, 135-36, and 152-53. For the possibility of tutorials becoming tinged with pederasty for Symonds and Pater, see pp.28, 81, 83, 88, 102-03, 124-29, 134, 137, and 150.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p.94.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p.114.

<sup>28</sup> Symonds, *Greek Ethics* [1901], p.6.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

<sup>30</sup> In "'A Race of Born Pederasts': Sir Richard Burton, Homosexuality, and the Arabs', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 25.1 (2003), pp.1-20, Colette Colligan writes: 'Yet, by the early 1880s, fiction published by William Lazenby began to feature sodomy. Stories preoccupied with sodomitical acts were serialised in his periodicals *The Pearl* (1878-81) and *The Cremorne* (1882)' (p.3). One of these stories from *The Pearl* appears as 'Appendix Three'.

<sup>31</sup> In his 'Introduction' to *Love in Earnest*, d'Arch Smith writes:

Adult homosexuality, indeed, has little to do with the themes of the poets here treated who loved only adolescent boys and it is for this reason that I have deliberately eschewed the word 'homosexual'. It is unpleasantly hybrid and modern psychiatrists would give another term to the boy-lover. This word, 'paederast', I have also decided not to employ, not only to remove from the poets the smear which it would undoubtedly place on their blameless lives but also because it is not in common use outside the analyst's consulting-room and the textbook which treats of aberrant behaviour. [...] The word 'Uranian' was chosen because it was much used in the circles in which our poets moved and because it is free from the nuances of 'homosexual', 'paederast', and 'calamite'. (p.xx)

I am in complete agreement with d'Arch Smith's comment about the concept of the 'homosexual' and its inapplicability to the dynamics of boy-love. On the other hand, for my own part I have chosen to employ the word 'paederast', though usually in the form of a more tentative 'paederastic desire' (as with 'homoerotic desire', where appropriate). Given the cultural and scholarly changes of the thirty years since d'Arch Smith published the above volume, 'paederastic' now seems far more Grecian, linguistically pure, and neutral (especially in the sphere of literary and art-history scholarship) than a term like 'paedophilia' (part of the polemics of current psychiatry) or 'boy-love' (part of the polemics of current fringe apologists like NAMBLA). While d'Arch Smith might have been duly and aptly followed in his use of the term

‘Uranian’, I have chosen instead to employ ‘Uranian’ mainly to refer to ‘membership’ in the Uranian group or an accordance to that group’s themes. ‘Pederastic’, even if it does suggest erotic actualisation, nonetheless serves decently to capture the nature of the desire being considered here, and this will be explored more fully in ‘Chapter One’.

<sup>32</sup> Michael M. Kaylor, “‘Beautiful Dripping Fragments’”: A Whitmanesque Reading of Hopkins’ “Epithalamion”, *Victorian Poetry*, 40.2 (2002), pp.157-87. This article, though expanded, constitutes ‘Chapter Three’.

<sup>33</sup> D’Arch Smith, p.xxi.

<sup>34</sup> See James R. Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p.176. In the letter to myself in ‘Appendix Four’, d’Arch Smith writes: ‘It’s fair to say, of course, that at the time they were writing [...] there was no distinction made between the homo. and the uranian [...] and in psychological medicine all inverts were lumped together (unless age group fell drastically). Today as you say there are only expressions of horror’. In *Love in Earnest*, d’Arch Smith writes of Symonds and Edward Carpenter: ‘Neither they nor their readers cared to differentiate between the liaisons of adults and of men and boys, the latter of which nowadays appear by far the more culpable of the two and present an entirely different social problem’ (p.12).

<sup>35</sup> John Pollini, ‘The Warren Cup: Homoerotic Love and Symposial Rhetoric in Silver’, *Art Bulletin*, 81.1 (1999), pp.21-52 (p.34).

<sup>36</sup> Frederick Rolfe (Baron Corvo), *The Venice Letters*, ed. with intro. by Cecil Woolf (London: Cecil & Amelia Woolf, 1974), p.37.

<sup>37</sup> One of those cultures considered ‘primitive’ was the Hawaiian. See Robert J. Morris, ‘*Aikane*: Accounts of Hawaiian Same-Sex Relationships in the Journals of Captain Cook’s Third Voyage (1776-80)’, *Journal of Homosexuality*, 19.4 (1990), pp.21-54. Why this has relevance here is that Hopkins’s father, Manley Hopkins, was appointed in 1856 Consul-General in London for Hawaii (a post he retained for thirty years). This appointment inspired him to write what was then the standard text on the subject — *Hawaii: The Past, Present, and Future of Its Island-Kingdom* (1862). It is unthinkable that Hopkins’s father did not have access to these details from Captain Cook’s voyage, though it seems unlikely he would have shared them with his son, unless it were to voice his disgust at primitive depravity or to warn against the vice the Hawaiians historically had in common with the ancient Greeks (remembering that his son had strong aesthetic and rather ‘unmanly’ interests, and was studying Classics at Oxford).

<sup>38</sup> D’Arch Smith, p.xxi.

<sup>39</sup> Portraits of some of the individuals considered in this dissertation are included, to personalise these individuals a bit, as ‘Appendix Five’.

— Chapter One —

**‘That World in Which Others Had  
Moved with So Much Embarrassment’:  
Victorianists and the Taxonomies of Desire**

His erotic tendency,  
condemned and strictly forbidden  
(but innate for all that), was the cause of it:  
society was totally prudish. (C. P. Cavafy, ‘Days of 1896’)<sup>1</sup>

In his ‘Preliminaries’ chapter to *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls*, Denis Donoghue makes the following assertion about his own method:

In this book I assume, unless contrary evidence is irresistible, that the constituents of Pater’s work are there because he invented them. If a detail in the work is also known to correspond to something in the life — Marius the Epicurean dreaded the sight of copulating snakes, and so did Pater — I don’t regard the correlation as embarrassing.<sup>2</sup>

The serpentine correlation which Donoghue does regard as embarrassing is between Pater and pederasty, illustrated by his already-mentioned avoidance of the implications of his own claim that ‘mostly [Pater] saw in those [Renaissance] paintings an ideal human image, the love of a man for a beautiful boy’. As a result, Donoghue avoids, in Pater’s case, ‘the problem of the boy’, a problem that Michel Foucault elucidates in the final chapters of his *History of Sexuality*.<sup>3</sup> In order to avoid this ‘embarrassing’ correlation, Donoghue rhetorically shifts the centre around which Pater’s desire coils, from ‘love of a man for a beautiful boy’ (pederasty)<sup>4</sup> to ‘love of a man for a beautiful man’ (homosexuality), a shift which is manifest in his analysis of Pater’s ‘Winckelmann’ essay. About Winckelmann being murdered before the young Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) has had an opportunity to make his acquaintance, Donoghue writes: ‘The loss is not sustained by “German literary history”, which can hardly feel it, but by the fellowship of homosexuals from Plato’s academy to Pater’s Brasenose’.<sup>5</sup> This claim shifts

the centre around which Pater's desire coils, since it should read 'the fellowship of pederasts', especially concerning Plato's academy. Although Donoghue does occasionally bring Pater and his circle into proximity with pederastic desire, he attempts rhetorically to keep these individuals untainted by any association with its actualisation, 'dread[ing] the sight of copulating'. This is particularly noticeable in the following: 'Like many Victorian homosexuals, [John Addington] Symonds derived immense satisfaction from talking and writing about boy-love, pederasty, and "the early Greek enthusiasm"'.<sup>6</sup> For Donoghue, 'derived immense satisfaction from talking and writing about boy-love [or] pederasty' stops shy of claiming that J. A. Symonds, Walter Pater, and their fellows shared or indulged in such desires, or even possessed, like Winckelmann, 'the early Greek enthusiasm'. The final turn of the rhetorical screw is Donoghue's decision to categorise these individuals solely as 'Victorian homosexuals', rather than 'Victorian pederasts'. Donoghue does this for the same reason that almost all literary critics and biographers do so, choosing one of four strategies in order to avoid 'the problem of the boy': they attempt absolute avoidance, claim anachronism, heighten the 'homosocial', or label as 'homosexual'.

In the sections to follow, I will consider these four strategies, particularly as they pertain to Hopkins scholarship. However, rather than tracing the historical development of a 'homoerotic' consideration of Hopkins — a consideration which spans from a passing allusion by W. H. Auden in 1936 to present-day Gay Studies, a consideration which has already been dutifully delineated by Denis Sobolev in his recent 'Hopkins's "Bellbright Bodies": The Dialectics of Desire in His Writings' (2003)<sup>7</sup> — I have opted instead to delineate several recent avoidances of a 'pederastic' consideration of the poet.

## Absolute Avoidance: 'Not to Be Talked About'

There is no binary division to be made between what one says and what one does not say [...] There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses.

(Michel Foucault, as quoted in E. K. Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*)<sup>8</sup>

In *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture*, James Kincaid suggests that 'perhaps the Victorian code of action was one thing and that of speech was another: "Certain things were not to be talked about; that was really all that was asked"'.<sup>9</sup> Whether Kincaid's claim was true or not for the Victorians is not at issue here: what is at issue is whether his claim was, and often still is, true for modern scholars dealing with one Victorian, Gerard Manley Hopkins. While 'critics from [Robert] Bridges onwards have charged Hopkins with decadence, perversion, and impurity',<sup>10</sup> what is meant by such a charge is unclear and open to a variety of approaches and appraisals, one of which is to ignore such a charge completely. A decade after W. H. Auden and F. O. Matthiessen had both made passing allusions to Hopkins's 'homosexuality', W. H. Gardner wrote in 1949 that 'there is nothing [...] to suggest, let alone prove, that Hopkins was tainted with any serious sexual abnormality', and any charge that he was so tainted has arisen from 'certain uninformed or misguided critics'.<sup>11</sup>

Although 'until the mid-1970s almost nothing had been written on the subject',<sup>12</sup> it was subsequently explored, in some depth, by Wendell Stacy Johnson, Bernard Bergonzi, Paddy Kitchen, John Robinson, and Michael Lynch. However, 'in the 1980s the pendulum swung back, and the question of Hopkins's sexual orientation became marginal once again', with critics focusing instead 'on the general sexual overtones of his language'<sup>13</sup> — critics such as John Forns, Linda Dowling, and John B. Gleason. The only striking exception was Byrne R. S. Fone, who claimed that 'for Gerard Manley Hopkins,

the homosexual discourse was one that exerted considerable fascination and produced no inconsiderable pain and evasion'.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, 'homoerotic' explorations began again after the publication of *Facsimiles I* in 1989, as Sobolev explains:

In 1989 Norman MacKenzie published the most guarded materials of Hopkins criticism: his early notes and diaries, whose carefully censored fragments were earlier published by Humphry House. [...] This publication has changed the atmosphere of Hopkins criticism. If in 1983 [David Anthony] Downes was still able to dismiss the question of Hopkins's homosexuality as complete nonsense, such a dismissal is no longer possible; as [Robert B.] Martin writes, 'in totality [Hopkins's notes] indicate that his susceptibility was largely homoerotic'. An unprejudiced reader can hardly disagree with this conclusion; as far as we know, Hopkins was attracted to male rather than female beauty.<sup>15</sup>

To put it another way, Hopkins was anything but ignorant about his erotic tendencies: his notes indicate an acute awareness of the homoerotic nature of his leanings, regardless of the fact that the term 'homosexual' (let alone 'homoerotic') had not yet been coined.<sup>16</sup>

In summary, Sobolev considers that 'the dismissal of Hopkins's latent homoeroticism is no longer possible',<sup>17</sup> which is attested to by criticism since 1989, including that of Richard Dellamora, James W. Earl, Joseph H. Gardner, Renee V. Overholser, Andrew Holleran, Joseph Bristow, Robert B. Martin, Norman White, Jude V. Nixon, Peter Swaab, Julia Saville, Simon Humphries, Michael M. Kaylor, and Sobolev himself. Even if absolute dismissal is no longer possible, there are other avoidance strategies available to Hopkins scholars, one of these stemming from the fact that the term 'homosexual' had not yet been coined — hence, is anachronistic in considerations of Hopkins and his contemporaries.

## Anachronism: 'The Love That Dare Not Speak'

Invent me a language of love. *You* could do it.  
Bewilderdly, All yours, Clyde  
(Closing of a letter from Clyde Fitch to Oscar Wilde)<sup>18</sup>

Ah! dear, learn this, that love has many names.  
(Marc-André Raffalovich, *Cyril and Lionel*, 1884)<sup>19</sup>

Although Benjamin Jowett translates one of Socrates' statements in the *Phaedrus* as 'Every one chooses the object of his affections according to his character, and this he makes his god, and fashions and adorns as a sort of image which he is to fall down and worship',<sup>20</sup> many critics, particularly those following Michel Foucault's lead,<sup>21</sup> would insist that this is merely a modern response, a cultural construction which arose only recently in our Western, capitalistic, bourgeois society. According to this view, ancient Greek conceptions of and discourses on 'love' were quite distinct from those of an Oxford don like Jowett in Victorian England (even though he was a professor of Greek), and both an ancient Greco-Roman and a donnish Victorian had a strikingly different conception of 'character' than we possess today, especially in regard to sexuality:

For example, in contemporary American society, an adult male who has sex with a fourteen-year-old boy would be considered a child molester and, if caught, would be prosecuted. In ancient Rome, by comparison, it was legal and generally socially acceptable for an adult Roman male to have homosexual relations with another male, whatever his age, provided that, first, the other male was a slave, freedman, foreigner, or male prostitute (who would have been a slave, foreigner, or former Roman citizen), and, second, the Roman male citizen was the active, not the passive, sexual partner in the relationship.<sup>22</sup>

Following Foucault, scholars such as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and David Halperin have argued that various Victorian public discourses, notably the psychiatric and the legal, fostered a designation or invention of the 'homosexual' as a distinct category of individuals, evident in the publications of sexologists such as Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840-1902) and Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), sexologists who argued for an almost-pathological interpretation of the phenomenon in rather Essentialist terms, an

interpretation which led, before 1910, to hundreds of articles on the subject in The Netherlands, Germany, and elsewhere. One result of these burgeoning discourses was that the ‘homosexual’ was often portrayed as a corruptor of the innocent, with a predisposition towards both depravity and pederasty — a necessary portrayal if these sexologists were to account for the continued existence of the ‘pederast’. What is key for Foucault, Sedgwick, and Halperin is that these discourses resulted in the *creation* of the ‘homosexual’, a socially constructed category, not an intrinsic one — hence making it both linguistically and philosophically anachronistic to refer to desires or individuals before the 1870s (at the earliest) as ‘homosexual’. In contrast to this claim of anachronism levelled by Foucault & Co., the rather Essentialist claims of Amy Richlin, John Pollini, and Timothy d’Arch Smith seem, to me, far more sensible and practical:

What is to gain from a model that says there was no ‘homosexuality’ in antiquity? Such a model allows us to stress the difference between ancient societies and our own, to explain what they did have in their own terms. This move, however, when it comes up against Greek and Roman invective against male-male love emphasizes its political use, its quality of ‘bluff’: homophobia tends to disappear along with homosexuals. And this model makes it very hard to talk about real *cinaedi* [men considered ‘effeminate’]. What, on the other hand, is to gain from a model that uses ‘homosexuality’ as a category for analyzing ancient societies? A gay history analysis [...] which stresses continuity rather than difference [...] [an analysis which] would emphasize what ancient invective has in common with homophobia, and would focus on real *cinaedi*, both on their oppression and their possible subculture. (Richlin)<sup>23</sup>

As a result of this concern about anachronistic usage, some have replaced ‘homosexual’ with such faddish and cumbersome designations as ‘male-to-male’ and ‘female-to-female’ to describe same-sex relationships. [...] To say that we cannot use *homosexual* with reference to sexual behaviour in antiquity would be equivalent to maintaining that we cannot speak of *propaganda* in antiquity because this term was not coined until the seventeenth century. Although the ancients had no specific word for propaganda, they certainly engaged in various forms of it. (Pollini)<sup>24</sup>

It would be absurd to suggest that homosexuality was a novel invention, like the telephone or electricity, on which the forward-looking Victorian had stumbled and had placed into society as an innovationary development in the arena of human experience. Rather, it was a road along which humans had always travelled, sadly, for it was often snared with pitfalls or barricaded by religious and secular authorities alike who believed it to lead to the gates of hell, and those who ventured along it did so silently and secretly. (d’Arch Smith)<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, even a moot acceptance of Foucault’s basic claim about the modernity of ‘homosexuality’ does not alter the verity that his argument is undercut by historical evidence as far as ‘pederasty’, not broader ‘homosexuality’, is concerned. Notice that,



although Pollini (who made one of the Essentialist claims above) has a degree of reservation about employing ‘homosexual’ or ‘homosexuality’ as nouns in criticism —

Although we can speak of homosexuality or homosexuals in general discussions of biological conditions, the use of the term *homosexual* as a cultural determinant in antiquity is essentially useless in view of the fact that we cannot identify specific individuals as homosexuals in the modern sense of the word precisely because ancient sexual constructs are very different from those used today. Therefore, while it is perfectly legitimate to use *homosexual* or *heterosexual* adjectivally to describe sexual acts between individuals of the same or opposite sex, these same terms as nouns ought to be avoided in their application to those engaged in sexual behaviour or acts in the ancient world.<sup>26</sup>

— Pollini reveals no such scruple about employing ‘connoisseur pederasts’ or ‘pederasty’ as nouns, since these arise from Greco-Roman texts and contexts, Pollini further noting that *pederasty* derives ‘from the Greek παιδερᾶσται, meaning, “to be the lover of *paides* (boys)”’.<sup>27</sup> While Foucault & Co. has established a certain rhetorical space for arguing that various Victorian public discourses, notably the psychiatric and the legal, fostered a designation or invention of the ‘homosexual’ as a distinct category around 1870 or later, they have not done so in relation to the ‘pederast’; and it is no coincidence that ‘the problem of the boy’ was the last thing Foucault addressed in his *History of Sexuality*, a problem which neither he nor his followers have adequately solved or accounted for.

Put concisely: the lingering problem for Foucault & Co. is that antiquity did possess, as K. J. Dover details in *Greek Homosexuality*, abundant terminology for pederastic ‘inclinations’ and ‘preferences’, terminology which suggests that the Classical world had a concept of sexual attraction not drastically different from our own, particularly in regard to the ‘love’ between a man and a boy.<sup>28</sup> This is most clearly demonstrated in Dover’s discussion of Xenophon’s use of the word *tropos* (meaning ‘way; character; disposition; inclination’), a word that Xenophon uses, as one of the participants in Plato’s *Symposium*, to describe the behaviour of the extravagant pederast Episthenes.<sup>29</sup> While the last portion of Foucault’s *History of Sexuality* does engage Classical sources such as Plato’s *Symposium* and its later Roman counterparts, Foucault does not address the

disparity or rift that these sources, sources that Dover had earlier considered, seem to reveal in his own arguments (though his death may have prevented him from subsequently doing so). However, even if one forgoes the Classical and merely consigns oneself to evidence more recent, the title of a 1769 volume by Johann Matthias Gesner suggests that a *tropos* (way, character, disposition, or inclination) was assigned to at least one individual: *Socrates Sanctus Paederasta*, or ‘Socrates: The Holy Pederast’ (see ‘Appendix Six’ for the title-page and an illustration from this volume). A title like ‘The Holy Pederast’ reveals that a *tropos* could be and was assigned — even if only to ‘pederasts’ and not to ‘homosexuals’ — a hundred years before same-sex eroticism had, according to Foucault, anything resembling a *tropos*. Gesner’s title *Sanctus Paederasta* points to a substantial hole in Foucault’s argument, as well as the Social Constructionist arguments of his company, a hole that arises from ‘the problem of the boy’ and the symposial discourses surrounding it.

Although planted and cultivated during the age of Episthenes and Socrates, the symposial approach to pederasty continued to flower occasionally in Imperial Rome, Renaissance Florence, and Victorian Oxford, watered by conversational insinuations, textual allusions, visual representations, and a shared *tropos*. One object that serves to link the pederastic symposiums of the Greco-Romans to those of the late-Victorians was acquired by one of the most outspoken of the Uranian poets, a member of Pater’s circle who would later encapsulate the Uranian sentiment most strikingly, though under the pseudonym of Arthur Lyon Raile, in his three-volume *Defence of Uranian Love* (1928, 1930).

After graduating from Harvard University in 1883, the anglophile Edward Perry Warren (1860-1928), son of a wealthy American paper-manufacturer, was drawn to Oxford University with the hope of studying under or at least being near Walter Pater, his

idol. After matriculating on 12 October 1883, Warren became a member of New College, Oxford, and received his B.A. in 1888. In the year of his Oxford graduation, his father died: as a result, Warren found himself with a respectable inheritance, an inheritance which he preferred to have managed by a trust. This decision provided him with both freedom and £10,000 a year, affording him the time and means to travel and to acquire artworks and antiquities at his own volition.<sup>30</sup> Whether for himself or under the auspices of prestigious museums, Warren, the pre-eminent collector of antiquities of his day, made a multitude of acquisitions, both antiquarian and modern, acquisitions which were the choicest possible, often despite their scandalous subject matter, as with Auguste Rodin's *Kiss* which he personally commissioned in 1900.<sup>31</sup> One of the antiquarian objects that Warren acquired for himself, an object that he later loaned to the Martin von Wagner Museum in Würzburg, Germany,<sup>32</sup> now resides in the British Museum — a silver *scyphus* dubbed 'the Warren Cup'. Considered the most important acquisition by the British Museum in thirty years, the Warren Cup was purchased in 1999 for £1.8 million (£300,000 coming from the Heritage Lottery Fund), and is now on permanent exhibition in the Wolfson Gallery of Roman Antiquities (Room 70):

One of the most exquisite works of turetic art to have been created in the early Roman Imperial period is a silver ovoid *scyphus*, or drinking vessel, approximately 6 inches (15 centimeters) high, known as the Warren Cup, so-named for the American collector Edward Perry Warren, who originally acquired it in the early twentieth century. [...] The Warren Cup is remarkable especially for its representation of two homoerotic scenes, each featuring an older, idealized male 'pedicating' (that is, anally penetrating) a younger male. Unlike scenes of heterosexual intercourse, those of a homoerotic nature are relatively uncommon in Roman art, with the Warren Cup providing the only known representation of homosexual copulation in the medium of decorative Roman silver.<sup>33</sup>

[Photographs of the Warren Cup are provided as 'Appendix Seven']

John R. Clarke suggests that such Roman vessels were 'meant to entertain the guests [of a wealthy individual] with their engaging imagery and fine craftsmanship';<sup>34</sup> and John Pollini, that 'a *scyphus* of the high quality and costliness of the Warren Cup would undoubtedly have been owned by a wealthy individual who had his own slaves, including likely his own special "reserve stock" of *pueri delicati* [pretty boys for erotic and other

intimate services]’.<sup>35</sup> Beyond its craftsmanship and costliness, the Warren Cup has ‘engaging imagery’, imagery that stretches the full breadth of pederastic desire, as Pollini explains:

Significant, too, is the age range of the two boys being pedicated on the Warren Cup. The younger boy appears to be about twelve to thirteen years old; the older, about seventeen to eighteen. Each would, therefore, represent the opposite poles of the age range of boys whom connoisseur pederasts judged to be ‘ripe’ for anal penetration [...] [as] in the passage from Strato [below].<sup>36</sup>

I delight in the prime of a twelve-year-old boy, but much more desirable is one of thirteen. One of fourteen is a sweeter flower of love, but one beginning his fifteenth year is more of a pleasure. The sixteenth year is that of the gods. Yet the seventeenth is not mine but for Zeus to seek. If, however, one has a passion for those still older, he no longer ‘plays’, but forthwith ‘receives his reply’. (Strato, from *Anthologia Palatina*)<sup>37</sup>

Although these comments by Strato (c. 340-270 BCE) may serve to clarify the pedicated boys depicted on the sides of the Warren Cup, as well as the reason for their age difference, the pre-pubertal boy who is playing voyeur in the doorway (depicted on side A) is far more problematic to clarify. He becomes the Warren Cup’s ‘problem of the boy’, as Clarke and Pollini explain:

The detail of the boy in a tunic entering the room is more difficult to interpret. He may fit into the broad category of the so-called onlooker. [...] Another possibility is that the scene takes place in a brothel, and that the entering boy is an attendant — or another possible partner for one of the men. (Clarke)<sup>38</sup>

On side A of the cup a small, curly-haired, tunic-clad boy stands by a half-opened door peering in on the couple making love. [...] His size and apparent age clearly indicate that he is still a pre-pubertal boy and therefore not yet ‘ripe’ for pedicating. His unbelted tunic may also signify his future passive sexual role, since to be *discinctus* (wearing an unbelted tunic) was often synonymous with being effeminate. [...] At a symbolic level, his presence would signify the first stage in the education of a slave boy, while the approximately twelve-to-thirteen-year-old adolescent on side B would represent the second phase of *ars amatoria*, in which a master enjoys penetrating a slave boy who has just reached the age of puberty. And finally, the presumably more experienced youth in his late teens represents the last phase of service as a sex slave. As an experienced sex slave, this older youth demonstrates the sort of advanced skills that the tunic-clad boy behind the door would be called on to perform in the not too distant future. (Pollini)<sup>39</sup>

I consider neither of these interpretations entirely convincing. For all of his pre-pubescence and the decadence associated with positing or positioning him as a sexual object (especially for modern historians), this tunic-clad boy might well have suggested an ever-present potential for the men at a Roman symposium, most of whom either had pre-pubescent slaves who could be treated as *pueri delicati* or had sufficient funds to acquire

them if they so chose (at least such guests as would have attended grandiose symposiums with trappings like the Warren Cup). Even if, for the Romans, there was a degree of decadence associated with pedicating a boy not conventionally or normally thought of as ‘ripe’, it must be remembered that decadence is not always considered a negative quality, particularly in a privately commissioned, privately owned, and privately used object like the Warren Cup. While the boy’s unbelted tunic seems to demarcate him as both available and prepared, the missing belt only *intimates* this erotic potential: the image does not *dictate* it, as it does in the case of the nude boys being pedicated. His state of partial undress seems to reveal a degree of aesthetic and cultural tact, merely opening the door for this pre-pubescent boy to enter (as he does literally on the Warren Cup) into the symposial discourse. Conversationally at least, the Roman symposial guest was free to strip away the boy’s tunic — if such was his desire and if his audience was adequately select — or else to leave the boy clad and untouched, a fruit left to ‘ripen’, to observe the ‘arts of love’. According to Joseph A. Kestner, this tunic-clad boy would have had particular, Decadent appeal to Victorian Uranians like Warren, for the Uranians would not have quibbled much about the boy’s chronological age, Strato’s comments, or conventions regarding ‘ripening’: ‘[The Uranian] construction of the beloved boy, however, in the strictest sense embraced practices (anal and oral sexual intercourse) which would not have been sanctioned in the ancient Greek model except with male prostitutes’.<sup>40</sup>

For an Imperial Roman, as for a Classical Greek, an erotic object like the Warren Cup would have served as a pictorial prompt, inviting him, as a member of a symposium, to praise, to expound, or to (re)consider ‘the pederastic’ — a particular form of love, desire, and/or preference which would never, during the Greco-Roman period, have been referred to as ‘The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name’. In fact, this cup’s blatant eroticism was an invitation to speak, as Pollini emphasises:

I would like to propose a range of possibilities in which a hypothetical ancient symposiast, taking visual clues from the scenes on the Warren Cup, might have directed his conversation, drawing analogies, making allusions, punning, or employing a host of other literary tropes, while peppering his discourse with quotes from past and/or contemporary authors on the nature of love and its pleasures. These suggestions are by no means all-inclusive; the possibilities would have been limited only by a symposiast's knowledge of the subject and, most likely, his own personal experiences and preferences.<sup>41</sup>

[For Greek versions of such a cup, see 'Appendix Eight']

What is central here is not what Pollini's Greco-Roman symposiast would have said about pederasty and its depictions on the Warren Cup, or what a Renaissance symposiast would have said about pederasty and Greco-Roman or contemporary depictions of it, but what Greco-Roman and Renaissance pederasty and its depictions meant to a distinct group of Victorian writers, artists, and thinkers, most of whom, like Warren, had some connection to Oxford University, its Greats curriculum, and Walter Pater, remembering ever that 'Pater's culture strictly pertains to "a small band of elite 'Oxonian souls'"'.<sup>42</sup> It is to that particular group of Victorians — those elite 'Oxonian souls' into whose hands Greco-Roman pederastic culture had passed, as would the Warren Cup — that I now turn my attention, particularly to Gerard Manley Hopkins and Walter Pater, both of whom would have had much to say about the Warren Cup. Presented with its tunic-clad boy, Hopkins would have 'eyed him [...] making my play / Turn most on tender byplay' ('Brothers', lines 14-16); Pater would have eyed him as 'an ideal human image, the love of a man for a beautiful boy'. Hopkins and Pater would each have had something profound and curious to say — in Greek, Latin, or English — about the pederastic and homoerotic *tropos* captured artistically on this silver Roman vessel, despite what modern scholars like Linda Dowling might assert. In fact, Hopkins had a habit of seeing himself and his passions reflected in polished silver: 'in smooth spoons spy life's masque mirrored: tame / My tempests there, my fire and fever fussy' ('[The Shepherd's Brow]', lines 13-14). That Hopkins and Pater, like those Greco-Roman symposiasts, would have had much to say

regarding the *tropos* captured artistically on the Warren Cup draws into question Foucault's claims, both Classical and Victorian.

In 'Ruskin's Pied Beauty and the Constitution of a "Homosexual" Code', Dowling writes: 'Given the fragmentary biographical materials we possess about both Hopkins and Pater, any assertion about the "homoerotic" nature of their experience or imagination may seem at best recklessly premature and at worst damnably presumptuous'.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, a few years later, in *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*, Dowling is less reserved about making such assertions, though she tends to recast much of the 'homoerotic' into 'perfervid friendships'<sup>44</sup> or the 'homosocial' (as in her consideration of Tractarian friendships; *passé* Sedgwick).<sup>45</sup> Having embraced the Social Constructionist argument that language and its discourses are vital for ascertaining and asserting one's own experiences and imagination, Dowling employs a full range of fashionable 'vocabulary of erotic sensuality', assuming that the fine distinctions she is drawing between 'perfervid friendships', 'homosocial', 'homoerotic', 'masculine desire', and 'homosexual' allow her to name the 'previously unnameable' in a way that the Victorians she is considering would have been unable to do for themselves, at least before the late-Victorian apologists:

In these [Uranian] poems, beginning with such works as J. A. Symonds's privately circulated poems of the late 1860s and culminating with Lord Alfred Douglas's *Poems* (1896), published in Paris in the aftermath of the Wilde scandal, we see that vocabulary of erotic sensuality [...] being deliberately inverted in ways that are able now to give a name to previously unnameable masculine desire.<sup>46</sup>

What Dowling fails to explain convincingly is why or to what extent these 'masculine desires' were 'unnameable'. Her rhetorical claim seems to stem from a belief that it is anachronistic to consider 'masculine desire' as 'nameable' prior to 1870 at the earliest (*passé* Foucault), and that there was a general inability 'to give a name' to this 'masculine desire', rather than an obvious fear of labelling oneself in a hostile environment, a hostile

environment like that in which the Uranians were then living (though, in many ways, little has changed in this regard for those with pederastic desires), a hostile environment which had its roots in the thirteenth century.

According to John Boswell's *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality*, homoeroticism and pederasty — both as acts and as subcultures — were tacitly tolerated in the West until the thirteenth century,<sup>47</sup> a claim which seems to be supported by the fact that 'sodomy' was not mentioned as a crime in English jurisprudence until *Fleta: seu Commentarius juris Anglicani* (c. 1290), a work attributed to an anonymous jurist in the court of Edward I, a jurist who ordered convicted 'sodomites' to be buried alive.<sup>48</sup> Ten years later, the treatise *Britton*, attributed to John le Breton, ordered them to be burned alive instead (though it seems that neither this nor the punishment decreed in *Fleta* was ever seriously or extensively implemented, as the first statement of the next piece of legislation seems to suggest). Little changed legally for the convicted 'sodomite' until 1533, when Henry VIII oversaw the enactment of the Buggery Act (Statute 25, Henry VIII, capitulum 6), the first secular legislation in Europe to criminalize 'sodomitical' practices, practices which became a felony punishable by hanging, as well as by the immediate forfeiture of all lands, property, and hereditary rights to the Crown:

Forasmuch as there is not yet sufficient and condign punishment appointed and limited by the due course of the Laws of this Realm for the detestable and abominable Vice of Buggery committed with mankind or beast: It may therefore please the King's Highness with the assent of the Lords Spiritual and the Commons of this present parliament assembled, that it may be enacted by the authority of the same, that the same offence be from henceforth adjudged Felony and that such an order and form of process therein to be used against the offenders as in cases of felony at the Common Law. And that the offenders being hereof convict by verdict confession or outlawry shall suffer such pains of death and losses and penalties of their good chattels debts lands tenements and hereditaments as felons do according to the Common Laws of this Realme. And that no person offending in any such offence shall be admitted to his Clergy, And that Justices of the Peace shall have power and authority within the limits of their commissions and Jurisdictions to hear and determine the said offence, as they do in the cases of other felonies. This Act to endure till the last day of the next Parliament.

In 1563, Elizabeth I's second Parliament re-enacted and made permanent the Buggery Act of 1533 (Statute 5, Elizabeth I, capitulum 17), legislation which remained relatively



unchanged until 1828, when the subsidiary points of the Buggery Act were revoked — with the exception of the death penalty — and requirements of ‘proof of penetration’ instituted (only acts of ‘penetration’ had been specifically criminalized after 1817 anyway). In 1861, the death penalty for ‘sodomy’ was formally abolished, replaced by lengthy imprisonments spanning from ten years to life (with the length and form of incarceration left to the discretion of the courts). Such was the hostile environment that confronted those Victorians whose desires were pederastic or homoerotic, at least those considered of sufficient age to be held ‘criminally culpable’.

Since English Common Law had only ever specified the age of consent for females involved in heterosexual acts — not for males involved in ‘buggery’<sup>49</sup> — it is only possible to speculate about *how the Victorian period would have perceived and evaluated ‘criminal culpability’ on the part of a boy* by examining the relevant female legislation, which is as follows: In 1861, Parliament passed the Offenses Against the Person Act (Statutes 24 and 25, Victoria, capitulum 100), solidifying the age of consent as twelve, with erotic acts with a girl under the age of ten becoming a felony; between ten and twelve, a misdemeanour. In 1875, amendments were added to the Offenses Against the Person Act (Statutes 38 and 39, Victoria, capitulum 94), raising the age of consent to thirteen. However, later events would alter this legislation significantly. On 6 July 1885, the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, William T. Stead, began publishing a series of articles titled ‘The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon’, claiming that England was rife with child prostitution and white slavery, claims that were further bastioned by evidence gathered by the newly formed Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (established in 1884 and given royal patronage). Under widespread pressure sparked by Stead’s journalistic investigations (including his effortless ‘purchase’ of an eleven-year-old girl, sold to him as a ‘slave’ by her mother, an event duly publicised by Stead in his newspaper), the Criminal

Law Amendment Act (Statutes 48 and 49, Victoria, capitulum 69, 11) became law on 14 August 1885, repealing sections 49 and 52 of the Offences Against the Person Act of 1861 (as well as the subsequent amendments of 1875) and raising the age of consent to sixteen. Deftly inserted into the final draft of this bill — a bill rushed through Parliament at a furious pace — was the Labouchere Amendment (nicknamed ‘the blackmailer’s charter’), a last-minute addition which remained undebated and only obliquely mentioned by politicians and the press. This addition, which criminalised the vague crime of ‘gross indecency’ between males, was the legislation that would eventually spell Wilde’s doom. To return to the main portion of this legislation (setting aside Labouchere’s spurious addition for a moment): Despite the fact that the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 instantly raised the age of consent by three years, there were voices still calling for further increases, the most prominent being that of Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone, who expressed that ‘in my opinion the protected age might properly be advanced beyond 16 in the Criminal Law Amendment Bill [...] I personally should have been glad if the Government had found it consistent with their views to name 18, rather than 16, as the protected age’.<sup>50</sup> From the evolving legislation above, it is possible to speculate that the Victorians would have considered a boy in his mid-teens ‘criminally culpable’ for erotic acts with another male (whether his peer or older), and worthy of the full repercussions of such erotic acts under British Criminal Law.

It must be remembered that, although homoerotic and pederastic acts were no longer capital offences punishable by hanging, or felonies punishable by imprisonment of ten years to life, Section II of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 nonetheless read:

Any male person who, in public or private, commits, or is a party to the commission of, or procures or attempts to procure the commission by any male person of, any act of gross indecency with another male person, shall be guilty of misdemeanour, and, being convicted thereof, shall be liable, at the discretion of the Court, to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding two years with or without hard labour.<sup>51</sup>

Although this legislation greatly reduced the severity of such a criminal conviction, such a conviction, even when it led to some form of police supervision rather than imprisonment, usually spelled one's doom as far as reputation, career, and friendships were concerned — even when one was not as famous as an Oscar Wilde. Such a conviction was, for the Victorians, equivalent to the brand of Cain.

Beyond displaying the hostile environment confronting those whose desires were pederastic and/or homoerotic, beyond suggesting what would have constituted the age of 'criminal culpability', these legal statutes also display that the Victorians, like their predecessors, *did* have various taxonomies for negatively naming and socially branding individuals like the Uranians, taxonomies derived from biblical or slang sources — such as 'sodomite' or 'bugger' — and usually bespeaking 'acts' rather than 'lifestyles', 'dispositions', 'identities', or the like:

Before there was 'homosexuality' in the church, there was 'sodomy'; before 'sodomy', layers of other terms: 'sin of the Sodomites', 'irrational copulation', 'crime against nature', 'softness', 'corrupting boys', 'copulating with men'. Each phrase has been used in Christian moral writing, and all have been used to describe the clergy.<sup>52</sup>

Inasmuch as buggery specifically refers to anal intercourse [...] one might speculate that it was the Old Norse word '*baugr*' in the sense of anus that is the true root of English 'bugger' and that the anti-Bulgarian *blazon populaire* [in French] merely provided a convenient later verbal foil and support for the folk speech.<sup>53</sup>

These were taxonomies bespeaking biblical, legal, or popular opprobrium, and certainly had currency in the pulpit, pamphlet, courtroom, parlour, and street. Since these expressions of opprobrium — as Foucault, Sedgwick, and Halperin emphasise — denote 'acts' or 'perpetrators of acts' rather than 'modes of being', they arose from commission rather than constitution, hence were worthy of the full weight of the judicial condemnation and punishments noted above. However, what these three critics seem to disregard is that, for the Victorians and those before them, championing a more positive name in place of 'sodomite' or 'bugger' would have been tantamount to being accused of participating in or condoning the acts or qualities being named, for why else would one risk doing so. Seen

in this way, the ‘unnameable’ derives not from ‘cannot be named *intrinsically*’ but from ‘cannot be named *safely*’ — as Lord Alfred Douglas’s poem ‘Two Loves’ clearly illustrates. In his (in)famously phrased ‘I am the love that dare not speak its name’,<sup>54</sup> Lord Alfred dares to mention *that he dares not mention* the name of his love, and even this was quoted against Wilde during his trial, becoming a potent example of the dangers inherent not only in erotic acts, but also in erotic speech-acts.

If one considers not just the Victorians — those consummate chroniclers of words through megalithic endeavours like the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the *English Dialect Dictionary* (of which Hopkins was a contributor) — but also their immediate precursors, one finds various examples of what Dowling calls ‘spaces of discourse’ for the pederastic and the homoerotic. Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote a defence of ‘Greek love’ (or pederasty) in his *Discourse on the Manners of the Antient Greeks Relative to the Subject of Love* (written in 1818). William Beckford and George Gordon, Lord Byron were both practitioners of ‘Greek love’ — and had to flee to the Continent as a result. Jeremy Bentham wrote an extensive legal appeal for its decriminalisation in his *Offences Against One’s Self* (around 1785). J. A. Symonds wrote a historical treatise on it titled *A Problem in Greek Ethics* (finished in 1873, privately printed in 1883, and appearing as ‘Appendix A’ in Havelock Ellis’s *Sexual Inversion* in 1897). Sir Richard Francis Burton chronicled its existence in the East in his ‘Terminal Essay, Part IV/D, Social Conditions — Pederasty’, appended to volume ten of his translation of *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* (privately printed in 1885-86).<sup>55</sup> It is rather diminishing of poets and intellectuals of this calibre to claim that they were intrinsically, linguistically, or conceptually unable to provide a decent name for the ‘unnameable’ in whatever form. It is rather ridiculous, I would assert, to claim that Horace Walpole was able invent such a glorious word as *serendipity* around 1754 (a merging of his own experiences with the tale

of the three Princes of Serendip),<sup>56</sup> but was unable to invent a suitable word for his own erotic desires.<sup>57</sup>

The *OED* defines *serendipity* (which Walpole called ‘a very expressive word’ derived from ‘a silly fairy tale’) as ‘(A supposed talent for) the making of happy and unexpected discoveries by accident or when looking for something else’, further noting that ‘formerly rare, this word and its derivatives has had wide currency in the 20<sup>th</sup> century’. This *OED* note is important to consider in relation to words like ‘homosexuality’ and ‘pederasty’. It is not that there were no ‘rare’ words for such concepts or desires, but that there were no words in ‘wide currency’ except for ‘sodomy’ and ‘buggery’, words which most people chose to allude to, rather than employ directly — hence, ‘the love that dare not speak its name’. Although the concept of ‘wide currency’ (or, in this particular case, the public’s Wilde curiosity) may partially explain the available diction of society, as well as its attitudes and responses, currency is not obligated to be widespread. With its etymology deriving from modern Latin *paederastia* and Greek *paiderastia*: *pais*, *paid* (‘boy’) plus *erastes* (‘lover’) (*OED*) — the word ‘pederasty’ did have currency, even if only limited currency, long before the Victorians began, as Foucault asserts, to codify the linguistic and conceptual hybrid of the ‘homosexual’.

Furthermore, it should be remembered that the present consideration concerns the pederastic Uranians, a distinct group of Victorian writers, artists, and thinkers, most of whom had some connection to Oxford University, its Greats curriculum, and Walter Pater — in other words, a ‘small band of elite “Oxonian souls”’ who clearly understood the etymology and the import of both ‘pederast’ and ‘pederasty’, and would have laughed at Dowling’s assertion that they did not. In fact, all of the writers to whom individual sections in this dissertation are devoted were fluent or even brilliant in the Greek from which ‘pederasty’, in more than one way, derived:

The uncritical allusions to homoeroticism in the Greek texts read in *Literae Humaniores* [or Classics, or Greats] would have introduced Oxford undergraduates to the possibility of a culture in which a mode of sexuality prohibited in their own society was tolerated and even encouraged. Indeed, it would probably have been impossible to discuss the subject of homoeroticism without considering the form it took in ancient Greece.<sup>58</sup>

Hopkins, an Oxford graduate in *Literae Humaniores* (Classics), became Professor of Classics at University College, Dublin, and a Fellow of the Royal University of Ireland. Pater, an Oxford graduate in *Literae Humaniores*, became an Oxford don lecturing in Greek, among other subjects, at Brasenose College, Oxford. Wilde, winner of the Berkeley Gold Medal for Greek from Trinity College, Dublin, later took an Oxford degree in *Literae Humaniores*. Johnson, a Cambridge graduate, became an Assistant Master at Eton, teaching Classics. After finishing at Eton, where he had studied under Johnson, Dolben began preparing with a private tutor for the Oxford entrance exam, expecting to study *Literae Humaniores*. However, after one such tutorial, which involved construing Ajax's speech about taking leave of the world, Dolben went for a swim with his tutor's son and drowned, utterly ending his Classics career. Hopkins, Pater, Wilde, Johnson, and Dolben — they were all fluent in Greek (or, in Dolben's case, decently so); they were all fluent in Greek texts which lauded pederastic desire; they were all fluent that their fellows were also fluent in Greek and the desire it praised; they were all fluent about each other or their respective coteries. This complex 'fluency' was one of the elements which fused these individuals into a group, a 'small band of elite "Oxonian souls"' for whom fluency in ancient Greek and things Grecian allowed for an exploration of Classical texts and their attendant celebrations of pederasty, allowed for the acquisition of an elaborate vocabulary for making their own pederastic desires conceptual, textual, and contextual — even if *only* in Greek.

With the above in mind, it is surprising that, as the sole support for her claim that individuals before the late-Victorians were unable 'to give a name to previously unnameable masculine desire', Dowling refers to the detail that 'sodomy' was 'the crime

not to be named among Christians’, stressing that this concept was ‘always previously banished [...] to a dim region of nameless evil by English theological or religious discourses’,<sup>59</sup> discourses which had blent themselves with the burgeoning machinery of English Common Law. Seeming to forget that the title of her own book is *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*, not *Divinity and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* — and that Hellenism in Victorian Oxford involved the aforementioned fluency in a language with extensive pederastic diction and dimensions (not to mention the Latin which was equally studied in *Literae Humaniores*) — Dowling implies that English theological and religious discourses (as well as the judicial application or adaptation of these) determined not only the content and the currency of the English language, but also the intellectual constructs by which desires were made textual or perceptible for the English (*passé* Foucault, who wrote: ‘As defined by the ancient civil or canonical codes, sodomy was a category of forbidden acts; their perpetrator was nothing more than the juridical subject of them’<sup>60</sup>). As is often the case with New Historicists and other Social Constructionists, Dowling’s perceives no marked difference between aesthetic or philosophical works and broader historical documents (which is particularly evident in those passages where she discusses ‘spaces for discourse’<sup>61</sup>). As a result, she postulates that writers and artists are ever engaged in various forms of counter-discourse with(in) the discourses of society, constrained within society’s power dynamics, unable to formulate anything outside of those strictures and structures, unable to engage, adapt, or annex English diction or import that of Greek or Latin.

Despite Dowling’s claims, Shelley, Beckford, Byron, Bentham, Burton, and Walpole (not to mention Hopkins, Pater, Wilde, Johnson, and Dolben) did have a dozen suitable words in their vocabulary for the eroticism of the Uranians, or they coined them — English words such as ‘pederasty’, ‘Greek love’, ‘Sotadism’, and ‘inversion’.

However, modern critics find such diction problematic (perhaps with the exception of ‘inversion’), readily translatable into modern legal and medical taxonomies as ‘paedophilia’ or ‘ephebophilia’ (the latter term recently coined by Tariq Rahman for the sexual desire for pubescents).<sup>62</sup> The words ‘paedophile’ and ‘ephebophile’ are ultimate opprobriums within our official, sanctioned discourses, since an individual accused of being either is still worthy of being ‘banished to a dim region of nameless evil’, though the ‘dim region’ is now a gaol or madhouse — places relatively unchanged since the Victorian period in their characteristics and contexts, despite our preference for calling them ‘correctional facilities’ and ‘mental institutions’. Despite the pleasantries of its dubious dubbing, a ‘peace-keeper’ still retains all of the qualities of a ‘bomb’ — or, as Shakespeare asserts so floridly, ‘that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet’ (*Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, lines 43-44).

In essence, a name has no true effect upon the object to which it refers, unless that effect is imposed from the outside, as by menace, censorship, or ignorance:

‘Why, what a wonderful piece of luck!’ [the Student] cried; ‘here is a red rose! I have never seen any rose like it in all my life. It is so beautiful that I am sure it has a long Latin name’; and he leaned down and plucked it. (Oscar Wilde, ‘The Nightingale and the Rose’, p.281).

As with Wilde’s Student, overly fascinated with taxonomic classification, modern attempts at analysing or grasping the pederastic flower of the Uranians have often required such a plucking, wrenching that flower from the Greco-Roman context from which it had sprung and from which it had drawn its Latin name — as well as from the continuum in which it still blossoms today. By translating it into current, simplistic taxonomies such as ‘paedophilia’, ‘ephebophilia’, or ‘child molestation’ (scientific terms which are emotive as well as referential), or by a hubristic belief that modern taxonomic tools allow us to ‘give a name to previously unnameable masculine desire’ — scholars often forget that the beauty of such a complex flower is lost in translation, a point made by Shelley, translator of Plato’s pederastic *Symposium*, in his ‘A Defence of Poetry’:



Hence the vanity of translation; it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower — and this is the burden of the curse of Babel.<sup>63</sup>

Yet, there are other scholarly methods for handling the pederastic flower, one of which is to hide it discretely within the wider field of human desire and social interaction, to merely label it an aberrant or abhorrent manifestation of the ‘homosocial’.

### Homosocial: Foucault’s Parrot

In time to come, Marius was to depend very much on the preferences, the personal judgments, of the comrade [Flavian] who now laid his hand so brotherly on his shoulder as they left. (Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean*)<sup>64</sup>

In *Gerard Manley Hopkins and His Contemporaries: Liddon, Newman, Darwin, and Pater*, Jude V. Nixon notes: ‘Hopkins’s admission of attraction to physical beauty has sparked the charge that Hopkins had a homosexual attraction to Dolben and also, critics maintain, to Bridges himself, akin to the kind of feverish attraction [Pater’s] Marius had to Flavian’.<sup>65</sup> However, Nixon disagrees with this assessment, assuming that what is expressed by Hopkins is really buckled within Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s ‘homosocial’ conception of ‘homoerotic code’. This assumption is particularly difficult to justify in the case of Hopkins and Dolben alluded to above, especially since, as Sedgwick argues in *Between Men* (1985) and *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990), her coinage ‘homosocial’ describes a dynamic involving a triangular relationship between male attraction/repulsion and the female body, a dynamic that arises

because the paths of male entitlement, especially in the nineteenth century, required certain intense male bonds that were not readily distinguishable from the most reprobated bonds, an endemic and ineradicable state of what I am calling male homosexual panic became the normal condition of male heterosexual entitlement.<sup>66</sup>

In the case of Hopkins and Dolben, the relationship is devoid of the ‘female body’ to facilitate this Sedgwickian triangularity.

Even if homophobia does involve, as Sedgwick believes, some degree of ‘homosexual panic’ (a ready mixture of the menace, censorship, and ignorance noted above), her argument seems, nonetheless, a rather defensive attempt to squeeze Feminist gender dynamics into homoerotic or pederastic dynamics, dynamics which often exclude ‘the female’ out-of-hand and with gusto. (For an engraving by Albrecht Dürer which depicts the earliest female response to pederasty, see ‘Appendix Nine’.) William F. Shuter explains this Feminist motivation as follows: ‘In the case of Pater (and hardly in his case alone), one difficulty is the quite intelligible aspiration on the part of gay and feminist critics to occupy a common ground’.<sup>67</sup> However, this attempt ‘to occupy a common ground’ is thwarted by the pederastic response to the ‘female body’, a response which stretches back to antiquity, as is revealed in Symonds’s translation of a passage from Lucian (c. 120-180 CE):

I do not care for curls or tresses  
 Displayed in wily wildernesses  
 I do not prize the arts that dye  
 A painted cheek with hues that fly:  
 Give me a boy whose face and hand  
 Are rough with dust or circus-sand,  
 Whose ruddy flesh exhales the scent  
 Of health without embellishment :  
 Sweet to my sense is such a youth,  
 Whose charms have all the charm of truth.  
 Leave paints and perfumes, rouge, and curls,  
 To lazy, lewd Corinthian girls.<sup>68</sup>

As highly representative examples of the Uranians’ pederastic response to the ‘female body’ and its charms, consider the following, from Symonds and Theodore Wratishaw (1871-1933):

What is the charm of barren joy?  
 The well-knit body of a boy,  
     Slender and slim,  
 Why is it then more wonderful  
 Than Venus with her white breast full  
     And sweet eyes dim? (Symonds, from ‘Verses’)<sup>69</sup>

Between thine arms I find mine only bliss;  
 Ah let me in thy bosom still enjoy  
 Oblivion of the past, divinest boy,  
 And the dull ennui of a woman's kiss! (Wratislaw, from 'To a Sicilian Boy')<sup>70</sup>

While Symonds and Wratislaw voice a preference for boys, the 'Uranians proper' (as d'Arch Smith labels them), writers such as Frederick William Rolfe (1860-1913), are more manifest and misogynistic.<sup>71</sup> I wonder how Sedgwick would respond to the following scathing passage from *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole*, a passage in which Rolfe's protagonist stumbles to express, in a collage of languages, his utter revulsion for the 'female body' and its feminine trappings, a revulsion one might be tempted to call 'The Hate That Could Not Speak Its Name':

What had [his former-friend] Caliban spluttered, 'marry some nice girl — instead of sneezing at them all — heaps would jump at you, if you would condescend to ask them nicely, as you can, if you choose'. Ouph! 'Marry some nice girl with money!' — some 'nice girl' — some fille repugnante, la femelle du male, une chose horrible, tout en tignasse, en pattes rougeaudes, yeux ravagés, bouche défraîchie, talons éculés — cidevant provinciale, nippée comme une Hottentot — puis bonne à tout faire, feignante, voleuse, sale — brrr! — some coarse raucous short-legged hockey- or hunting-female hideous in hairy felt — some bulky kallipyg with swung skirts and cardboard waist and glass-balled hat-pins and fat open-work stockings and isosceles shoes — something pink-nosed and round-eyed and frisky, as inane and selfish and snappy-mannered as a lap-dog — some leek-shaped latest thing, heaving herself up from long tight lambrequins to her own bursting bosom and bonneted with a hearse-plumed jungle-crowned bath — some pretentious pompadoured image trailing satin, moving (apparently leglessly) in society — all of the mental and physical consistency of parrots crossed with jelly-fish. O god of Love, never! (pp.180-81)

For Rolfe, the 'female body' — 'a parrot crossed with a jelly-fish' — seems a species to be avoided, chided, or pitied, not a vital corner of the triangularity around which his own desires are formulated.<sup>72</sup> It is safe to assume that Rolfe would have agreed with the assessment Michael Lynch (who wrote the first article literally trumpeting Hopkins's homoeroticism, in 1979) voiced about his friend Sedgwick's 'homosocial' criticism, as Sedgwick herself has recently admitted:

Michael Lynch, a long-time pioneer of gay studies whom I met a few years later, told me his first response to *Between Men* was, 'This woman has a lot of ideas about a lot of things, but she doesn't know much about gay men!' He was so right [...] Rereading the book now, I'm brought up short, often, with dismay at the thinness of the experience on which many of its analyses and generalizations are based. Yet I'm also relieved, and proud, that its main motives and imperatives still seem so recognizable.<sup>73</sup>

Unfortunately, a score of critics continue to parrot Sedgwick's 'homosocial' criticism, never questioning 'the thinness of the experience on which many of its analyses and generalizations are based', a 'thinness' that its creator Sedgwick, in retrospect, has herself begun to question.

By employing a term like 'homosocial', a term which covers everything from a handshake to sodomy, many Feminist critics keep open the possibility of considering all men and their 'paths of male entitlement' in a similar vein: consequently, women (or at least the 'female body') can maintain an angle in Sedgwick's formerly-assumed-and-proclaimed 'homosocial' triangularity.<sup>74</sup> Since it illustrates how overly encompassing a term like 'homosocial' can be, consider an earlier, lesbian version of this concept advocated by Adrienne Rich in her 'Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence' (1980):

I have chosen to use the terms lesbian existence and lesbian continuum because the word lesbianism has a clinical and limiting ring. Lesbian existence suggests both the fact of the historical presence of lesbians and our continuing creation of the meaning of that existence. I mean the term lesbian continuum to include a range — through each woman's life and throughout history — of woman-identified experience; not simply the fact that a woman has had or consciously desired genital sexual experience with another woman. If we expand it to embrace many more forms of primary intensity between and among women, including the sharing of a rich inner life, the bonding against male tyranny, the giving and receiving of practical and political support; if we can also hear in it such associations as marriage resistance [...] we begin to grasp breadths of female history and psychology that have lain out of reach as a consequence of limited, mostly clinical, definitions of 'lesbianism'.<sup>75</sup>

This passage reveals that Rich's female 'homosocial' dynamic spans from 'genital sexual experience' to 'practical and political support' — hence, from lesbian cunnilingus to babysitting. Since the usefulness of any term as a taxonomic category is weakened by its span, and since Sedgwick's and Rich's 'homosocial' terms seem to span at least half the range of human experience, the usefulness of such terms must be rather meagre and almost primary, like the terms 'democracy', 'freedom', and 'Other'. A supreme exemplum of the utter compass of a term like 'homosocial' appears in Julia Saville's *A Queer Chivalry: The Homoerotic Asceticism of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, where she suggests that, for Hopkins,

this dynamic is also applicable to the Holy Trinity, with its ‘divine homosocial intercourse between Father and Son, realized through the bodies of men’.<sup>76</sup> In accordance with Sedgwick’s claims about the triangular relationship (or trinity) between male attraction/repulsion and the female body, it seems mandatory that Hopkins envision the Holy Ghost as female (which, it must be admitted, he often does)<sup>77</sup> — though the implication or application of this to Hopkins or his literary canon seems rather doubtful and grasping. Even in the Holy Trinity, Feminist discourse attempts to find its place, the result being that, as Dennis Sobolev complains, Saville incorporates ‘Christianity as a whole into the homoerotic rubric of psychoanalytic studies’.<sup>78</sup> At its best, such criticism considers male bonding *without* subsuming the pederastic into its overly buxom ‘homosocial’ discourse, an apt example being the following distinction made by Lesley Higgins: ‘The passages I have quoted from [Pater’s] *Plato and Platonism* suggest quite another story. In two very public fora — first the Oxford lecture hall, then the published text — Pater searched for “universal” truths within ancient Greek culture and found them in the reification of an intense homosociality and an active *paidierastia*.’<sup>79</sup> That such a ‘search’ took place in a public forum like a university lecture or a published text does not imply that Pater and his fellows actually found what they were looking for, at least on a personal level: perhaps those ‘universal truths’ about erotic desire were beyond their grasping, even if they were intrinsically ‘homosexual’, a claim to which I now turn.

## Homosexual: Celibate, but Still Looking through the Chink

We should have to say that pederasty, however great an evil in itself, was, in that time and place [Wyvern College], the only foothold or cranny left for certain good things [...] A perversion was the only chink left through which something spontaneous and uncalculating could creep in. (C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*)<sup>80</sup>

In ‘The ‘Piecemeal Peace’ of Hopkins’s Return to Oxford, 1878-1879’, Lesley Higgins argues that Hopkins, particularly as an undergraduate, neither recognised nor comprehended the ‘homoerotic’ or ‘homosexual’ elements within himself, elements that modern scholars do recognise and comprehend:

Like many Victorians — like Pater himself — the one aspect of his ‘being’ that the young Gerard Hopkins would and could not explore was his sexual identity, specifically his homoerotic sensibility. As a highly-strung, physiologically and sexually naive undergraduate, his erotic yearnings were deeply troubling to him; he was never able to differentiate clearly between the sensuous, the sensual, and the sinful. The celibacy of the priesthood provided a refuge from sexuality. Yet his artistic eye was always caught by the physically beautiful.<sup>81</sup>

The claim that Hopkins was a ‘physiologically and sexually naive undergraduate’ is particularly questionable, arising from posthumous medical evaluations like those by the psychiatrist Felix Letemendia, who concludes that ‘Hopkins was decidedly late in developing full sexual maturation, judging by his private note in [MS] C.i.217, recorded when he was nineteen-years five-months old’.<sup>82</sup> The private note to which Dr Letemendia refers begins ‘E.s.n.po. Jan.6.’ (*Facsimiles* I, p.127), a string of abbreviations which Norman H. MacKenzie suggests stands for ‘Emissio seminis nocte post Jan. 6 [1864]’, translatable into ‘a wet dream on the night following Jan. 6’ (p.127, note). However, even given that MacKenzie’s interpretation of those abbreviations is correct, the presence of this ‘wet dream’ in Hopkins’s private confession notes does not necessarily imply, as Dr Letemendia and MacKenzie assert, that Hopkins had never had such an experience before, or that he was unfamiliar with solitary pleasures of a nocturnal or masturbatory kind. For Hopkins, this ‘wet dream’ was worth noting because his High Anglican confessors,

Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-82) and Henry Parry Liddon (1829-90), had engendered in him a pharisaic scrupulosity that became something of a fetish, at least for a period: ‘The spiritual entries [like the one above] cover a period of ten troubled months from March 25, 1865, during which Hopkins was trying to reach a higher plane of spiritual life [...] They end on January 23, 1866, some two and a half years before he entered the Jesuit Novitiate’ (MacKenzie’s Introduction, *Facsimiles I*, p.4).<sup>83</sup> The sudden discontinuity in these confession notes would have drawn the speculative attention of Michel Foucault, though there is justification for the assertion that the subsequent notebook is merely no longer extant, perhaps burned by Hopkins or someone else. However, the two-and-a-half years which followed the last of these extant confession notes was an equally formative period for Hopkins, who found himself under guidance of another sort — Walter Pater and John Henry Newman (*later* Cardinal; 1801-90) — two new influences who would have had little sympathy with the pharisaic ‘Letter of the Law’ and note-taking which Pusey and Liddon espoused. Pater and Newman always opted instead for a more liberal consideration of the import behind ‘details of conscience’. It was probably with just such a liberal corrective in mind that Jowett, one of the leaders of the ultra-liberal Broad Church party, sent Hopkins to agnostic Pater for Greats coaching, as Robert Bernard Martin explains:

Jowett surely suggested Pater in the hope that he would act as a counterbalance to the dangerous influence of Liddon, whom he knew Hopkins had seen frequently in the past year or two [...] What [Jowett] had failed to notice was that Hopkins had already begun avoiding Liddon, and that in any case the influence of Pater would be far more dangerous than Liddon’s because Pater openly voiced doubts that bubbled up in Hopkins but seemed never to trouble Liddon.<sup>84</sup>

One aspect that made both Pater and Newman particularly ‘dangerous’ for this young, High Anglican undergraduate (and later Roman Catholic convert) was that each recognised the pederastic and/or homoerotic elements within himself — even if, in Newman’s case, his response to those elements was a choice of celibacy. Despite the fact

that a celibacy like Newman's has often served, to some degree, as 'a refuge from sexuality', Renee V. Overholser suggests that Hopkins nonetheless exhibited an uncanny potential for exploring his own sexuality, when he chose to do so: 'The tightly disciplined Hopkins was intensely aware of his own sexuality, monitored every word and every gesture, lost physical control only during sleep, and feared the results even then'.<sup>85</sup> This 'tightly disciplined Hopkins' — especially after he had, as a Jesuit, professed a vow of celibacy — is also the contemplation of Peter Swaab, who chooses to label Hopkins a 'homosexual' despite recognising that 'the word "homosexual" is of course anachronistic in reference to Hopkins's lifetime, but the non-anachronistic alternatives are so fussy and unwieldy that I have stayed with it — scrupulous readers should insert imaginary scare-quotes for each usage'.<sup>86</sup> Anachronism aside, the problem, according to Swaab, is the general (in)applicability of sexual categories to a celibate priest, even though this state of celibacy seems, in Hopkins's case, to have facilitated rather than suppressed his erotic expressiveness, at least poetically:

And although his religious vocation constrained and contained the expression of his sexuality, it may also have eased the problems attending a marginalized sexual identity: a vow of celibacy might by abstracting the issue of desire diminish the relevance of particular kinds of sexuality, discovering the same ambivalent possibilities in the varieties of human sexual passion. Being a Jesuit may actually have worked to enable and not to repress the sexual forthrightness of his poetry.<sup>87</sup>

The question one gleans from the above is: *Are sexual categories applicable to a professed celibate?* This question is still contentious in Hopkins scholarship, as is displayed by the most recent article on the topic, Dennis Sobolev's 'Hopkins's "Bellbright Bodies": The Dialectics of Desire in His Writings'. Although arguing that it is inherently anachronistic to claim that Hopkins was a 'homosexual' (even if imaginary scare-quotes are inserted), Sobolev nonetheless acknowledges the presence of certain 'homoerotic' elements within the poet and his poetry — though, like Swaab, he questions the applicability of sexual terminology to Hopkins:



Nothing indicates that a nineteenth-century Catholic priest could experience his homoerotic tendencies, even acknowledged and accepted, as the core of his identity. [...] What Hopkins's notebooks demonstrate is both his homoerotic leanings and his conscious and unequivocal resistance to them; nothing in these diaries indicates that he saw his homoerotic 'temptations' as either the pivotal point of his identity or an object of celebration.<sup>88</sup>

In Sobolev's analysis, the various discourses relating to Hopkins's homoeroticism and to Victorian 'taxonomies of desire' come full circle: Hopkins cannot be labelled a 'sodomite' since 'sodomy' denotes an act rather than a mode of being, commission rather than constitution. Hopkins cannot be labelled a 'homosexual' since that word, which denotes constitution rather than commission, is anachronistic in relation to Hopkins's lifetime. Hopkins cannot be labelled a person with a 'homoerotic identity' since, as a Roman Catholic priest, he could neither conscientiously commit homoerotic acts nor embrace a homoerotic constitution — hence, he had nothing with which to bastion such an 'identity'. At most, Hopkins's eroticism becomes, for Sobolev, a buckling of disconcerting tendencies: a tendency towards 'sodomy', a tendency towards 'homosexuality', a tendency towards embracing a 'homoerotic identity'. Recognising that, given the extant biographical and literary evidence, an absolute avoidance of Hopkins's homoeroticism is no longer possible, Sobolev nonetheless constructs a Hopkins who is beyond the bounds of homoerotic consideration or should be, a Hopkins who was himself the foremost advocate of *the absolute avoidance of Hopkins's homoeroticism*, a homoeroticism which was merely a bundle of dismissed 'homoerotic tendencies'. Recast in the language of contemporary Christian polemics (intentionally or not), Sobolev's Hopkins becomes merely the possessor of certain 'tendencies', tendencies which, when they surfaced, were cast aside by Hopkins in disgust — or, to phrase this in accordance with current Roman Catholic doctrine, Hopkins overcame an 'objective disorder',<sup>89</sup> an 'intrinsically disordered inclination',<sup>90</sup> through prayer and supplication, though an act of conscious choice in accordance with traditional Church teaching on the immorality of homoerotic acts and indulged desires (as derived from Genesis 19.1-11; Leviticus 18.22,

20.13; 1 Corinthians 6.9; Romans 1.18-32; 1 Timothy 1.10). Hence, in order to lead a fuller Christian life, Hopkins ameliorated, changed, or prevented the development of a 'homoerotic identity', transcending his difficult 'tendencies' by exercising a form of internal Christian censure that, Sobolev emphasises, is revealed in his undergraduate confession notes.

However, what Sobolev and others fail to acknowledge is that these confession notes in Hopkins's 'diaries' (confession notes which scholars often link to his later Roman Catholicism and vow of celibacy) date from a period when Hopkins, still a High Anglican undergraduate, had made a fetish for taking such confession notes, a practise recommended to him by Pusey and Liddon, both of whom were equally fetishistic in this regard. Nevertheless, after Hopkins had made contact, personally or textually, with Pater, Newman, Duns Scotus, various Jesuits, and many others besides, Hopkins seems to have given up this fetish, or at least to have diminished it significantly. Although Hopkins may have changed substantially after abandoning the practice of filling notebooks with sins and scruples, he clearly did not change or prevent his own erotic desires, as his Uranian poetry, a cornucopia of pederastic and homoerotic nuances, bountifully displays. (This is explored more fully in 'Chapter Three'.) Despite his vow of celibacy — or partially facilitated by it, as Swaab suggests — Hopkins's erotic desires found full expression through voyeurism, fantasy, poetry, and innuendo ... if not in act. Seen in this way, Hopkins becomes one of those at Oxford who, by the 1860s, had begun to express homoerotic and pederastic desires through voyeurism, flirtation, letters, and Classically inspired verse. He becomes one of those linked, at least on the level of desire, with that wider continuum stretching from Classical Greece to the present day, a continuum which, within the pederastic and homoerotic 'taxonomies of desire', would be aptly labelled 'Uranian'.

Approaching these pederastic and homoerotic ‘taxonomies of desire’, particularly the pederastic, has always been a delicate issue for scholarship, and not just for Hopkins scholarship. By attempting absolute avoidance, claiming anachronism, heightening the ‘homosocial’, or labelling as ‘homosexual’ (often despite those occasional vows of celibacy), Victorianists have ‘moved with so much embarrassment’, embarrassment which is not solely theirs or of their own scholarly creating. This embarrassment, especially in regard to the pederastic, permeates modern Western culture because individuals like Hopkins posit a form of love, intimacy, and erotic expression which our social, medical, ethical, religious, political, scholarly, and familial powers consider maladjusted, psychotic, immoral, sinful, fringe, objectionable, and/or intrusive. The very existence of these individuals constitutes an eccentric positionality which our culture recognises can be exploited and explored as a critique, variant, alternative, or challenge to its own more accepted modes of love and physical intimacy. This collective ‘embarrassment’ particularly surfaces in those cases where our culture must — as in the case of Hopkins — recognise the importance or superiority of such an individual, despite his ‘suspect’ erotic desires or actions. This collective ‘embarrassment’ is displayed clearly in a review that appeared in *The Economist* in February 1993, a review of a new supplement to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, a supplement titled *Missing Persons*. Despite the fact that 1,086 individuals have found inclusion in the *DNB* through this supplement, the anonymous reviewer, in a less-than-two-page critique, considers the inclusion of three individuals whom I will consider at some length in this dissertation as Uranians. The reviewer dismissively notes that one individual was included in the *DNB* because he was ‘very young (Digby Dolben [...] died at the age of 19)’, and more optimistically that ‘some are included because they were genuine “discoveries” by a later age. Gerard

Manley Hopkins's poetry was not published until 30 years after his death'. However, what is most noteworthy is that, out of the 1,086 individuals who have found inclusion through this supplement to the *DNB* — even though the reviewer notes the inclusion of 'murderers (Christie, Peace)' — the reviewer states that 'the vilest person here commemorated is probably Frederick Rolfe, "Baron Corvo"'. What makes Rolfe the 'vilest person here commemorated', viler even than those murderers, is undoubtedly that he was a Uranian writer and a practising pederast — and an unrepentant one at that.<sup>91</sup> For modern Western culture, there is at least one 'sin' viler than murder, and that is actualised pederasty. Moreover, the vilest of the vile are the Uranians and their fellows, those scurrilous free spirits who are always posing a problem, who are always worthy of exclusion, who are always embarrassing the 'collective we' by drawing our attention to 'the problem of the boy'.

### ‘The Divine Friend, Unknown, Most Desired’: The Problematic Uranians

Thus Aschenbach felt an obscure sense of satisfaction at what was going on in the dirty alleyways of Venice, cloaked in official secrecy.  
(Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice*)<sup>92</sup>

*Der Tod in Venedig (Death in Venice)* dates from 1912, the year after Thomas Mann (1875-1955), on holiday with his wife in Venice, had fallen in love with a boy named Wladyslaw Moes (1900-86), an almost-eleven-year-old Polish aristocrat who was addressed by his childhood companions as 'Wladzio', a diminutive which Mann misheard as 'Tadzio'.<sup>93</sup> Mann would later assert the authenticity of the Venetian experiences captured in his novella:

Nothing is invented in *Death in Venice*. The ‘pilgrim’ at the North Cemetery, the dreary Pola boat, the grey-haired rake, the sinister gondolier, Tazio and his family, the journey interrupted by a mistake about the luggage, the cholera, the upright clerk at the travel bureau, the rascally ballad singer, all that and anything else you like, they were all there.<sup>94</sup>

His wife Katia’s *Unwritten Memoirs* (1875) is far more revealing:

On the very first day, we saw the Polish family, which looked exactly the way my husband described them: the girls were dressed rather stiffly and severely, and the very charming, beautiful boy of about thirteen [*sic*] was wearing a sailor suit with an open collar and very pretty lacings. He caught my husband’s attention immediately. This boy was tremendously attractive, and my husband was always watching him with his companions on the beach. He didn’t pursue him through all of Venice — that he didn’t do — but the boy did fascinate him, and he thought of him often.<sup>95</sup>

Also there in 1911, wandering about ‘the dirty alleyways of Venice’ and sharing Mann’s erotic interest in young Tazios, was another writer, though these two never met, as far as anyone knows. Frederick William Rolfe, donning the pseudo-pseudonym<sup>96</sup> of Baron Corvo, arrived in Venice in 1908 and remained there until his death five years later. With Mann’s voyeuristic novella; Rolfe’s tantalisingly autobiographical *Desire and Pursuit of the Whole* (1910); J. A. Symonds’s *In the Key of Blue and Other Essays* (1893); part of Henry James’s ‘Pupil’ (1891); and a dozen lesser works, literary or pictorial — Venice had indeed become, for the late-Victorians and beyond, the pederastic stage, the Uranian playground.

While Stephen Jay Greenblatt has made currency of the concept of ‘Elizabethan self-fashioning’, that concept (though not exactly in an identical sense) is also applicable to one group during the ‘Second English Renaissance’, that period dubbed by its own members as ‘Victorian’. This ‘self-fashioned’ group was the Uranians. Amid a world of decorous behaviour, these Uranian writers and artists became the ultimate outsiders, outsiders whose desires and pursuits were particularly pederastic in nature, hence beyond the pale of possible disclosure or acceptance in proper society, and best expressed in a place like Venice. Their voyeuristic posturing — a proximity to the object of desire without that distance being defeated, at least artistically — constitutes a distinct temperament unique in English letters (though this temperament, of course, extends

beyond them to writers such as Thomas Mann). However, the arguable immorality and assured illegality of their desires resulted in a form of self-fashioning no less marked than that of their Elizabethan predecessors, though taking a different stance, a stance gilded by an astonishing degree of secrecy. Rolfe's own self-fashioning — 'History As It Ought To Have Been And Very Well Might Have Been, But Wasn't' (*Desire*, p.45)<sup>97</sup> — is most clearly displayed in his novel *Hadrian the Seventh* (1904), a novel that concerns a convert who becomes, through serendipitous circumstances, the Pope. Rolfe was himself the convert George Arthur Rose, and the papacy never within his scope; however, in fantasy, in 'history as it ought to have been', anything was possible, even the expression of pontifical authority and pederastic desires.

Besides the self-fashioned and flamboyant Baron Corvo, there are roughly forty other Uranian poets and a score of prose writers and artists who constitute a pederastic tradition currently chronicled by only one book — Timothy d'Arch Smith's *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* (for a list of these poets, see 'Appendix Ten').<sup>98</sup> This book's subtitle, 'Some Notes', expresses the inherent difficulty in reconstructing the Uranian atmosphere — even in a place like Venice — a difficulty which arises, in part, from the group's overt or covert discretions, its members often sacrificing or breaking with their fellows as necessity required.

A striking example of such a breach is Walter Pater's review of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (I consider this in detail in 'Chapter Five'). Asked by Oscar Wilde to provide a congenial review, Pater instead took the occasion not to flatter, elucidate, or cloak, but to distance himself as much as possible from both Dorian and his corrupter, Lord Henry — both of whom were clearly modelled on himself and the ideas he had expressed in his volume *The Renaissance*. This review, published in the periodical *The*

*Bookman* in November 1891, claimed that the murdered Basil was the ultimate and beneficial expression of ‘true Epicureanism’, and decried the flagrant and sordid sensuality that Wilde’s novel presents and represents.<sup>99</sup> This review severed a fourteen-year friendship between these two writers, Pater choosing discretion over friendship. Wilde’s cultivations in love and in literature had become too outspoken and, consequently, dangerous for Pater, who began, in turn, to cultivate as much distance between himself and his friend, in person and in print, as courtesy would allow. Another example is Pater’s response to the fate of Simeon Solomon (1840-1905), a brilliant young artist from a Jewish family, an artist whose friends and style were particularly Pre-Raphaelite. Despite the overt homoeroticism of much of his artwork, Solomon’s future seemed assured — well, until he was arrested with George Roberts on 11 February 1873, charged with indecent exposure and attempting to commit sodomy; and, on 24 March, sentenced to eighteen months in prison, a sentence later reduced to a period under police supervision.<sup>100</sup> Expecting the sudden reappearance of this convicted ‘sodomite’ into their Decadent circle, ‘[Algernon Charles] Swinburne, Pater, and [Ingram] Bywater met by arrangement in Oxford on May 23<sup>rd</sup> to consider how they might deal with the situation of their “wandering Jew”’.<sup>101</sup> Swinburne opted to obliterate, as best he could, all traces of his former intimacy with the painter.<sup>102</sup> Although Swinburne enjoyed hinting to his friends that he had himself experimented with such ‘wandering’, he tended to distance himself from those who ‘wandered’ into court or who published avowals (Swinburne would later sneer at the recently deceased J. A. Symonds, a rival for Jowett’s affections, as ‘the Platonic amorist of blue-breeched gondoliers who is now in Aretino’s bosom’<sup>103</sup>). Solomon’s subsequent arrest on similar charges on 3 March 1874 (having been discovered *in flagrante delicto* with a certain Raphael-Maximilien Dumont in a public urinal near the Bourse) and his sentence of three months in a French prison<sup>104</sup> — these sounded Solomon’s ‘social death-

knell' as far as Pater and most of his circle were concerned. Although Pater's affection for Solomon as a person and his admiration for him as an artist would continue, in 1876 he refused to name Solomon directly amidst considerations of the painter's *Bacchus* (1866; see 'Appendix Eleven'), mentioning only 'a Bacchus by a young Hebrew painter, in the exhibition of the Royal Academy of 1868 [*sic*]'.<sup>105</sup> Forced to choose between his own protection and continued friendship, Pater always opted for the former, hoping not to find himself (as Wilde eventually would) a defendant in a trial where textual suggestion might shade into legal transcription.

With the above in mind, it is perhaps not surprising that, in most cases, relationships among the members of the Uranian circle were entirely textual, traceable only through bookplates, inscriptions, dedications, and acceptance letters.<sup>106</sup> An example of this textual insinuation is found in the relationship between J. A. Symonds, Professor John Conington (1825-69), and William Johnson (*later* Cory). After 'Symonds found himself at Balliol [College, Oxford,] in the autumn of 1858 in a world where perfervid friendships between undergraduates, and to a lesser extent between undergraduates and dons, were commonplace if not quite unremarkable',<sup>107</sup> Professor Conington presented him with a gift copy of *Ionica* (1858),<sup>108</sup> a collection of poems by his own friend Johnson, a collection tinged with pederasty. Impulsively, '[Symonds] wrote to Johnson at Eton, receiving in reply "a long epistle on paderastia in modern times, defending it and laying down the principle that affection between people of the same sex is no less natural and rational than the ordinary passionate relations"'.<sup>109</sup> This was the usual method of Uranian exchange and insinuation. Donoghue notes a similar process in the relationship between Pater and Wilde:

In July 1877 Wilde published an article on the Grosvenor Gallery in the *Dublin University Magazine* and sent a copy of it to Pater. A few references to Greek islands, handsome boys, and Correggio's paintings of adolescent beauty alerted Pater to the writer's disposition. He thanked Wilde for the article, praised the cultivated tastes it displayed, and invited him to make 'an early call upon your return to Oxford'.<sup>110</sup>



That those with a Uranian ‘disposition’ discussed pederasty and forms of the homoerotic (whether Classical or contemporary) among themselves, in private or by letter, can be taken for granted — I fancy that, when Wilde called upon Pater after his return to Oxford, they discussed not cricket but cricketers, not bats but balls — however, of such conversations and correspondence, what remains is usually only hearsay, conjecture, or occasional comments like the following to Marc-André Raffalovich (1864-1934; later the lover of John Gray, who had been Wilde’s lover at the time of the publication of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*), a comment made by Wilde’s wife Constance: ‘Oscar says he likes you so much — that you have such nice improper talks together’.<sup>111</sup> Substantiating or elucidating such second-hand statements is often problematised or thwarted because the Uranians frequently burned their own correspondence and diaries (or their friends and families did so) — or, as in the case of Pater, they covered their tracks by avoiding both. The diary of Charles Edward Sayle (1864-1924) provides an example of why such was often the case: in one entry Sayle relates that he had dreamed that his friend Horatio Forbes Brown (1854-1926; a sometimes friend of Rolfe’s whose parties were a feature of Venetian life) was ‘in a state of complete nudity, indecisive of what to use for a fig-leaf — a page of his own poems? or mine?’<sup>112</sup> For the Uranians, that fig-leaf of discretion and diversion was paper thin, allowing their private parts to show through.

Also heightening their biographical and literary obscurity is that the Uranians often printed their volumes privately and circulated them only among their fellows, which requires a biographer or literary critic dealing with the Uranians to be equally an archaeologist and an archivist. Frequently, the history of the Uranians is contained only in the sales catalogues of auction houses such as Sotheby’s and Christie’s, with the artwork going into the hands of private collectors such as Seymour Stein, who acquired Solomon’s

*Bacchus* (1866; the painting Pater mentions as by ‘a young Hebrew painter’) for a mere £28,000 in 1993.<sup>113</sup>

For their own more private and masturbatory purposes, the Uranians collected artwork of a different sort: nudes of Italian boys by photographers such as Wilhelm von Gloeden (1856-1931; residing in Taormina, Sicily) and his distant relative Wilhelm von Plüschow (1852-1930; residing mostly in Rome)<sup>114</sup> — photographs which have themselves become collectables dispersed by auction houses and chronicled in sales catalogues. However, for the Uranian scholar, catalogues have much to tell, and von Gloeden’s guest book was itself a catalogue of the pederastically inclined, including the signature of Oscar Wilde, one of von Gloeden’s staunchest admirers.<sup>115</sup> Like children with packets of baseball cards, the Uranians exchanged these salacious photographs as a form of pictorial insinuation and friendship. In a New Year’s Eve letter of 1889, Edmund Gosse (1849-1928) thanks Symonds for sending him one of these photographs, undoubtedly a Christmas gift: ‘As I sat in the Choir [of Westminster Abbey during Robert Browning’s funeral], with George Meredith at my side, I peeped at it again and again’.<sup>116</sup> (Some representative photographs by von Gloeden are included as ‘Appendix Twelve’.) Boys will be boys — but there were real dangers involved in such exchanges and glances, though the Uranians had, it must be admitted, an ‘ability to devise elegant stratagems to legitimize sexual display’.<sup>117</sup> It is difficult to imagine, however, an ‘elegant stratagem’ which could have ‘legitimized’ Gosse’s constant peeping at a provocatively posed Italian boy during Browning’s funeral — but, for the Uranians, the danger was half the pleasure, as it was for Browning’s Duke of Ferrara.<sup>118</sup>

‘All things I love are dangerous’ was a self-assessment by Marc-André Raffalovich, a young poet from Paris who, after moving to England, joined the Uranian circle despite Sidney Colvin’s warning ‘to have nothing to do with Symonds or Pater, a

warning the recipient ostentatiously ignored'.<sup>119</sup> Besides being a collector of 'dangerous' friends, Raffalovich was also an avid collector of their 'dangerous' works, exercising much the same discrimination that Pater praises in his review of Colvin's *Children in Italian and English Design*: 'You feel that beyond mere knowledge, mere intellectual discrimination, each [phase of art] is a distinct thing for [Colvin], and yields him a distinct savour'.<sup>120</sup> In this volume reviewed by Pater, Colvin considers at length the ways that William Blake's texts and illustrations form decorative units: this very quality, to a lesser extent, has proven the 'distinct savour', the saving grace of the 'dangerous' Uranian collectables that Colvin's friend Raffalovich so loved. In the twentieth century and today, these Uranian collectables, whether visual or textual, have become most prized, though for different, more respectable reasons, especially concerning the textual: fine papers, exquisite bindings, and general rarity (making it no surprise that the only chronicler of the Uranians, Timothy d'Arch Smith, has been both a collector and a dealer in rare book).<sup>121</sup> As a result, many of the Uranian works — so ostentatious, so well crafted, so elegant — have disappeared into private collections like Stein's or have not surfaced again since auctions over fifty years ago.

A case in point: in 2002, William Dailey Rare Books of Los Angeles sold, for \$2,000, Raffalovich's own copy of Sayle's poem *Bertha: A Story of Love*, published in a limited edition by Kegan Paul in 1885. What is of interest to a book collector is its

orig. blue cloth, lettered in gilt, blocked in gilt with a device of a sail (a pun on the author's name) designed by [Edward] Burne-Jones. 1 corner worn, light wear to boards, several spots of foxing to flyleaf, otherwise fine. With 3 bookplates of Marc-André Raffalovich, rubber-stamp of the Dominican fathers, & the bookplate of Timothy d'Arch Smith.<sup>122</sup>

Such is the view of an antiquarian, concerned with curio and rarity. However, to a scholar or biographer of the Uranian movement, this book is nearly priceless (prompting me to wonder how d'Arch Smith could ever have parted with it), for it bears three bookplates affixed by Raffalovich, to whom the book was originally presented. The book's ultimate

value is not contained in its ornamental binding, but in the traces it provides of a line of Uranian descent, exchange, and intimacy, linking undeniably Sayle and Raffalovich.<sup>123</sup> Another striking example of such a volume is William Johnson's *Ionica*, a 'classic paean to romantic paiderastia'<sup>124</sup> privately published in a limited edition by Smith, Elder & Co. in 1858, and bound together with *Ionica II* in 1877, a copy of which is currently for sale by R. F. G. Hollett & Son, a bookseller in Sedbergh, Cumbria, for \$1,557 (another copy, in a less exquisite binding, is currently for sale by William Dailey Rare Books for a mere \$1,000).<sup>125</sup> However, those volumes all pale into antiquarian insignificance next to the copy of *Ionica* currently for sale for \$60,000 by John Windle Antiquarian Bookseller of San Francisco, whose catalogue entry reads:

Small 8vo, 169 x 105 mm. Full blue morocco extra, covers semé with a field of tiny gilt dots (tool 5m), gilt borders of tiny three-pointed leaves (tool 7d) and dots, flat back with bands tooled in six panels, lettered in gilt, gilt edges gauffred with same three-pointed leaf tool, turn-ins tooled at the corners, signed in the back 18C\*S89. Enclosed in a later cloth box, a superb copy, essentially flawless.

One of the finest and plainest of all [Cobden Sanderson] bindings. [...] The book has been unlocated since it was commissioned by Bain and sold to the Hon. C. W. Mills M. P. in 1890. Tidcombe 96 ('unlocated'). [...] The last example to have sold was in Breslauer cat. 110, #228 (\$90,000; sold to Otto Schaefer, resold at auction, later with Pirages and sold). 'The greatest English bookbinder since Roger Payne ... bindings by [Cobden Sanderson] himself are of the greatest rarity as most of them are in permanent collections ... [Sanderson] not only renewed the art of bookbinding in the English-speaking world, but also in Europe, except for France'.<sup>126</sup>

As the above volumes and their accompanying price-tags reveal, the legacy of the Uranians has seen a diaspora, though a diaspora which has served, in a unique way, to preserve that legacy, even if only as mere antiquarian artefacts and collectables — a state of affairs that Michael H. Harris does not consider detrimental but perhaps beneficial:

The debt owed by society in general to private collectors of books and manuscripts can hardly be overestimated. Although their range of interest is often narrow and their holdings are for years removed from the public view, the end results of their collecting have proven to be of benefit to all humankind. [...] Moreover, [these books and manuscripts] are often kept in far better condition in private libraries than they would have been in public ones.<sup>127</sup>

Beyond the privately published, the exquisitely bound, and the thoroughly dispersed, the rarest of Uranian texts often existed or still exist as vulnerable manuscripts,

the most significant example of such a text which was endangered-then-rescued being Rolfe's *Desire and Pursuit of the Whole*, first published in 1934 in conjunction with A. J. A. Symons's *Quest for Corvo: An Experiment in Biography*, which is the chronicle of Symons's adventure unearthing Rolfe's manuscripts as well as the details of Rolfe's salacious life, details thinly veiled behind the fig-leaf of Rolfe's *Desire*. Symons's acquisition and preservation of these manuscripts has served to resuscitate Rolfe's notoriety, if not his literary standing (and now to allow his appearance in the *DNB* as the 'vilest person here commemorated'). More recently, Rolfe's literary standing has indeed been enhanced — by the novelist A. S. Byatt, whose *Possession: A Romance* (winner of the 1990 Booker Prize) was heavily inspired by Symons's 'detectival adventure'. Further, Byatt provided the introduction to the recent edition of Symons's *Quest for Corvo*, an introduction which trumpets the value of this experimental biography of Rolfe: '[I] reread it every few years [...] I have learned much from it about how to construct novels and how to think about human lives'.<sup>128</sup> Had Rolfe's manuscript novel — which Symons, its pursuer, dubbed '[Rolfe's] last self-portrait'<sup>129</sup> — been destroyed ('Rolfe's brothers Herbert and Percy saw the novel; Percy recommended burning it'<sup>130</sup>), the loss would have been substantial; for, as d'Arch Smith asserts, *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole* is 'one of the finest homosexual novels ever written'.<sup>131</sup>

As far as Rolfe's novel is concerned, I will forgo the impish pleasures that its protagonist Nicholas Crabbe derives from exposing the hypocrisies of the other English expatriates in Venice and from throwing vitriol on his former friends back in England (both of which constitute substantial portions of the text). What is more striking, for my purposes, is Crabbe's relationship with his gondolier, 'such an ordinary-looking working-boy [...] such an innocent expert well-knit frank boy' (*Desire*, p.52), a boy with only one flaw:

[Nicholas] always laid singular and particular stress upon the influence of her phenomenally perfect boyishness — not her sexlessness, not her masculinity, but her boyishness [...] She looked like a boy: she could do, and did do, boy's work, and did it well: she had been used to pass as a boy, and to act as a boy; and she preferred it: that way lay her taste and inclination: she was competent in that capacity. [...] A youth knows and asserts his uneasy virility: a girl assiduously insinuates her femininity. [Gilda] came into neither category. She was simply a splendid strapping boy — excepting for the single fact that she was not a boy, but a girl. (pp.48-49)

This is Uranian self-fashioning taking a rather Elizabethan twist, for the ensuing dalliance and the eventual erotic consummation which concludes the novel would have been untenable if Zildo the boy-gondolier were not, in actuality, the boyish Gilda whom Nicholas had pulled from a pile of rubble after an earthquake, an act which drove the resuscitated Gilda to swear her perpetual servitude in the only capacity in which Nicholas needed a servant — as his gondolier. However, after this episode has been duly explained and its import supplied, the writer and the reader proceed to forget that the boy is not a boy, which brings them into constant proximity — but only proximity — with the ultimate object of Rolfe's desire:

[Zildo's] cleansing operations [on the boat] brought him near his master's chair. He crept balancing along the gunwale with his cloth, to polish the prow. As he came crawling back, a little shy breath of night sighingly lifted and spread the splendour of the fair plume waving in noble ripples on his brow. Nicholas had a sudden impulse to blow it, just for the sensuous pleasure of seeing its beauty in movement again — it was within a hand's length of his lips.

'To land', he instantly commanded, checking himself with a shock, sternly governing mind with will. [...] But, perhaps Zildo would not have snubbed him? 'So much the worse, o fool! Hast thou time or occasion for dalliance?' Thus, he reigned up his soul, prone to sink, prompt to soar. (*Desire*, pp.107-08)

Or this scene, more tauntingly tactile and sensual:

And then, all of a sudden, on this iridescent morning of opals in January, when the lips of Zildo touched the hand of Nicholas, owner of lips and owner of hand experienced a single definite shock: an electric shiver tingled through their veins: hot blood went surging and romping through their hearts: a blast, as of rams' horns, sang in their ears and rang in their beings; and down went all sorts of separations. They were bewitched. They were startled beyond measure. [...] [Nicholas] thrust the whole affair out of his mind. Zildo was worthy of all praise — as a servant. And — custodia oculorum — it might be as well not to look at Zildo quite so much. (*Desire*, pp.122-23)

The passages above display typical Uranian posturing — an aesthetic proximity to the object of desire without that voyeuristic distance being transgressed — 'History As It Ought To Have Been And Very Well Might Have Been, But Wasn't'. For, to come too close often brought the actual into absolute contrast with the thing desired, but not always.

Rolfe's letters from Venice (private, but fortunately not destroyed), display how this desirous proximity found itself expressed in everyday life, 'History As It Was':

A Sicilian ship was lying alongside the quay and armies of lusty youths were dancing down long long planks with sacks on their shoulders which they delivered in a warehouse ashore. The air was filled with a cloud of fine white floury dust from the sacks which powdered the complexions of their carriers most deliciously and the fragrance of it was simply heavenly. As I stopped to look a minute one of the carriers attracted my notice. They were all half naked and sweating. I looked a second time as his face seemed familiar. He was running up a plank. And he also turned to look at me. Seeing my gaze he made me a sign for a cigarette. I grabbed at my pockets but hadn't got one; and shook my head. He ran on into the ship. I ran off to the nearest baccy shop and came back with a packet of cigs and a box of matches to wait at the foot of his plank. Presently he came down the plank dancing staggering under a sack. I watched him. Such a lovely figure, young, muscular, splendidly strong, big black eyes, rosy face, round black head, scented like an angel. As he came out again running (they are watched by guards all the time) I threw him my little offering. 'Who are you?' 'Amadeo Amadei' (lovely mediæval name). The next time, 'What are you carrying?' 'Lily-flowers for soap-making'. The next time, 'Where have I seen you?' 'Assistant gondolier one day with Piero last year' — then — 'Sir, Round Table' [the name of a pederastic brothel]. [...] I'm going to that ship again to-morrow morning. I want to know more.<sup>132</sup>

Did Rolfe return the next day? If so, did this lead to more than cigarettes, rapid banter, and insinuation? Had the next letter been destroyed, as Rolfe had requested, the answer to these questions would have remained forever elusive: but, it was not. Returning the next day, Rolfe invited the boy to an empty wine-shop where, while the proprietor slept, the boy performed a strip tease, told Rolfe about his erotic adventures and techniques, and boldly offered himself to Rolfe in any way he might desire, without charge.<sup>133</sup> This was a moment pregnant with possibilities. Yet, despite their shared arousal, they never even touched, which allowed Rolfe to revel instead in the voyeuristic spectacle and its potential, allowed him to experience an aesthetic proximity to the object of his desire without that distance being transgressed — for Rolfe desired much more than touches, or seemed to. Such spectacles and their attendant pleasures — 'what was going on in the dirty alleyways of Venice' — were what had turned this locality, for the late-Victorians and beyond, into the pederastic stage. This Venetian ambience, with its potential for flagrant dalliance with willing boys like Amadeo, was what inspired Rolfe to write *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole*, and to wander about Venice, despite perennial destitution, until he lay dying of double pneumonia. Like Mann's Gustav von Aschenbach, Rolfe would die with his

imagination scanning a shoreline full of young gondoliers and bathing boys, still waiting for his own Tadzio or Zildo, a boy who would offer more than physical caresses, a *Divo Amico Ignoto Desideratissimo* — ‘The Divine Friend, Unknown, Most Desired’ (see ‘Appendix Thirteen’ for Rolfe’s grave; ‘Appendix Fourteen’ for what was meant by a ‘Venetian bather’ and for one of Rolfe’s photographs). This ‘Divine Friend’ was, in fact, the fictive beloved to whom Rolfe had dedicated his novel *Don Renato: An Ideal Content: A Historical Romance* (1909).<sup>134</sup> These two aspects — the ‘unknown’ and the ‘most desired’ — encapsulate the Uranian movement and its elusiveness, encapsulate its desire for physical contact as well as for romance, its desire for self-protection as well as to be known, this last aspect often pondered by Mann in his diaries:

Why do I write this? In order simply to destroy it all at some appropriate time before I die? Or because I wish the world to *know* me? I believe the world does know me more than it lets on, at least the cognoscenti do, without needing this much more from me.<sup>135</sup>

If this strand of pederastic writers is ever to be properly engaged or known, it will probably be through Gerard Manley Hopkins, for only in the case of Hopkins do we find a poetry of grandeur blended with Uranian sentiment. Laid alongside Hopkins’s poetry, the poetry of the others seems facile, the prose equally so (despite the costliness of their volumes and the mastery displayed in their bindings), such that only in Walter Pater — and to a limited extent in Henry James — does this sentiment ever reach high art. However, it is because of three other aspects that Hopkins also lends himself to such a choice. Firstly, Hopkins detested the self-fashioning distinctly this group’s, or at least he claimed to (I will throw a degree of doubt on this in ‘Chapter Two’). While Rolfe’s *nom de plume* of ‘Baron Corvo’ allows him to be both playful and scathing,<sup>136</sup> its absence allows Hopkins a self-honesty equally comic and brutal. It is this degree of honesty that makes Hopkins unique among the Uranians, recalling Hopkins’s boyhood motto, ‘To be rather than seem’.<sup>137</sup> Secondly, Hopkins almost always speaks from his own distinct



perspective, unlike Pater who ‘rarely speaks for himself; normally he lets his feelings emerge from his attention to something else, a group of paintings, a story from Greece, Lamb’s essays, Sir Thomas Browne’s tone, Wordsworth’s poems’.<sup>138</sup> Thirdly, as an anonymous reviewer made clear half a century ago in *The Times Literary Supplement*: ‘No modern poet has been critically commented on in more detail. [...] Rarely has a poet attracted such a burden of documentation and commentary’.<sup>139</sup> His poems, letters, journals, confession notes, as well as the ‘biographically known’ (such as his perpetual friendship with Pater), enable us to reconstruct Hopkins’s Uranian desires and his responses to them more fully than those of others such as Rolfe or Pater, with Wilde perhaps serving as the only other who lends himself to such attention, despite his praise, emanating from the mouth of Vivian in *The Decay of Lying*, for ‘the temper of the true liar, with his frank, fearless statements, his superb irresponsibility, his healthy, natural disdain of proof of any kind!’ (p.1072). However, Wilde has been thoroughly subjected to such or similar considerations — though not often concerning his pederastic desires.

Hopkins is the most obvious bull’s eye for future Uranian scholarship, which is made pointedly clear by a manuscript fragment found among his papers after his death:

Denis,  
 Whose motionable, alert, most vaulting wit  
 Caps occasion with an intellectual fit.  
 Yet Arthur is a Bowman: his three-heeled timber’ll hit  
 The bald and bold blinking gold when all’s done  
 Right rooting in the bare butt’s wincing navel in the sight of the sun. (*OET*, p.155)

‘His three-heeled timber [...] Right rooting in the bare butt’s wincing navel’ is a fitting description of the pedicating on the Warren Cup, pointedly phallic and anal imagery that most Victorian scholars hope not to see ‘bald and bold’ in ‘the sight of the sun’.<sup>140</sup> For most scholars, the salacious is best ignored, especially in terms of these Uranians, though this is difficult to do in Hopkins’s case, since his letters, journals, and confession notes

augment the erotic subtexts or ‘underthoughts’ of his poetry, with Hopkins’s main subtext continually surfacing, as it does in a letter to his friend Coventry Patmore (1823-96):

Everyone has some one fault he is tender to and vice he tolerates. We do this ourselves, but when another does it towards another vice not our own favourite (of tolerance, I do not say of commission) we are disgusted. The *Saturday Review* contrasting the Catholic and Protestant ideal of a schoolboy came out with the frank truth, that it looked on chastity as a feminine virtue (= lewdness a masculine one: it was not quite so raw as I put it, but this was the meaning). (24 September 1883, *Letters* III, p.308)<sup>141</sup>

Directly after observing that ‘everyone has some one fault he is tender to and vice he tolerates’ — an observation which could easily have provided Hopkins with a full plethora of human faults and vices on which to comment — he turns immediately to the question of the ‘ideal of a schoolboy’, to the question of schoolboy lewdness and its toleration at public schools, a toleration which another poet, Rupert Brooke, was later reported to have observed while temporarily a housemaster at Rugby: ‘What is the whole duty of a housemaster? To prepare boys for Confirmation, and turn a blind eye on sodomy’.<sup>142</sup> Obviously, Hopkins never strays very far from the proximity of the ‘fault he is tender to’, the ‘fault’ that provides his Uranian theme. This proximity is evident in the last letter he wrote before his death to his closest friend Robert Bridges (1844-1930):

Who is Miss Cassidy? She is an elderly lady who by often asking me down to Monasterevan and by the change and holiday her kind hospitality provides is become one of the props and struts of my existence [...] Outside Moore Abbey, which is a beautiful park, the country is flat, bogs and river and canals. [...] The country has nevertheless a charm. The two beautiful young people live within an easy drive. (29 April 1889, *Letters* I, pp.305-06)

With typical Uranian finesse, Hopkins constructs here a description both playful and telling, undoubtedly leaving Bridges to wonder whether the Monasterevan countryside, for all its flatness and bogginess, ‘has nevertheless a charm’ — or, whether the Monasterevan countryside ‘has nevertheless a charm’, one charm, that two beautiful young people live nearby, particularly ‘the youngest boy Leo [Wheble] [...] a remarkably winning sweetmannered young fellow’ (Letter to his mother, 25 December 1887, *Letters* III, p.183). Hopkins can often be found tantalisingly close to the object of his pederastic desire, in close proximity to countryside dangers moral or sexual, ‘within an easy drive’.

However, the city could also afford such dangers — and a diary entry made by Mark Pattison (1813-84) on 5 May 1878 leaves one to wonder how Hopkins, appointed to a Jesuit curacy in Oxford in December of that year, could have claimed so matter-of-factly: ‘By the by, when I was at Oxford Pater was one of the men I saw most of’ (22 May 1880, *Letters* III, p.246). Pattison’s diary entry reads:

To Pater’s to tea, where Oscar Browning [...] was more like Socrates than ever. He conversed in one corner with 4 feminine looking youths ‘paw dandling’ there in one fivesome, while the Miss Paters & I sate looking on in another corner — Presently Walter Pater, who, I had been told, was ‘upstairs’ appeared, attended by 2 more youths of similar appearance.<sup>143</sup>

Oscar Browning (1837-1923), who had been sacked from Eton in September 1875 under suspicion of pederasty, partly because of his involvement with young George Curzon (1859-1925; later Viceroy of India)<sup>144</sup>, ‘paw dandling’ with four feminine youths in a corner — that was a rather tactile situation to be certain. Pater, who was said to be ‘upstairs’ (an area beyond the bounds of even the closest of Victorian guests), reappearing with two feminine youths in tow — that was a rather dangerous situation to be certain. These teatime asides seem to have been excessive for Pattison, and worthy of comment — but for Hopkins? Well, the only extant letter between Hopkins and Pater is Pater’s acceptance of an invitation to dinner — at no less discrete a place than the Jesuit presbytery (*Facsimiles* II, p.176). One could anticipate the tabloid headline: ‘High Priest of the Decadents Visits Priest of the Jesuits for Curious, Ecumenical Dinner’. Wilde always praised ‘feasting with panthers’<sup>145</sup>; and Hopkins, like Wilde, would have readily recognised a Decadent allusion to ‘pa—t—er—’ hidden within that dangerous phrase. Hopkins’s ‘feasting with Pater’ poses an enigma for any biography of the poet, but there are four other aspects that further constitute Hopkins’s unique problematics: his use of poetical puzzles, his fluid personality, his often impish impiety, and his manuscript burnings. To these problematics, I now turn.<sup>146</sup>

## Notes for Chapter One

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<sup>1</sup> C. P. Cavafy, *Collected Poems*, trans. by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, ed. by George Savidis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), p.146 (lines 1-4).

<sup>2</sup> Denis Donoghue, *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (New York: Knopf, 1995), p.10.

<sup>3</sup> Since Foucault's criticism serves as the foundation upon which much (if not most) recent scholarship about the homoerotic and pederastic is based, I feel obliged to provide a summary of the material he covers in the last chapters of *The History of Sexuality*, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1986), where Foucault considers three Classical texts, one each from Maximus of Tyre, Plutarch, and Pseudo-Lucian:

Maximus of Tyre's lecture considers the distinction between true love (offering virtue, friendship, reserve, and permanence) and erotic attraction (offering excess, bitterness, arrogance, and disloyalty). Plutarch's dialogue has two parties. Assuming that the same love finds its expression in either boys or women, one party claims that, for pederasty to be ethical, it must be free of sexual desire, hence representative of a higher form of love than the natural appetite required for procreation. The counter-argument is that, despite a pederast's elevated rhetoric, all he really intends is the acquisition of erotic fulfilment; hence, pederasty displays an ungraceful duplicity which is not evident in the love for women, a love which can mature into a permanent fellowship. Pseudo-Lucian's dialogue has two parties as well. One party contrasts the needed mechanism of procreation with the management of chaos, with pederasty seen as a display of chaos conquered, as an abstract expression of civilisation's gradual triumph over necessity, with pederasty changing, as the boy matures, into a bond of friendship. The counter-argument hinges on the claim that the pleasures of pederasty are not shared by the boy, while those of the love for women are, making marriage, ideally, both a physically and spiritually fulfilling union between a husband and a wife. (My summary of vol. 3, *The Care of the Self*, pp.189-232)

Based on the above texts, Foucault's own conclusion is that 'thus there begins to develop an erotics different from the one that had taken its starting point in the love of boys, even though abstention from the sexual pleasures plays an important part in both. This new erotics organized itself around the symmetrical and reciprocal relationship of a man and a woman, around the high value attributed to virginity, and around the complete union in which it finds perfection' (p.232).

<sup>4</sup> The etymology of 'pederasty' derives from modern Latin *paederastia* and from Greek *paiderastia*: *pais, paid* ('boy') plus *erastes* ('lover') (*OED*). I have avoided the term 'paedophilia' because of its emotive nature, as well as its clinical and legal ring.

<sup>5</sup> Donoghue, p.158.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.42.

<sup>7</sup> Denis Sobolev, 'Hopkins's "Bellbright Bodies": The Dialectics of Desire in His Writings', *TSLL*, 45.1 (2003), pp.114-40. In this article, Sobolev traces how Hopkins scholarship has dealt with 'homoerotic' elements in the poet's life and writings; therefore, for me to do so again would be merely to tend the same ground. I am in full agreement with Sobolev's assertion that 'to put it another way, in the analysis of Hopkins's writings such terms as "homosexual", "gay", "queer", and "identity" must make way for "homoerotic", "masculinist", "discourse", and "desire"' (p.133).

<sup>8</sup> Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p.3.

<sup>9</sup> James R. Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p.37.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Lock, 'Hopkins as a Decadent Poet', *Essays in Criticism*, 34 (1984), pp.129-54 (p.129).

<sup>11</sup> W. H. Gardner, *Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89): A Study of Poetic Idiosyncrasy in Relation to Poetic Tradition*, 2 vols (London: Secker and Warburg, 1944 and 1949), II, p.84.

<sup>12</sup> Sobolev, p.115.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Byrne R. S. Fone, 'This Other Eden: Arcadia and the Homosexual Imagination', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 8.3-4 (1983), pp.13-34 (p.27).

<sup>15</sup> Sobolev, p.120.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.121.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> As quoted in Gary Schmidgall, *The Stranger Wilde: Interpreting Oscar* (New York: Dutton, 1994), p.178.

<sup>19</sup> Marc-André Raffalovich, *Cyril and Lionel, and Other Poems: A Volume of Sentimental Studies* (London: Kegan Paul, 1884), p.27.

<sup>20</sup> Plato, *On Homosexuality: Lysis, Phaedrus, and Symposium*, trans. by Benjamin Jowett (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus, 1991), p.71.

<sup>21</sup> In *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, p.43, Foucault explains the distinction he sees between the 'sodomite' (an individual committing criminal acts) and the 'homosexual' (an individual with 'a singular nature'). See also vol. 2, *The Use of Pleasure*, pp.187-246. Similar comments are made by David M. Halperin in *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p.8. In 'New Pedagogy on Ancient Pederasty', *The Gay & Lesbian Review Worldwide*, 11.3 (2004), pp.13-14, Beert Verstraete notes the line of descent from Foucault to Halperin, as well as Halperin's link to 'quasi-feminist ideology':

In the two decades following Dover's book [*Greek Homosexuality*], social constructionism established itself as the dominant discourse of scholars about (homo)sexuality in classical antiquity, with the American classicist David Halperin as its leading spokesperson in the English-speaking world, a position he reaffirms in his most recent collection of essays, *How to Write the History of Homosexuality* (2002). Halperin is still very much a disciple of one of social constructionism's founding thinkers, the late Michel Foucault. [...] Halperin has not entirely abandoned his quasi-feminist ideology of a near-victimization model of Greek pederasty, according to which the younger partner could not have derived, or was not at all expected to derive, any sexual pleasure himself from the relationship. (p.14)

Dominique Fernandez claims that the concept of 'homosexuality' dates to 1869: 'Rappelons que le mot "homosexualité", à forte connotation médicale, fut inventé par Benkert, écrivain hongrois, en 1869' — *Le Rapt de Ganymède* (Paris: Grasset, 1989), p.40.

About 'the historical shift in the conceptualizing of "homosexuality" from a behaviour to an identity', Jonathan Dollimore writes: 'In the nineteenth century a major and specifically "scientific" branch of this development comes to construct homosexuality as primarily a congenital abnormality rather than, as before, a sinful and evil practice' — *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p.46.

<sup>22</sup> John Pollini, 'The Warren Cup: Homoerotic Love and Symposial Rhetoric in Silver', *Art Bulletin*, 81.1 (1999), pp.21-52 (pp.22-23). Pollini notes that 'the Roman poet Lucretius, writing on the human condition in his *De Rerum Natura*, speaks of a "normal" adult male's love for "either a boy or a woman"' (p.24).

<sup>23</sup> Amy Richlin, 'Not before Homosexuality: The Materiality of the *Cinaedus* and the Roman Law against Love between Men', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 3.4 (1993), pp.523-73 (p.571).

<sup>24</sup> Pollini, pp.23-24.

<sup>25</sup> Timothy d'Arch Smith, *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p.1.

<sup>26</sup> Pollini, p.27. Pollini further suggests that 'the fact that nowhere in the corpus of Latin and Greek literature can males be specifically identified as exclusively homosexual suggests that they were assumed to be attracted to both sexes' (p.28).

<sup>27</sup> For representative examples of this use, see *ibid.*, p.36.

<sup>28</sup> K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), pp.31-32.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.62. Dover provides a more historical account of Episthenes on p.51. For Xenophon's praise of the valour of Episthenes, see Clifford Hindley, 'Xenophon on Male Love', *Classical Quarterly*, 49.1 (1999), pp.74-99 (p.76).

<sup>30</sup> I am thankful to Julie Ann Noecker of the History Faculty Library, Oxford University, for providing me with information from *Alumni Oxonienses 1775-1886* regarding Warren's Oxford details (e-mail from 27 July 2004). All other details are gleaned from David Sox, *Bachelors of Art: Edward Perry Warren and the Lewes House Brotherhood* (London: Fourth Estate, 1991).

- <sup>31</sup> In 'Homoerotic Art Collection from 1750 to 1920', *Art History*, 24.2 (2001), pp.247-77, Whitney Davis writes:  
The ancient erotica acquired by Warren as an art dealer [...] such as some of the phallic and homosexual vases now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, which Warren represented overseas, and possibly the extraordinary Roman silver goblet whose unusual scene of anal sex between youths at a pederastic symposium has been extensively studied. Without Warren we would know much less than we do about homosexuality and classical art. (p.248)
- <sup>32</sup> For information on the Warren Cup's provenance, see John R. Clarke, 'The Warren Cup and the Context for Representations of Male-to-Male Lovemaking in Augustan and Early Julio-Claudian Art', *Art Bulletin*, 75.2 (1993), pp.275-94 (p.276).
- <sup>33</sup> Pollini, p.21.
- <sup>34</sup> Clarke, p.279.
- <sup>35</sup> Pollini, p.36. See also Clarke, p.290.
- <sup>36</sup> Pollini, p.36.
- <sup>37</sup> As translated by Pollini in *ibid.*, p.32.
- <sup>38</sup> Clarke, p.293.
- <sup>39</sup> Pollini, pp.38-39.
- <sup>40</sup> Joseph A. Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Scholar Press, 1995), p.249.
- <sup>41</sup> Pollini, p.37.
- <sup>42</sup> Clay Daniel, 'The Religion of Culture: Arnold's Priest and Pater's Mystic', *Victorian Newsletter*, 72 (1987), pp.9-11 (p.11).
- <sup>43</sup> Linda Dowling, 'Ruskin's Pied Beauty and the Construction of a "Homosexual" Code', *Victorian Newsletter*, 75 (1989), pp.1-8 (p.1).
- <sup>44</sup> Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), p.86. Dowling's term 'perfervid friendships' (from Latin *perfervidus*) implies that these friendships were driven by emotions that were overwrought or exaggerated; hence, it deprives them of their authenticity.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.43-44, 65, and 114.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p.26.
- <sup>47</sup> John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
- <sup>48</sup> This and the other legislative details are gleaned from Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition* (London: Longmans, Green, 1955), pp.145-52; augmented by H. Montgomery Hyde, *The Love That Dared Not Speak Its Name: A Candid History of Homosexuality in Britain* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970); Byrne R. S. Fone, *Homophobia: A History* (New York: Metropolitan, 2000).
- <sup>49</sup> This claim is made by Carolyn A. Conley, *The Unwritten Law: Criminal Justice in Victorian Kent* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p.116.
- <sup>50</sup> M. R. D. Foot and H. C. G. Matthew, eds, *The Gladstone Diaries*, 14 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968-94), vol. XI (July 1884 – December 1886), p.378.
- <sup>51</sup> As quoted in Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde*, rev. edn (New York: Knopf, 1988), p.409, note. See F. B. Smith, 'Labouchere's Amendment to the Criminal Law Amendment Bill', *Historical Studies*, 17.67 (1976), pp.165-73.
- <sup>52</sup> Mark D. Jordan, *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p.113. Jordan claims that St Peter Damian coined the word 'sodomy' in the eleventh century.

<sup>53</sup> Alan Dundes, 'Much Ado About "Sweet Bugger All": Getting to the Bottom of a Puzzle in British Folk Speech', *Folklore*, 113.1 (2002), pp.35-49 (p.42).

<sup>54</sup> Lord Alfred Douglas, 'Two Loves', in [John Francis Bloxam, ed.] *The Chameleon: A Bazaar of Dangerous and Smiling Chances*, 1 (December 1894) (London: Gay and Bird), one of two poems by Lord Alfred that appear on pp.25-28. It was also possible to appropriate existent words, as Ed Madden explains: 'In [Raffalovich's] "Shame and Beauty", Beauty, Youth, and Desire appear personified as "the brother-slaves of Shame" — a use of the word "shame" as a synonym for homosexuality that predates Lord Alfred Douglas's more famous usage in "Two Loves" by a decade' — 'Say It with Flowers: The Poetry of Marc-André Raffalovich', *College Literature*, 24.1 (1997), pp.11-27 (pp.15-16).

<sup>55</sup> See the following primary sources: Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Discourse on the Manners of the Antient Greeks Relative to the Subject of Love*, in James A. Notopoulos, *The Platonism of Shelley* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969). Jeremy Bentham, 'Offences Against One's Self: Paederasty', ed. by Louis Crompton, *Journal of Homosexuality*, 3.4 (1978), pp.383-405; continued 4.1 (1978), pp.91-107. John Addington Symonds, *A Problem in Greek Ethics*, in *Male Love: A Problem in Greek Ethics and Other Writings*, ed. by John Lauritsen (New York: Pagan Press, 1983). Richard F. Burton, 'The Terminal Essay', in *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* (Privately printed by the Burton Club, 1885-86), vol. X, pp.178-219. See the following secondary sources: George Haggerty, 'Beckford's Paederasty', in *Illicit Sex: Identity Politics in Early Modern Culture*, ed. by Thomas DiPiero and Pat Gill (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997), pp.123-42. Louis Crompton, *Byron and Greek Love: Homophobia in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century England* (London: Faber, 1985).

In "'A Race of Born Pederasts": Sir Richard Burton, Homosexuality, and the Arabs', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 25.1 (2003), pp.1-20, Colette Colligan writes: 'His essay on "Pederasty" devotes fifty pages to the subject although there are only four homosexual episodes in the *Arabian Nights*. [...] Burton's essay on "Pederasty" contributes to the nineteenth-century discourse on homosexuality by uncovering its cultural history' (pp.5-6).

<sup>56</sup> Letter to Horace Mann, 24 January 1754, in Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis, ed., *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, 31 vols (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1937).

<sup>57</sup> See George Haggerty, 'Literature and Homosexuality in the Late Eighteenth Century: Walpole, Beckford, and Lewis', *Studies in the Novel*, 18 (1986), pp.341-52.

<sup>58</sup> William F. Shuter, 'The "Outing" of Walter Pater', *Nineteenth Century Literature*, 48.4 (1994), pp.480-506 (p.492).

<sup>59</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.11; see also pp.26-27. It should be noted that Dowling does make an exception in Wilde's case, suggesting that, for him, this might have been 'an aesthetic choice' (see pp.125-27).

<sup>60</sup> Foucault, I, p.42.

<sup>61</sup> For an example, see Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.26.

<sup>62</sup> Tariq Rahman, 'E. M. Forster and the Break Away from the Ephebophilic Literary Tradition', *Etudes Anglaises*, 3 (1987), pp.267-78; 'Ephebophilia: The Case for the Use of a New Word', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 24.2 (1988), pp.126-41.

<sup>63</sup> Donald H. Reiman and Sharon B. Powers, eds, *Shelley's Poetry and Prose* (New York: Norton, 1977), p.484.

<sup>64</sup> *Marius*, I, p.168.

<sup>65</sup> Jude V. Nixon, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and His Contemporaries: Liddon, Newman, Darwin, and Pater* (New York: Garland Press, 1994), p.212. Marius and Flavian are characters in Walter Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*, and are dealt with at length in my 'Chapter Four'.

<sup>66</sup> Sedgwick, *Epistemology*, p.185.

<sup>67</sup> Shuter, 'Outing', p.501.

<sup>68</sup> Translated by John Addington Symonds, in *A Problem in Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion* (London: Privately printed, [1901]), p.37.

<sup>69</sup> As quoted in d'Arch Smith, p.73.



<sup>70</sup> As quoted in *ibid.*, p.84.

<sup>71</sup> In 'Motives for Guilt-Free Pederasty: Some Literary Considerations', *Sociological Review*, 24.1 (1976), pp.97-114, Brian Taylor notes this misogyny: 'Five dominant motifs [...] recur throughout [the Uranians'] work. They are: the transience of boyhood, lost youth, the divine sanction, the class sanction, and misogyny and the erotic superiority of pederasty' (pp.101-02). Taylor further writes: 'The Uranians, if they were satisfactorily to formulate in poetic form motivations for guilt-free pederasty, needed to topple from its pedestal the ideal conception of Womanhood which the Victorians erected as the symbol of acceptable love' (p.107). It is noteworthy that one of the individuals most credited with constructing this 'pedestal' was Coventry Patmore, especially through his *Angel in the House*, and that Hopkins suggested corrections to a new edition of this work (at Patmore's request).

<sup>72</sup> About the tale 'The Sub-Umbra' in *The Pearl*, Colligan notes: 'A classic example of the Sedgwickian triangle, the first story disrupts the homosexual desire between two boys by introducing a girl into their sex play. The two boys who have intercourse with the girl at the same time, one vaginally and one anally, focus on the sensation of their "pricks throbbing against each other in a most delicious manner, with only the thin membrane of the anal canal between them"' (p.15). Although *that* particular tale does contain a 'Sedgwickian triangle', the tale from *The Pearl* that I have included as 'Appendix Three' has a triangle with no female corner.

<sup>73</sup> Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, 'Forward' to *Between Men*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, as provided on her personal homepage <<http://www.duke.edu/~sedgwic/WRITING/BETWEEN.htm>> [accessed 27 July 2004].

<sup>74</sup> Confronted with Sedgwick's and Dowling's assertion about an unbroken 'continuum' between the homosocial and homosexual, Richard Dellamora argues that such an assertion 'stands in the way of homosexual awareness and self-identification among males', and that Pater would not have agreed with this 'homosocial continuum' — see *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), pp.169, 187-88, and 194.

<sup>75</sup> Adrienne Rich, 'Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence' (1980), reprinted in *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, ed. by Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson (New York: New Feminist Library, Monthly Review Press, 1983), pp.177-205 (p.192).

<sup>76</sup> Julia F. Saville, *A Queer Chivalry: The Homoerotic Asceticism of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), p.117.

<sup>77</sup> As in 'God's Grandeur': 'Because the Holy Ghost over the bent / World broods with warm breast' (lines 13-14).

<sup>78</sup> Sobolev, p.125.

<sup>79</sup> Lesley Higgins, 'Jowett and Pater: Trafficking in Platonic Wares', *Victorian Studies*, 37.1 (1993), pp.43-72 (p.58).

<sup>80</sup> See C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955), pp.109-10.

<sup>81</sup> Lesley Higgins, 'The "Piecemeal Peace" of Hopkins's Return to Oxford, 1878-1879', in *Gerard Manley Hopkins and Critical Discourse*, ed. by Eugene Hollahan (New York: AMS, 1993), pp.167-82 (p.177).

<sup>82</sup> For extended comment on this topic, see Dr Felix Letemendia's 'Part III: Medico-Psychological Commentary' in the 'Introduction' to *Facsimiles I*, pp.31-36. It is my opinion that MacKenzie's incorporation of this posthumous psychiatric analysis of Hopkins by Dr Letemendia, especially as part of his 'Introduction' to *Facsimiles I*, was an attempt to forestall the more pederastic and homoerotic interpretations which the contents of Hopkins's confession notes clearly suggest. Had Dr Letemendia's analysis appeared as an appendix, I might consider it otherwise: but, as it stands, it seems an apology for what follows, the same sort of disingenuousness one finds in the traditional glosses preceding each chapter of the Canticles in the King James version of the Bible, claiming that what follows is a description of the relationship between Christ and his bridegroom The Church ... as opposed to clearly erotic, Eastern poetry.

<sup>83</sup> See Robert Bernard Martin, *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Very Private Life* (New York: Flamingo, 1992), pp.99-103.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.130-31. In *Hopkins: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), Norman White notes that 'Hopkins was one of the lucky students who had Jowett as personal tutor' (p.104).

<sup>85</sup> Renee V. Overholser, "'Looking with Terrible Temptation": Gerard Manley Hopkins and Beautiful Bodies', in *Victorian Literature and Culture* 19, ed. by John Maynard and Adrienne Auslander Munich (New York: AMS Press,

1991), pp.25-53 (p.27).

<sup>86</sup> Peter Swaab, 'Hopkins and the Pushed Peach', *Critical Quarterly*, 37.3 (1995), pp.43-60 (p.44).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p.44.

<sup>88</sup> Sobolev, p.122.

<sup>89</sup> Vatican, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*, section 3 (1 October 1986) <[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19861001\\_homosexual-persons\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19861001_homosexual-persons_en.html)> [accessed 15 June 2004].

<sup>90</sup> Vatican, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, rev. edn, 1997, paragraph 2358 (from section II, 'The Vocation to Chastity') <<http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc.htm>> [accessed 15 June 2004].

<sup>91</sup> These quotations are from an anonymous review, 'Famous Foundlings — *Dictionary of National Biography: Missing Persons*, Edited by C. S. Nicholls', *The Economist*, 326.7798 (13 February 1993), pp.91-92.

<sup>92</sup> Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice and Other Stories*, trans. by David Luke (London: Secker and Warburg, 1990), p.246.

<sup>93</sup> All these details are taken from Gilbert Adair, *The Real Tadzio: Thomas Mann's 'Death in Venice' and the Boy Who Inspired It* (London: Short, 2001). For analysis of the pederastic dimensions of Thomas Mann's novel, see George Bridges, 'The Problem of Pederastic Love in Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* and Plato's *Phaedrus*', *Journal of the PNCF* (Pacific Northwest Council on Foreign Languages), 7 (1986), pp.39-46; Cynthia B. Bryson, 'The Imperative Daily Nap; or, Aschenbach's Dream in *Death in Venice*', *Studies in Short Fiction*, 29.2 (1992), pp.181-93; Tom Hayes and Lee Quinby, 'The Aporia of Bourgeois Art: Desire in Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*', *Criticism*, 31 (1989), pp.159-77; Ignace Feuerlicht, 'Thomas Mann and Homoeroticism', *Germanic Review*, 57.3 (1982), pp.89-97; Richard White, 'Love, Beauty, and *Death in Venice*', *Philosophy and Literature*, 14.1 (1990), pp.53-64.

<sup>94</sup> Thomas Mann, *A Sketch of My Life* (Paris: Harrison of Paris, 1930); see Gary Schmidgall, 'Death in Venice, Life in Zurich: Mann's Late "Something for the Heart"', *Southwest Review*, 82.3 (1997), pp.293-324 (p.296).

<sup>95</sup> As quoted in Schmidgall, 'Death', p.296.

<sup>96</sup> The reason why I have employed the phrase 'pseudo-pseudonym' is that, according to Rolfe, 'Baron Corvo' was an honorary title bestowed upon him by the Duchess Carolina Sforza, a wealthy patron who had assisted him when he was homeless in Rome, and supposedly made a regular allowance to him while he was in England — see A. J. A. Symons, *The Quest for Corvo: An Experiment in Biography* (New York: New York Review Books, 2001), p.34. Rolfe was given to donning pseudonyms (such as Frank English, Frederick Austin, and A. Crab Maid), though his most frequent adjustment came from merely shortening his name to 'Fr. Rolfe', such that 'Fr.' would be interpreted, naturally, as an ecclesiastical 'Father'. However, what can one expect from someone whose name reached its full form as Frederick William Serafino Austin Lewis Mary Rolfe, Baron Corvo?

<sup>97</sup> Frederick Rolfe, *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole*, ed. by Andrew Eburne (New York: Braziller, 1994 [1934]).

<sup>98</sup> For various reasons — based mostly on the fact that this group had then found a vehicle for expression, and on the necessity to limit his own scope — d'Arch Smith demarcates the birth of the 'Uranians' (as a self-defined group) as 1888-89, though he does make a detailed study of those writers he labels 'Uranian precursors' before approaching the 'Uranians proper'. Specifically, d'Arch Smith asserts that 'the date of the commencement of the Uranian movement [...] may accurately be placed at 1 April 1888 when the poem "Hyacinthus", appeared in the *Artist*' (p.24). In contrast, I have chosen to backdate the founding of the group thirty years, to the 1858 publication of *Ionica* by William Johnson (*later* Cory). Johnson is one of the poets d'Arch Smith considers 'Uranian precursors'. D'Arch Smith would probably not question my choice, since he does himself write that 'it is far from easy to explain satisfactorily the upsurge of Uranian writings between the approximate (but by no means arbitrary) dates of 1858 and 1930' (p.1).

<sup>99</sup> Walter Pater, 'A Novel by Mr. Oscar Wilde' [Review], *The Bookman*, 1 (1891), pp.59-60 (p.59).

<sup>100</sup> Roberto C. Ferrari, 'Biographical Timeline of Simeon Solomon's Life', in the *Simeon Solomon Research Archive* <<http://www.fau.edu/solomon/bio.html>> [accessed 19 June 2004].

<sup>101</sup> Donoghue, p.38.

<sup>102</sup> Some of those traces were difficult to obliterate, though Swinburne did require that they not be reprinted, as with a review he had written about Solomon's art, claiming that it is 'music made visible' — Algernon Charles Swinburne, 'Simeon Solomon: Notes on His "Vision of Love" and Other Studies', *Dark Blue* [an Oxford University magazine], 1 (July 1871), pp.568-77.

<sup>103</sup> Swinburne, *Studies in Prose and Poetry* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1894), p.34.

<sup>104</sup> Ferrari quotes an e-mail to himself from William Peniston, an e-mail which secures these details:

Solomon was arrested on March 4, 1874 at 8:30 at night in a urinal near the Bourse with Henri Lefranc, the alias of Raphael-Maximilien Dumont, a 19-year-old native-born Parisian wine clerk. The 7<sup>th</sup> Chamber of the Criminal Court of the 1<sup>st</sup> instance sentenced them on April 18, 1874 to 3 months in prison and 16 francs in fine for Solomon and 6 months in prison and 16 francs in fine for Lefranc/Dumont. (Information from the police ledger 'Pederasts et diverse', BB6, Archives de la Prefecture de la Police, Paris, France — as reported in the *Simeon Solomon Research Archive* <<http://www.fau.edu/solomon>> [accessed 19 June 2004].

<sup>105</sup> Walter Pater, *Greek Studies: A Series of Essays*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910), p.42.

<sup>106</sup> Donoghue notes that 'Pater conducted some of his relations with a more judicious mixture of public and private acknowledgments. His friendship with John Addington Symonds was typical of this precision' (p.39).

<sup>107</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.86.

<sup>108</sup> D'Arch Smith, p.9.

<sup>109</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, pp.86-87. D'Arch Smith suggests that 'Cory gave the Uranians at once an inspiration and an example' (p.11).

<sup>110</sup> Donoghue, p.81.

<sup>111</sup> As quoted in Ellmann, p.282. Ellmann glosses this as 'Wilde and Raffalovich talked openly about sexual matters' (p.282). Madden writes: 'A Russian Jew born in Paris, Raffalovich moved to England in 1882, planning to attend Oxford. Instead he settled in London and began to make a name for himself as a wealthy young writer and socialite' (p.12). Madden also notes that Raffalovich was an 'old friend' of J. K. Huysmans, whose writings are believed to have influenced, to some degree, Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray* (p.24).

<sup>112</sup> As quoted in d'Arch Smith, p.110.

<sup>113</sup> Patrick Pacheco, 'The Pasha of Pop', *Art and Antiques*, 5 (1994), pp.78-79 (p.79).

<sup>114</sup> The fact that these two pederastic aristocrats and photographers left Germany to reside in Italy is explained by Vicki Goldberg in 'A Man-Made Arcadia Enshrining Male Beauty', *New York Times* (13 August 2000), 'Art/Architecture' section, pp.30-31: 'Germany in the 1880s was still prosecuting men for nude sunbathing, but in Sicily, male children ordinarily went nude on the beach, and most Mediterranean countries tacitly accepted homosexuality as a passing phase in a boy's development' (p.30). She also comments on von Gloeden's success as a photographer:

Not bad for a man who might have well been arrested for child pornography in our supposedly more tolerant and certainly less wilfully innocent culture. Von Gloeden was interested only in young boys and early adolescents [...] He photographed some of the same models for years but usually stopped doing so as they reached early manhood. A couple of young children who cannot be much more than 5 or 6 also turn up in his photographs. (p.31)

<sup>115</sup> Goldberg, p.30.

<sup>116</sup> As quoted in Ann Thwaite, *Edmund Gosse: A Literary Landscape, 1849-1928* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1984), pp.323-24. I wish to thank Rictor Norton for corresponding with me regarding this point. According to d'Arch Smith, Symonds made such gifts to others as well, a sign of friendship and understanding: 'Symonds was extremely kind to [Charles Kains] Jackson, [and] sent him photographs of nude Italian youths from the studios of von Gloeden and others' (p.18). It should be noted that von Gloeden's photographs were not always treated as mere pornography: 'His work was shown in international exhibitions and published in art journals, which doubtless preferred the more discreet images' (Goldberg, p.30).

<sup>117</sup> Goldberg, p.31.

<sup>118</sup> One of the ironies here is that George Meredith wrote a poem commemorating Browning's funeral, 'Now Dumb Is He Who Walked the World to Speak' (a poem which does not mention Gosse's prurient asides).

<sup>119</sup> Donoghue, p.44. On 7 June 1894, *The Blackmailers*, a homoerotically tinged play by Raffalovich and his lover John Gray, received its first-and-only performance at the Prince of Wales Theatre, London. The play appears in Laurence Senelick, ed., *Lovesick: Modernist Plays of Same-Sex Love, 1894-1925* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>120</sup> Walter Pater, [Review of] 'Children in Italian and English Design by Sidney Colvin (London, 1872)', reprinted in *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp.191-95 (p.195).

<sup>121</sup> Notably, Timothy d'Arch Smith — himself an avid collector — once managed The Times Bookshop; then, later, with Jean Overton Fuller, managed Fuller d'Arch Smith Ltd. Rare Books. Through unprecedented access to rare materials in stately homes, libraries, and antiquarian establishments, d'Arch Smith has extensively catalogued, appraised, and sold the choicest and most controversial of literary works. *Love in Earnest* arose, in part, from this rare access.

<sup>122</sup> My thanks to Steve Gertz of William Dailey Rare Books for corresponding with me concerning the book's catalogue description and for providing me with information about its sale.

<sup>123</sup> See d'Arch Smith, pp.77, 103. This volume was formerly in Timothy d'Arch Smith's collection and bears his bookplate, as well as several of Raffalovich's (See 'Appendix Fifteen').

<sup>124</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.114.

<sup>125</sup> Hollett & Son's bookseller number: 45712. Dailey's bookseller number: 8114. These are currently for sale through a consortium of booksellers at <[www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)> [accessed 25 July 2004].

<sup>126</sup> This volume is currently for sale through a consortium of booksellers at <[www.polybiblio.com/jrwindle/538.html](http://www.polybiblio.com/jrwindle/538.html)> [accessed 25 May 2004].

<sup>127</sup> Michael H. Harris, *The History of Libraries in the Western World*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn (London: Scarecrow, 1999), p.159.

<sup>128</sup> A. S. Byatt, Introduction to *The Quest for Corvo: An Experiment in Biography*, by A. J. A. Symons (New York: New York Review Books, 2001), pp.ix-xvi (p.ix).

<sup>129</sup> A. J. A. Symons, *The Quest for Corvo: An Experiment in Biography* (New York: New York Review Books, 2001), p.261.

<sup>130</sup> *Desire*, p.xviii.

<sup>131</sup> D'Arch Smith, p.xix.

<sup>132</sup> From Frederick Rolfe's letter to C., [c. November 1909], *The Venice Letters*, ed. with intro. by Cecil Woolf (London: Cecil & Amelia Woolf, 1974), p.27. In his introduction, C. Woolf writes:

It is quite clear that Rolfe was at this time obsessed with adolescent boys. It is obvious that Masson Fox was also strongly attracted to boys. 'That homosexual underworld', of which A. J. A. Symons tells us that Rolfe 'stood self-revealed as patron', was in fact a little circle of three or four young, ragged lads ('simple little devils', Rolfe calls them) in their late 'teens, with whom he was on terms of intimate friendship. Besides these he refers in passing to half-a-dozen others. He delighted in picking their brains and listening to their tales. Symons also claims that Rolfe had become 'a habitual corrupter of youth' and 'a seducer of innocence', but the letters reveal that all three youths were practised initiates long before Rolfe set foot in Venice and so were neither innocent nor chaste. But they were genuinely fond of Rolfe and eager to meet a friend who shared their tastes. (p.11)

<sup>133</sup> [Letter to C.], 28 November 1909, *ibid.*, pp.28-33.

<sup>134</sup> Frederick Rolfe, *Don Renato: An Ideal Content: A Historical Romance* ([n.l.]: [n.p.], 1909), dedication.

<sup>135</sup> As quoted and translated by Schmidgall, 'Death', pp.315-16.

<sup>136</sup> It is interesting to note that, in Rolfe's pseudo-pseudonym of 'Baron Corvo', *Corvo* is Italian for 'raven'. The only pseudonym Hopkins ever employed, as in *The Wreck of the Deutschland*, was 'Brân Maenefa', Welsh for 'The Crow of Maenefa', a near cousin to Rolfe's preferred pseudonym.

<sup>137</sup> As quoted in White, *Hopkins*, p.387.

<sup>138</sup> Donoghue, p.308. In 'Pater's Sadness', *Raritan*, 20.2 (2000), pp.136-58, Jacques Khalip writes:

Pater remains as impenetrable as the subjects he writes about: the poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Rossetti, the landscapes of Leonardo, Botticelli, the School of Giorgione, and the sculptures of Michelangelo. As with all these artists, that which is absent in Pater is precisely that which must be attended to, as if it were vividly present. Pater reminds us of our own anonymity and secrecy, our fear that our most private lives and feelings will never be understood and justly appreciated, and even more, that our discretions are activities of possible oppression. (p.138)

<sup>139</sup> Anonymous, 'Rare Ill-Broker'd Talent', *The Times Literary Supplement* (25 September 1959), p.544.

<sup>140</sup> Swaab writes: 'Hopkins never intended to publish the poem, and probably had no notion that a post-Freudian readership might take it as a quiet reverie about buggery' (pp.48-49). MacKenzie merely notes: 'Thumb-nail sketches of two boys or men (Mt. St. Mary's? Stonyhurst? Oxford?)', pointing out that the seeming wordplay on 'Arthur Bowman' and 'Denis Capps or Capes' has not yet led to any attributions (*OET*, p.398).

<sup>141</sup> In March 1882, the *Journal of Education* published a lengthy letter, signed 'Olim Etonensis', arguing that educators should 'let well alone' and not interfere in the immoral practices (the 'lewdness' to which Hopkins refers) of the boys in their charge, since these practices have no lingering repercussions (*Journal of Education*, 152.49 (1882), pp.85-86) (See d'Arch Smith, p.2). See also Vern and Bonnie Bullough, 'Homosexuality in Nineteenth Century English Public Schools', *Homosexuality in International Perspective*, ed. by Joseph Harry and Man Singh Das (New Delhi: Vikas, 1980), pp.123-31; John Chandos, *Boys Together: English Public Schools, 1800-1864* (London: Hutchinson, 1984); Alisdare Hickson, *The Poisoned Bowl: Sex, Repression and the Public School System* (London: Constable, 1995).

<sup>142</sup> As quoted in John Knowler, *Trust an Englishman* (London: Cape, 1972), p.113.

<sup>143</sup> As quoted in *The Letters of Walter Pater*, ed. by Lawrence Evans (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p.xxxiv.

<sup>144</sup> 'Oscar Browning was dismissed from Eton — for insubordination, according to the official explanation, for pederastic excess, according to the unofficial one. Browning was the friend of Pater and the patron of Simeon Solomon, whose painting "Bacchus" was inspired by the trip to Italy he took with Browning. Thanks to the influence of personal friends, Browning was able to secure a new post at King's College, Cambridge' (Dowling, 'Ruskin's', p.7). For a detailed account of this, see Ian Anstruther, *Oscar Browning: A Biography* (London: John Murray, 1983), especially the chapters 'Greek Love and George Curzon' and 'Ruined and Disgraced' (pp.55-80); David Gilmour, *Curzon* (London: John Murray, 1994), especially the chapter 'Passionate Resolves: Eton, 1872-78' (pp.12-22). For further information about William Johnson (*later* Cory) and Oscar Browning, see Christopher Hollis, *Eton: A History* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1960), pp.276-84.

<sup>145</sup> 'People thought it dreadful of me to have entertained at dinner the evil things of life, and to have found pleasure in their company. But they [...] were delightful and stimulating. It was like feasting with panthers. The danger was half the excitement' — from 'De Profundis' (1897), in *Soul of Man and Prison Writings*, ed. by Isobel Murray (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.132.

<sup>146</sup> Sobolev writes: 'Hopkins's tortuous relations with Dolben, his intense feeling for male physicality, his obsessive celebration of Christ's body at Bedford Leigh, the male characters and the sexually ambiguous language of some of his poems, and, perhaps, even his acknowledgement of the similarity to Whitman must be considered as different manifestations of the same problematics' (p.121). The four 'problematics' I consider in 'Chapter Two' address most of these points listed by Sobolev.

## — Chapter Two —

### **‘Problems So Beautifully Ingenious’: Hopkins and Uranian Problematics**

#### A Poem on a Dinner Acceptance: Hopkins and Issues of Uranian Scholarship

All art is at once surface and symbol.  
Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril.  
Those who read the symbol do so at their peril.  
(Oscar Wilde, Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*)<sup>1</sup>

On the surface, Gerard Manley Hopkins’s fragmentary poem ‘[Who Shaped These Walls]’ is a partial draft on a scrap of paper, the only extant letter between himself and Walter Pater, Pater’s aforementioned acceptance of an invitation to dinner (*Facsimiles II*, p.176). Although merely a fragment of their friendship and of Victorian cordiality, beneath its surface of ink and formality there is a faint expression of peril, peril involving disclosure of those homoerotic and pederastic sensibilities that these two friends had in common. As a symbol, this letter and its poem serve as the solitary occasion directly connecting Pater, leader of the Aesthetes and Decadents into the 1890s, with the poetry of Hopkins, once his student, forever his friend. If engaged symbolically — as if written with Pater in mind, though not for Pater to read<sup>2</sup> — Hopkins’s poem becomes more insightful than improvisational, a glimpse into the ways Pater maintained his discretion amidst the perils inherent to deviance during the Victorian period:

Who shaped these walls has shewn  
The music of his mind,  
Made know, though thick through stone  
What beauty beat behind.  
[...]  
Who built these walls made known  
The music of his mind,  
Yet here he has but shewn  
His ruder-rounded rind.

His brightest blooms lie there unblown  
His sweetest nectar hides behind. (lines 9-12; 37-42)

Noteworthy here is a passage from Pater's essay 'Poems by William Morris', a passage from which Hopkins's fragmentary poem seems to have derived both its theme and its diction:

Experience, already reduced to a swarm of impressions, is ringed round for each of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that, which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of an individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world.<sup>3</sup>

How often had Pater, like 'a solitary prisoner', retreated behind 'his ruder-rounded rind', disguising or sublimating his most impassioned expressions, 'his brightest blooms [lying] there unblown', homoerotic and pederastic blooms dripping the 'sweetest nectar', though 'hidden behind' either the thick wall of Victorian normalcy or a 'personality through which no real voice has ever pierced'? Hopkins was one of the few who could have aptly answered that question, for he was Pater's former student and later friend. However, for a modern reader to discover the 'brightest blooms' and the 'sweetest nectar' of an individual like Pater — an individual who had had to live amidst societal dangers and a necessity to discretely hide his 'real voice', 'the music of his mind' — a reader must loosen those textual walls, those barriers Pater has wrought around his erotic garden. A reader must ignore his Wildean warnings that 'trespassers will be prosecuted' or that 'those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril'. A clue is usually provided, a textual chink through which the 'real voice' of a Pyramus like Hopkins, Pater, or Wilde can be heard to 'fling out broad [his] name'<sup>4</sup> — or at least to whisper it.

Using Hopkins as the 'representative Uranian' (for reasons previously explained), I will now explore four aspects of Hopkins's life and poetry which thwart a ready discovery of such a textual chink: the first involves his use of poetical puzzles, puzzles which thwart a straightforward reading; the second involves his fluid personality, a personality which thwarts identity taxonomies; the third involves his often impish impiety, an impiety which

thwarts all seriousness; the fourth involves his manuscript burnings, burnings which thwart a proper literary or biographical post-mortem.

### ‘Like the Plain Shaft’: Hopkins and Issues of Inversion

Decadence, burdened by freedom, invents harsh new limits, psychosexual and artistic. [...] Decadence takes western sexual personae to their ultimate point of hardness and artificiality [...] the aggressive eye pinning and freezing nature’s roiling objects. (Camille Paglia, *Sexual Personae*)<sup>5</sup>

To illustrate the problems of applying a theory, any theory, to the Uranian and/or Decadent writers presently under consideration, particularly Gerard Manley Hopkins, I wish to consider an article co-written by two prominent linguists, Mick Short and Willie van Peer — ‘Accident! Stylisticians Evaluate: Aims and Methods of Stylistic Analysis’. The following is their explanation of the method by which they plan to test the validity of Stylistic Analysis:

Unlike literary critics, stylisticians often assume that their work is independent of value judgments. [...] The experiment described here was also based on this assumption. The general aim was to put the two experimenters in the kind of position that new readers of a poem would be in. To this end, a third party was invited to choose a poem (randomly, out of a set of poetry volumes) and tell us its title in order to check that we were not familiar with it. The poem selected was ‘Inversnaid’ by Gerard Manley Hopkins.<sup>6</sup>

On pages 48-50 of their article, Short and van Peer describe their observations:

Note that the switch from *description* in the first three stanzas [...] to the generalized *question* in the last stanza is accompanied by a switch to the generic and homophoric use of the article.

[Predicative verbs] show a decrease in activity, from the very active [...] to the passive [...] to the [stative].

[A] change is effected from intransitive verbs in the first three stanzas to transitive verbs in the final stanza, which have generic noun phrases referring to the nouns in the preceding stanzas as their objects.

Concrete nouns in the first three stanzas [are] replaced by generic nouns in the final stanza.



The adjective in the final stanza does not refer to colour, in contrast to those in the preceding stanzas.

[The Scots words in the poem] heighten the local atmosphere of the Scottish scenery, but note again that such words are completely absent from the final stanza.

*Obsolete words* are similarly restricted to the three initial stanzas [...] Note that the neologisms decrease in boldness as the poem progresses.

A number of lexical items clearly have *figurative* meanings [...] Again no such cases can be found in the final stanza.

Thus far, Short and van Peer have remained linguistically objective, but page 53 marks a shift from description to evaluation, despite their earlier claim ‘that their work is independent of value judgments’:

[In the last stanza] there is merely the expression of a vague hope for the wilds of nature, and the symbolism and patterning set up in the previous stanzas is wasted.

What is of essential interest here is that the evidence of the stylistic analysis so far provides good confirmation of the stated expectancies of the readers when dealing with the last stanza of the poem. The fact that their expectancies were not met also leads them to make negative statements about the worth of the poem.

Contrary to normal expectations the text reduces in complexity and entropy as it unfolds.

In their stylistic analysis, evaluations like the following abound — ‘little aesthetic reward’<sup>7</sup> — evaluations which lead to the overall conclusion that ‘hence the elements of this stanza [stanza four] cannot be systematically related to (or contrasted with) the elements of the other stanzas, and this causes “Inversnaid” to be less successful than most of Hopkins’ other poems’.<sup>8</sup> Even eminent Hopkins scholars have come to nearly the same assessment as these two linguists, as is representatively expressed by Norman White: ‘Hopkins was not satisfied with the poem, and did not mention it to either Bridges or Dixon, neither of whom saw it until after his death’.<sup>9</sup> These conclusions — ‘less successful’, ‘not satisfy[ing]’, ‘little aesthetic reward’ — tell less about the poem itself than about its readers, readers who have not proven satisfactory to the task of successfully recognising this poem as the exquisite puzzle that it is, hence have not gleaned its ‘aesthetic reward’.

For this poem, its context and setting — Inversnaid, ‘Sept. 28 1881’, a Wednesday — are essential to note. After seven weeks at St Joseph’s Church, Glasgow, Hopkins was given two days’ leave, and he hurried to the eastern shore of Loch Lomond to visit the Inversnaid waterfall for the first time. Norman MacKenzie notes that ‘the poem describes the stream’s course in reverse from its steep and rocky end to its quieter start among the braes around its source, Loch Arklet’ (*OET*, p.425, note); White describes the setting thus:

Arklet Water was wider and fuller than a burn; its peaty-brown waters, descended from Loch Arklet, were added to by burns, noticeably Snaid Burn, and over a course of a mile and a half through narrow valleys of heather and ladder-fern to oak forests, with the occasional birch, ash, and, hanging over the water, rowan, gradually steepened and quickened. There were smaller falls and side pools, with froth, foam, bubbles, and whirls, in rocky basins, before the final, magnificent, high but broken fall into a larger pool just before it entered Loch Lomond. Hopkins first saw the fall from the steamer, and on landing at the pier climbed up the mossy and rocky side of the stream to the narrow road, and then walked along the road inland, following the course of the stream uphill.<sup>10</sup>

The principal and fatal flaw of the stylistic analysis of Hopkins’s ‘Inversnaid’ stems from a mistaken assumption that a waterfall poem should, stylistically, flow towards its climax, a climax of water descending into a lake: in essence, Short and van Peer have provided forty-nine pages of analysis without recognising that this waterfall was poetically constructed backwards. Both MacKenzie and White note what the Stylisticians fail to perceive — since their linguistic methods take into account *no* primary sources such as letters or other documents — that Hopkins approached the Inversnaid waterfall from its terminus, and only later walked uphill and inland towards its source, Loch Arklet. However, what all critics have failed to appreciate is that, at this moment, Hopkins’s genius and intuition met a landscape from which a poetical masterpiece would flow, but backwards.

Four extant Hopkins letters, to his friends Richard Watson Dixon (1833-1900) and Alexander William Mowbray Baillie (1843-1921), provide details of this encounter with Inversnaid and its waterfall. The first Inversnaid letter — to Dixon, dated 26-30

September 1881 — was begun two days before Hopkins wrote ‘Inversnaid’ and finished two days after. It relates:

At Inversnaid (where Wordsworth saw the Highland Girl) on Wednesday I was delivered of an air to ‘Does the South Wind’ [a poem by Dixon] and jotted it down on Loch Lomond. (*Letters II*, p.65)

The second Inversnaid letter — to Dixon, dated 29 October 1881 — clarifies the state of

Hopkins’s adaptation of his friend’s poem into music (a point which will be crucial later):

*Does the South Wind* [...] is not quite finished and only written in sol-fa score. (*Letters II*, p.85)

The third Inversnaid letter — to Dixon, dated 30 June 1886 — written more than four years after the second letter, again comments about this trip to Inversnaid and the resultant music, with Hopkins notably forgetting that he had already told Dixon about this trip, as well as his having begun the music to his friend’s poem there:

And I am very slowly but very elaborately working at ‘Does the South Wind’ for solos, chorus, and strings. Some years ago I went from Glasgow, where I was, one day to Loch Lomond and landed at Inversnaid (famous through Wordsworth and Matthew Arnold) for some hours. There I had an inspiration of a tune. (*Letters II*, p.135)

The fourth Inversnaid letter — to Baillie, dated 7 September 1887 — recounts the

impression of this visit upon himself:

For this and other reasons I could wish I were in the Highlands. I never had more than a glimpse of their skirts. I hurried from Glasgow one day to Loch Lomond. The day was dark and partly hid the lake, yet it did not altogether disfigure it but gave a pensive or solemn beauty which left a deep impression on me. I landed at Inversnaid [...] for a few hours and had an inspiration of a very good tune to some lovely words by Canon Dixon, of whose poems (almost unknown) I am a very earnest admirer. (*Letters III*, p.288)

These four letters make reference to the ‘deep impression’ upon Hopkins of this landscape which had inspired a tune, but nothing — not even a passing allusion — to the poem which had also been composed there, a poem whose existence was never related, as far as the evidence suggests, to anyone while Hopkins was alive, a poem that exists only as a single, pencilled draft. At the very least, the poem is a complex nature-sketch that could be paraphrased as:

Brown and rippling like a horse's back, this small and dismal stream loudly gallops downward, its course directed by confining rocks which, as it reaches the falls and descends to the lake, separate its foamy fleece like the flutes of a column. Above the falls, the yellowish-brown froth moves about like a wind-blown bonnet, turning and dissipating as the stream swirls into a black pool capable of drowning all in Despair. Directed to this place by the steep banks which surround it — banks where heather, fern and mountain ash grow — the slower stream sprinkles the branches, fronds, and scarlet berries of the foliage with moisture. What would the world be if deprived of its wet and wild qualities? Let nature remain as it is — wet and wild, bountiful in weeds and wilderness.

Such is the basic nature-sketch poetically expressed on a few manuscript pages in a pocket-sized booklet measuring a minute 5.5 by 8.9 centimetres, and directly following a 'sol-fa score' for the first Latin line of 'S. Thomae Aquinatis Rhythmus' (the rhymed prayer or St Thomas Aquinas) — '*Adoro te supplex, lateens deitas*' (see *OET*, p.100; my 'Appendix Sixteen').

Of great bearing here is whether or not there is some connection between the tonic solfa tune for Dixon's poem 'Does the South Wind' (alluded to in the letters above) and the surviving tune for the Latin line '*Adoro te supplex, lateens deitas*'. In 'Gerard Manley Hopkins as Musician' (Appendix II of *Journals*, pp.457-97), John Stevens, who attempts to account for and analyse all of Hopkins's musical dabblings, notes that the tune for Dixon's 'Does the South Wind' (titled 'Ruffling Wind' in its published form)<sup>11</sup> is no longer extant (p.464). This may not be the case. '*Do ti do re la so fa mi*' — the fragmentary tune on MS H.ii.16<sup>v</sup>, directly preceding the sole autograph of 'Inversnaid' (which begins on H.ii.17<sup>r</sup>) — might be, jointly, a tune for St Thomas Aquinas's rhymed prayer and for Dixon's poem. According to this scenario, after noticing an internal similarity between these two texts, Hopkins planned to use some portion of the fragmentary tune of the prayer to set the music for Dixon's poem. If this scenario is correct, then Hopkins 'was delivered of an air to "Does the South Wind" and jotted it down on Loch Lomond', apparently pencilling this tune onto the cover of the tiny booklet while onboard a steamer *approaching* the waterfall. A second scenario would posit that Hopkins's tune for Dixon's poem was written onto another page of the tiny booklet, a

missing page that formerly followed the manuscript for ‘Inversnaid’ (which seems likely if there is no connection between Dixon’s poem and the tune for the prayer written on the booklet’s cover, with ‘Inversnaid’ immediately following<sup>12</sup>). If such is the case, then the tune for Dixon’s poem was composed after the sole manuscript of ‘Inversnaid’, and certainly ‘jotted down’ by Hopkins while on a steamer returning *from* Inversnaid. The second scenario seems more plausible, since Hopkins wrote that ‘at Inversnaid [...] I was delivered of an air to “Does the South Wind”’, and subsequently ‘jotted it down on Loch Lomond’ (which suggests the return trip *from* Inversnaid rather than the initial approach).

The confusing navigation above condenses into the following: if Hopkins’s solfa tune for Dixon’s poem was written, as he claims, ‘at Inversnaid [...] on Wednesday’ (which is the same Wednesday with which he dates the manuscript of ‘Inversnaid’ — ‘Sept. 28 1881’); and if this solfa tune was written into that same small booklet as ‘Inversnaid’, either before or after the poem (it seems that Hopkins had taken this booklet along expressly for such jottings); then the only extant draft of ‘Inversnaid’ had no predecessors, no prior drafts. Put simply: the sole autograph of ‘Inversnaid’ (which begins on H.ii.17<sup>r</sup>) is either fronted immediately by the fragmentary tune to Dixon’s poem (on MS H.ii.16<sup>v</sup>), composed on the same Wednesday, with no manuscript pages intervening (pages which would have been necessary for earlier drafts of ‘Inversnaid’); or, the sole autograph of ‘Inversnaid’ was followed immediately by a manuscript page no longer extant, a manuscript page on which was written that tune composed on the same Wednesday (hence, ‘Inversnaid’ would have been composed before the tune to Dixon’s poem). Whichever scenario is endorsed, ‘Inversnaid’ seems to have been written, in total and on the spot, during the few hours Hopkins spent at Inversnaid, giving the poem a compositional timeframe wedged between his arrival and his departure from Inversnaid, ‘a few hours’. Hence, Hopkins’s ‘Inversnaid’ becomes a momentary effusion that spilled

onto a few manuscript pages, an impromptu performance no less amazing than W. A. Mozart's Twelve Variations in C major on *Ah, vous dirai-je maman* ('Twinkle, twinkle little star'). My claim that the poem was an 'impromptu performance' does not diminish its standing anymore than it would for a piece of Jazz, for I agree with Peter Milward that 'this is no chance effusion of the poet, standing by itself in isolation from his other poems'.<sup>13</sup>

But, how could such a masterful display of impromptu brilliance have gone unmentioned to even Hopkins's closest friends, especially the poets Dixon and Bridges? To answer that question — and, in consequence, to contradict the evaluations made about the poem by both Stylisticians and Hopkins scholars — requires that I return again to two of those letters Hopkins wrote concerning his trip to Inversnaid.

The second Inversnaid letter — to Dixon, dated 29 October 1881 — also mentions a problem that Hopkins perceived as endemic to the English sonnet, an inherent lack of length and proportion:

The reason why the sonnet has never been so effective or successful in England as in Italy I believe to be this: it is not so long as the Italian sonnet; it is not long enough, I will presently say how. Now in the form of any work of art the intrinsic measurements, the proportions, that is, of the parts to one another and to the whole, are no doubt the principal point, but still the extrinsic measurements, the absolute size or quantity goes for something. Thus supposing in the Doric Order the Parthenon to be the standard of perfection, then if the *columns* of the Parthenon have so many semidiameters or modules to their height, the architrave so many, and so on these will be the typical proportions. But if a building is raised on a notably greater scale it will be found that these proportions for the *columns* and the rest are no longer satisfactory, so that one of two things — either the proportions must be changed or the Order abandoned. (*Letters* II, p.85; emphasis added)

The third Inversnaid letter — to Dixon, dated 30 June 1886 — postulates that sonnets like Thomas Gray's 'Sonnet, On the Death of Mr Richard West' might actually gain in unity (or proportion) by making one part less beautiful than another:

The sonnet of Gray's that you ask about is the wellknown one (the only one, I daresay) 'In vain to me': I remarked on its rhythmical beauty [...] Wordsworth says somewhere of it that it is 'evident' the only valuable part of it is (I believe) 'For other notes' and the quatrain that follows. Such a criticism is rude at best, since in a work of art having so strong a unity as a sonnet one part which singly is less beautiful than another part may be as necessary to the whole effect, like the plain shaft in a *column* and so on. But besides what he calls evident is not so, nor true. (*Letters* II, pp.136-37; emphasis added)

The link between these two passages is far more important for a proper understanding and evaluation of Hopkins's 'Inversnaid' than either the inverted landscape description or the long-forgotten tune to Dixon's poem: that link is an architectonic comparison of the English sonnet to a Classical column.

Hopkins's comments about the inadequate length of the English sonnet are particularly important when considering his 'Inversnaid', which is, in many ways, a sonnet with two added lines (especially if a volta exists just before the fourth stanza, the stanza criticised by the Stylisticians for its volta-like change in form and content). In essence, Hopkins seems to have applied his comments about Classical architecture to the English sonnet, recognising that 'either the proportions must be changed or the Order abandoned' and choosing to change the proportions.

Besides conceptually, an inverted Classical column does indeed capture the visual representation of a waterfall, a representation dramatically heightened, as Hopkins writes to Dixon, by making 'one part [...] less beautiful than another', an aesthetic choice 'necessary to the whole effect' if the poem is to be figured 'like the plain shaft in a column' until it reaches its more spectacular and capital effects at its physical ending (which, in the case of his 'Inversnaid', is actually its beginning) — or, in Hopkins's inverted columnar phrasing, till the water 'flutes and low to the lake falls home' (see 'Appendix Sixteen (b)' for an illustration), 'flutes' being, of course, the decorative motif consisting of a series of uniform, vertical incisions in the surface of a Classical column.<sup>14</sup> As early as 1862, a schoolboy Hopkins, writing to his friend Ernest Hartley Coleridge, reveals his interest in Classical columns: 'I have begun the story of the Corinthian capital' (3 September 1862, *Letters* III, p.13). If extent, this prose history might have shed some light on our present considerations, but it is not.

At this point, I wish to expand the meaning of the poem by revealing more here than Hopkins's defamiliarisation of a landscape by describing its waterfall backwards, perhaps without regard for the expectations of his readers (as the Stylisticians complain) — though Hopkins seems to have had no reader in mind, save himself, for this unconventional and unmentioned poem: as Hopkins once wrote to Bridges, 'a poet is a public in himself' (19 January 1879, *Letters* I, p.59). I will posit in what follows that Hopkins is deconstructing this waterfall for a particular, very personal reason: through it, he finds an opportunity to deconstruct his own poetic process, to reveal his own creative impulses and liquidity of mind, to display what he refers to in 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' (with a sort of verbal pun) as being 'mined with a motion, a drift' (line 27). In essence, Hopkins moves backwards creatively, inspired by the name 'Inversnaid' to express an 'inverse made in verse', inspired to trace his own writing process back to its source. This was, for Hopkins, a movement far too intimate — emotionally and aesthetically — to allow another poet, even as dear a friend as Robert Bridges, to watch.<sup>15</sup> Remembering that, in architectural terminology, *scapae* is 'the shaft of a column' (from *scapus* or 'stalk' in Latin),<sup>16</sup> the poem's column, or core-meaning, or inscape is the 'inversion' of Hopkins's own writing process, a sort of poetic deconstruction which might account for its lack of 'theological dimension', a lack to which Milward draws attention: 'There is something apparently uncharacteristic of Hopkins in this poem, with its absence of theological reflection'.<sup>17</sup>

For my hypothesis to be supported, it needs must be through manuscript evidence, the only evidence revealing Hopkins's process of poetic formulation, his 'mind with a motion'. For this reason, I wish to turn to another of Hopkins's water poems, 'Epithalamion' (for which I provide a close reading in 'Chapter Three'). This choice is necessitated because Hopkins's manuscripts are usually adjusted fair copies, with



incremental drafts a rarity, except in a few cases such as his ‘Epithalamion’. As Robert Bernard Martin explains: ‘To see the manuscript of this poem [“Epithalamion”] is to realize how little we actually know about the physical circumstances of his writing. Usually we are lucky if we know even the general locality in which he wrote’.<sup>18</sup>

The following is a transcription of the first three lines of the evolving ‘Epithalamion’ in manuscript (*Facsimiles* II, plates 494-502; see ‘Appendix Sixteen (c)’):

MS 1, H.ii.14<sup>r</sup>:  
 Listener, make believe  
~~You hear the maddest shout~~  
~~You~~ That whelmed ~~in~~ under wood

MS 1, H.ii.14<sup>v</sup>:  
~~With the~~  
 Under this leafy hood

MS 2, H.i.50<sup>r</sup>:  
 Do like me,  
~~Like me,~~ my listener; make believe  
  
 by the leafy  
 That whelmed ~~under the~~ hood  
  
 slant-to  
~~slant-down~~ wood  
 lean-to  
~~Of a—~~leaning down—and leafy wood

MS 3, H.ii.11<sup>r</sup> (struck through by Hopkins):

what I do                    hearer, hear what I do:  
 Do ~~like me now,~~ dear my listener; listen with me, make believe  
  
 That                    once by  
                                  ~~in~~                    hood  
~~How~~ whelmed            by            branchy bunchy ~~wood~~  
  
                                  once  
 That leaf-whelmed            somewhere under hood  
  
                                  some  
 Of    a-            branchy bunchy wood,

MS 3, H.ii.11<sup>r</sup>:  
 Hark, hearer, hear what I do; lend a thought now, make believe  
     We are  
     ~~You~~  
     ~~That~~ leaf-whelmed somewhere with the hood  
 Of some branchy bunchy bushybowered wood,

These manuscript lines, even after a momentary perusal, reveal an ever increasing complexity from the vague to the concrete, from the passive to the active (especially in regard to the role of the reader) — put simply, a development towards the complexity which the Stylisticians praise in the earlier stanzas of ‘Inversnaid’.

Hopkins’s reader is initially drawn into the ‘Epithalamion’ by a direct address and asked to participate in the fantasy being constructed: ‘listener, make believe’ (MS 1). This address is broadened to ‘do like me, my listener; make believe’ (MS 2), Hopkins accentuating that both he and his reader (now possessively labelled as ‘my listener’) are joint participants in the creation of this fantasy, with Hopkins later suggesting that his reader, whom he now calls ‘dear’, merely follow his lead: ‘do like me now, dear listener, listen with me, make believe’ (MS 3). Although the last version is from the passage Hopkins struck through, it is noteworthy that he has begun replacing ‘dear listener’ with ‘hearer’, especially since ‘hearer’ has miscreant connotations which would have been clearly evident to a Classical scholar like Hopkins: in Greek pederastic tradition, this direct address emphasised the beloved’s role within a pederastic, pedagogic relationship, a relationship between a young *erômenos* (or *aitês*, the ‘hearer’) and an older *erastês* (or *eispnêlas*, the ‘inspirer’). This becomes, in the final version, a very poignant address, both poetically and pederastically choice: ‘hark, hearer, hear what I do; lend a thought now, make believe’ (MS 3). Hence, the participating reader, the ‘dear listener’, becomes Hopkins’s ‘hearer’, the pederastic encapsulation of both his ‘listener’ and his ‘dear’.

Hopkins's placement of his 'hearer' into the topographical location of the 'Epithalamion' is fleshed out by the change of 'whelmèd in under wood' (MS 1) to 'under this leafy hood' (MS 1), these two earliest versions later blended into 'whelmed by the leafy hood' (MS 2). And, although struck through by Hopkins, 'whelmed once by branchy bunchy [hood]' in the first version of MS 3 subsequently becomes the far more poetically complex 'leaf-whelmed once somewhere under hood / Of some branchy bunchy wood'. Hopkins's reader ('hearer') begins as overwhelmed in a nondescript wooded landscape, then is later situated beneath a leafy hood, a hood that is then altered, with painterly finesse, into a branchy bunchy hood. In each successive stage of Hopkins's drafting, the phrasing becomes more tactile and resonant, the reader increasingly overwhelmed with leaves somewhere under the hood of a branchy bunchy wood. This movement towards heightened complexity — visually, tactilely, poetically — culminates in the two masterful, tongue-twisting lines of the final version: 'we are leaf-whelmed somewhere with the hood / Of some branchy bunchy bushybowered wood' (MS 3).

As far as Hopkins's preference for compounding is concerned, notice that, after initially writing 'of a leaning down — and leafy wood' (MS 2), Hopkins begins replacing 'leaning down' with 'lean-to', 'slant-down', and 'slant-to', searching for a suitable compound to replace the two words in the earlier form. In the final version, he jettisons this completely, perhaps because the phrasing seems to push the imagery earthward, lessening the 'whelming' quality of the forested landscape he is constructing. A similar movement of compounding, as well as heightened rhythmicity, is displayed by the shift from 'under wood' to 'leafy hood' to 'branchy bunchy hood' to 'hood / some branchy bunchy wood' to the ultimate 'hood / Of some branchy bunchy bushybowered wood'.

What is displayed here is a poetic evolution, a clustering on many levels: the reader ultimately becomes a pederastic 'hearer' asked not merely to watch but to

participate in the narrator's construction of an Arcadian fantasy; the landscape ultimately becomes not just a wood but an enveloping bower, utterly tactile and visual; the poetic diction ultimately moves towards heightened compounding, rhythmicity, and internal rhyme, particularly in the case of 'branchy bunchy bushybowered wood', where the beauty of the phrasing partly resides in 'branchy', 'bunchy', and 'bushy' seeming to compound equally with the adjective-root 'bowered'. 'Branchy bunchy bushybowered wood' reveals all of the brilliance for which the mature Hopkins is famed, even though it sprung from a mere 'under wood'. The clustering of the reader-writer relationship, the topiary description, the poetic diction and form — these reveal a poetic process and mental movement similar to that which is displayed invertedly, in verse, in his 'Inversnaid'.

Now, to return to 'Inversnaid' — but starting with the fourth stanza and moving backwards — notice that the poem begins vaguely with wide wildernesses labelled abstractly as 'them', with simplistic phrasing and vocabulary reminiscent of MS 1 (H.ii.14<sup>r</sup> and 14<sup>v</sup>) of the 'Epithalamion', with myriad landscapes passive to the point of vulnerability:

What would the world be, once bereft  
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,  
O let them be left, wildness and wet;  
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

The second stanza endows such weeds and wildernesses with tactile detail, with specific natural growth that illustrates a shift from 'them' to 'the'. Its complexity is also heightened through the introduction of simple compounds — as in MS 2 (H.i.50<sup>r</sup>) of the 'Epithalamion' — as well as Scots words and the portmanteau 'fitches'.<sup>19</sup> Notice also how the rhythm of the second line captures the brook's restricted motion:

Degged with dew, dappled with dew  
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,  
Wiry heathpacks, fitches of fern,  
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.

The third stanza reveals a specific-yet-fashioned landscape (expressed as ‘a’), a landscape where passive and active elements intermingle (illustrated by a cluster of froth that dissipates amidst the currents of a dark pool), a landscape reminiscent of the struck-through portion of MS 3 (H.ii.11<sup>r</sup>) of the ‘Epithalamion’. For the movement of the froth, Hopkins coins the word ‘twindles’, perhaps a portmanteau of ‘twitches’ and ‘dwindles’, or of ‘twine’ and ‘spindle’.<sup>20</sup> Four compounds (one a triple) heighten the complexity of the stanza’s diction; and the circular rhythmicity of lines three and four, the sense of motion:

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-froth  
Turns and twindles over the broth  
Of a pool so pitchblack, fell-frowning  
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

The fourth stanza possesses all of the overt complexity readers have come to expect from Hopkins — the complexity of MS 3 (H.ii.11<sup>r</sup>) of the ‘Epithalamion’ — with the poet directing his reader’s gaze towards ‘this’, a present landscape ultimately anthropomorphised into an equestrian ‘he’. Although, in accordance with Hopkins’s polished preference, the four compounds in the stanza are without hyphenation, what is most poetically telling is that the whole stanza is infused masterfully with the rhythmic motion of the waterfall:

This darksome burn, horseback brown,  
His rollrock highroad roaring down,  
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam  
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

Considered in this inverted form, Hopkins’s ‘Inversnaid’ reveals the same writing process as the evolving drafts of the ‘Epithalamion’, though it does so invertedly, for reasons literary scholarship and linguistics have neither noted nor explained.

Literary scholars and linguists often expect poetical meaning to be self-evident — which is a rather shallow approach to works by a genius, especially a genius like Hopkins who compared original artworks to chess problems. In a pair of letters to his most constant and competent reader, Bridges — the friend to whom he wrote: ‘I do not write

for the public. You are my public' (21 August 1877, *Letters I*, p.46) — Hopkins explains this chess comparison. The first letter (from 24 October 1883) and the second (from 6 November 1887) are both contemporaneous with the letters about Hopkins's trip to Inversnaid that I have already considered:

But you know there are some solutions to, say, chess problems so beautifully ingenious, some resolutions of suspensions so lovely in music that even the feeling of interest is keenest when they are known and over, and for some time survives the discovery. (*Letters I*, p.187)

Epic and drama and ballad and many, most, things should be at once intelligible: but everything need not and cannot be. [...] It is like a [check] mate which may be given, one way only, in three moves; otherwise, various ways, in many. (p.265-66)

'Solutions [...] so beautifully ingenious' are often required in poetry, for 'everything need not and cannot be [intelligible]' on a first reading — or maybe a hundredth.<sup>21</sup> Hopkins's 'Inversnaid', one such poetical chess problem, begs for a solution more complex than a dismissive comment by unappreciative Stylisticians that it has 'little aesthetic reward'.<sup>22</sup>

In 'To R.B.' — Hopkins's last poem, aptly addressed to Robert Bridges, his principal reader, his 'public' — Hopkins asserts that his own poetic skill has reached such mastery that his 'hand at work [is] now never wrong' (line 8), an assertion applicable to his 'Inversnaid'. Such a claim of 'genius' would be mocked by most modern literary scholars and linguists, who give little credence to Ezra Pound's assertion that 'a man of genius has a right to any mode of expression',<sup>23</sup> or to Hopkins's assertion that 'every true poet [...] must be original and originality a condition of poetic genius' (6 October 1886, *Letters III*, p.370). However, the poet Coventry Patmore, to whom Hopkins had addressed the last comment, was perceptive enough to recognise that the proper response towards a genius or possible genius is to anticipate that his 'hand at work [is] now never wrong':

After all, I might very likely be wrong, for I see that Bridges goes along with you where I cannot, & where I do not believe that I ever could; and I deliberately recognise in the author of 'Prometheus' [Bridges] a sounder and more delicate taste than my own. You remember I only claimed to be a God among the *Gallery Gods* — i.e. the common run of 'Nineteenth Century', 'Fortnightly' & such critics. I feel *absolutely* sure that you would never conciliate *them* — but Bridges' appreciation is a fact that I cannot get over. I cannot understand his not seeing defects in your system wh. I seem to see so clearly; and when I do not understand a man's ignorance, I obey the Philosopher and think myself ignorant of his understanding. (20 March 1884, *Letters III*, pp.353-54)

That ‘Inversnaid’ seems ‘to have been carried in embryonic form in Hopkins’ mind for two and one-half years before it was finally given its final [form]’<sup>24</sup> — springing from a six-line fragment ‘[O where is it, the wilderness]’ (*OET*, p.155) — strikes me as far less surprisingly than that it seems to have been composed, in all of its glory, in about two and one-half hours, an impromptu performance recorded into a tiny booklet that Hopkins had withdrawn from his pocket while standing on the deck of a steamer or while walking along a wooded path at the edge of a waterfall, following the water uphill, against its current, towards its source. What other than ‘genius’ can account for this sudden confluence of poetic skill and landscape description, this appeal for the preservation of natural beauty, this straightforwardly readable poem which deconstructs itself if read in reverse, this master poet’s creativity being completely seized and sized — in short and imperiously, this utter intricacy as well as miracle of the moment. In ‘Inversnaid’, Hopkins has managed the Keatsian impossible, holding water in a witch’s sieve — after inverting it.

Since Hopkins once admitted to Bridges, ‘I may as well say what I should not otherwise have said, that I always knew in my heart Walt Whitman’s mind to be more like my own than any other man’s living’ (18 October 1882, *Letters* I, p.155) — it is perhaps not inappropriate to allow Whitman to provide a final justification for this poem, as well as an explanation for its presently misunderstood state: ‘Backward I see in my own days where I sweated through fog with linguists and contenders, / I have no mockings or arguments, I witness and wait’ (*SM*, lines 80-81).

‘Backward I see’. If readers can manage to see backwards, to see beyond the mockings and arguments, the Stylistic fog of linguists like Short and van Peer, readers might just witness, as they wait expectantly, a miracle of translated genius, a miracle that Hopkins describes in ‘Henry Purcell’ as ‘meaning motion fans fresh our wits with wonder’

(line 14). To see backwards is to perceive properly, with awe, Hopkins's inverse made in verse, and to unravel one of his grandest textual puzzles.<sup>25</sup>

### ‘A Parcel of Underwear’: Hopkins and Issues of Identity

At length let up again to feel the puzzle of puzzles,  
And that we call Being.  
(Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*)<sup>26</sup>

Half a century ago, an anonymous reviewer voiced surprise in the *Times Literary Supplement* that ‘no modern poet has been critically commented on in more detail [...] Rarely has a poet attracted such a burden of documentation and commentary’.<sup>27</sup> Yet, even that anonymous reviewer would marvel, more than forty years later, at the number of books, scholarly articles, and the like written about Hopkins each year. His poems, letters, journals, confession notes, and scores of other documents — these added to the ‘biographically known’ — all make Gerard Manley Hopkins an ‘identity’ worth knowing, if only that were possible.

My own educated prejudice about Hopkins's ‘identity’ hinges on his intimate claim that ‘Walt Whitman's mind [is] more like my own than any other man's living’ (*Letters* I, p.155), and my belief that, given this confession, Whitman's explanation of his own curious and mercurial mind equally befits Hopkins:

Do I contradict myself?  
Very well then I contradict myself,  
(I am large, I contain multitudes.) (*SM*, lines 1324-26)

This educated prejudice, I must admit, is a dangerous acquisition — for it is indeed hubris for biographers or literary scholars to suppose that they know a biographical ‘subject’ well



enough (perhaps even better than that ‘subject’ knew himself or herself), even when that ‘knowing’ is based on very intimate details such as that Hopkins would sometimes ‘bring a parcel of underwear, more holes than cloth, and humbly ask [his friend Mrs McCabe] if she could have the garments mended, as he wished to spare the Society [of Jesus] undue expenditure on his behalf’.<sup>28</sup> ‘More holes than cloth’ — that is indeed the biographical and scholarly dilemma posed by Hopkins. In her introduction to A. J. A. Symons’s classic biography of another Uranian, Frederick Rolfe (Baron Corvo), A. S. Byatt describes the most profound problem of biography: ‘There were holes in the fabric just where a reader was most hungry for density and richness. People often leave no record of the most critical or passionate moments of their lives. They leave laundry bills and manifestoes’.<sup>29</sup> Thomas Carlyle made much the same point when he declared that ‘*disjecta membra* [scattered parts] are all the we find of any Poet, or of any man’.<sup>30</sup> ‘Scattered parts’ — it is because of these that a biographer, in particular, should remain leery of embracing educated prejudices or of employing primary concepts like ‘identity’, an elusive concept that Hopkins falteringly attempts to grasp in a short treatise which he never published:

When I consider my selfbeing, my consciousness and feeling of myself, that taste of myself, of *I* and *me* above and in all things, which is more distinctive than the taste of ale or alum, more distinctive than the smell of walnutleaf or camphor, and is incommunicable by any means to another man (as when I was a child I used to ask myself: What must it be to be someone else?). Nothing else in nature comes near this unspeakable stress of pitch, distinctiveness, and selving, this selfbeing of my own. (*Sermons*, p.123)

‘This selfbeing of my own’ which Hopkins admits is ‘incommunicable by any means to another man’ (recalling the fragmentary poem he drafted on Pater’s dinner acceptance) is the essence of what a biographer, for all the scattered parts and inexplicable holes of the life being considered, hopes to mend into a fitting garment.

His middle-class background; his education at Highgate, then at Oxford; his High Church and his Aesthetic leanings; his conversion to Roman Catholicism; his years spent in training to become a Jesuit priest; his spurious postings in most of the large Victorian

cities; his friendships with the poets Robert Bridges, R. W. Dixon, and Coventry Patmore, as well as with Walter Pater and John Henry, Cardinal Newman; his frustrated life as a poetic genius unappreciated — that is the basic fabric of Hopkins's life until what must have seemed a godsend to the Jesuits, his appointment as Professor of Classics at University College, Dublin, and Fellow of the Royal University of Ireland. This problematic Jesuit had finally found a use. But, the more private aspects of the man — his homoerotic and pederastic desires, his reigning sorrows, his thwarted artistic aspirations — these are most clearly presented and represented in his poetry, a poetry equally sacred and profane, a blend of the painterly, the priestly, and the prurient, a blend of his principle influences — Ruskin, Newman, and Pater. Such kaleidoscopic forces within one poet serve to question whether a sometimes-fashionable concept like 'identity' has any particular applicability for an individual, let alone for a group, a community, or a nation. It is this concept of 'identity' that I would now like to draw into question, by pointing out holes in the Hopkinsian fabric, holes that make his inner life 'incommunicable by any means to another', which is often what Hopkins himself intended.

After taking up his Irish professorship, Hopkins wrote to his mother that 'the College is poor, all unprovided to a degree that outsiders wd. scarcely believe, and of course — I cannot go into details — it cannot be comfortable' (26 November 1884, *Letters* III, p.164). More than three years later, Hopkins would provide her with a personal and academic self-evaluation: 'I am now working at examination papers all day and this work began last month and will outlast this one. It is great, very great drudgery. I cannot of course say it is wholly useless, but I believe that most of it is and that I bear a burden which crushes me and does little to help any good end' (5 July 1888, *Letters* III, pp.184-85). This is what he had earlier expressed to Bridges as 'that coffin of weakness and dejection in which I live, without even the hope of change' (1 April 1885, *Letters* I,

pp.214-15). Sometime during 1885, this ‘coffin of weakness and dejection’ became too much for the poet to bear, and the ensuing depression saw the creation of his brilliant ‘Dark Sonnets’. One sonnet from this sequence is particularly important for any consideration of Hopkins’s ‘selfbeing’ and the cause(s) of his Dublin depression:

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.  
 What hours, O what black hours we have spent  
 This night! what sights you, heart, saw, ways you went!  
 And more must, in yet longer light’s delay.  
 With witness I speak this. But where I say  
 Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament  
 Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent  
 To dearest him that lives alas! away.  
 I am gall, I am heartburn. God’s most deep decree  
 Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;  
 Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.  
 Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see  
 The lost are like this, and their scourge to be  
 As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.<sup>31</sup>

Although this poem is undated, it is surely one of the four sonnets alluded to on 1 September 1885 as having come ‘like inspirations unbidden and against my will’ (*Letters I*, p.221), and probably the very one described earlier, on 17 May 1885: ‘I have after long silence written two sonnets, which I am touching; if ever anything was written in blood one of these was’ (*Letters I*, p.219).

This sonnet ‘written in blood’ begins: ‘I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day’. From its outset, the poem is a consideration of ‘selfbeing’, of consciousness, of the feeling and taste of ‘my selfstuff’ (one of the alternatives within line 12, from MS H.ii.35<sup>v</sup>)<sup>32</sup>. In essence, Hopkins’s speaker appears bereft of everything except the feeling of self, of existential human isolation, of bitter retrospection (*OET*, p.447, note). In his spiritual-retreat notes for 1-2 January 1888, Hopkins describes a similar experience: ‘Being tired I nodded and woke with a start. What is my wretched life? Five wasted years almost have passed in Ireland. [...] In the dark [...] we want a light shed on our way and a happiness spread over our life’ (*Sermons*, p.262). The imagery of the first line of the sonnet draws on the ninth plague of Egypt, ‘darkness over the land [...] even darkness which may be

felt' (Exodus 10.21, KJV) — as well as on the Wisdom of Solomon, 'over them [...] was spread an heavy night, an image of that darkness which should afterward receive them: but yet were they unto themselves more grievous than the darkness' (17.21, Apocrypha, KJV). Evincing the scope of his poetic genius, his 'hand at work now never wrong' ('To R.B.', line 8), Hopkins manages to encapsulate this self-burden 'more grievous than the darkness', this 'darkness which may be felt', in a single aptly chosen word — *fell*. Its five homophones of different etymology all serve to characterise the encompassing darkness and the unsurpassable density of Hopkins's present experience:

a covering of hide;  
 gall (as in line 9);  
 a waste hillside (as in the places on which some medieval visionaries woke to find themselves);  
 a blow;  
 savage, ruthless (as an adjective). (from *OET*, pp.447-48, note)

All of these meanings serve as keys to the sonnet, as well as contradict each other at various points, for they resonate a Whitmanesque 'contains multitudes'. In essence, the 'fell of dark' becomes massive, aggressively dangerous, maddeningly tactile — becomes a panther surrounding its prey, an image Hopkins employs in another of the 'Dark Sonnets':

But ah, but O thou terrible, why wouldst thou rude on me  
 Thy wring-world right foot rock? lay a lionlimb against me? scan  
 With darksome devouring eyes my bruised bones? and fan,  
 O in turns of tempest, me heaped there; me frantic to avoid thee and flee?  
 ('Carrion Comfort', lines 5-8)

'Darksome' and 'devouring' are indeed appropriate descriptions of this pitch-black poem and its attendant depression, its 'turns of tempest' so sombre and so wasting:

What hours, O what black hours we have spent  
 This night! what sights you, heart, saw, ways you went!  
 And more must, in yet longer light's delay.

Although these 'black hours' of disturbing sights and a heart atoss are a biographical certainty, Hopkins's description of them is followed by a claim almost legal or contractual, as if he needs to account for both his actions and his whereabouts ('me heaped there'), to prove to his auditors or to himself that this horrific experience had indeed been real: 'with

witness I speak this'. But, who is his 'witness'? His heart, his God, another person? A reader witnesses only a Hopkinsian hole in the fabric, vague and intentional.

After realising that he has merely telescoped a lifetime of felt darkness into a single nightmarish experience, Hopkins widens the lens to reveal that this 'dark night of the soul' is not just a particular moment, not just 'this night' for which he has been providing an audited account:

But where I say  
Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament  
Is cries countless.

The above recalls the poet's letters to his mother and to Bridges, letters steeped in feelings of depression, uselessness, dissatisfaction, and apathy; however, it is more than that. Just when Hopkins seems on the verge of blurring himself into poetic oblivion *via* hyperbole — his 'hours' becoming a 'life', his 'lament' becoming 'cries countless' — he focuses the lens again, and the sonnet suddenly becomes curiously intimate, confessional, passionate, histrionic, and palpable, the generalised pain and darkness telescoped not towards the *what*, but the *who*:

And my lament  
Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent  
To dearest him that lives alas! away.

The crucial intimation here might well be the phrase 'dead letters' — correspondence which remains at the Dead Letter Office when no traceable link to either addressee or sender can be found. Perhaps Christ is forever unresponsive to Hopkins's prayers, or perhaps this simile concerns a more mortal figure, another 'dearest him', the 'he' of a letter to Bridges, dated 15 February 1879:

I cannot in conscience spend time on poetry, neither have I the inducements and inspirations that make others compose. Feeling, love in particular, is the great moving power and spring of verse and the only person that I am in love with seldom, especially now, stirs my heart sensibly and when he does I cannot always 'make capital' on it, it would be a sacrilege to do so. (*Letters I*, p.66)

The *who* of this intimation to Bridges is tantalisingly undisclosed, an intentional hole in the fabric where a name should be, the name of 'the only person that I am in love with',

the person whose memory it would be a form of ‘sacrilege’ to ‘make capital on’, the person whose memory would be rent by rendering it as poetry. The lack of capitalisation for the ‘he’ of the letter and the ‘him’ of the poem (almost making a pun of ‘I cannot always “make capital” on it’) draws into question a ready attribution of these to Christ, which would have been a legitimate priestly affection. ‘The only person I am in love with’ may instead have a biographical referent, a young poet whom Hopkins had made into what might be considered, shallowly, a fetish — Digby Mackworth Dolben (one of the subjects of the ‘Conclusion’). Dolben’s death, some two-and-a-half years after he and Hopkins had met, removed the obvious dangers associated with an actualised affection, whether those dangers were moral, spiritual, legal, social, emotional, or intimate. Before Dolben’s death, Hopkins wrote to Bridges: ‘Give my love to [Coles] and Dolben. I have written letters without end to the latter without a whiff of answer’ (28 August 1865, *Letters* I, p.1). However, love unanswered, unrequited, unconsummated, and abounding in ‘dead letters’ is love nonetheless; and, for Hopkins, this love, both as a remembrance of things past and as a dissatisfaction with the present, seems to have nurtured a bitterness which he directed at both his own limitations and at his God, who was responsible for placing the supreme limitation by taking Dolben away. That is perhaps the cause of Hopkins’s bitterness: the effect is more problematic to assess, full of biographical holes.

If the *who – he – him* is indeed Dolben, then the effect on Hopkins is a lingering distillation, a continual reflection on the same issues as Richard Barnfield’s Elizabethan poem *The Teares of an Affectionate Shepheard Sicke for Loue* (1594), though without Barnfield’s acquiescence and erotic bravado:

If it be sinne to loue a sweet-fac’d Boy,  
 (Whose amber locks trust vp in golden tramels  
 Dangle adowne his louely cheekes with ioy,  
 When pearle and flowers his faire haire enamels)  
 If it be sinne to loue a louely Lad;  
 Oh then sinne I, for whom my soule is sad. (lines 7-12)<sup>33</sup>

During a spiritual retreat on 2 January 1888, Hopkins notes that ‘something bitter distills’ (*Sermons*, p.262), and that particular distillation may have grown bitter through an absence of sweetness, the absence of his own ‘sweet-fac’d Boy’, his ‘louely Lad’, his ‘dearest him that lives alas! away’. While Barnfield’s ‘my soule is sad’ is mitigated by pederastic pleasure (‘If it be sinne to loue a louely Lad; / Oh then sinne I’), Hopkins’s ‘my fits of sadness [that] resemble madness’ remain ever aggravated, which is revealed in the gastric juices of the following:

I am gall, I am heartburn. God’s most deep decree  
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;  
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.

In his commentary notes for the Ignatian ‘Meditation on Hell’, Hopkins describes the galling bitterness of a soul in Hell whose mind is ‘gnawing and feeding on its own most miserable self’, for ‘their sins are the bitterness, [because those sins that] tasted sweet once, now taste most bitter’ (*Sermons*, p.243). This is exactly what is found in the bakery of the next few lines:

Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see  
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be  
As I am mine, their sweating selves

Something bitter does distil here — the ‘selfyeast of spirit’, the worse than ‘sweating selves’ — a bitter distillation which Norman White describes as ‘a counter-movement of arrogance and unstated questioning’,<sup>34</sup> a counter-movement which will continue for Hopkins, as is illustrated by ‘[Thou Art Indeed Just, Lord]’, a sonnet written in the year of his death:

Wert thou my enemy, O thou my friend,  
How wouldst thou worse, I wonder, than thou dost  
Defeat, thwart me? (lines 5-7)

The Hopkins above is still beneath God’s dark and palpable ‘lionlimb’, is still questioning defiantly and arrogantly whether he is the plaything of a divine friend or a devouring foe.

However, while weaving fabric poetical, Hopkins is difficult to defeat or thwart, even by a Divine ‘lionlimb’, as the last two words of ‘[I Wake and Feel the Fell of Dark, Not Day]’ make clear — *but worse*. This last phrase lingers to defy syntactically Hopkins’s readers, his biographers, his unfortunate reality, his unsympathetic and unapproachable God, his ‘selfbeing of my own’. This last phrase is poetic slight-of-hand by a master of the poetic deck:

Indeed, Hopkins strains the syntax of English, sometimes beyond the point of intelligibility, in order to draw from the language a coherence that runs athwart the syntagmatic line proper to discursive sense. The density of his poetic language, abundantly remarked upon and described in criticism, seems to reveal a new linguistic dimension based upon visible — or rather, as Hopkins would prefer, audible — connections between words, both in their depth and on their surfaces. [...] Indeed, few poets had insisted as doggedly as Hopkins on the non-discursive connections that the reader is meant to perceive.<sup>35</sup>

The non-discursive connections that arise from ‘but worse’ prompt the question, ‘But worse than what?’ If the earlier allusion is indeed to Dolben and not to Christ, then the Hopkins displayed here has moved beyond priest, poet, Victorian, and Jesuit: he has become a defiant troubadour, a lover not unlike Tristan, who responds, after being told that he has drunk his death by sharing the unintended elixir with Isolde, ‘By my death, do you mean this pain of love?’<sup>36</sup> If such is the case, then Hopkins’s sonnet chronicles a lifetime of ‘this pain of love’, this bitter yearning for ‘dearest him that lives alas! away’, Hopkins echoing Tristan’s declaration that ‘If by my death, you mean this agony of love, that is my life. If by my death, you mean the punishment that we are to suffer if discovered, I accept that. And if by my death, you mean eternal punishment in the fires of Hell, I accept that, too’.<sup>37</sup>

Syntactically, a phrase like ‘but worse’ defies ready explanation because it leaves two contradictory options: either ‘this pain of love’ is not as intense as the pain of Hell, or it is more so. Hopkins never opts syntactically to side or decide — hence, the Paterian greyness of the phrase becomes an equal blending of the sacred and the profane, becomes what Pater describes in his essay on ‘Aesthetic Poetry’ as ‘the strange suggestion of a



deliberate choice between Christ and a rival lover',<sup>38</sup> a choice with which Hopkins seems to dalliance, but refuses to make. This Jesuit poet had indeed learned much from his Decadent friend and former academic coach, and these last two words rival or perhaps surpass Pater's own Antinomian subtlety and suggestiveness as a blatant hole in a textual garment. That this hole is intentional is supported by Bridges's claim that 'No one ever wrote words with more critical deliberation than Gerard Hopkins' (*Dolben* 1915, p.cxiv).<sup>39</sup>

If this sonnet does, at least syntactically, make 'the strange suggestion of a deliberate choice between Christ and a rival lover', a lover such as Digby Dolben, then Hopkins is also defiantly challenging, or at least defiantly questioning, traditional Church teaching on the immorality of homoerotic and pederastic acts, even if those acts are only committed in the heart, for the Church recognises little distinction between the two (though it phrases the concept heterosexually): 'But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart' (Matthew 5.28, KJV). Hopkins's defiant challenge, a challenge which White describes as 'a counter-movement of arrogance and unstated questioning', is so central to the 'instress' of Hopkins's 'inscape', the core or column of his being, 'my selfbeing, my consciousness and feeling of myself, that taste of myself' (*Sermons*, p.123), that it crushes beneath its own dark, poetic 'lionlimb' Dennis Sobolev's claim that

nothing indicates that a nineteenth-century Catholic priest could experience his homoerotic tendencies, even acknowledged and accepted, as the core of his identity. [...] What Hopkins's notebooks demonstrate is both his homoerotic leanings and his conscious and unequivocal resistance to them; nothing in these diaries indicates that he saw his homoerotic 'temptations' as either the pivotal point of his identity or an object of celebration.<sup>40</sup>

However, according to Pater, both sides of such a syntactical divide — the divide 'between Christ and a rival lover' — are profoundly dangerous and sensuous, for the disparity between religious 'resistance' and erotic 'celebration', 'between Christ and a rival lover', is often rather slight: 'That religion, monastic religion at any rate, has its sensuous side, a dangerously sensuous side [...] is the experience of Rousseau as well as

of the Christian mystics'.<sup>41</sup> While the Hopkins of 1885 seems to straddle that divide — the two syntactical options of Christ or a rival lover, of Roman Catholicism or Decadence — the Hopkins of 1888 performs 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell' (in the truest Blakean sense), unifying these seemingly disparate extremes through, as would seem appropriate, an epithalamion, a 'hymn of the wedding chamber' (this poem is the consideration of 'Chapter Three').<sup>42</sup> In his 'Epithalamion', Hopkins casts aside the tattered garb of convention and established 'identity', revealing himself in all of his newfound nakedness and freedom. But, for now, lest I disregard my own chapter divisions, let me return again to Hopkins's outward trappings, his 'identity', his 'parcel of underwear, more holes than cloth'.

'More holes than cloth' — this remains the dilemma for Hopkins biography and a feature of his poetry that adds to its subtlety and suggestiveness, its danger and depth. In response to those holes, particularly those 'strange suggestion[s] of a deliberate choice between Christ and a rival lover', most Hopkins biographers and critics have exhibited a scholarly preference for the congenial, which is partly a decorous and cautious attempt not to marginalise the poet's deeply held religious convictions, his devotion to celibacy, and his authentic sense of vocation. Although I understand this rather Roman Catholic preference, I keep hearing Whitman whisper through those textual and biographical holes:

Do I contradict myself?  
Very well then I contradict myself,  
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)

Hopkins often appears, and probably was, holey and contradictory — but his stature, his largeness is not diminished by this, for he is the most curious type of genius, the type that is impossible to pin down, to force to fit the constraints of what biographers and scholars might, with their love of taxonomy, label as the Englishman, the Victorian, the Roman Catholic, the Jesuit, the poet, the Decadent, the pederast, the Communist sympathiser, the Classical scholar, the professor, the Ruskinian lover of nature, the exile, the Britannia

jingoist, the dandy. He is all of these and more besides, possessing that ‘fluidity of personality’ which Jude Nixon suggests is central to Pater’s argument in *The Renaissance*.<sup>43</sup> Confronted always with Hopkins’s ‘more holes than cloth’, his ‘scattered parts’, his ‘fluidity’, I wonder how biographers and scholars can employ a concept like ‘identity’ at all: the consistency they seek may not, in the nature of man (particularly this man), be there.

Man may, in essence, be a contradictory and elusive entity, with an inscape instressed in so multitudinous a way that the relative parts of itself are often contradictory to itself. Man perhaps deserves Montaigne’s dub of ‘a marvellous, vain, fickle, and unstable subject’,<sup>44</sup> and fickleness is a quality that Hopkins chose not to censure, but to celebrate:

Glory be to God for dappled things —  
 [...]
 All things counter, original, spare, strange;  
 Whatever is fickle, frecklèd (who knows how?). (‘Pied Beauty’, lines 1; 7-8)

The religious can celebrate Hopkins the priest-poet by affixing his image in stained glass; the British can add continuity to Poets’ Corner by affixing his name to a plaque — but the man is too large to affix (see ‘Appendix Seventeen’).<sup>45</sup> He contains Whitmanesque multitudes, hence is beyond feeble attempts to picture or to name, to capture within a ‘theory’ or ‘identity’. Hopkins is neither a saint nor an icon, but is certainly beyond our modern taxonomies in many ways. Most of those who fit readily within such taxonomies have a relatively measurable ‘identity’ (for lack of a better word): Hopkins has expanse.<sup>46</sup> Even if scholars and biographers brush aside my claim of expanse, of Hopkins’s multitudinous selving or inscape, they must still come to terms with at least a double self in the poet, a double self which Hopkins elucidates while chiding Bridges for not appreciating the genius of Robert Louis Stevenson (This is glossed by an insight from Nils Clausson):

This sour severity blinds you to his great genius. *Jekyll and Hyde* I have read. [...] You are certainly wrong about Hyde being overdrawn: my Hyde is worse. (28 October 1886, *Letters I*, p.238)

(Stevenson's sensational tale of the double self [first published in 1886] would certainly have resonated particularly strongly with Wilde and other members of the homosexual subculture that was emerging in London at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>47</sup>)

This gloss is important for a proper understanding of Hopkins and his selving, since it reveals what may have been the import of Hopkins's claim that 'my Hyde is worse' — and, in his sonnet, 'but worse'.<sup>48</sup> In the Victorian period (and often in our own), this 'double self' was a requirement for those with a pederastic and/or homoerotic 'disposition', a necessity in a world of decorous behaviour, a world with which the more 'public' self needed to accord lest the individual be deemed maladjusted, psychotic, immoral, sinful, unlawful, fringe, objectionable, and/or intrusive. Hyde was all of these pejoratives, at least when considered by 'legitimate' powers — social, medical, ethical, religious, legal, political, scholarly, and familial — those powers which determine what is proper and what is 'worse'. Hopkins's 'my Hyde is worse' is a revealing disclosure of a 'sweating self' beneath his own Victorian veneer, and legitimates, to some degree, Bridges's wish for Hopkins 'to throw off the mask' — a wish that I will explore in the next section. But, this tension between the public and the private selves, between the expressed and the silenced, between what Hopkins labels the 'overthought' and the 'underthought', between what Wilde terms the 'surface' and the 'symbol', 'between Christ and a rival lover', fostered a poetic tension that has helped to secure Hopkins's canonicity as far as English letters is concerned, a security that Hopkins himself would never have anticipated, assuming, as did Bridges, that his idiosyncratic qualities would ever 'blind you to his great genius'.

At his death in 1889, Gerard Manley Hopkins considered his life a failure in many ways, and most of these relating to his poetic gifts. Like Stephen Greenblatt, I have a 'desire to speak with the dead', a desire which Greenblatt describes as 'a familiar, if

unvoiced, motive in literary studies, a motive organized, professionalized, buried beneath thick layers of bureaucratic decorum'.<sup>49</sup> Were it possible to resurrect Hopkins for some portion of an hour, to let him wander through the British Library (or almost any university library, for that matter), amid the scores of scholarly volumes devoted to him (including the *Hopkins Quarterly*), aisles of volumes, an every growing expanse of text and dedication, there would certainly be a look of bewilderment and a tinge of pleasure in his eyes, a look revealing that he knew not his own 'identity' really, or his importance to this world and its literary history. A man cannot know (and Hopkins was no exception) the impact of his own life — an impact that biographers ultimately hope to interweave with their materials, however dappled, strange, and fickle the fabric at their disposal is, fabric that is only rent asunder by sometimes-fashionable concepts like 'identity' and 'selfhood', concepts employed by critics like David Anthony Downes<sup>50</sup> (though it must be admitted that Hopkins often employed such terms himself, or tried to). Besides the 'more holes than cloth', another way that such attempts at 'identity' and 'selfhood' taxonomies are thwarted is by Hopkins's frequent lack of seriousness, of Victorian earnestness — an aspect of his character and writings to which I now turn.

## ‘Fun While It Lasted’: Hopkins and Issues of Seriousness

The Greeks were often arbitrary, impulsive, frivolous, cynical, witty or jocular. (K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*)<sup>51</sup>

It is well to understand that the artist, even he inhabiting the most austere regions of art, is not an absolutely serious man [...] and that tragedy and farce can spring from one and the same root. A turn of the lighting changes one into the other; the farce is a hidden tragedy, the tragedy — in the last analysis — a sublime practical joke. The seriousness of the artist — a subject to ponder. (Thomas Mann, ‘Sufferings and Greatness of Richard Wagner’)<sup>52</sup>

In *A Study in Scarlet*, Sherlock Holmes appears textually for the first time, as Mr Stamford describes him to Dr Watson:

‘[Holmes] appears to have a passion for definite and exact knowledge [...] but it may be pushed to excess. When it comes to beating the subjects in the dissecting-rooms with a stick, it is certainly taking rather a bizarre shape’.

‘Beating the subjects!’<sup>53</sup>

I cringe to think what a Freudian biographer or scholar — or any biographer or scholar for that matter — would attribute to Mr Holmes from the above description. The picture of Mr Holmes frequenting dissection-rooms to beat corpses with his cane could lend itself to a flurry of sadistic, morbid speculations. Fortunately, Stamford explains away the enigma: ‘Yes, to verify how far bruises may be produced after death. I saw him at it with my own eyes’. That is the method behind the seeming madness: Mr Holmes, ever the curious Victorian detective, abuses corpses as a scientific act of post-mortem investigation into the nature of human bruising.

Unfortunately, biographers are often left with only fragments of such tales, with no conscientious friend to explain, to say ‘I saw him at it with my own eyes’. The life of the English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins also abounds with what is known and what is not, with tantalising suggestions, with vagrant and vacant clues. Nevertheless, a biographer must probe the partial story of a Holmes or a Hopkins for explanations which will display the method behind the madness, which will provide the needed density and richness.

As has already been observed, sometime during 1885 ‘that coffin of weakness and dejection in which I live, without even the hope of change’ (1 April 1885, *Letters I*, pp.214-15) became too much for Hopkins to bear, and the ensuing depression resulted in the creation of his brilliant ‘Dark Sonnets’, one poem of which I considered in the previous section. Most critics believe that the majority of these poems were written while Hopkins was at Clongowes Wood College for his yearly Jesuit retreat, in late August 1885, and there are benefits to derive from such a claim. If composed at that moment, the poems would likely demonstrate a movement parallel to the meditative *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, whose *Exercises* provided a framework for such retreats, as well as for Hopkins’s spirituality as a religious. If these poems were composed during that spiritual retreat, it would be easier to make a defence for a proper sequence of their composition. As Hopkins’s principal biographer Norman White explains: ‘While composing the poems, Hopkins’s mind would be scrupulously and severely concentrated on Ignatius’ words and on his responses to them, so the poems are intimately related to the *Spiritual Exercises*’.<sup>54</sup> Properly sequencing these undated poems<sup>55</sup> would allow biographers and literary critics, or so they assume, to find the meaning in the madness — and madness is what they are dealing with here, as a letter to Robert Bridges, dated 17 May 1885, makes clear:

Well then to judge of my case, I think that my fits of sadness, though they do not affect my judgment, resemble madness. Change is the only relief, and that I can seldom get. (*Letters I*, p.216)

I have after long silence written two sonnets, which I am touching: if ever anything was written in blood one of these was. (p.219)

In a letter to Coventry Patmore, dated 21 August 1885, Hopkins explains that he is ‘going into retreat tonight’, then pursues a related topic: ‘But as I am upon this subject I may mention in proof of the abuses high contemplation is liable to three things which have come under my notice’ (*Letters III*, p.365). Although the abuses Hopkins mentions are

sexual in nature, the fact that he is considering the ‘abuses high contemplation is liable to’ makes it seem improbable, to me, that he almost immediately allowed the ‘high contemplations’ of a spiritual retreat to reach the tenor of absolute dejection found in the ‘Dark Sonnets’, though perhaps the poet was not in control, as a letter to Bridges, dated 1 September 1885, explains: ‘I shall shortly have some sonnets to send you, five or more. Four of these came like inspirations unbidden and against my will’ (*Letters* I, p.221). Some representative passages from these poems are sufficient to provide a taste of their bitter tears:

Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee;  
 Not untwist — slack they may be — these last strands of man  
 In me or, most weary, cry *I can no more*. I can;  
 Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to be. (‘[Carrion Comfort]’, lines 1-4)

To seem the stranger lies my lot, my life  
 Among strangers. (‘[To Seem the Stranger]’, lines 1-2)

O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall  
 Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap  
 May who ne'er hung there. (‘[No Worst, There Is None]’, lines 9-11)

We hear our hearts grate on themselves: it kills  
 To bruise them dearer. (‘[Patience, Hard Thing!]’, lines 9-10)

not live this tormented mind  
 With this tormented mind tormenting yet. (‘[My Own Heart]’, lines 3-4)

This is some of the most heart-wrenching verse in English, wrung from a poet in the grips of a religious and personal depression nearly beyond the bounds of sanity: such is the generally accepted, biographical story for the last week of August 1885. Amid his absolute psychological pain — or his recovery from it — Hopkins writes to Bridges on 1 September:

I have just returned from an absurd adventure, which when I resigned myself to it I could not help enjoying. A hairbrained fellow took me down to Kingstown and on board his yacht and, whereas I meant to return to town by six that evening, would not let me go either that night or this morning till past midday. I was afraid it would be compromising, but it was fun while it lasted. (*Letters* I, p.220)

Even if one brushes aside the obvious sexual possibilities of this adventure (a Jesuit priest on a young man's yacht compelled to spend the night and the morning after, afraid that the



situation ‘would be compromising’), is one supposed to believe that, on the evening of 21 August, after making statements about the ‘abuses high contemplation is liable to’, Hopkins went into spiritual retreat for over a week, a retreat where he experienced an absolute descent and deconstruction of the soul, a spiritual and psychological abuse which he captured onto paper as the ‘Dark Sonnets’ — then, immediately after leaving that retreat, embarked on 31 August on ‘an absurd adventure’ with ‘a hairbrained fellow [...] on board his yacht’, an adventure which ‘was fun while it lasted’? Something is amiss here, something that negates the seriousness of the desolate moment, for I can hear Dr Watson exclaiming over my shoulder, ‘Fun while it lasted!’

The problem with dating the majority of the ‘Dark Sonnets’, or their polishing, to the Clongowes Wood College retreat at the end of August 1885 (instead of dating most of them, as I would suggest, to the preceding spring) is a loss of any direct causal relationship between Hopkins’s appreciable life and his depression. I wish to suggest a simpler, less religiously profound cause for these poems, a cause which (un)hinges in relation to the suicidal tendency which Hopkins displays markedly in that 1881 poem about his trip to Inversnaid:

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-froth  
Turns and twindles over the broth  
Of a pool so pitchblack, fell-frowning,  
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning. (lines 5-8)

However, it is a letter to one of his closest university friends, A. W. M. Baillie, which provides, for me, the explanation of the cause of the ‘Dark Sonnets’, again involving both despair and drowning. In this letter, dated 24 April – 17 May 1885, Hopkins refers to his own constant and generalised melancholy:

This is part of my disease, so to call it. The melancholy I have all my life been subject to has become of late years not indeed more intense in its fits but rather more distributed, constant, and crippling. (*Letters III*, p.256)

This letter also describes a specific shock:

I mean poor Geldart, whose death, as it was in Monday last's *Pall Mall*, you must have heard of. I suppose it was suicide, his mind, for he was a selftormentor, having been unhinged, as it had been once or twice before, by a struggle he had gone through. [...] Three of my intimate friends at Oxford have thus drowned themselves, a good many more of my acquaintances and contemporaries have died by their own hands in other ways [...] I should say that Geldart had lent me his autobiography called (I wish it had another name) *A Son of Belial*. It is an amusing and a sad book — perhaps you have seen it. I am in it [...] thinly disguised. (pp.254-55)

In chapters seven through nine of this autobiography, Hopkins appears as Gerontius Manley, 'my ritualistic friend'.<sup>56</sup> His friend Geldart's suicide and the nostalgic emotions evoked by reading Geldart's autobiography just prior seem to have caused Hopkins to re-examine his own life against a remembrance of things past, as the letter further explains:

I began to overhaul my old letters, accumulations of actually ever since I was at school, destroying all but a very few, and growing ever lother [*sic*] to destroy, but also to read, so that at last I left off reading; and there they lie. (p.255)

Four years earlier, Hopkins had written to the same correspondent, 'Not to love my University would be to undo the very buttons of my being' (22 May 1880, *Letters* III, p.244), and his love for Oxford was encapsulated in his university friendships with people like Geldart. Their suicides — that is what nearly undid the buttons of Hopkins's being. Hopkins's own suicidal tendency, his renewed friendship with his university friend Geldart, his subsequent reading of Geldart's autobiography (an autobiography in which he himself appears as an undergraduate), his reading about Geldart's 'suicide' in a newspaper, his own resultant nostalgia, his overhauling of the letters that he had collected since Highgate School, his burning of many of these remembrancers — these are what created the impetus for such phrases as 'choose not to be', 'seem the stranger', 'cries countless, cries like dead letters', 'mind has mountains', 'this tormented mind tormenting yet'. This seems logical, however plain a portrait.

Dating the majority of the 'Dark Sonnets' to late August 1885 is a scholarly preference which attempts not to marginalise Hopkins's deeply felt religious convictions or his authentic sense of vocation. It is an appeal to an absolute religious consistency and

seriousness that may not adequately characterise this particular poet and priest — however inconvenient and inexplicable that inconsistency and frivolity is for Hopkins biographers and critics. To provide another example: Although ‘on 15 August [1882], the feast of the Assumption, eight fathers [including Fr Hopkins] pronounced their last vows, during 9 o’clock mass celebrated at St Joseph’s by the Provincial, Fr Purbrick [...] [which meant that] Hopkins had completed his formal training as a Jesuit, fourteen years after he had first entered Manresa as a novice<sup>57</sup> — on 17 August, just two days after he had finished his Jesuit training by pronouncing those solemn and final vows, Hopkins wrote lightly to three Jesuit friends:

My hearties, — I am going to answer ‘the three of yez’.

[...]

After our vows we got agate among the novices, charming boys they are. One of them is 68 years of age. There was an entertainment in the evening, in the society’s wellknown style of gingerbread jokes and a rococo gilding of piety and tears and fond farewells, but still the general effect very nice.<sup>58</sup>

At this, Dr Watson would have exclaimed, ‘Gingerbread jokes! Rococo gilding of piety and tears!’ This does not sound like a Jesuit remembering the sacred moment which finalised his Jesuit training (securing his placement as a ‘Spiritual Coadjutor’), or the celebration provided for him and the others afterwards, or the communal atmosphere of the Society of Jesus. Perhaps this frivolity — so difficult to accord with conventional perspectives on Hopkins — explains why this letter was only recently trumpeted as ‘newfound’, though ‘newfound’ disguises the fact that, for multiple decades, this manuscript letter, among others, had lain unmentioned and unaccounted for among the papers for the projected Hopkins biography that Anthony D. Bischoff, SJ, left unfinished at his death in 1993. The ‘losing’ of this frivolous and enigmatic letter is the one detail Joseph J. Feeney, SJ, has failed to explain since ‘newfinding’ this and other manuscripts among the late Bischoff’s things,<sup>59</sup> leaving one to speculate that other ‘unmentionables’ still linger in Jesuit hands. The questions that arise from this ‘newfound’ letter are

complex, forcing one to ask how seriously Hopkins held his priestly profession — a question that even Hopkins's contemporaries were asking. While Hopkins was in London as a curate in 1878, Bridges wrote to a friend, Lionel Muirhead:

Gerard Hopkins is in town preaching and confessing at Farm Street. I went to hear him. He is good. He calls here; and we have sweet laughter, and pleasant chats. He is not at all the worse for being a Jesuit; as far as one can judge without knowing what he would have been otherwise.<sup>60</sup>

Bridges always remained sceptical of Hopkins's priestly profession, as well as his religious motivations (though unable to posit what else Hopkins could have been besides a Jesuit); Bridges always waited for Hopkins 'to throw off the mask' of the Jesuit role he believed him to be playing.

Current scholars often see Hopkins the Jesuit as far more melancholic and dull than charming, fluid, and irreverent, which displays a failure to comprehend the 'sweet laughter, and pleasant chats' to which Bridges was privy, the improvisational humanity that characterised Hopkins as much as his depressions did. Hopkins ever exhibited that multifaceted individuality which Donoghue notices in Pater, Jeff Nunokawa in Wilde:

Pater practiced what Michel Foucault came to the point of preaching in his last books, the three volumes of his *History of Sexuality*: an aesthetic sense of life, according to which — in Foucault's terms — we create ourselves as a work of art [...] The method is improvisation. Neither in Pater nor in Foucault is it necessary to posit a stable self defending its coherence from every attack.<sup>61</sup>

Wilde pictures another labor of self-fashioning instead, the labor of self-fashioning which appears at its most glamorous in the labor of fashion itself. Those who have most famously studied this art of the self categorize it as the fruit of the freedom that attends modernity — the loosening of the traditional bonds that once constituted our identity, the style of life that bears the mark of a personal signature rather than an imposed status. It is Wilde, of all people, who discerns the shades.<sup>62</sup>

Pater wrote of Winckelmann that 'the insincerity of his religious profession was only one incident of a culture in which the moral instinct, like the religious or political, was merged in the artistic' (*Renaissance* 1893, p.149), and Bridges seems to have thought much the same of Hopkins, as Hopkins indicates in a letter, dated 10 June 1882, written after Bridges's visit during the Corpus Christi procession at Roehampton:

It is long since such things had any significance for you. But what is strange and unpleasant is that you sometimes speak as if they had in reality none for me and you were only waiting with a certain disgust till I too should be disgusted with myself enough to throw off the mask. You said

something of the sort walking on the Cowley Road when we were last at Oxford together — in '79 it must have been. Yet I can hardly think you do not think I am in earnest. (*Letters I*, p.148)

A clue to the question of how seriously, or earnestly, Hopkins held his priestly profession — a seriousness which his closest friend Bridges surely questioned, even to his face — was left at the bottom of another boat (this time not a yacht), during a playful exchange with the children of his Irish friend Dr Francis McCabe, whose home was Belleville:

Opposite Belleville was a lake in a disused quarry, on which the young McCabes kept a flat-bottomed punt, in which they would row and fish [...] Hopkins used to join the young people in the boat: 'Once on a very hot day he took off his [priestly] dog collar and threw it down in the bottom of the boat exclaiming "I'll say goodbye to Rome"'.<sup>63</sup>

Much that needs explaining still rests at the bottom of that boat with Hopkins's priestly collar, much of that 'arbitrary, impulsive, frivolous, cynical, witty or jocular' quality that Dover notes in the ancient Greeks, and that should be noted in this Dublin professor of Greek. However, Hopkins's world would soon become much hotter and less explanatory than on that summer day spent with the McCabe children, spent revelling in his acquired freedom from Rome and its seriousness.

### 'Telling Secrets': Hopkins and Issues of Post-mortem

Above all other things I put the fact that *you* have come out of the ranks of a common friend into the first place of all, as something better than a brother. You are the inestimable treasure for which I have been waiting nearly thirty years and which, God knows, I long ago thought would never come at all.

(Edmund Gosse, Letter to the sculptor Hamo Thornycroft, 31 December 1879)<sup>64</sup>

Literature has often been subjected to a 233° change of perspective — 233° Celsius to be precise — the temperature at which paper begins to burn, as Ray Bradbury famously notes. So, despite the use of exquisite forensic tools, both biography and literary criticism

have often been thwarted outright by the burning of manuscripts, whether as an expression of authorial intention, affection, censorship, or ignorance. In the case of Gerard Manley Hopkins, the biographical post-mortem has been altered immensely by the choices of which manuscripts to burn and which to preserve, and those choices have often involved a sensitivity to the homoerotic and the pederastic.

For Hopkins — whose poem ‘That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the Comfort of the Resurrection’ contains the observations that ‘million-fuelèd, nature’s bonfire burns on’ and that ‘world’s wildfire, leave but ash’ (lines 9, 20) — the bonfire and the ash have often been his own manuscripts. The first of these bonfires, on 11 May 1868, saw him casting into the flames his early poems, an event he dubbed the ‘slaughter of the innocents’ (*Journals*, p.165).<sup>65</sup>

In August of that year, Hopkins answered a request from his closest friend Robert Bridges for a poem: ‘I cannot send my *Summa* for it is burnt with my other verses: I saw they wd. interfere with my state and vocation’ (7 August 1868, *Letters I*, p.24). This decision was clarified later for R. W. Dixon: ‘I destroyed the verse I had written when I entered the Society [of Jesus] and meant to write no more; the *Deutschland* I began after a long interval at the chance suggestion of my superior, but that being done it is a question whether I did well to write anything else’ (29 October – 2 November 1881, *Letters II*, p.88). This explanation of the Jesuitical motivation behind the ‘slaughter of the innocents’ and the ensuing decision ‘to write no more’ drew the following response from Dixon:

Your Letter touches & moves me more than I can say [...] [especially] to hear of your having destroyed poems, & feeling that you have a vocation in comparison of which poetry & the fame that might assuredly be yours is nothing. I could say much, for my heart bleeds [...] Surely one vocation cannot destroy another: and such a Society as yours will not remain ignorant that you have such gifts as have seldom been given by God to man. (4-14 November 1881, *Letters II*, pp.89-90)

This was a heart-wrenching plea from an appreciative friend who did not know the whole story, for ‘surely one vocation *cannot* destroy another’, and never did. What Hopkins conveniently failed to mention to Dixon was that this bonfire had been more of a purging of manuscript drafts and an act of carnival religiosity than an actual slaughter, as the rest of the letter to Bridges relates: ‘I kept however corrected copies of some things which you have and will send them that what you have got you may have in its last edition’ (*Letters I*, p.24).<sup>66</sup>

A decade later, Hopkins would explain to Bridges, ‘I do not write for the public. You are my public’ (21 August 1877, *Letters I*, p.46) — and that public had a copy of most of what Hopkins had written before the bonfire, ‘in its last edition’. Hopkins’s choice of this friend, this public, this literary executor, this editor was a brilliant one, since Bridges would find himself, decades later, Poet Laureate, and in a position to publish grandly the first edition of Hopkins’s poems (Oxford University Press, 1918). Besides the ‘retained’ poems forwarded to Bridges in 1868, the editor of Hopkins’s *Journals* admits: ‘In the early Diaries are many of the verses once thought to have been burnt’ (*Journals*, p.xv). When it comes to verses, poets often make resolutions about parting with them, but the decomposing hand of a Lizzie Siddal is eventually moved aside to release the manuscripts that a grieving Dante Gabriel Rossetti has buried with her. Phoenix-like, poems amazingly resurrect from ashes and graves.

This is rarely the case with items more biographically telling. In a letter written from Dublin in 1885, amidst the depression which birthed his much-prized ‘Dark Sonnets’, Hopkins recounts to A. W. M. Baillie: ‘I began to overhaul my old letters, accumulations of actually ever since I was at school, destroying all but a very few, and growing ever lother [*sic*] to destroy, but also to read, so that at last I left off reading; and

there they lie' (24 April 1885, *Letters* III, p.255). This was the first major bonfire purging away the details of Hopkins's life, but not the last.

After his death on 8 June 1889, Hopkins's remaining papers were found in his room in 86 St Stephen's Green, Dublin. About these, Fr Thomas Wheeler, SJ — then Minister and Vice-President of University College, and the person who had attended Hopkins as he lay dying — wrote to Bridges:

Hopkins had a presentiment that he would not recover — but I am sure he took no measure to arrange his papers, and gave no instructions about preserving or destroying them. Any suggestion to that effect would be made to me — and he never broached the subject at all [...] So I cannot fancy what he would have wished to be done with them. As for myself I looked in a hurried way through his papers but cannot say that I read any of them. Letters which I recognized by your writing or initials I set apart to forward. Many others I destroyed: and when I learned your wish to sift these writings in view to publication or selection I gathered them together indiscriminately and sent them to be used by you or his parents, at your discretion. (27 October 1889, as quoted in *Letters* I, p.vi)

Fr Wheeler's letter was in response to Bridges's request for the forwarding of his own letters, as well as Hopkins's literary remains, for 'Hopkins had once told Bridges that he was content to leave the fate of his poems in the hands of Providence, but he chose Bridges as his poetic executor'.<sup>67</sup> Fr Wheeler's comment that 'many others I destroyed' encapsulates a loss that is only hinted at by what remains. An example of this is Hopkins's only extant letter from Walter Pater (that acceptance of a dinner invitation considered earlier), a letter undoubtedly saved from oblivion because Hopkins had drafted part of a poem, '[Who Shaped These Walls]', on the manuscript (*Facsimiles* II, p.176). One is left to wonder what else was tossed into that Dublin bonfire, perhaps even Hopkins's ode on the martyred Edmund Campion, alluded to several times in letters:

One is a great ode on Edmund Campion S.J. [...] Thinking over this matter [of Campion's martyrdom three-hundred years ago] my vein began to flow and I have by me a few scattered stanzas, something between the *Deutschland* and *Alexander's Feast*, in sprung rhythm of irregular metre. But the vein urged by any country sight or feeling of freedom or leisure (you cannot tell what a slavery of mind or heart it is to live my life in a great town) soon dried and I do not know if I can coax it to run again. (16 September 1881, *Letters* I, pp.135-34)<sup>68</sup>

After Hopkins's remaining papers had reached England, this bonfire continued under Bridges's supervision, as the editor of Hopkins's *Letters* relates: 'It seems,



therefore, that [Bridges's] letters were returned, and that [he] destroyed them [...] One side of this fruitful friendship, therefore, has to be deduced from what remains. That is a grave misfortune' (*Letters* I, p.vi). Bridges, who hoped to thwart his own future biographers, tended to do things like this, and had done so before: 'Two letters, written towards the end [of Hopkins's life], [Bridges] tells us that he burned, but he gives no reason. It seems probable they were letters of anguish and distress (the prose counterpart of certain of the sonnets) that he knew his friend would not wish to have printed' (*Letters* I, p.v). Bridges simply notes: 'The two letters preceding this one were destroyed RB' (as quoted in *Letters* I, p.330, note). However, Bridges was not the only friend to destroy letters relating to Hopkins. In July 1909, W. E. Addis wrote to Fr Joseph Keating, SJ: 'I knew [Hopkins] in his undergraduate days far better than any one else did [...] Of many letters some of them very long which Hopkins wrote to me I have not, alas! kept even one'.<sup>69</sup>

Under their own volition or Bridges's guidance, Hopkins's family also participated in this process of purging. Hopkins's sisters Grace and Kate burned, unopened, an autograph notebook in their possession, a notebook on which Hopkins had written, 'Please do not open this' (*Journals*, p.xiv).<sup>70</sup> It is fortunate that Hopkins's sisters did not have access to his other notebooks, since a number of the parts of the now-published journals are marked 'PRIVATE' or 'Please not to read' (*Journals*, p.529, note). In fact, Bridges usually sought the family's sanction before committing Hopkins's manuscripts to the flames: 'There is a bundle of what is practically worthless — old examination papers, and schemes for discovering the Structure of Greek choruses etc etc. which cd. be of no possible use to any one but the writer. I will either return this lot [to you] as it is or use my judgment in burning it. I think it ought to be burned' (Letter of 14 October 1889, as quoted in *Journals*, p.xii). Questionably, Bridges and the Hopkins family sometimes

deviated from what would clearly have been Hopkins's 'intentions' as a Jesuit — opting instead for clarification of his life through choosing which manuscript evidence to preserve. In November 1889, Bridges wrote again: 'I have added one or two MS to this collection, and I have tied into the end of it an envelope which you will find to contain some MS notes which Gerard made of his meditations in retreat. *These are very private*, and were certainly not intended to be read' (as quoted in *Journals*, p.xiii). Although these 'were certainly not intended to be read', Bridges suggests preserving them, for 'they are a valuable & unimpeachable testimony to the mental trouble that he suffered from being obliged to witness the disloyal plotting of his Society in Ireland — and together with his letters to me will some day be wanted' (p.xiii).

However, it was with the Society of Jesus, those 'disloyal plott[ers] of his Society in Ireland', that a mass of Hopkins's manuscripts remained, such that Fr Matthew Russell, SJ, editor of the *Irish Monthly*, was able to assert authoritatively in 1902: 'The remains of Father Hopkins' writings were left here, in Dublin' (as quoted in *Journals*, p.xv). Understandably, the papers relating to Hopkins's university duties went to his successor in the chair of Greek; others remained in his desk drawers until borrowed and often kept by admirers. Many of those papers have found their way into library collections and archives; others are lost.

It must be admitted though that Hopkins had himself inadvertently provoked a famous literary bonfire, a bonfire involving a prose meditation by Coventry Patmore, that poet who had a knack for rescuing artworks, either physically or publicly. It was Patmore who, after Alfred Tennyson had absentmindedly left behind his only manuscript volume of *In Memoriam* in a cupboard at some lodgings on Hampstead Road, managed to rescue it forcefully before the landlady had her way with it. It was Patmore who persuaded John Ruskin to write that famous letter to *The Times* in favour of the maligned Pre-Raphaelite

Brotherhood, hence swaying the public to take a second, more appreciative look.<sup>71</sup> Saving the Victorians' most beloved poem as well as their most representative artworks — these were indeed Herculean feats, feats that Patmore managed with his usual, cultivated flare.

Some thirty years after these events, at the end of July 1883, Patmore made Hopkins's acquaintance while at Stonyhurst College's 'Great Academies' as the guest of honour; and, from that moment, Patmore's feelings for Hopkins as both friend and critic were clear: 'I assure you that I shall always regard my having made your acquaintance as an important event of my life, and there are few things I desire more than a renewal of opportunity of personal intercourse with you' (11 June 1885, *Letters* III, pp.363-64). Although Patmore never warmed to or particularly understood Hopkins's utterly innovative poetics, he did value Hopkins as a critic, asking him to comment on his forthcoming edition of *The Angel in the House* and confiding to him about his most intimate of projects, *Sponsa Dei*, or *The Bride of God*: 'I have written a series of notes wh. I purpose shall be published after my death, under the title of 'Sponsa Dei'. I do not think they would be more, or so impressive in verse' (7 April 1885, *Letters* III, p.361). In fact, Patmore had spent ten years polishing this commingling of the sacred and the profane, a commingling probably beyond the bounds of Roman Catholic propriety: 'I spend many hours a day in meditating on my own line, but that line has carried me and daily carries me further and further away from the thoughts that can or ought to be spoken' (p.362).

While, as Robert Bernard Martin stresses, Hopkins was equally attuned to this undercurrent of eroticism — 'there is a long Christian tradition of the association between eroticism and religion, and it was never far beneath the surface in Hopkins's poetry'<sup>72</sup> — when asked to criticise Patmore's overly heterosexual 'Psyche Odes', Hopkins was only able to comment falteringly (as one would expect, given his own erotic 'sensibilities') that

these odes are ‘such a new thing and belong to such a new atmosphere that I feel it as dangerous to criticise them almost as the *Canticles*’ (3 January 1884, *Letters* III, p.347). What Hopkins tactfully describes as ‘a new atmosphere’ arising from Patmore’s pen is elucidated more forthrightly by Leslie Shane, editor of the *Dublin Review*: ‘The flaming content of Patmore’s “Unknown Eros” left Swinburne panting in his gilded brothel’.<sup>73</sup>

In August 1885, while visiting Patmore at Hastings — where, it should be noted, Patmore’s library was said ‘to have [had] as many erotic books as religious ones’<sup>74</sup> — Hopkins was given the manuscript of *Sponsa Dei* to read. The result was that ‘Hopkins did not approve of the book. He told Patmore that he thought the book too intimate, dealing as it did with so “mystical an interpretation of the significance of physical love in religion”, to be placed in the hands of the general reading public’.<sup>75</sup> Given the delicacy of this situation, Hopkins waited until he was far away from Hastings before commenting at length, which he did on 21 August: ‘Anything however high and innocent may happen to suggest anything however low and loathsome’ (*Letters* III, p.365). After providing three examples of religious contemplation perverted to the point of sexual excess, Hopkins writes: ‘I am sorry to disgust you with these horrors; but such is man and such is Satanic craft. I could not bring myself to speak by word of mouth’.<sup>76</sup>

Partly prompted by his friend’s reaction, Patmore, on Christmas Day 1887, tossed this beloved prose meditation into the fireplace. In a letter to Bridges following Hopkins’s death, Patmore explains this act:

The *authority* of his goodness was so great with me that I threw the manuscript of a little book — a sort of ‘Religio Poetae’ — into the fire, simply because, when he had read it, he said with a grave look, ‘that’s telling secrets’. This little book had been the work of ten years’ continual meditations, and could not but have made a greater effect than all the rest I have ever written; but his doubt was final with me. (12 August 1889, *Letters* III, p.391, note).

To Hopkins, Patmore had earlier explained:

Much-meditating on the effect which my M.S. ‘Sponsa Dei’ had upon you, when you read it while staying here, I concluded that I would not take the responsibility of being the first to expound the truths therein contained: so, on Xmas Day, I committed the work to the flames without reserve of a single paragraph. (10 February 1888, *Letters* III, p.385)

Presented with the shocking suggestion that his own words had sparked this bonfire, Hopkins took months to reply:

Your news was that you had burnt the book called *Sponsa Dei*, and that on reflexion upon remarks of mine. I wish I had been more guarded in making them. When we take a step like this we are forced to condemn ourselves: either our work shd. never have been done or never undone, and either way our time and toil are wasted — a sad thought [...] My objections were not final, they were but considerations (I forget now, with one exception, what they were); even if they were valid, still if you had kept to yr. custom of consulting your [spiritual] director, as you said you should, the book might have appeared with no change or with slight ones. But now regret is useless. (6-7 May 1888, *Letters III*, pp.385-86)

Patmore, fearing the import derived from his earlier letter, responded immediately:

I did not burn ‘Sponsa Dei’ altogether without the further consultation you mentioned. After what you had said, I talked to Dr Rouse [my spiritual director] about it, and he seemed to have no strong opinion one way or another, but said he thought that all the substance of the work was already published in my poems & in one or two of my papers in the *St. James’s*. So I felt free to do what your condemnation of the little book inclined me to do. (11 May 1888, *Letters III*, pp.390-91).

Dr Rouse’s observations reveal that, as with Hopkins’s ‘slaughter of the innocents’, this Hastings bonfire had been more a purging of a manuscript draft and an act of carnival religiosity than an actual slaughter, for Patmore had already published most of the contents of *Sponsa Dei*, though in a form less accessible to the common reader, the ‘general reading public’. Although E. J. Oliver notes ‘Patmore’s joy in bonfires’,<sup>77</sup> it must be admitted that those bonfires were largely symbolic.

Edmund Gosse — at that time Patmore’s literary executor and one of the few who had already read this manuscript — was shocked one morning at breakfast by the following exclamation: ‘You won’t have much to do as my literary executor!’<sup>78</sup> In a textual passage in which he publicly blames Hopkins for the loss, Gosse describes the destroyed prose work:

This vanished masterpiece was not very long, but polished and modulated to the highest degree of perfection [...] The subject of it was certainly audacious. It was not more or less than an interpretation of the love between the soul and God by an analogy of the love between a woman and a man; it was, indeed, a transcendental treatise on Divine desire seen through the veil of human desire. (as quoted in *Letters III*, p.xxxiv)

Gosse further writes: ‘The purity and crystalline passion of the writer carried him safely over the most astounding difficulties, but perhaps, on the whole, he was right in

considering that it should not be shown to the vulgar'.<sup>79</sup> Gosse may have been a literary figure of some clout during the Victorian period, but his competence to assess what could 'safely [carry a person] over the most astounding [erotic] difficulties' and what 'should not be shown to the vulgar' (a reference to the 'general reading public') should be considered suspect, as the following aside (already mentioned in 'Chapter One') will show. Like many in his intimate circle, Gosse had a penchant for collecting photographs of nude boys, particularly those by Wilhelm von Gloeden, photographs which his circle exchanged like Decadent baseball cards. In relation to Gosse's sense of public discretion, one should remember that already-mentioned letter of 31 December 1889, that letter in which he thanks J. A. Symonds for sending him one such photograph: 'As I sat in the Choir [in Westminster Abbey during Robert Browning's funeral], with George Meredith at my side, I peeped at it again and again'.<sup>80</sup>

Nonetheless, Gosse's concern that some things 'should not be shown to the vulgar' is worth considering (and not just because my prior comment about his indiscretions borders on *argumentum ad homonym*) — particularly how Gosse's concern relates to the ethical aspects of literary burial, exhumation, and post-mortem. Let me provide an example: With the autumn Classical Honour Moderations exam looming before him, Hopkins set off on a reading holiday in Wales in early August 1864, with his friends A. E. Hardy and Edward Bond. While writing to another friend, A. W. M. Baillie, Hopkins confided that he was having 'a hard time of it to resist contamination from the bawdy jokes and allusions of Bond and Hardy', innuendo provoked by the presence of four young ladies from Reading who were staying at the same lodgings (20 July – 14 August 1864, *Letters* III, p.213). The reading party had become a Reading party. At this point in the letter, Hopkins 'obliterated four lines and a bit, and stuck a piece of paper over part of the cancelled sentence' (Editor's note, *Letters* III, p.213). In reference to this cancelled

passage, Hopkins wrote to Baillie at the very beginning of the letter: ‘I TRUST TO YOUR HONOUR NOT TO READ the lines scratched out below’ (p.210). Although this paste-over remained undisturbed during Baillie’s lifetime — a token of his respect for Hopkins’s wishes — modern conservation tools have exhumed the lines, such that scholars now know that ‘Hardy is always talking of debauching [two] well-dressed girls but when he has introduced himself to them oh then he is very, very sick’ (as quoted in editor’s note, *Letters* III, p.213). Since, on this holiday in Wales, Hopkins had had ‘a hard time of it to resist contamination from the bawdy jokes and allusions of Bond’, Bond would seem the last person Hopkins would accompany on another holiday, especially his last holiday before entering the Jesuit Novitiate in 1868. However, Hopkins’s journal entry for 3 July 1868 reveals: ‘Started with Ed. Bond for Switzerland’ (*Journals*, p.168). The reason for choosing Switzerland was that Hopkins had been told by Bond that ‘the Jesuits [...] are strictly forbidden the country’ (2 July 1868, *Letters* III, p.53) — the reason for choosing the bawdy and allusive Bond as his companion, that is open to conjecture.

The point is that, with preserved documents (no matter how ‘privileged’ and ‘private’ such documents might be considered today), curiosity always reigns over privacy, as is the case with Billie Andrew Inman’s volumes *Walter Pater’s Reading: A Bibliography of His Library Borrowings and Literary References, 1857-1873* (1981) and *Walter Pater and His Reading, 1874-1877: With a Bibliography of His Library Borrowings, 1878-1894* (1990). At present, legal regulations usually stipulate that records of library borrowings must be purged after books have been returned: thankfully, the Bodleian Library had no such policy during the Victorian period, for it is the nature of biographers and literary critics to probe all of the residue that a biographical ‘subject’ has left behind, with the same vigour as an Egyptologist over the body of a pharaoh, and with many of the same tools.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Hopkins's literary remains became the impetus and the test case for employing forensic tools in the study of literary manuscripts, as Norman H. MacKenzie, editor of Hopkins's authoritative *Oxford English Text* edition and Garland Press *Facsimile* volumes, explains:

If two inks with different chemical ingredients have been used in a MS — as is often the case when a forger has changed part of a document — no matter how cleverly he has matched the ink in colour to deceive the naked eye, the Infrared Image Converter should be able to detect the intrusive ink. Since visual separation of Hopkins's revisions from the transcriptions of Bridges was often problematical, I suggested to the Bodleian Library that MS. B should be taken to the Document Examination Laboratory of Scotland Yard for a demonstration of their apparatus [...] Dr. David Rogers, the senior research librarian who accompanied me, was so impressed that he enlisted Dr. Edward Hall of Oxford's Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art to construct a modified version of the instrument for the use of readers in the Bodleian. (*Facsimiles* II, pp.10-11)

This machine was eventually augmented by a more sophisticated Video Spectral Comparator, installed in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Library specifically for examining Hopkins's manuscripts (*Facsimiles* II, p.11). Such forensic tools have altered our view of Hopkins forever, and the resultant manuscript autopsies have not always proven pleasant or ethical to many Hopkins scholars. These autopsies, added to the publication of suppressed materials, have altered forever our conception of Hopkins, as Dennis Sobolev explains:

In 1989 Norman MacKenzie published the most guarded materials of Hopkins criticism: his early notes and diaries, whose carefully censored fragments were earlier published by Humphry House. [...] This publication has changed the atmosphere of Hopkins criticism. If in 1983 [David Anthony] Downes was still able to dismiss the question of Hopkins's homosexuality as complete nonsense, such a dismissal is no longer possible; as Martin writes, 'in totality [Hopkins's notes] indicate that his susceptibility was largely homoerotic'. An unprejudiced reader can hardly disagree with this conclusion; as far as we know, Hopkins was attracted to male rather than female beauty.<sup>81</sup>

Illustrious, illustrative examples of the erotic disclosures from these manuscript autopsies and the full publication of the early notes and diaries can be found in relation to the manuscripts of Hopkins's 'Epithalamion' (long mistakenly labelled a fragment) and his confession notes.

In the 'Epithalamion', Hopkins's reader is asked to join the narrator in imaginatively constructing a woodland abounding with bathing boys. The narrator then



directs the reader's gaze towards an advancing stranger who, inspired by the sight of these naked striplings, undresses and bathes alone, caressed by a vacillating stream — not a typical, Roman Catholic wedding-scene, to be certain. As recently as 1990, scholars such as James Earl have suggested that the proper lesson learned from Hopkins's 'Epithalamion' is that 'we would do well to destroy the poems we write while administering exams', Earl merely labelling the poem 'a beautifully embarrassing sexual fantasy'.<sup>82</sup>

After bemoaning the fact that this voyeuristic masterpiece had not been cast into the flames by the poet or someone else, Earl must have been dumbfounded when the two facsimile volumes of Hopkins's manuscripts appeared, revealing to a wide readership that, while describing the spilling of the water from the moorland, Hopkins had not initially written 'heavenfallen freshness', but 'heavenfallen freshmen' (H.ii.9<sup>r</sup>, *Facsimiles II*, p.327), a Freudian slip which, though discretely struck out, reveals that his poetic mind, in process, was aflow with a homoerotic and pederastic waterworld in which his 'freshmen' bathed rather than finished their exam, an exam which they were taking while he was busily composing this poetic Arcadia. Beyond this 'beautifully embarrassing sexual fantasy' and its 'freshmen', there are more concrete revelations in these facsimiles, such as Hopkins's confession notes crossed out by himself — confession notes which, if unreadable to the naked eye, can be exposed through forensic science:

- Parker's boy at Merton: evil thoughts. (*Facsimiles I*, p.157)
- Looking at a cart-boy fr. Standen's shopdoor. (p.157)
- Looking at boy thro' window. (p.162)
- Looking at boys, several instances. (p.173)
- Imprudent looking at organ-boy and other boys. (p.174)
- Looking at a boy at Tiverton. (p.177)
- Temptation in thinking over boy I saw. (p.181)
- Looking at a chorister at Magdalen, and evil thoughts. (p.195)
- Evil thoughts abt. Magdalen wh. I did not treat as I shd. Temptation fr. myself in washing [...]
  - Dallying with that temptation about Magdalen, wh. indeed I think was never a tempt. in itself but a scruple and a wicked careless predisposition of mind. (pp.198-99)

This last entry clearly reveals Hopkins dallying, days later, with a remembrance of that Magdalen choirboy (with a bit of masturbatory suggestion washing over it all).<sup>83</sup> Hopkins, who had a passion for etymology (later contributing eighty-nine entries to the *English Dialect Dictionary*), would have appreciated that the *OED* traces the word ‘chorister’ back to 1611, to an entry defining a ‘querister’ as a ‘singing boy’. ‘Querister’ was just the sort of dictionary entry to stir a ‘queer’ like Hopkins, whose confession notes occasionally read: ‘looking at a dreadful word in Lexicon’ (*Facsimiles* I, p.156) and ‘evil thoughts in dictionary’ (p.157). Such disclosures in Hopkins’s confession notes and his ‘Epithalamion’ drafts serve to define Hopkins as a voyeur of cart-boys, choristers, and heavenfallen freshmen, serve to define him erotically — by dictionary definition — as a ‘pederast’, even if only on the level of his ‘looking’. Such disclosures also leave many critics wondering whether these manuscripts should have been burned or kept.<sup>84</sup>

Mine is a unique reading of those two ‘Magdalen’ confession entries, since critics till now have universally claimed that the second entry refers to Hopkins’s cousin Magdalen, hence displays an absolutely rare moment of heterosexual attraction.<sup>85</sup> Given Hopkins’s confession a few days prior about ‘looking at a chorister at Magdalen, and evil thoughts’, this canonised claim seems blatantly false, a mistake arising from the assumption that ‘Magdalen’ is a person’s name in the second entry, not a place with erotic associations for Hopkins. This mistake also arises from a lingering hope in many critics that Hopkins would, at the very least, have gone through a slight ‘heterosexual phase’ sometime or another — however, my reading of this last confession note, if correct, is one more indication that the ‘heterosexual Hopkins’ is not to be. It seems natural for Hopkins to have chosen to write ‘that temptation about Magdalen’ rather than ‘that chorister at Magdalen’, especially since he is confessing ‘evil thoughts’ about a particular chorister: in essence, by metonymically substituting ‘Magdalen’ for ‘chorister’, Hopkins keeps the

image of that particular boy out of his mind as much as possible, which seems — while still under the (un)scrupulous High Anglican influence of E. B. Pusey and H. P. Liddon — to have been his goal.<sup>86</sup>

Given my reading, the last entry of this ‘Magdalen’ set becomes important in another way, for it discredits Sobolev’s claim that ‘in relation to Whitman, it is noteworthy that Hopkins admits the similarity only between his and “Whitman’s mind(s)”, and nothing indicates that by the mind he means sexual orientation’.<sup>87</sup> If I am correct that ‘Magdalen’ is a reference to Magdalen Chapel, a place bountiful in choristers, and not to Hopkins’s female cousin of the same name, then Hopkins’s claim about ‘dallying with that temptation about Magdalen’ which arose from ‘a wicked careless predisposition of mind’ discredits Sobolev’s claim, providing, as Hopkins’s confession note does, a direct link between Hopkins’s mind and his erotic desires.<sup>88</sup> This makes Hopkins’s claim of having a mind strikingly like Whitman’s all the more potent and revealing. It should also be noted (which Sobolev fails to consider) that Hopkins’s claim of similarity to Whitman appears in a letter to his closest friend Robert Bridges, whom Hopkins sometimes addresses tenderly as ‘my dearest’<sup>89</sup>, and who had already exhibited a tendency to discontinue correspondence when things went too far, as he had earlier done because of the political sentiments expressed in Hopkins’s (in)famous ‘Red Letter’ — ‘Horrible to say, in a manner I am a Communist’ (2 August 1871, *Letters* I, pp.27-28). For a time, Hopkins clearly feared that this tendency would resurface:

Besides I did not foresee the misunderstanding. What I did fear, and it made me keep the letter back, was that you would be offended at my freedom, indeed that you would not answer at all. Whereas, for which I heartily thank you, you have answered three times. (29 January 1879, *Letters* I, pp.63-64)

Given Hopkins’s clear expressions of affection for ‘my dearest’ Bridges and the risk of Bridges not replying (perhaps for years), it is silly to expect Hopkins to exclaim bluntly, ‘I always knew in my *loins* Walt Whitman’s *lust* to be more like my own than any other

man's living', even if such was the case. Besides, all that would have remained of such a scandalous intimation would have been a simple note from Bridges: 'The letter preceding this one was destroyed RB'.

There is always a limit to 'telling secrets' directly, especially secrets like those contained in a poem like Hopkins's 'Epithalamion' — and burning has often been the preferred method for dealing with such 'secrets', as Earl's inflammatory comment attests. Most scholars and biographers are leery of seeing Hopkins in the position of Ronald Firbank's protagonist in *Concerning the Eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli* (1926) — especially since, at the end of that novella, Firbank's cardinal dies while chasing his favourite chorister around the altar of an empty church, in the nude.<sup>90</sup> A noteworthy vignette along this line was left behind by J. A. Symonds, a vignette concerning the eccentricities of Hopkins's university friend Edward William Urquhart (1839-1916), whom Symonds describes as 'a Scotchman of perfervid type' who 'had High Church proclivities and ran after choristers'.<sup>91</sup> In confession notes about Magdalen Chapel and its innocent choristers, as well as in his later poetry and letters, Hopkins left behind similar vignettes concerning his own pederastic and homoerotic eccentricities — a striking example being his 'Epithalamion', to which I now turn.

## Notes for Chapter Two

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<sup>1</sup> Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994), pp.17-159 (p.17).

<sup>2</sup> In a letter to Robert Bridges (29 January 1879), Hopkins retorts: ‘Can you suppose I should send Pater a discipline wrapped up in a sonnet “with my best love”? Would it not be mad?’ (*Letters I*, p.62). This suggests that Hopkins would never have shown this poem to Pater, even if he had finished it.

All quotations from Hopkins’s poetry are from *The Poetical Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); abbreviated as *OET*. Besides the *OET*, the other primary sources I have used are those most authoritative and typical:

*The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Humphry House, completed by Graham Storey (London: Oxford University Press, 1959). *The Sermons and Devotional Writings of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Christopher Devlin, SJ (London: Oxford University Press, 1959).

*The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, ed. by C. C. Abbott, 2<sup>nd</sup> imp. rev. (London: Oxford University Press, 1955). *The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon*, ed. by C. C. Abbott, 2<sup>nd</sup> imp. rev. (London: Oxford University Press, 1955). *Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins Including his Correspondence with Coventry Patmore*, ed. by C. C. Abbott, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1956). These are abbreviated as *Letters I*, *II*, and *III*, respectively.

*The Early Poetic Manuscripts and Note-books of Gerard Manley Hopkins in Facsimile*, ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (New York: Garland, 1989). *The Later Poetic Manuscripts of Gerard Manley Hopkins in Facsimile*, ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (New York: Garland, 1991). These are abbreviated as *Facsimiles I* and *II*, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Pater [Anonymously published], ‘Poems by William Morris’, *Westminster Review*, 34 (October 1868), pp.300-12, (pp.310-11).

<sup>4</sup> From Hopkins’s ‘[As Kingfishers Catch Fire]’, line 4.

<sup>5</sup> Camille Paglia, *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson* (New York: Vintage, 1991), p.389.

<sup>6</sup> Mick Short and Willie van Peer, ‘Accident! Stylisticians Evaluate: Aims and Methods of Stylistic Analysis’, in *Reading, Analysing & Teaching Literature*, ed. by Mick Short (London: Longman, 1988), pp.22-71 (p.23).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.59.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p.65.

<sup>9</sup> Norman White, *Hopkins: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p.328.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.327-28.

<sup>11</sup> ‘Ruffling Wind’, in Robert Bridges, ed., *Poems by the Late Rev. Dr. Richard Watson Dixon, a Selection with Portrait and a Memoir by Robert Bridges* (London: John Murray, 1909), p.147:

Does the south wind ever know  
That he makes the lily blow?  
Does the north wind hear the cry  
Of the leaf he whirls on high? (lines 1-4)

<sup>12</sup> *OET*, p.313

<sup>13</sup> Peter Milward, *Landscape and Inscape: Vision and Inspiration in Hopkins’s Poetry*, with photographs by Raymond Schoder (London: Elek, 1975), p.76.

<sup>14</sup> *OED*.

<sup>15</sup> I would, given more space, argue for other reasons besides this aesthetic one, most of those of a biographical nature. The poem’s language and imagery seem to have derived partially from Richard Watson Dixon’s poem ‘Despair’, a poem from *Christ’s Company and Other Poems* (London: Smith, Elder, 1861), a collection of verse about which Hopkins was impassioned, as he relates to Dixon:

I became so fond of [*Christ's Company*] that I made it, as far as that could be, a part of my own mind [...] And to shew you how greatly I prized them, when I entered my present state of life [becoming a Jesuit], in which I knew I could have no books of my own and was unlikely to meet with your works in the libraries I should have access to, I copied out *St. Paul*, *St. John*, *Love's Consolation*, and others from both volumes and keep them by me. (*Letters II*, p.1)

Consider lines 5-10 of 'Despair':

I trace this fountain rolling deeply down —  
Dark is the night, my pathway ruinous —  
Here foam the muddy billows thick and brown,  
Then issue thus  
Into a lake where all the world might drown.

<sup>16</sup> *OED*.

<sup>17</sup> Milward, *Landscape*, p.76.

<sup>18</sup> Robert Bernard Martin, *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Very Private Life* (London: Flamingo, 1992), p.390.

<sup>19</sup> See Milward, *Landscape*, p.80.

<sup>20</sup> The first portmanteau is suggested by Milward, *Landscape*, p.78; the second by Catherine Phillips, ed., *Gerard Manley Hopkins* (The Oxford Authors series) (London: Oxford University Press, 1986), p.366. MacKenzie in *OET* suggests that it is a Lancashire dialect word meaning 'produces twins' (i.e. splits in two), p.426.

<sup>21</sup> One is reminded of T. S. Eliot's comment on Shakespeare: 'We do not understand Shakespeare from a single reading, and certainly not from a single play. There is a relation between the various plays of Shakespeare, taken in order; and it is a work of years to venture even one individual interpretation of the pattern in Shakespeare's carpet' — from 'Dante', in *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1978), p.245.

<sup>22</sup> Short and van Peer, p.59.

<sup>23</sup> Letter to the painter J. B. Yeats, 4 February 1918, as quoted in Humphrey Carpenter, *A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), part 2, chapter 10.

<sup>24</sup> Paul Mariani, *A Commentary on the Complete Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), p.176.

<sup>25</sup> As a less artistically complex example of this Uranian indulgence in the 'puzzle poem', consider these lines from John Gambriel Nicholson's 'Dead Roses', in which he hides the name of Frank Victor Rushforth, his thirteen-year-old beloved, as quoted in Timothy d'Arch Smith, *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p.128:

But art is *victor* still through all the ages  
And renders evergreen our sunny hours:  
Key to my verse you are; and may its meaning  
Every time you turn my volume's pages  
*Rush forth* to greet you like the scent of flowers!

<sup>26</sup> *Song of Myself*, in *Leaves of Grass: Comprehensive Reader's Edition*, ed. by Harold W. Blodgett and Sculley Bradley (New York: New York University Press, 1965), pp.28-89; abbreviated as *SM* — lines 609-10.

<sup>27</sup> Anonymous, 'Rare Ill-Broker'd Talent', *The Times Literary Supplement* (25 September 1959), p.544.

<sup>28</sup> As quoted in White, *Hopkins*, p.411.

<sup>29</sup> A. S. Byatt, Introduction to *The Quest for Corvo: An Experiment in Biography*, by A. J. A. Symons (New York: New York Review Books, 2001), pp.ix-xvi (p.ix).

<sup>30</sup> Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, 5<sup>th</sup> vol. of *The Works of Thomas Carlyle in Thirty Volumes* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1897), p.11.

<sup>31</sup> This sonnet is from *OET*, pp.181-82. I have chosen to employ the title 'Dark Sonnets' for these poems rather than the more traditional 'Terrible Sonnets', since the current meaning of 'terrible' has associations that befit these brilliant sonnets not at all. The other option in currency is 'Sonnets of Desolation', first employed by William Gardner, though Gardner chose that title under the assumption that this 'desolation' was the 'desolation' described in St Ignatius's 'Rules for Discernment of Spirits'. Since I disagree with Gardner's pat connection of these sonnets to Hopkins's Ignatian retreat, I have opted to avoid his title as well.

<sup>32</sup> *Facsimiles II*, p.267.

<sup>33</sup> Richard Barnfield, *The Affectionate Shepherd* [1594] (Llandogo, England: Old Stile Press, 1998).

<sup>34</sup> White, *Hopkins*, p.400.

<sup>35</sup> Cary H. Plotkin, *The Tenth Muse: Victorian Philology and the Genesis of the Poetic Language of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), pp.122-23.

<sup>36</sup> Joseph Campbell, with Bill Moyers, *The Power of Myth*, ed. by Betty Sue Flowers (New York: Doubleday, 1988), pp.235-36.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.235-36.

<sup>38</sup> Walter Pater, *Appreciations: With an Essay on Style* (London: Macmillan, 1889), p.215.

<sup>39</sup> Robert Bridges, ed., *The Poems of Digby Mackworth Dolben*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1915).

<sup>40</sup> Denis Sobolev, 'Hopkins's "Bellbright Bodies": The Dialectics of Desire in His Writings', *TSSL*, 45.1 (2003), pp.114-40 (p.122).

<sup>41</sup> Pater, 'Aesthetic Poetry', p.215.

<sup>42</sup> In *Gerard Manley Hopkins: The Poet as Victorian* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968), Wendell Stacy Johnson notes a similar evolution within Tennyson's monumental poem to A. H. Hallam: 'The framework of *In Memoriam*, with a hymn at the beginning and type of epithalamion at the end' (p.13).

<sup>43</sup> Jude V. Nixon, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and His Contemporaries: Liddon, Newman, Darwin, and Pater* (New York: Garland Press, 1994), p.177.

<sup>44</sup> Michel Eyquem, seigneur de Montaigne, *Works*, book I, chapter 1, 'That Men by Various Ways Arrive at the Same End'.

<sup>45</sup> There is a memorial window to Hopkins at St Bartholomew's Church, Haslemere. On 8 December 1975, a memorial to Hopkins was unveiled and dedicated in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, London. For discerning comments on this event and its ironies, see Norman White, 'Saint Gerard Manley Hopkins?', *The Yale Review*, 69 (1980), pp.473-80. Both of these memorials appear in 'Appendix Seventeen'.

<sup>46</sup> In 'Pater's Sadness', *Raritan*, 20.2 (2000), pp.136-58, Jacques Khalip writes: 'This mystery surrounding Pater [is] a mystery that has occupied readers and critics alike in the effort to establish a credible selfhood for a writer who refuses any defining personality regardless of his own aesthetic recommendations' (pp.155-56).

<sup>47</sup> Nils Clausson, "'Culture and Corruption": Paterian Self-Development versus Gothic Degeneration in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*', *Papers on Language & Literature*, 39.4 (2003), pp.339-64 (p.349).

<sup>48</sup> '[I Wake and Feel the Fell of Dark, Not Day]', line 14.

<sup>49</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p.1.

<sup>50</sup> A striking, recent example of this is David Anthony Downes's *Hopkins' Achieved Self* (London: University Press of America, 1996).

<sup>51</sup> K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), p.9.



<sup>52</sup> Thomas Mann, *Essays of Three Decades*, trans. by H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Knopf, 1948), p.329.

<sup>53</sup>

Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet*, in *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*, 2 vols (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1930), p.17.

<sup>54</sup> White, *Hopkins*, p.404.

<sup>55</sup> As MacKenzie explains about his editing decisions in the *OET*:

In my attempted chronological sequence I have placed each of the Sonnets of Desolation, only after considerable investigation, where it seems best to fit such evidence as we have from the erratic handwriting of his troubled Irish days, from any interlocking of poems in the surviving MSS, and all the biographical information I could discover. But no claims to certainty can be made [...] Critics who conceive theories of the development of GMH's mind and spirits during his days in Ireland may be able to argue interestingly for a different arrangement. (p.443, note)

<sup>56</sup> [Edmund Geldart] Nitram Tradleg, *A Son of Belial: Autobiographical Sketches* (London: Trubner, 1882); reissued by University Microfilms International, 1976.

<sup>57</sup> White, *Hopkins*, p.335.

<sup>58</sup> Letter of 17 August 1882, as quoted in Joseph J. Feeney, 'Four Newfound Hopkins Letters: An Annotated Edition, with a Fragment of Another Letter', *Hopkins Quarterly*, 23.1-2 (1996), pp.3-40 (pp.9; 14).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.3-40. It is possible to compare Hopkins's earlier, more idealised, more enthusiastic feelings towards such a moment with the later actuality. Of his early poem 'The Habit of Perfection', David Anthony Downes writes: 'Here is indicated his prepossession with spiritual thoughts; here is, in embryo, the highly subjective emotion and eccentricity of expression which is to mark his later and more mature work. In every stanza there is the cry of a grand renunciation — the taking of the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience' — *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Study of His Ignatian Spirit* (New York: Bookman, 1959), p.81.

<sup>60</sup> Donald E. Stanford, ed., *The Selected Letters of Robert Bridges, with the Correspondence of Robert Bridges and Lionel Muirhead*, 2 vols (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1983-84), I, p.127.

<sup>61</sup> Donoghue, pp.324-25.

<sup>62</sup> Jeff Nunokawa, *Tame Passions of Wilde: The Styles of Manageable Desire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), p.18. See also Joseph Bristow, "'A Complex Multiform Creature": Wilde's Sexual Identities', in *The Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde*, ed. by Peter Raby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp.195-218. In 'In the Mouth of Fame', *Times Literary Supplement* (9 February 2001), pp.3-5, Thomas Wright claims that 'we think of Wilde now as a man who had so many different personalities that he could only ever be true to himself when he as inconsistent' (p.3).

<sup>63</sup> White, *Hopkins*, p.411. For some curious parallels between Hopkins and Wilde, see Leonara Rita Obed, 'Gerard Manley Hopkins and Oscar Wilde – Victorians and Writers', a lecture delivered at the 16<sup>th</sup> Gerard Manley Hopkins Summer School, Monasterevin, Ireland (July 2003) <[http://www.gerardmanleyhopkins.org/lectures\\_2003/oscar\\_wilde.html](http://www.gerardmanleyhopkins.org/lectures_2003/oscar_wilde.html)>, continued <[http://www.gerardmanleyhopkins.org/lectures\\_2003/hopkins-and-wilde-2.html](http://www.gerardmanleyhopkins.org/lectures_2003/hopkins-and-wilde-2.html)> [accessed 12 June 2004]. Obed's *tone* mirrors that of my own: 'As the Oxford dandy who became a dandyfied Jesuit, Hopkins not only had an uncanny resemblance to Oscar Wilde, but fulfilled his clandestine dreams: he was the sacred counterpoint to his profanities, an actual and secret Ernest in the disappearing English countryside to Wilde's city-smart Jack' ([oscar\\_wilde.html](#)).

<sup>64</sup> As quoted in Evan Charteris, *The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse* (London: Harper, 1931), p.107. For Gosse's homoerotic attraction to the academic sculptor Hamo Thornycroft, see Ann Thwaite, *Edmund Gosse: A Literary Landscape, 1849-1928* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1985), pp.192-97. This led to 'the catty description of Gosse as a closeted "hamosexual" by Lytton Strachey' — Jason Edwards, 'Edmund Gosse and the Victorian Nude', *History Today*, 51.11 (2001), pp.29-35 (p.34). In 'Near and Far: Homoeroticism, Labour, and Hamo Thornycroft's *Mower*', *Art History*, 26.1 (2003), pp.26-55, Michael Hatt describes how this attraction flowered into verse:

The most significant example [of Gosse's love poems to Thornycroft] is a set of poems included in his collection *Firdausi in Exile*, first published in 1885. [...] A letter from John Addington Symonds to Gosse, dated 25 March 1890, clarifies things. Symonds is responding to a letter from Gosse that included a key to *Firdausi in Exile*, identifying a sequence of covert homosexual verse, a cycle Symonds calls 'The Taming of Chimaera'. (pp.28-29)

<sup>65</sup> I am recognising a distinction between ‘bonfire’ and a more typical ‘tidying up’. Not infrequently, Hopkins had burned other manuscripts, though the extent of these burnings is hard to measure, as in a journal entry for 1 June 1866: ‘I read today the journal I kept in 1862, burning parts’ (*Journals*, p.138).

<sup>66</sup> Maneck Homi Daruwala notes an apparently opposite motivation for a similar bonfire by Pater: ‘Finally, despite the stress on criticism and fiction, Pater’s aesthetics remain those of Romantic poetry. Pater, like Wilde, began by writing poetry, even though he burnt his early poems for being too Christian’ — in “‘The Discerning Flame’: Of Pater and *The Renaissance*’, *Victorian Institute Journal*, 16 (1988), pp.85-127 (p.117).

<sup>67</sup> White, *Hopkins*, p.451.

<sup>68</sup> In the introduction to his biography of Hopkins, Martin relates that in a BBC broadcast in 1957, Lance Sieveking, a relative of Gerard Manley Hopkins, told of an old man in Dublin who remembered passing the half-open door of Hopkins’s rooms in St Stephen’s Green on the day after his death in 1889. Although it was June, a huge fire was burning in the grate, and when he turned to investigate, he saw ‘an old fellow, all in black’, pulling out the contents of a chest of drawers and ‘heaping papers on the fire’. We shall never know what was destroyed that day, although it seems a safe supposition that most of the poet’s remaining private papers went up the chimney. (p.xi)

<sup>69</sup> As quoted in G. F. Lahey, *Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930), pp.18-19.

<sup>70</sup> For the details of this burning, see W. H. Gardner, *Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89): A Study of Poetic Idiosyncrasy in Relation to Poetic Tradition*, 2 vols (London: Secker and Warburg, 1944 and 1949), I, p.viii.

<sup>71</sup> About his rescue of *In Memoriam*, see Derek Patmore, *Portrait of My Family: 1783-1896* (New York: Harper, 1935), pp.103-04. About his prompting of Ruskin, see E. J. Oliver, *Coventry Patmore* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956), p.36. Patmore’s assistance to the Pre-Raphaelites went even further: ‘Other of Ruskin’s letters show the efforts he made, on Patmore’s initiative, to find patrons and purchasers for the Pre-Raphaelites’ (Oliver, p.30).

<sup>72</sup> Martin, p.251.

<sup>73</sup> D. Patmore, p.214.

<sup>74</sup> Martin, p.355.

<sup>75</sup> D. Patmore, pp.218-19.

<sup>76</sup> In ‘The Other in the Mirror: Sex, Victorians and Historians’ (1998) <<http://www.lesleyahall.net/sexvict.htm>> [accessed 5 August 2004], Lesley A. Hall notes: ‘There is, indeed, some rather curious evidence — which I discovered in correspondence between one of [Patmore’s] descendants and Sir Julian Huxley — that Patmore practised a possibly unique form of masturbation without ejaculation providing the pleasures of arousal without those of satisfaction’. This material was further elucidated and corrected in an e-mail to me from Dr Hall on 2 January 2005:

Looking back over my files, I see that this correspondence consists of a group of letters from Richard de Bary to Julian Huxley during 1933. They are from the Huxley papers at Rice University, file 11.3. de Bary was not in fact a relative of Patmore but had ‘spoken with one who knew CP personally’. The process appears to have involved ‘an absolutely perfect closure (by silk-thread or what you will) of the sex organ’, which, according to de Bary, prevented emission and the re-absorption of the spermatozoa into the nervous system. [...] There is also a letter from the specialist in sexual medicine Dr Norman Haire, to whom Huxley showed this correspondence.

I wish to thank Dr Hall for kindly sending me copies of this entire correspondence.

<sup>77</sup> Oliver, p.169.

<sup>78</sup> As quoted in White, *Hopkins*, p.403.

<sup>79</sup> As quoted in D. Patmore, p.213.

<sup>80</sup> As quoted in Thwaite, pp.323-24. I wish to thank Rictor Norton for corresponding with me regarding this point. Notice Gosse’s similar concerns regarding his own Pater biography, as Donoghue notes: ‘Gosse wanted to bring Pater’s life forward, subject to considerations of decorum and privacy’ (p.18). As far as the broader implications of Gosse’s fascination with such nudes, Edwards writes:

Yet in many ways, Gosse's account [of his father's violent verbal response to the sculptures in an art book bought by his wife (Gosse's mother) and his allusions to the pederastic sins of the ancients] does challenge our inherited familiar notions of the Victorian encounter with the nude. As we review the Victorian nude in the gallery today, Gosse's memoirs remind us that it aroused desires, that [these] were different to our own, were born out of different ideas, and were experienced in different ways. (p.35)

I agree that Gosse's account in *Father and Son* does call for a re-evaluation of Victorian perceptions of the nude, though I disagree with Edwards's claim that Gosse exhibits 'different' desires, desires which arose from 'different' ideas and were experienced in 'different' ways. Edwards's phrasing reveals a Social Constructionist bias which I addressed as spurious and quibbling in 'Chapter One'.

<sup>81</sup> Sobolev, p.120.

<sup>82</sup>

James W. Earl, "The One Rapture of an Inspiration", *Thought*, 65 (1990), pp.550-62 (p.560).

<sup>83</sup> This chorister fetish is almost a Roman Catholic stereotype. As representative, see Richard Sherr, 'A Canon, a Choirboy, and Homosexuality in Late Sixteenth-Century Italy: A Case Study', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 21 (1991), pp.1-22.

<sup>84</sup> There is certainly more here than Dowling's claim (though that claim is true, however partial) that 'the Tractarian ideal of friendship as spiritual communion [...] would so deeply color Oxford sociality in later years, prompting both A. H. Clough and G. M. Hopkins to fill their Oxford diaries with brief but impassioned notations of the ebb and flow in friendship' (*Hellenism*, p.43).

A particularly salient example of such a 'pederastic' bonfire is documented by Colette Colligan in her "A Race of Born Pederasts": Sir Richard Burton, Homosexuality, and the Arabs', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 25.1 (2003), pp.1-20 (pp.9-10):

As her husband's executor, Isabel Burton censored and burned much of his unpublished material on pederasty. [...] Isabel Burton found *The Scented Garden* particularly offensive and burnt the nearly completed manuscript. In a melodramatic letter to the *Morning Post* on January 19, 1891, she publicly confessed to burning the manuscript:

My husband has been collecting for 14 years information and materials on a certain subject. [...] He then gave himself up entirely to the writing of this book, which was called *The Scented Garden*, a translation from the Arabic. It treated of a certain passion. Do not let anyone suppose that Richard Burton ever wrote a thing from the impure point of view [...] I remained for three days in a state of perfect torture as to what I ought to do about it [...] I said to myself 'out of 2,000 men, 14 will probably read it in the spirit of science in which it was written; [...] the other [...] will read it for filth's sake, and pass it to their friends, and the harm done will be incalculable' [...] It would, by degrees, descend amongst the populace of Holywell Street.

The following provide other examples: In G. C. Williamson, *Murray Marks and His Friends: A Tribute of Regard by Dr. G. C. Williamson* (London: John Lane, 1919), pp.156-63, Williamson explains that, as an act of altruism, Marks was one of those who bought the later pederastic and homoerotic artworks of the impoverished Simeon Solomon, only so that they could then destroy them, 'because [these works of art] were evil in design and horrible in appearance'. In 'Death in Venice, Life in Zurich: Mann's Late "Something for the Heart"', *Southwest Review*, 82.3 (1997), pp.293-324, Gary Schmidgall notes that Thomas Mann made bonfires of his own diaries because of their pederastic/homoerotic content: 'But for the diaries, we would be obliged to read between the lines of his novels, short stories, and feuilletons to speculate that he was also a great and lifelong, if also frustrated, lover. He had destroyed compromising diaries as early as 1895, when Wilde's trial panicked him, and as recently as 1945' (p.321).

<sup>85</sup> For two examples, the first coming from the publication of these private notes, the second from the most recent overview of Hopkins's sexuality, see Dr Felix Letemendia, 'Part III: Medico-Psychological Commentary', in the Introduction to *Facsimiles I*, p.34; Sobolev, p.120.

<sup>86</sup> For the erotic attractiveness of the Magdalen choristers, see Martin, pp.62-63.

<sup>87</sup> Sobolev, p.117; see also the accompanying note, p.135.

<sup>88</sup> This confession note would, even if it related to Hopkins's female cousin, do the same.

<sup>89</sup> About Alfred, Lord Tennyson's use of the word 'dearest' to describe Arthur Henry Hallam in *In Memoriam*, Jack Kolb notes: 'Tennyson himself was quoted as saying "if anybody thinks I ever called him 'dearest' in his life they are much mistaken, for I never even called him 'dear'"' — 'Hallam, Tennyson, Homosexuality and the Critics',

*Philological Quarterly*, 79.3 (2000), pp.365-96 (p.367). In this article, Kolb also analyses an anonymous review of *In Memoriam* in *The London Times* (November 1851), a review which complains about the ‘amatory tenderness’ that such phrasing as ‘dearest’ suggests; Kolb notes that this anonymous review was ‘almost certainly written by Manley Hopkins, Gerard’s father’ (p.367).

<sup>90</sup> In “‘Aggressive, Witty, & Unrelenting’: Brigid Brophy and Ronald Firbank’, *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, 15.3 (1995), pp.68-78, Peter Parker comments that ‘Firbank has suffered similarly in that even his admirers regretted (and, perhaps more to the point, were embarrassed by) what Evelyn Waugh described as a “coy naughtiness about birches and pretty boys”’ (p.72).

<sup>91</sup> As quoted in Martin, p.62.

## — Chapter Three —

### **‘Beautiful Dripping Fragments’: A Whitmanesque Reading of Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’**

A celibate whose Ruskinian interest in natural beauty focussed upon the landscape and the innocent child or youth, Hopkins has not often been written of in sexual language or been critically analyzed for sexual themes and attitudes. Perhaps we should be glad. (Wendell Stacy Johnson, ‘Sexuality and Inscape’)<sup>1</sup>

In considerations prior to — but left unchanged in — his literary biography of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Norman White dismisses the poet’s elusive ‘Epithalamion’ as ‘second-hand impressions pasted together’, as ‘landscape descriptions [which] have no force of plot behind them’.<sup>2</sup> I wish to argue in the pages to follow that such an assessment overlooks the ‘Epithalamion’ as a display of Hopkins’s mastery of the painterly, the priestly, and the prurient — overlooks a masterpiece which John Ferns has argued not only reveals Hopkins in ‘his freest and happiest poetical vein’, but also ‘shows his genius’.<sup>3</sup> (This poem is included as ‘Appendix Eighteen’.) Even as recently as 1990, scholars such as James W. Earl have suggested indelicately that the proper lesson learned from Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’ is that ‘we would do well to destroy the poems we write while administering exams’, Earl merely labelling the poem ‘a beautifully embarrassing sexual fantasy’.<sup>4</sup>

Traditionally, most scholars have dismissed Hopkins’s poem as a spurious improvisation, ignoring the existence of earlier drafts, drafts indicative of a thoughtful process of revision.<sup>5</sup> Scholars seem to request a fair copy to legitimise the ‘Epithalamion’, even though its writer admitted only a year after its composition, in that fatal year which saw both his death and the purging of his uncollected manuscripts: ‘We greatly differ in feeling about copying one’s verses out: I find it repulsive, and let them lie months and

years in rough copy untransferred to my [manuscript] book' (Last letter to Robert Bridges, 29 April 1889, *Letters I*, p.304).<sup>6</sup>

Hopkins himself contributed to this dismissal of the poem as a fragment, and certainly for good reasons. As if to thwart societal disapproval, whether Victorian or Jesuit, Hopkins attached a nuptial title and several extraneous fragments to the poem (totalling eleven manuscript lines), obvious fragments that Norman H. MacKenzie describes as 'perhaps the weakest lines GMH ever wrote' (*Facsimiles II*, p.383, note). Always keen to exploit a poetic opportunity, Hopkins seems to have converted the occasion of his brother Everard's wedding — an occasion Hopkins had earlier treated facetiously, labelling the poetic wedding announcement 'buffoonery' in a passage C. C. Abbott excised from the published *Letters*<sup>7</sup> — into 'an audible fig-leaf intended to cover the sentiments expressed earlier [in the poem]',<sup>8</sup> sentiments both suggestive and erotic. If one moves aside that fig-leaf — the nuptial title and the appended fragments — one discovers a poet inflamed with pederastic desire, a poet who guides his reader into a woodland abounding with bathing boys, then directs that reader's gaze towards an advancing stranger who, inspired by the sight of these naked striplings, undresses and bathes alone, caressed by a vacillating stream. This is not a typical, Roman Catholic wedding-scene, to be certain — or, in the words of Simon Humphries, 'This looks not like a nuptial'.<sup>9</sup>

Regarding the spiritual and psychological nakedness of Hopkins's 'Dark Sonnets', most critics would agree with Robert Bernard Martin that 'in this great series of poems Hopkins seems stripped before us, so that no conventions of nationality, period or religion come between poet and reader to obscure the sense of profound emotion they share'.<sup>10</sup> However, White's classification of the later 'Epithalamion' as a pitiable fragment and Earl's suggestion that it should have seen the flames together reveal a deliberate

avoidance, in the critical sphere, of the homoerotic and pederastic qualities that infuse it, an avoidance of the sexual and psychological nakedness that it presents and represents, an avoidance of what Michael Lynch has labelled ‘the gayness of [Hopkins’s] whole aesthetic’.<sup>11</sup> ‘Take away the “title”’, suggests Humphries, ‘and those forty-two lines might begin to look like the kind of poem that is uncongenial to some critics’.<sup>12</sup> Because of this, as Dennis Sobolev notes: ‘The history of the reading of this poem is not especially rich; most critics [have] tried to avoid it’.<sup>13</sup>

This scholarly preference for the congenial is partly a decorous and cautious attempt not to marginalise Hopkins’s deeply felt religious convictions, his devotion to celibacy, and his authentic sense of vocation. After John Robinson had described Hopkins as ‘a man drawn to boys by their beauty’, as a man who might have eventually found religious sanction for such a love,<sup>14</sup> he drew the following retort from MacKenzie — provoking, but not exactly a disclaimer: ‘Robinson seems to mock the strenuous idealism with which every true priest, doctor, teacher, etc., must try to meet the temptations from one sex or the other in his profession’ (*OET*, p.453, note). In what follows, I also wish to suggest that scholars be decorous and cautious — not so much with their established views of Hopkins the man and his roles, priestly or otherwise, but with the complexity of the texts and other evidence that he has left behind, however fragmentary, uncongenial, and full of temptations what remains may be. It is particularly down the path of sexual desire, not spiritual devotion, that I wish to approach this rather-naked poet, hoping not to mock but to mark.

Although correct that ‘the lines suggest that when [Hopkins] let himself go, his verse turned spontaneously to naturalized images of the youthful male body’, and although apt in his comparison of the ‘Epithalamion’ to Whitman’s ‘[Twenty-eight Young Men Bathe by the Shore]’ — even Richard Dellamora fails to recognise the complexity of the

poem, describing it as merely ‘a free improvisation’.<sup>15</sup> While Dellamora’s analysis attempts a broad critique, endeavouring to secure Hopkins within the wider atmosphere of a Victorian Oxford replete with Walter Pater, J. A. Symonds, and Oscar Wilde, I will instead attempt a closer, more textual reading, hoping to offer a defence for a solitary poem mislabelled by most critics as a fragment, a folly, or a free improvisation (the principal exceptions being John Ferns and Jude Nixon).<sup>16</sup> I will argue that the ‘Epithalamion’ is a masterpiece which deserves inclusion among the seriously studied poems of Hopkins’s canon; and, as Martin asserts, that ‘it is like a paradigm of his whole poetic career’.<sup>17</sup> Like Pater’s Marius the Epicurean, I am hoping that the following will reveal ‘an ampler vision, which should take up into itself and explain this world’s delightful shows, as the scattered fragments of a poetry, till then but half-understood, might be taken up into the text of a lost epic, recovered at last’ (*Marius*, II, p.214).<sup>18</sup> It is necessary here to remember Thomas Carlyle’s comment that ‘*disjecta membra* [scattered parts] are all we find of any Poet, or of any man’.<sup>19</sup>

In essence, I wish to suggest that scholars rethink their overly abstract methods of engaging Hopkins’s texts and life, taking into consideration Pater’s recommendation — made in praise of the archaeologist and art critic Johann Joachim Winckelmann — that they ‘escape from abstract theory to intuition, to the exercise of sight and touch’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.147). Responding to the ‘Epithalamion’ in a more ‘feeling’ (in this particular case, more Whitmanesque) way might allow for a recognition that the poem is something quite different than previously supposed. However, before beginning what I hope to be an ‘exercise of sight and touch’, I feel obliged to justify a Whitmanesque reading of Hopkins’s poem.

Although Hopkins claims he ‘cannot have read more than half a dozen pieces [by Whitman] at most’, besides one review, and all of these from periodicals such as the



*Athenæum* and *Academy*, he admits nonetheless: ‘This, though very little, is quite enough to give a strong impression’ (*Letters* I, p.154). Although this comment mostly regards the poet’s rhythms, its implications go far deeper than the merely metrical. Just a few statements later in this October 1882 letter to Robert Bridges, Hopkins confesses: ‘I may as well say what I should not otherwise have said, that I always knew in my heart Walt Whitman’s mind to be more *like* my own than any other man’s living. As he is a very great scoundrel this is not a pleasant confession’ (p.155, emphasis added). In light of Henry David Thoreau’s insistence that ‘Walt Whitman can communicate to us no experience, and if we are shocked, whose experience is it that we are reminded of?’<sup>20</sup> — Hopkins’s admission is indeed confessional. Even if only in thought, never in act, Hopkins realised that he was ‘like’ Whitman, that homoerotic ‘scoundrel’ who asserts poignantly, ‘wherever are men *like* me, are our lusty lurking masculine poems’ (‘Spontaneous Me’, line 11, emphasis added).<sup>21</sup> Given Hopkins’s admission of similarity to Whitman, I will posit that something lusty and masculine does indeed lurk behind the nuptial title and extraneous fragments of his ‘Epithalamion’, a ‘scoundrel-ous’ something he dared not name, something erotically responsive to what Whitman christens as ‘youth, large, lusty, loving — youth full of grace, force, fascination’ (‘Youth, Day, Old Age and Night’, line 1),<sup>22</sup> something that can be unexpurgated through a Whitmanesque reading of the poem.

Since Whitman (as well as his contemporaries Ralph Waldo Emerson and Thoreau) successfully employed ‘indirect but powerful sexual imagery often couched in matrimonial terms’ and ‘the invocation of classical locations’ to establish spaces conducive for displaying homoeroticism,<sup>23</sup> it should come as no surprise that Hopkins also chose to conceal his most delicate homoerotic and pederastic expression within an epithalamion, the Classical ‘hymn of the wedding chamber’. By concealing his most

poignantly erotic fantasy behind several extraneous fragments and a nuptial title, Hopkins responds as Whitman does in ‘When I Read the Book’, though the latter chose to hide between parenthetical fig-leaves, then ultimately to exclude the poem before publication: ‘(As if any man really knew aught of my life; / As if you, O cunning Soul, did not keep your secret well!)’ (lines 4-5). There is indeed such a cunning behind Hopkins’s fig-leaves, as we, his readers, shall soon hear.

With his voice resonating a Whitmanesque ‘what I assume you shall assume’ (*SM*, line 2), Hopkins’s narrator summons us, his readers, into the text: ‘Hark, hearer, hear what I do’. As a direct address, ‘hearer’ has miscreant connotations which would have been clearly evident to a Classical scholar like Hopkins, professor of Greek at University College, Dublin. Such an imperative (translatable into a Whitmanesque ‘what I hear you shall hear’) has served throughout pederastic tradition — especially among the ancient Dorians — as a direct address emphasising the beloved’s role within a pederastic, pedagogic relationship, a relationship between a young *erômenos* (or *aitês*, the ‘hearer’) and an older *erastês* (or *eispnêlas*, the ‘inspirer’), a relationship which is explained in *Plato and Platonism*, a collection of lectures by Hopkins’s former academic coach and later friend, Walter Pater.<sup>24</sup> Pater, who also claims that an artist ‘says to the reader, — I want you to see precisely what I see’ (*Appreciations*, p.31), defines the roles of ‘hearer’ and ‘inspirer’ among the ancient Dorians as

the clean, youthful friendship, ‘passing even the love of women’, which [...] elaborated into a kind of art, became an elementary part of [ancient Greek] education. [...] The beloved and the lover, side by side through their long days of eager labour, and above all on the battlefield, became respectively, *aitês*, the hearer, and *eispnêlas*, the inspirer; the elder inspiring the younger with his own strength and noble taste in things. (*Platonism*, pp.231-32)<sup>25</sup>

After addressing his reader as ‘hearer’, Hopkins’s narrator invites him to participate aesthetically in the creation of a mutual fantasy, hoping to inspire him with his own strength and taste in things poetical, hoping to demonstrate that ‘instinctive imaginative

power' which Pater considers 'a sort of visual power [...] causing others also to see what is matter of original intuition for him' (p.142).

Although increasingly aware that prurient arousal might be inherent in sharing the voyeurism of Hopkins's narrator, the 'observer-participant framing the action',<sup>26</sup> Hopkins's hypothetical 'hearer' is drawn into a sympathetic confidence with this 'inspirer', realising that any passions they display here together must ever remain private, as Whitman stresses emphatically in 'To You':

Let us twain walk aside from the rest;  
Now we are together privately, do you discard ceremony;  
Come! vouchsafe to me what has yet been vouchsafed  
To none — Tell me the whole story,  
[...]  
Tell me what you would not tell your brother, wife, husband, or physician.

The reader 'vouchsafes' to Hopkins's narrator when he 'lends' him 'a thought', allows him control over his imagination and shares in his point of view: the reader is consequently implicated in the impending voyeurism. Like Whitman's reader, who is free to 'fully participate in [the text's] homoerotic and homosexual context',<sup>27</sup> Hopkins's reader is drawn into the 'Epithalamion' and its context by a narratorial stratagem similar to that which Michael Moon terms 'enfoldment'. Moon asserts that Whitman's texts are primarily poetic enfoldments which 'claim to deliver both the full physical presence of the author, which it of course cannot actually provide, and the imaginary space it does extend, in which the sympathetic reader may enter into partial or liminal contact with the author/speaker of these texts'.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, after Hopkins's narrator invites the reader to participate in the imaginative creation of a 'branchy bunchy bushybowered wood', the reader, by joining him, becomes 'leaf-whelmed somewhere', overwhelmed by foliage, enfolded seductively into a masculine landscape by a technique Whitman describes as 'putting myself here and now to the ambush'd womb of the shadows' (*SM*, line 1053).<sup>29</sup> As with Whitman's woodlands, Hopkins's are not *feminine* wombs, for even the

topographical descriptions abound with phallic imagery<sup>30</sup> and swell with the seminal inspiration that inflames the landscape of Hopkins's sonnet 'Spring':

What is all this juice and all this joy?  
 A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning  
 In Eden garden. — Have, get, before it cloy,  
 Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning (lines 9-12)

Affirming Whitman's notion that 'the cleanest [or most unsoured] expression is that which finds no sphere worthy of itself and makes one' (*Preface* 1855, p.717), Hopkins imaginatively constructs a liminal space conducive to the flow of his own desires, a Xanadu with a vaulted pleasure-dome formed by a bushybowered wood that 'leans along the loins of hills', an image of pubic foliage sprouting from fleshy riverbanks. As his narrator explains, these hilly loins are animated by a 'candycoloured [...] gluegold-brown / Marbled river' — an adhesive, *Calamus* river aflow with a palatable, shiny, streaked liquid — a semen of sorts. This description, which 'fancy painted [...] very faintly, in watered sepia' (*Letters* I, p.225), seems the residue of one of Hopkins's own sacred Alphs, the river Hodder — 'swollen and golden [...] like ropes and hills of melting candy' — or elsewhere, 'a sallow glassy gold at Hodder Roughs' (*Journals*, pp.212; 200). In the 'Epithalamion', this seminal river gushes 'boisterously beautiful, between / Roots and rocks', as if forced through phallic passageways; and is 'danced and dandled' in ejaculatory spurts that fall as 'froth' and 'waterblowballs'. Since the jerking, fondling motion of 'dandled' is coupled with a word like 'waterblowballs', the river acquires even greater masturbatory connotations: the 'watery' fluid is 'dandled' forward by a 'blow' (a rather aggressively fistful word), till it is ejaculated as dropping 'balls' (not to mention 'froth'). This is indeed a Whitmanesque 'pent-up aching river', squeezed forward, from between the rocks, by the lusty urgency of gravity. As a symbolic treatment, this landscape displays the languor of unchannelled desire, the 'strain of the earth's sweet

being', the 'limpid liquid within the young man, / The vex'd corrosion' that Whitman describes as 'so pensive and so painful, / The torment, the irritable tide that will not be at rest' ('Spontaneous Me', lines 27-29).

Hopkins's hills and imagination seem animated by what Whitman describes as 'the procreant urge of the world' (*SM*, line 44), undoubtedly prompting the observation by Ferns that 'the world in which Hopkins asks us to join him is a procreant, natural world'.<sup>31</sup> 'Projected masculine, full-sized and golden' (*SM*, line 647), Whitman's procreant landscapes are bountiful with the 'tussled hay of head [...] trickling sap of maple [...] fibre of manly wheat [...] sweaty brooks and dews [...] winds whose soft-tickling genitals rub against me' (*SM*, lines 536-41). These landscapes, sprouting 'a forest of phallic suggestion',<sup>32</sup> are indistinguishable from the one into which Hopkins has led his reader, noticeable in such things as Hopkins's choice of 'honeysuck' rather than 'honeysuckle' (hence, allowing for possible connotations of fellatio, rather than maternal feeding).

Although paradises like 'this carnal pastoral world'<sup>33</sup> are sensually suggestive in their flow and foliage, they lack the reciprocity necessary to satisfy fully. 'What you look hard at seems to look hard at you', wrote Hopkins regarding nature in his journal (p.204), and the crucial word here might well be 'seems'. Like their progenitor Adam, both Hopkins and Whitman realise that even an authentic interaction with 'the earth's sweet being in the beginning / In Eden garden' is vacant without companionship. As Whitman will admit, 'Now I care not to walk the earth unless a lover, a dear friend, walk by my side'.<sup>34</sup> Although Whitman can contemplate aesthetically that 'I hear and behold God in every object' (*SM*, line 1281) and Hopkins that 'the world is charged with the grandeur of God' ('God's Grandeur', line 1), both poets recognise, as did Adam before them, that without human intimacy even the presence of God amidst his creation implies loneliness.

In his meditative ‘Hurrahing in Harvest’, Hopkins wanders a Whitmanesque landscape in autumn, conscious that ‘the azurous hung hills are [the Saviour’s] world-wielding shoulder / Majestic’ (lines 9-10), conscious that he — as priest, as poet, as man — is lifting up ‘heart, eyes, / Down all that glory in the heavens to glean our Saviour’ (lines 5-6). Nevertheless, contact with both nature and its God leaves him, ‘the beholder / Wanting’ (lines 11-12), wanting another form of contact besides the spiritually and poetically contemplative.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, in ‘Ribblesdale’, Hopkins rhetorically questions: ‘What is Earth’s eye, tongue, or heart else, where / Else, but in dear and dogged man?’ (lines 9-10). ‘Earth, sweet Earth, sweet landscape’, recognises Hopkins, ‘[has] no tongue to plead, no heart to feel’ (lines 1-3). Hopkins seems to be searching for something which nature cannot alone provide, something perhaps analogous to Whitman’s lover-in-repose: ‘[he who] gently turn’d over upon me, / And parted the shirt from my bosom-bone, and plunged [his] tongue to my bare-stript heart’ (*SM*, lines 88-89).

‘And now I think I am going out by woods and waters alone’, wrote Hopkins to Bridges in 1883 (*Letters I*, p.181). That Hopkins might have explored the pathways and waterways of his own Arcadian woodlands — places like the Vale of Clwyd — looking for an affectionate loungee with a tongue and a heart and a hand for earnest grasping, should come as no surprise in Hopkins as a man, though perhaps surprising in Hopkins as a Jesuit priest. Nevertheless, this lounging figure is ‘the central and primary archetype of the homosexual imagination and the dominating icon of homoerotic fantasy — the anonymous image of passionate sexual desire as well as the ideal friend, the archetypal comrade. He stands for the unexpected sexual encounter that is unfettered by the artificial demands of name, custom, or social status’.<sup>36</sup> Because this loungee is stripped of name, of custom, of social status — some ‘child of Amansstrength’ without the brawny name of ‘Harry Ploughman’ (line 15) — he represents the ultimate stranger, perhaps the very

stranger whom the reader is taken into Hopkins's epithalamic forest to observe. But first, 'O the lads!'

'We are there' in that bushybowered wood only a moment before the phallic forest — the 'hanging honeysuck' and the 'dogeared hazels' — begins to resound with cries of merriment. We, the unified pair, the reader and narrator, 'hear a shout' (in draft H.i.50<sup>r</sup>, 'the maddest merry shout'), a sound eventually recognised by our guiding narrator as 'boys from the town / Bathing', young figures engaged in the shameless madness of merriment and play.<sup>37</sup> In this landscape, even the trees seem to appreciate these boys as 'summer's sovereign good', for they 'hover' over the 'bevy of them' like a brooding bird covering her young with a canopy of feathers, an image which appears consistently throughout Hopkins's canon, most notably in his sonnets 'In the Valley of the Elwy' ('a hood / All over, as a bevy of eggs the mothering wing / Will', lines 5-7) and 'God's Grandeur' ('the Holy Ghost over the bent / World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings', lines 13-14).

Overdraped by the dualistic wings of summer sunshine and shading foliage, these naked striplings, mastered by the heat, hurl themselves defiantly into the moorland river 'with dare and with downdolphinry and bellbright bodies' — their 'bellbright' (a commonplace for 'bronzed')<sup>38</sup> bodies penetrating the water's 'kindcold element' with the ease of dolphins, then 'huddling out' of the seminal souse only to dive in again.<sup>39</sup> Disorderly, these boys cluster together on the riverbank like Whitman's young 'Paumanok' swimmers — 'the clutch'd together! the passionate ones! / The side by side! the elder and younger brothers! the bony-limb'd' (lines 205-06). Ravished by a Whitmanesque zeal, Hopkins and his narrator — exclaiming in an earlier draft, 'O the lads!' (H.i.50<sup>r</sup>) — anticipate that we, his readers, will also enjoy a frolicsome display of

‘bony-limb’d’ boys labelled as ‘summer’s sovereign good’, boys whom Sobolev describes as ‘the objects of desire in all its unredeemed physicality’.<sup>40</sup>

Appreciating with Whitman that ‘no shutter’d room or school can commune with me, / But roughs and little children better than they’ (*SM*, lines 1255-56), Hopkins seems to have composed some portion of his ‘Epithalamion’ while invigilating a university examination, allowing his thoughts to drift from that shuttered schoolroom towards communion with little roughs sanctified as ‘summer’s sovereign good’, perhaps remembering the bathers in Frederick Walker’s painting by that name (see ‘Appendix Nineteen’),<sup>41</sup> or in Stonyhurst College’s ‘deep salmon pool with a funnel of white water at its head which generations of boys had used as a chute’,<sup>42</sup> a place in the river Hodder which was locally nicknamed ‘Paradise’, described by Hopkins as ‘all between waterfalls. [...] If you stop swimming to look round you see fairyland pictures up and down the stream’ — and a decade later, ‘the river Hodder with lovely fairyland views’ (*Letters* III, p.117; I, p.151). Beyond speculations about an inspiring landscape — particularly vague since Hopkins has allowed for the options of ‘Southern dean or Lancashire clough or Devon cleave’ — the manuscripts of the ‘Epithalamion’ reveal another location from which to draw: that shuttered classroom. While describing the spilling of the water from the moorland, Hopkins wrote not ‘heavenfallen freshness’, but ‘heavenfallen freshmen’ (H.ii.9<sup>f</sup>), a Freudian slip which, though discretely struck out, reveals that his poetic mind, in process, was aflow with a homoerotic and pederastic waterworld in which his students — and, given his tastes, certainly the freshmen — bathed rather than finished their exam. Imaginatively, Hopkins seems to have been communing with his students in another, more pastoral place.<sup>43</sup>

Selected from lads in paintings or Stonyhurst or Dublin or elsewhere (or merely a composite of them all), Hopkins’s clustering freshmen, imagined by the poet as ‘wet-



fresh', populate the erotically ornamented landscape of his 'Epithalamion', a space where the moorland water merges with 'young beings, strangers who seem to touch the fountains of our love, and draw forth their swelling waters' (Whitman, 'Child's Champion', p.74).<sup>44</sup> This mixture of flesh and fancy can be seen more clearly elsewhere, in Hopkins's description of one well-favoured boy:

Mannerly-hearted! more than handsome face —  
Beauty's bearing or muse of mounting vein,  
All, in this case, *bathed* in high hallowing grace.  
(*'Handsome Heart'*, lines 9-11, emphasis added)

Considered amid the coupled concepts of water and eroticism (a common aesthetic theme for the Victorians, especially for painters such as Henry Scott Tuke; see 'Appendix Twenty'<sup>45</sup>), this boy becomes more than an embodiment of 'beauty's bearing', more than a poetic 'muse'. As 'the muse of mounting vein', he seems to have inspired both Hopkins's poetic and phallic veins to mount, quivering Hopkins, like Whitman,

to a new identity,  
Flames and ether making a rush for my veins,  
Traucherous tip of me reaching and crowding. (*SM*, lines 619-21)

Such 'mortal beauty', Hopkins admitted in a sonnet by that name, typically inflamed his senses: 'mortal beauty [is] dangerous; [for it] does set danc- / Ing blood' (lines 1-2).<sup>46</sup> The lines which follow these insinuate even more about Hopkins's voyeuristic tendency: while contemplating the mortal objects his gaze usually sought, Hopkins alludes to 'Pope Gregory the Great, whose appreciation of the beauty of Anglo-Saxon slave boys (*Non Angli sed angeli*) led him to send Augustine to convert the pagan invaders of Britain. The extensive allusion to this well-known story occupies lines seven and eight of the sonnet and is therefore spatially at its center'.<sup>47</sup> Hopkins directs his reader to contemplate 'mortal beauty', specifically the beauty of these young *angli / angeli*:

See, it does this: keeps warm  
Men's wits to the things that are; what good means — where a glance  
Master more may than gaze, gaze out of countenance. (lines 3-5)

An earlier draft stresses the visual clarity essential for such voyeurism: ‘One *clear glance* / May gather, more than staring out of countenance’ (H.ii.23<sup>v</sup>, emphasis added). Another stresses Hopkins’s own role as that voyeur: ‘Where a glance / Gather more may than gaze *me* out of countenance’ (H.ii.29<sup>v</sup>, emphasis added). Then, lest his reader misunderstand this rare expression of ‘perfect personal candor’ (Whitman, *Preface* 1855, p.722) and fail to comprehend what keeps his wits warm to ‘what good means’, especially ‘summer’s sovereign good’ — missing that ‘meaning motion’ which Hopkins says in ‘Henry Purcell’ ‘fans fresh our wits with wonder’ (line 14) — Hopkins clarifies, in the next poetical line, exactly what kind of motion dances his blood, warms and fans his wits: ‘those lovely lads once, wet-fresh’ (‘To What Serves Mortal Beauty?’, line 6).<sup>48</sup>

Enfolded into a vantage point amid the foliage, Hopkins’s narrator — fully endowed with Hopkins’s voyeuristic tendency — now directs the reader’s gaze not only towards those ‘wet-fresh’ lads, but also towards an advancing stranger ‘beckoned by [their] noise’, a curious and lusty intruder of whom Whitman would have inquired, ‘Who goes there? hankering, gross, mystical, nude’ (*SM*, line 389).<sup>49</sup> Although, for the moment, Hopkins’s epithalamic stranger remains dressed, he is nonetheless a lusty intruder who ‘drops towards the river [...] unseen’, the liquidity of his motion reminiscent of the seminal drops of the ‘waterblowballs’ and the dew of the ‘hanging honeysuck’. As the embodiment of Hopkins’s homoerotic and pederastic desires, this stranger appears in the poem for the first time, limned with a Paterian solidity:

To speak, to think, to feel, about abstract ideas as if they were living persons: that, is the second stage of Plato’s speculative ascent. With the lover, who had graduated, was become a master, in the school of love, [...] it was as if the faculty of physical vision, of the bodily eye, were still at work at the very centre of intellectual abstraction. Abstract ideas themselves became animated, living persons, almost corporeal, as if with hands and eyes. (*Platonism*, p.170)

While Hopkins’s abstracted sensuality takes on human shape and moves unseen towards the boys, their ‘bellbright bodies [are] huddling out’ of the river, repeatedly running across the rocks, leaping into the air, plunging into the water, becoming ‘earthworld, airworld,

waterworld thorough hurred', hurred with the same masturbatory force as the 'waterblowballs' from the river's phallic passageways.

Initially, Hopkins's reader knows nothing about this stranger except that he is 'listless' — lacking in youthful appetite, desire, and joy. 'Beckoned by the noise', he 'came' and 'eyed' the boys amidst their motion of diving, watching their excited faces and plunging bodies contort with the same expectation that Hopkins describes in his poem 'Brothers':

[Young] Henry by the wall  
 Beckoned me beside him.  
 I came where called and eyed him  
 By meanwhiles; making my play  
 Turn most on tender byplay.  
 For, wrung all on love's rack,  
 My lad, [...]  
 Smiled, blushed, and bit his lip,  
 Or drove, with a diver's dip,  
 Clutched hands through claspèd knees. (lines 12-21)<sup>50</sup>

For the stranger of the 'Epithalamion', the nudity of such boys leaping about in a watery dance — 'this garland of their gambol' — is so sensually arousing that it 'flashes in his breast', the sight of their shameless bodies in 'a diver's dip' setting his blood dancing with 'a sudden zest / Of summertime joys'. There is certainly more here than Joseph Bristow's discrete aside that Hopkins's representation of these youthful male bodies 'as primarily "garlanded", donned in flowers and, by extension, somehow prettified in this manner, not only was unorthodox in English letters, [but] also came close to sexually immoral sentiments'.<sup>51</sup> This 'Garland of Ladslove' (to lend it a Uranian title)<sup>52</sup> would have been interpreted less hesitantly by Pater, his Decadents, and their Uranian descendants, all of whom would have clearly understood the implication of Hopkins's 'self *flashes* off frame and face' ('Mortal Beauty', line 11, emphasis added), a description derived from two of Hopkins's most constant of words, 'dappled' and 'pied', words which, Bristow emphasises, 'find their ancient Greek analogue in the word *poikilos*. Plato's Socratic dialogues deploy this term, which also connotes energies that "flash" and "flame" with

pederastic desire'.<sup>53</sup> Whatever the arguments for a Classical derivation — arguments which Linda Dowling develops<sup>54</sup> and Bristow encapsulates above — it is relatively certain that this sudden overflow of 'limber liquid youth' will, at least momentarily, provide relief for the stranger's inflamed pederastic desires, a relief described by Whitman in his excluded ditty 'After the Argument': 'A group of little children with their ways and chatter flow in, / Like welcome, rippling water o'er my heated nerves and flesh'.

Whitman suggests that this is the way 'boys stir us' while we lie in the shadows. Aroused by the sight and sound of boys stirring a river '*boi-ster-ous-ly* beautiful' (giving that word a bit of pederastic distance<sup>55</sup>), Hopkins's listless stranger, warmly dressed in 'woolwoven wear', is motivated to undrape and bathe alone in 'a pool neighbouring', a pool hidden from the boys' view by a canopy of wychelms, beaches, ashes, sycamores, hornbeams, and hazels. Although 'ashamed to go naked about the world' (Whitman, 'O Hot-Cheeked and Blushing', line 6), this stranger, in typical Whitmanesque fashion, nonetheless feels compelled to 'go to the bank by the wood and become undisguised and naked' (*SM*, line 19). Hidden from all eyes but our own, he participates voyeuristically in the 'riot of [their] rout', yet remains hidden behind a curtain of foliage, a curtain not unlike that which discretely distances Whitman's female voyeur in '[Twenty-Eight Young Men Bathe by the Shore]':

Where are you off to, lady? for I see you,  
You splash in the water there, yet stay stock still in your room.

Dancing and laughing along the beach came the twenty-ninth bather,  
The rest did not see her, but she saw them and loved them.  
[...]

they do not ask who seizes fast to them,  
They do not know who puffs and declines with pendant and bending arch,  
They do not think whom they souse with spray. (*SM*, lines 206-16)

Rather than conceal himself behind the feminine, Hopkins chooses more daringly to introduce an unimpassioned male stranger described as 'listless', a twenty-ninth bather 'whose perceptions he fully shares'.<sup>56</sup> Such a decision is indeed risky, for Hopkins does

not even distance his poem into a more excusable antiquity (as, for example, J. A. Symonds does in ‘The Lotos Garland of Antinous’). This is the boy-stirred Hopkins MacKenzie derides Robinson for drawing attention to, lest readers ‘mock the strenuous idealism with which every true priest [...] must try to meet [...] temptations’ (*OET*, p.453, note). This is the boy-stirred Hopkins whose Oxford confession notes recount: ‘Parker’s boy at Merton: evil thoughts’ (*Facsimiles I*, p.157); ‘looking at a cart-boy fr. Standen’s shopdoor’ (p.157); ‘imprudent looking at organ-boy and other boys’ (p.174). This is the Hopkins who wrote to his mother from Tiverton that his distant cousins, the two Miss Patches, are ‘such pretty lively girls’ (29 July 1865, *Letters III*, p.90) — though what had really stirred him during this visit was something quite different: ‘looking at a boy at Tiverton’ (Confession note, 28 July 1865, *Facsimiles I*, p.177).

Afraid to meet such a Tiverton-temptation directly, especially in a waterworldly frolic, the voyeuristic stranger of Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’ responds like Whitman’s narrator does in ‘O Hot-Cheek’d and Blushing’: although ‘ashamed to go naked about the world’ (line 6), he is nevertheless overcome by a curiosity ‘to know where [his] feet stand and what this is flooding [him], childhood or manhood — and the hunger that crosses the bridge between’ (line 7). To appease such a shameful, sensual hunger, Hopkins’s stranger ‘hies to a pool neighbouring’, moves eagerly and pantingly towards a place where he can bathe alone, apart from the childhood pulling and hauling.

In ‘The Bugler’s First Communion’, a more ceremonial and professional Hopkins applauds a boy who ‘hies headstrong to [his] wellbeing’, who spontaneously gratifies his own spiritual hunger without concern for the reproach of others (line 24, emphasis added). Similarly, Hopkins’s epithalamic stranger hies headstrong towards his own wellbeing, a secluded pool where he can satisfy his sensual hunger with a watery communion, for

it is the best  
There; sweetest, freshest, shadowiest;  
Fairyland.

Famished by ‘the hunger that crosses the bridge between’ childhood and manhood, this stranger seeks the ‘sweet’ epithalamic pool and ‘here he feasts’ — imbibing the sound of the bathing gambol, the shade of the leaves ‘painted on the air’, the smell of the riverbank, and ‘O the lads!’ He is sensually satiated by a caressing, masculine atmosphere of which Whitman says, ‘I am mad for it to be in contact with me’ (*SM*, line 20). However, although the stranger begins to feast upon this voyeuristic spectacle, James R. Kincaid suggests that such a hunger can never be appeased: ‘We imagine that we are searching for optical consummation, a satiating feast for the eyes; but we have no intention of devouring anything or even of locating something that could be devoured. All we want, first and last, is appetite’.<sup>57</sup> This appetite, this maddening hunger, this opposite of ‘listlessness’, compels Hopkins’s stranger, in Whitmanesque fashion, to ‘go to the bank by the wood and become undisguised and naked’ (*SM*, line 19), compels him into a voyeuristic playfulness about which Kincaid concludes: ‘Play, feasting on its own inventiveness, does not lead to anything but its own perpetuation. [...] Play eroticizes the whole world — and keeps it that way’.<sup>58</sup> The state that Kincaid describes is illustrated by an entry in Symonds’s *Memoirs*, an entry whose train tracks run alongside Hopkins’s epithalamic pool and Whitman’s shore:

Four young men are bathing in the pond by the embankment. I pass; the engine screams and hurries me away. But the engine has no power to take my soul. That stays, and is the pond in which the bathers swim, the air in which they shout, the grass on which they run and dress themselves, the hand that touches them unfelt, the lips that kiss them and they know it not.<sup>59</sup>

This ‘eroticisation of the whole world’ is particularly noticeable in Hopkins’s description of the ‘branchy bunchy bushybowered wood’ that canopies his secluded pool. Especially when the topiary adjectives are taken as a progressive cluster do the connotations become clearly phallic and ejaculatory (see ‘Appendix Forty-Four’ [p.xci] for a thirteenth-century alchemical illustration of such a phallic tree). The delicate-yet-

abrasive softness of the ‘silk-beech’ — like the surface of the glans penis (*glans* being the botanical name for the nut of the beech mast)<sup>60</sup> — is immediately followed by the engorged bundles of the ‘scrolled’ ash and the ‘packed’ sycamore, creating an erection of bark which displays those primal passions which refuse to be restrained (the ‘wild’ wychelm) under a state of agitation (‘hornbeam fretty overstood / By’). This last tree is especially a portmanteau of phallic suggestion: ‘horn’ / ‘beam’. Thrust upwards, this cluster of trees (to add climax to the phallic suggestiveness) ejaculates ‘rafts and rafts of flake-leaves light’, sousing the sky with a repeated expression of what Hopkins calls ‘all this juice and all this joy’ in his poem ‘Spring’.<sup>61</sup>

It is beneath these leaves that the stranger responds as he would not dare elsewhere, declaring, as if to establish a poetic volta: ‘Nó more’. When coupled with its visual illustration — ‘down he dings / His bleachèd both and woolwoven wear’ — this verbal response of ‘Nó more’ anticipates far more than a discarding of clothing. Since ‘costumes rise out of the sub-strata of education, equality, ignorance, caste and the like’ (Whitman, ‘American Primer’, p.76),<sup>62</sup> Hopkins and his stranger are also discarding Jesuitical moralising, Victorian prudery, celibate asexuality, and personal shame: they are fulfilling Whitman’s command to ‘Undrape! you are not guilty to me’ (*SM*, line 145). This is a command ‘to reject to some degree the system of controls over [their] own bodies that [their] culture enforces’,<sup>63</sup> a command to sound their barbaric yawps of ‘Nó more!’ over the riverbanks of the world, a command to engage in the most ‘unmanly’ of activities — childish play. As a rejection of ‘the system of controls’ over the body, this ‘Nó more’ is strikingly daring for Hopkins, because, although having

a genius at individuality, Hopkins had made himself subservient to [the Society of Jesus,] a regimental organisation which controlled its members’ bodies and minds for every minute of the day, where individual behaviour was frowned on, and where imagination and the senses had to be harnessed within a specific dogmatic syllabus.<sup>64</sup>

A salient example of this ‘Nó more’ can be found in White’s account of Hopkins’s frolics with the children of his Irish friend, Dr Francis McCabe: ‘Hopkins used to join the young people in the boat: “Once on a very hot day he took off his [priestly] dog collar and threw it down in the bottom of the boat exclaiming ‘I’ll say goodbye to Rome’”’.<sup>65</sup> Clearly, warmth, water, and play have certain expectations in the mixing, one of which is exposure, as with the limbs: in ‘[As Kingfishers Catch Fire]’, Hopkins goes so far as to suggest that even ‘Christ plays in ten thousand places, / Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his’ (lines 12-13).

Hitherto in the ‘Epithalamion’, the stranger has been separated from the playful ‘garland of their gambol’ by his own garland of ‘woolwoven wear’, a particularly interesting referent in light of the following whimsical passage from Pater’s *Plato and Platonism*: ‘[Unable to find a place for the inspired poet in our land,] we should tell him that there neither is, nor may be, any one like [a poet] among us, and so send him on his way to some other city, having anointed his head with myrrh and crowned him with a *garland of wool*, as something in himself half-divine’ (p.276, emphasis added). Pater’s Plato suggests that the mature poet be sent away as a stranger, though anointed with praises and invested with a garland of wool: hence, in all ways, ‘to seem the stranger lies [his] lot’ (line 1), for he does not conform to the rigidity of a proper society — whether Platonic or Victorian or Jesuit. Therefore, given the constraint and heat of this ‘garland of wool’, Hopkins’s stranger opts instead for the naked ‘garland of their gambol’, though seeking a bit more privacy than the boys, for reasons.

With his ‘treacherous tip reaching and crowding’ inside of his clothes (like a ‘hornbeam fretty overstood / By’), the stranger furiously unbuttons ‘his bleached both and woolwoven wear’ (an earlier draft reading, ‘his bleached shirt and all his woven wear’, H.ii.14<sup>v</sup>). He allows these clothes (symbols of societal conformity and modesty) to fall



about his ankles like Madeline's dress in John Keats's 'The Eve of St Agnes', a discarded cluster which entangles him — because he is still wearing his shoes. Frustratingly, the stranger finds himself held captive by his own impatience, suspended in all of his aroused nakedness by the very act of undressing hurriedly and impulsively:

[His] forehead frowning, [his] lips crisp  
 Over fingerteasing task, his twiny boots  
*Fast* he opens, last he off wrings  
 Till walk the world he can with [his] bare feet. (emphasis added)

After his conventions, his bothersome clothing, and especially his shoes have been duly discarded — 'careless these in coloured wisp / All lie tumbled-to' — Hopkins's stranger discovers how surprisingly tactile the world about him has always been, discovers the Whitmanesque 'press of [his] foot to the earth [which] springs a hundred affections' (*SM*, line 253), a touch hitherto overlooked because, as Hopkins observes in 'God's Grandeur', 'nor can foot feel, being shod' (line 8). Standing naked at the rim of the hidden pool, now only garlanded by the 'loop-locks' of his hair — 'forward falling' locks finding their nearest equivalent in 'loose locks, long locks, lovelocks' ('Leaden Echo', line 31) — the stranger undoubtedly experiences the same liquid caress described by Whitman: 'It sails me, I dab with bare feet, they are lick'd by the indolent waves' (*SM*, line 606). Recognising the seductiveness of this inviting touch, Whitman embraces this water-as-lover, hurling himself expectantly into its sousing arms, as do Hopkins's young epithalamic bathers:

You sea! I resign myself to you also — I guess what you mean,  
 I behold from the beach your crooked inviting fingers,  
 I believe you refuse to go back without feeling of me,  
 We must have a turn together, I undress, hurry me out of sight of the land,  
 Cushion me soft, rock me in billowy drowse,  
 Dash me with amorous wet. (*SM*, lines 448-53)

While, for Whitman, this encounter with the sea, 'rich in physical and sensual detail, [...] results in an absolute spiritual as well as sexual union'<sup>66</sup> — for Hopkins, who undoubtedly recognises that these inviting fingers belong to the hand of God, the 'fondler of [his] heart'

(‘Deutschland’, line 71), this water also bespeaks a chilly sense of unfamiliarity, forbiddance, and danger.

Hopkins often contemplates a not-so-amorous ‘sway of the sea’, as in ‘The Wreck of the Deutschland’ where he questions God: ‘Dost thou touch me afresh? / Over again I feel thy finger and find thee’ (lines 3; 7-8). Although recognising the epithalamic river-water as the omnipresent hand of God the ‘fondler’, both Hopkins and his stranger are apprehensive about the caressing ‘limpid liquid’ at their feet, intuitively aware that even a touch of their feet would be erogenous, springing forth a hundred potentially ‘dangerous’ and unfamiliar affections. By the poetic repetition of ‘*here he will then, here he will the fleet / Flinty kindcold element let break across his limbs*’ (emphasis added), Hopkins dramatises the stranger’s hesitation, his apprehension about any contact with the ‘pent-up aching river’ into which the boys hurl themselves so expectantly. Realising that an erotic hunger crosses the river between childhood and manhood, ‘on all sides prurient provokers stiffening [his] limbs’ (*SM*, line 623), Hopkins’s hesitant-yet-hungry stranger seeks satisfaction, though on the adult side of this seminal deluge, in a pool more conducive to his ‘manhood, balanced, florid and full’ (*SM*, line 1170), a tranquil pool where the ‘procreant urge’ he shares with the boys and with Whitman can be mastered.

Mastery and masturbation — these two words cut to the quick of Hopkins’s frustrated sexuality and pit his Jesuitical impulses against his human. While Whitman, ‘in his own love grip of autoerotic arousal’,<sup>67</sup> can confidently assert, as he bathes and admires himself, that ‘welcome is every organ and attribute of me, and of any man hearty and clean, / Not an inch nor a particle of an inch is vile, and none shall be less familiar than the rest’ (*SM*, lines 57-58) — Hopkins cannot make such a sensual or masturbatory assertion. By contrast, the undergraduate Hopkins seems to have conceived of his own masturbation (the ‘Old Habits’ sometimes discretely signified as ‘O.H.’ or cast in Latin in his diaries) as

a stumbling block, a division between himself and the Divine, a tactile example of fleshy impulses mastering him in ways reminiscent of that ‘great scoundrel’, the irreverent Whitman, and his ‘O Christ! This is mastering me!’ (*SM* 1860, line 243). Especially as a Jesuit priest, Hopkins must have feared that these impulses, if indulged, would lead to the overt sexuality found in Whitman’s ‘Not My Enemies Ever Invade Me’: ‘But the lovers I recklessly love — lo! how they master me!’ (line 2). And, to be ‘no master of myself’, Hopkins admits, ‘is the worst failure of all’ (Retreat notes of 1888, *Sermons*, p.262). This undergraduate attempt to become ‘master of myself’ concerning masturbation is revealed most clearly in Hopkins’s confession notes, where, regarding ‘the flow of bodily fluid’ during acts such as masturbation, Dellamora believes Hopkins’s requirement of mastery only reserved a distinctly neutral place ‘for involuntary emission on the side of religious and organic ecstasy’.<sup>68</sup> If such was the case, then — even though his poetry ‘reveals how intimately his love of men and boys was connected with his love of Christ’<sup>69</sup> — Hopkins must have recognised that religious ecstasy (not to mention organic) was a rare experience, and hard to come by.

In ‘The Bugler’s First Communion’, Hopkins depicts just such a moment of religious (and perhaps organic) ecstasy, with the ‘overtones of strong sexual awareness in the poem’<sup>70</sup> cast in a ceremonial frame, as the priestly Hopkins ‘forth Christ from cupboard fetched’ and administered the Eucharist to a bugler boy of the Fifty-Second Light Infantry from the nearby Cowley Barracks, a bugler boy dressed in ‘regimental red’ (lines 9-10). During this ceremony, Hopkins becomes aware of how erotically provocative his own stance is, relative to the kneeling boy penitently ready to receive the Host. Hopkins avouches: ‘How fain I of feet / To his youngster take his treat!’ (lines 10-11). Given the ‘underthought’ that ‘if Christ is [seen as] a phallus, [then] the logical conclusion must be that the Eucharist is an act of fellatio’,<sup>71</sup> Hopkins withdraws the

consecrated Host, the ‘too huge godhead’ (line 12), from the altar cupboard, a cupboard depicted like the sheath of a phallus, complete with retractable wooden foreskin, allowing Hopkins to ‘unhouse and house the Lord [as godhead]’ (‘Habit of Perfection’, line 24). While he places the ‘leaf-light’ wafer upon the bugler boy’s tongue, Hopkins’s glance lingers about the boy’s face (‘Christ’s darling’) and mouth (‘tongue true’) and throat (‘breathing bloom’) (lines 14-16) — his glance seeming to follow the wafer along. In essence, Hopkins’s glance lingers around the thing he labels in ‘The Habit of Perfection’ as the ‘palate, the hutch of tasty lust’ (line 13). Given the above, it should come as little surprise that the parted lips of the bugler boy — armatured by many a rousing blast of a phallic trumpet — seem to have inspired Hopkins with the same ‘flashing’ passion that envelops his epithalamic stranger, a passion elucidated clearly by Whitman in ‘The Mystic Trumpeter’:

I hear thee trumpeter, listening alert I catch thy notes,  
 Now pouring, whirling like a tempest round me,  
 [...]  
 Blow trumpeter free and clear, I follow thee,  
 While at thy liquid prelude, glad, serene,  
 The fretting world, the streets, the noisy hours of day withdraw,  
 [...]  
 O trumpeter, methinks I am myself the instrument thou playest. (lines 3-4; 13-17; 50)

For Hopkins, the bugler boy’s ‘freshyouth fretted’ has a phallic, as well as instrumental connection to the ‘Epithalamion’ and its ‘hornbeam fretty’, since both herald the arrival of sexual arousal. For Hopkins and the other Uranians, the ‘bugler boy’ served as a potent symbol and a literal herald of sexual arousal, which is also the case in Hopkins’s poem ‘Brothers’, a poem occasioned by the performance of a one-act burlesque, ‘A Model Kingdom’ (adapted from a 1734 musical burlesque by Henry Carey, perhaps by Hopkins himself). In March 1878, the boys of Mount St Mary’s College near Chesterfield, where Hopkins was then Sub-minister, performed this burlesque, with the character of Salingophulos (the ‘brass-bold’ herald with trumpet) played by James Broadbent,<sup>72</sup> a boy

who ‘did give tongue’, a reference to his opening lines of the burlesque, lines which must have proven rather fretty for Hopkins:

Now [James] was brass-bold:  
 He had no work to hold  
 His heart up at the strain;  
 Nay, roguish ran the vein.  
 [...]  
 There! the hall rung;  
 Dog, he did give tongue! (‘Brothers’, lines 25-28, 33-34)

*Salingophulos*: Your faithful Gen’ral *Bombardinion*  
 Sends you his Tongue, transplanted in my Mouth,  
 To pour his Soul out in your Royal Ears. (as quoted in *OET*, p.422, note)

‘To pour his Soul out in your [...] Ears’ is a phrase that encapsulates the essence of the Classical pederastic relationship constructed within Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’, the ‘inspirer’ (*eispnēlas*) pouring his soul into the ear of his ‘hearer’ (*aitēs*). This phrasing is also found in the complex Uranian pun from which Timothy d’Arch Smith derives the title of his book, a pun used by the Uranian poet John Gambril Francis Nicholson (1866-1931) as the title for his *Love in Earnest: Sonnets, Ballades, and Lyrics* (1892). Brilliantly, Nicholson employs this quadruple pun to suggest that his love is for a boy named Earnest, that his love is ‘in earnest’, that his love is placed *in* Earnest (hinting at oral and anal penetration), and that his love is placed verbally in Earnest’s ‘ear-nest’. It is the last portion of this pun which finds resonance in the pederastic phrase ‘to pour his Soul out in your [...] Ears’, a phrase which would have had particular resonance for Hopkins when he heard young James Broadbent ‘give tongue’ as *Salingophulos*.

I wish now to return to ‘The Bugler’s First Communion’, Hopkins’s communion with that other ‘brass-bold’ boy. Aroused by the boy’s presence, Hopkins seems to fantasise about a moment of passionate reciprocity with the boy, not only exhibiting a desire to be fellated — to be mouthed like the boy’s instrument, as Whitman suggests; or to have his ‘love place *in* Earnest’, as Nicholson hints — but also to fellate, to consume

the bugler boy as though he were a piece of fruit, to feel him yield ‘tender as a pushed peach’, gushing ‘limber liquid youth’:

How it does my heart good [...]
   
When limber liquid youth, that to all I teach
   
    Yields tender as a pushed peach,
   
Hies headstrong to its wellbeing of a self-wise self-will! (lines 21-24)

Given the ‘underthought’ of this poem as a whole, Hopkins seems to have constructed here a variable scenario of fellatio, with its pederastic nuances held and tempered within a religious frame.<sup>73</sup>

At the very least — even barring the fellatio imagery which many readers will consider I have pushed beyond the point of decency<sup>74</sup> — this bugler boy encapsulates the pederastic ideal of a youth poised between those ripening desires which threaten innocence (‘freshyouth fretted in a bloomfall all portending / That sweet’s sweeter ending’) and the inexperience which will surely be lost to age (‘bloom of a chastity in mansex fine’) (lines 30-31; 16). Symonds explains this particular pederastic ideal as follows:

The very evanescence of this ‘bloom of youth’ made it in Greek eyes desirable, since nothing more clearly characterises the poetic myths which adumbrate their special sensibility than the pathos of a bloom that must fade. When distinction of feature and symmetry of form were added to this charm of youthfulness, the Greeks admitted, as true artists are obliged to do, that the male body displays harmonies of proportion and melodies of outline more comprehensive, more indicative of strength expressed in terms of grace, than that of women.<sup>75</sup>

Fearful that this pleasant ‘bloom of youth’ (represented by the bugler boy’s face) will wither from what he and Whitman jointly call ‘fretting’, Hopkins is apprehensive about looking away, racked with a pederastic fear which Kincaid explains:

[In such literature,] the adult turns his back for an instant and wheels around to find the room empty: ‘Suddenly, [...] overnight like an overblown flower, it is dead’. The child does not grow or even grow up; it becomes extinct. In part, these metaphors express the fact that the child becomes unattractive to the adult, becomes just another ordinary adult and no longer anything magical — disfigured by body hair and erupting skin and ungainly height.<sup>76</sup>

Although, in ‘The Leaden Echo’, Hopkins ponders how ‘to keep / Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, [...] from vanishing away’ (lines 1-2), he ultimately concludes that

no, nothing can be done  
 To keep at bay  
 Age and age's evils. (lines 9-11)

So, like a member of that 'morbid strain' of pederasty 'that longs for the expiring child' as a means of preserving the boy's innocence, purity, and beauty,<sup>77</sup> Hopkins writes to Bridges concerning this particular bugler boy: 'I am half inclined to hope the Hero of it may be killed in Afghanistan' (8 October 1879, *Letters I*, p.92) — where the British troops were then fighting the Second Afghan War (1878-80).

Although 'The Bugler's First Communion' shows how thoroughly Hopkins could sublimate his sexual desires into ritual and poetry, it also demonstrates how sexually unfulfilled he must have been amid his own denials and scrupulosities and beliefs; amid Jesuitical and other religious restrictions; amid the concern of Western culture (in general) and Victorian culture (in particular) to limit physical intimation and expression of homoerotic and pederastic desires. As Hopkins admits, even his Saviour often unsympathetically 'locks love [like a treasure] ever in a lad' ('Bugler's', line 35), locked by something far less malleable than humanity's 'bow or brooch or braid or brace, lace, latch or catch or key' ('Leaden Echo', line 1; Hopkins's dilemma seems pictorially illustrated by Anna Lea Merritt, see 'Appendix Twenty-One'). However, the principal reason for Hopkins's inability to acquire this locked treasure might be something unrelated to restrictions from within or without, something instead inherent to his own voyeuristic tendency, his own 'inscape'. A substantial distance is required for voyeurism, a distance illustrated in the 'Epithalamion' by the stranger's shift from the boisterous river and its stirring boys to a hidden pool neighbouring, a distance which might have posed Hopkins's problem. Lest it be thought that such a perspective could only be reached by modern literary criticism (mine in particular), perhaps it is best to let Hopkins explain the problem himself, as he does in a letter to R. W. Dixon: 'I cannot get my Elegy ["On the Portrait of Two Beautiful Young People"] finished, but I hope in a few days to see the hero and

heroine of it, which may enable me (or quite the reverse; perhaps that: it is not well to come too near things)' (22 December 1887, *Letters* II, p.154). Jude Nixon notes much the same in Pater's approach to beauty: 'Pater's aesthetic, then, is jointly one of subjectivity and one of distancing, creating a dialectic in which beauty, to be found, must be located in the space between subject and the object of perception'.<sup>78</sup>

So desirous is Hopkins to acquire this blurred and remote treasure that, even while contemplating the drowning nuns in 'The Wreck of the Deutschland', he is questioning: 'What by your measure is the heaven of desire, / The treasure never *eyesight* got?' (lines 207-08, emphasis added). This question echoes Kincaid's insistence that pederasty 'seems almost always to be on intimate terms with such possessive looking'.<sup>79</sup> Elsewhere, surrounded by more tranquil waters, Hopkins suggests where this treasure might be got:

Then come who pine for peace or pleasure  
Away from counter, court, or school,  
Spend here your measure of time and treasure  
And taste the treats of Penmaen Pool. (lines 37-40)

The bugler boy's Eucharistic 'treat' (line 11), with all of its erotic connotations, could just as easily have been acquired at a Penmaen or epithalamic pool, where even listless strangers can partake in a watery communion with the 'Thou mastering me / God', a God who is not only the 'giver of breath and bread', but also the giver of the 'world's strand [and] sway of the sea' ('Deutschland', lines 1-3). Nevertheless, even when purely visual, these 'treats' and the getting of them disturbed Hopkins, whose impulses and apparent earnestness were particularly Jesuitical, whether personal or prescribed:

I cast for comfort I can no more get  
By groping round my comfortless than blind  
Eyes in their dark can day or thirst can find  
Thirst's all-in-all in all a world of wet. ('My Own Heart', lines 5-8)

While considering Hopkins's grandest 'world of wet' — 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' — Bristow accentuates how thoroughly these concepts of Eucharistic and watery communion were merged for the poet:



In stanza thirty [...] the poet prayerfully appeals to ‘Jesu, heart’s light, / Jesu, maid’s son’, and asks what ‘feast followed the night’ that the Lord ‘hadst glory of this nun’. Here his inquiry shades into envy — for the nun has surely been ‘feasted’ upon in a way that has given her, and not the speaker, the Lord’s ‘crown’. This glorious ‘feast’ certainly sounds ravenous. [...] This ‘feast’ may — even when all doctrinal considerations have been made — appear to verge on impropriety. This is an eminently sexual, rapacious, and wholly virile God.<sup>80</sup>

Although hesitant, although fearful of the Whitmanesque ‘souse upon me of my lover the sea’ — the liquid embodiment of an ‘eminently sexual, rapacious, and wholly virile God’ — Hopkins’s stranger in the ‘Epithalamion’ accepts the sensual treats offered by this epithalamic waterworld, and immediately ‘feasts: [for] lovely all is!’ Compelled (or more aptly, guided) by an unseen poetical hand, Hopkins’s stranger is moved into a gushing cleft in the landscape’s side. He is moved tenderly, reminiscent of Christ’s easing of the hesitant finger of Thomas the Doubter into that place of liquid epiphany that Digby Dolben describes in ‘Homo Factus Est’:

Look upon me sweetly  
 With Thy Human Eyes,  
 With Thy Human Finger  
 Point me to the skies.

Safe from earthly scandal  
 My poor spirit hide  
 In the utter stillness  
 Of Thy wounded Side  
 [...]
 By the quiet waters,  
 Sweetest Jesu, lead;  
 ’Mid the virgin lilies,  
 Purest Jesu, feed. (lines 13-20; 49-52)<sup>81</sup>

As a ‘heavenfallen freshness’, Hopkins’s own ‘quiet waters’ spill from the moorland into a ‘coffer, burly all of blocks / Built of chancequarrièd, selfquainèd hoar-huskèd rocks’. Filled continually (‘dark or daylight, on and on’) by water that ‘warbles over into’ it, this stone chalice brims with a liquid grace like that promised the Woman at the Well: water from ‘a vein / Of the gospel proffer, a pressure, a principle, Christ’s gift’ (‘Deutschland’, lines 31-32). Quite physically, this coffer converts the providential water into the ‘finger of a tender of, O of a feathery delicacy’ (‘Deutschland’, line 246).

‘Feathery delicacy’ — for Hopkins, the poet of ‘The Windhover’, the falconry connotations of ‘warbles’ are particularly significant for his ‘Epithalamion’, describing how a falcon crosses its wings together over its back after ‘rousing’ and ‘mantling’.<sup>82</sup> Like a ‘dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding / Of the rolling level underneath him’ (‘Windhover’, lines 2-3), Hopkins’s moorland water alights upon the coffer’s ‘burly’ arm, where it *rouses*, raising and shaking its fluid feathers. Then, it *mantles*, spreading wings and tail over outstretched talons as it starts to perch. Finally, the water *warbles*, wrapping its wings about itself, a finishing flourish to its downward flight. In liquid terms, the coffer’s ‘burly [...] blocks’ serve to convert the ‘brute beauty’ (‘Windhover’, line 9) of the moorland water — rushing ‘boisterously beautiful, between / Roots and rocks’ for the delight of boys — into something calmer, something which ‘warbles’ into the epithalamic coffer with a ‘feathery delicacy’, with the rhythmic trills, thrills, and quavers expectant of a satisfied bird. Through a solitary term like ‘warble’, Hopkins, a poetic genius who admired falconry, is able to convey a completed-yet-controlled masturbatory flow, ‘the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!’ (‘Windhover’, line 8).

Beyond chalice and falcon iconography, this coffer also represents a natural cathedral whitened in places by the river’s sway, its very stones deposited by a less-than-delicate ‘finger’ of God, a finger which now descends into the coffer as feathery ribbons of water, ‘filleted with glassy grassy quicksilvery shivè and shoots’, giving the effect of a window of stained glass. A much younger Hopkins describes a similar effect as ‘glazed water vaulted o’er a drowsy stone’ (*Journals*, p.67). With its diamonded panes of ‘glassy’ water separated by leadwork of ‘grassy’ tracery (appropriately, *calms*), this ‘quicksilvery’ and prised window falls into the coffer, a window variegated by vegetative ‘shivè and shoots’ which grow upwards from between the ‘hoar-huskèd rocks’ (reminiscent of the earlier, more brutish ‘between / Roots and rocks’ — though ‘hoar’ denotes the mature,

rather than the ‘puerile’). Of all of Hopkins’s spaces, this submerged coffer, described with the intricacy of a Leonardo sketch, is indeed the most masterfully charged with the grandeur of God, abounding with spiritual relevance, creative incubation, and physical enjoyment, expressing the best of ‘earthworld, airworld, waterworld’ — though not ‘thorough hurled’ like the marbled river into which the boys dive. Mastery, not masturbatory hurling, is aflow in this seclusion, a thorough mastery of what Ferns calls ‘the restorative waters of life’.<sup>83</sup>

Beckoned by the healing spirit of God moving upon the face of this water, Hopkins’s stranger accepts the watery embrace he has hitherto so feared: he allows ‘the fleet / Flinty kindcold element [...] [to] break across his limbs / Long’, allows the ‘souse upon [him] of [his] lover the sea, as [he lies] willing and naked’ (Whitman, ‘Spontaneous Me’, line 35), allows himself to be covered by this window of variegated, liquid glass. Of particular interest here is Hopkins’s earlier use of the word ‘flashes’ to describe the passions stirring within the stranger’s breast: beyond expressing the influence of the boys’ voluptuous accents, ‘flashes’ is a glass-maker’s term for the act of covering transparent glass with a film of colour, implying that the listless stranger is overspread by a brilliant ‘froliclavish’, is given the ability to behold the world in a surprisingly fresh and dappled way. ‘Lavish’ is, in fact, the word Hopkins uses to describe the healing waters of St Winefred’s well (*Letters* I, p.40). Such a lavish use of glassmaking terminology and its expansive nuances should come as little surprise from this grandson of Martin Edward Hopkins, admitted as a Freeman of the City of London on 13 September 1809, as ‘Citizen and Glass-seller’.

Enfolded voyeuristically with this stranger into the bushybowered pool, we, Hopkins’s reader and narrator, seem also to experience this healing delight, to experience this new ‘exercise of sight and touch’ (Pater, *Renaissance* 1893, p.147), this ‘froliclavish’

so syntactically ambiguous: ‘we leave him, *froliclavish*, while he looks about him, laughs, swims’ (emphasis added).<sup>84</sup> Syntactically, perhaps this state of being ‘froliclavish’ belongs to the stranger, or to ourselves, or to us both. Whichever the case, we have experienced what we came for, and should discretely follow Hopkins’s advice for the proper engagement of ‘Mortal Beauty’: ‘Merely meet it [...] then leave, let that alone’ (lines 12-13). However, while we — the reader and narrator, the ‘hearer’ and ‘inspirer’ — attempt to leave our own poetic, voyeuristic seclusion, we seem to be discovered by the gaze of the stranger, that voyeur whom we thought we were watching unseen: after looking about him, the stranger, laughing perhaps at our own newly-acquired embarrassment, begins to swim uncaringly, as if beckoning us to join him in the sensual pleasures of his pool.

This is indeed what Ferns suggests, Hopkins in ‘his freest and happiest poetical vein’<sup>85</sup> — or is it? My readers will perhaps be a little surprised that, after the preceding pages, I will now muddy the waters of my own argument, as well as part company with all other critics, including Ferns. To claim that Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’ is a Uranian celebration of pederastic and homoerotic voyeurism, to lift the fig-leaf of its nuptial title and extraneous attachments to reveal an aroused Hopkins many have refused to see — that is not necessarily to agree with ‘freest and happiest’. Humphries claims that ‘whatever kind of poem critics have discovered in the text, there’s one certainty to hold on to: that this is a curiously untroubled poem. The Dublin poems are not carefree, not “careless”; this one is’.<sup>86</sup> I hope now to remove that certainty, suggesting instead that if Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’ has a fitting place it is probably nearest the ‘Dark Sonnets’ and the emotions surrounding them, a clear elucidation of the sadness to which Hopkins alludes in May 1885: ‘My fits of sadness [...] resemble madness’ (*Letters I*, p.216). ‘Could we draw the [“Epithalamion”] closer to the work of the Dublin period, those dark poems of

despairing self-examination from which critics (I think without exception) dissociate it?’ is a question Humphries raises in his recent article in *Victorian Poetry*,<sup>87</sup> a question I hope now to answer.

The sensual pleasures of the epithalamic pool are far more ambiguous than the syntactical options of the word ‘froliclavish’. Given the frolicsome and celebratory quality of the poem as a whole, it may seem remarkable that Hopkins’s most sensual expression should end in a ‘coffer’ — a medieval cognate of ‘coffin’<sup>88</sup> — amidst a continual overflow of water, a coffer occupied by a stranger who beckons us seductively like one of John William Waterhouse’s painted nymphs (see ‘Appendix Twenty-Two’). Hypnotically, pools and their bathers may invite us to participate in frolicsome abandon — but, for Victorians like Hopkins, pools were not always places of lasting ecstasy and expectation, erotic or otherwise. Waterworlds such as his ‘Inversnaid’ often surge with an unspecified sense of loss and despair:

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-froth  
Turns and twindles over the broth  
Of a pool so pitchblack, fell-frowning,  
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning. (lines 5-8)

Fear of the dangers intrinsic to pools has a biographical source for Hopkins. For Whitman, the death of ‘the boy I love’ was only a nightmare in his cluster *Whispers of Heavenly Death*:

Of him I love day and night I dream’d I heard he was dead,  
And I dream’d I went where they had buried him I love, but he was not in that place,  
And I dream’d I wander’d searching among burial-places to find him,  
And I found that every place was a burial-place. (‘Of Him I Love’, lines 1-4)

The death of Hopkins’s beloved, by drowning, was not a dream.

Digby Mackworth Dolben was just turning seventeen (more than three years younger than Hopkins) when they met briefly at Oxford in February 1865. ‘Hopkins found Dolben attractive’, White explains, ‘and like many others succumbed to his charm’.<sup>89</sup> This ‘infatuation’, suggests White, ‘probably caused him to understate the

flirtatiousness and provocativeness in Dolben's religious attitudes',<sup>90</sup> attitudes unconventional in their poetical figurement of Christ as a glorified pederastic or homoerotic lover, with death their consummation embrace. 'The traditional aspects of religious poetry as love poetry seem somehow extended beyond their legitimate bounds by Dolben', suggests Martin, later stressing that Hopkins was equally attuned to this undercurrent of eroticism: 'There is a long Christian tradition of the association between eroticism and religion, and it was never far beneath the surface in Hopkins's poetry'.<sup>91</sup> However, not long after their meeting, Dolben went far too far beneath the surface, this time literally, not figuratively — a familiar tale from Bridges's 'Memoir' of Dolben which I have provided because of the passage given emphasis:

He went, late in the afternoon, to bathe with [his private tutor] Mr. [Constantine] Prichard's [ten-year-old] son Walter at *a spot where the stream widens into a small pool*. The boy could not swim, but had learned to float on his back. Digby was a good swimmer. They had bathed there together before: the conditions were not dangerous, and no apprehension was felt when they did not return. [...] What happened was that when they were bathing Digby took the boy on his back and swam across the pool with him. Returning in the same fashion he suddenly sank within a few yards of the bank to which he was swimming. The boy, who was the only witness, had the presence of mind to turn on his back and keep himself afloat, and shout to some reapers in the riverside meadows. (*Dolben* 1915, pp.cx-cxi)<sup>92</sup>

Although Hopkins wrote to Bridges soon afterwards that 'there can very seldom have happened the loss of so much beauty (in body and mind and life) and of the promise of still more as there has been in his case — seldom I mean, in the whole world' (30 August 1867, *Letters* I, pp.16-17), the impact of Dolben's death on him is sketchy at best. Hopkins reveals little, Bridges even less — allowing some conservative critics, such as Justus George Lawler, to posit 'an interpretation totally at odds with that of Martin and all the domesticated [Humphry] House apes' (unfortunately not a Lawlerian truncation of 'apostles').<sup>93</sup> Rhetorically connected to Philip Henry Gosse's *Omphalos*, Lawler's insistence on 'verifiable data'<sup>94</sup> is a scholarly truncheon that does little to flesh out Hopkins's feelings for Dolben, or to discredit the eroticised interpretations made by Hopkins's principal biographers, Martin and White. A case in point is Lawler's absolute

dismissal of the current view that *The Bathers* (1865, adjusted till 1868) by Frederick Walker, one of Hopkins's most loved artists, is a probable influence upon the 'Epithalamion'. By rebutting that Hopkins makes no direct comment about this painting (hence provides no 'verifiable data'), Lawler conveniently ignores the fact that much of the biographical material relating to Hopkins has seen bonfires aplenty (as I illustrated in 'Chapter Two').<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, the lacuna that arises from Hopkins making no mention of *The Bathers* is an interesting one, one which may shed more light on Hopkins's feelings for Dolben than Lawler would sanction.

While in journal entries for 2 July 1866 and 17 June 1868 (see *Journals*, pp.142-43; 167) Hopkins notes having seen the Royal Academy Exhibitions for those years, the relevant unknown is whether he saw the Exhibition of 1867 (the year between), when Walker's *Bathers* was on display amidst critical furore, including comments by John Ruskin, who considered the painting an aberration within Walker's oeuvre.<sup>96</sup> What Lawler fails to acknowledge is that there is a substantial break — an entire year — in Hopkins's journals between 24 July 1866 (while Hopkins was on a reading holiday in Horsham with friends) and 10 July 1867 (after Hopkins had arrived in France with his friend Basil Poutiatine).<sup>97</sup> This means that, if Hopkins had seen and commented on Walker's painting, those references are now lost (perhaps having been included in letters or a journal no longer extant). I think it highly probable that Hopkins *did* see Walker's painting, especially given that he tended, as would be obvious, to visit the Royal Academy Exhibition, when he did visit it, in June or July (see also his letter to A. W. M. Baillie, 10 July 1863, *Letters* III, p.201), and given that he had just taken First Class Honours in *Literae Humaniores* (or Greats) in June 1867, about which, half-a-year later, he would write to Bridges: 'Is not the thought of Greats like a mill-stone round your neck now? It was to me' (1 November 1867, *Letters* I, p.18). Having had that 'mill-stone' removed,

indulging in a visit to London and its Royal Academy seems the sort of thing Hopkins would have done (and did do several times in the future) to relax. Further, there is a biographical detail which would have made this particular painting a difficult one for Hopkins to comment on later, since it would have brought to the surface far too much pain. *The Bathers* would have been seen and admired by Hopkins, granted that he did see it, in June 1867. Since Digby Dolben drowned while bathing on 28 June 1867, the obvious association between Dolben's death and Walker's painting would have necessitated many lacunae, especially given Hopkins's feelings for Dolben, feelings that both White and Martin observe.

Elaborating on a comment by Humphry House, Martin asserts that Hopkins's meeting with Dolben 'was, quite simply, the most momentous emotional event of [his] undergraduate years, probably of his entire life'.<sup>98</sup> More reservedly, White merely notes that, after Dolben's visit in 1865, 'almost every day that summer term [Hopkins] spent some time with [Stuckey] Coles, who knew Dolben well — better than Bridges had known him — from Eton', often committing the sin of 'dangerous talking about Dolben' (from *Facsimiles I*, p.158), such that, in the end, Hopkins seems to have been forbidden by his High Anglican confessor, probably H. P. Liddon, from having any contact with Dolben except by letter.<sup>99</sup> His confessor seems to have feared what Hopkins would later admit to Bridges: 'No one can admire beauty of the body more than I do. [...] But this kind of beauty is dangerous' (22 October 1879, *Letters I*, p.95).

Danger does permeate Hopkins's 'Epithalamion', all the more dangerous because of its subtlety. Like an unnoticed *memento mori*, the leaves above the epithalamic pool 'hang as still as hawk or hawkmoth', the first recognisable as Hopkins's elegant-yet-deadly 'Windhover' suspended above its prey; the second, a more common harbinger of death<sup>100</sup> — both motionless; both waiting. They are 'dealt so', like the fated tarot of



Hopkins's 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves'; or 'painted on the air', like the doom disclosed by the finger of God that only Daniel could read. Threateningly, these symbols of menace overhang a pool in which a coffer ('coffin') is submerged, a coffer filled continually by a window of variegated water, 'a heavenfallen freshness'. Taken as a whole, the pool with its coffer seems a skilfully executed, symbolic representation of Dolben's drowning place coupled with the altar of Finedon Chapel, below which the family vault formerly gave access to Dolben's tomb. 'Some day I hope to see Finedon and the place where he was drowned too', wrote Hopkins to Bridges amidst their grief. 'Can you tell me where he was buried? — at Finedon, was it not?' (30 August 1867, *Letters I*, p.17). If this epithalamic coffer, as I suggest, does indeed represent the combined drowning and burial places of Dolben, the places Hopkins so hoped to see (even if only in his imagination), then White's dismissal of such imagery as 'landscape descriptions [which] have no force of plot behind them' seems more than a grand misreading or an avoidance of the eroticism which infuses the poem: it throws into doubt more than just his and others' commentaries on this single 'pitiable fragment' (to borrow a phrase from Stephen Jay Gould). It is to miss that, for Hopkins, the world is charged with a sadness, with 'cries countless, cries like dead letters sent / To dearest him that lives alas! away' ('[I Wake and Feel]', lines 7-8).

To make a claim such as White's is to admit that one has never been led through this wooded cathedral (or perhaps any of Hopkins's other poetical structures) by the hand of a Gerard Manley Hopkins who was inscaped curiously as a priest by calling, poet by inspiration, pederast by desire. Humphries claims that 'we can't make the purely carefree poem and the repressive poem cohere. We can find one, then the other, in turn; but each reading blocks the other'.<sup>101</sup> Such is not the case: the carefree and the repressive, the loving and the dangerous, the landscape descriptions and the forceful plot — these all find their coherent meeting place 'at a spot where the stream widens into a small pool', the

place where God and Dolben met for their watery communion, their consummation embrace, their merging through submerging, their marriage through Death.

‘I began an Epithalamion on my brother’s wedding’, Hopkins wrote to Bridges. ‘It had some bright lines, but I could not get it done’ (25 May 1888, *Letters I*, p.277). This statement disguises the fact that Hopkins had begun an epithalamion to mark the joyous (perhaps ‘buffoonery’) occasion in April 1888 of his brother Everard’s marriage to Amy Caroline Sichel<sup>102</sup> — but that the resulting poem, by whatever poetical path, had led instead to ‘a spot where the stream widens into a small pool’, to a voyeuristic celebration of his own favoured love, complete with a narrator and his hearer, naked boys bathing, and a reluctant stranger who joins in, but at a distance. As Sobolev stresses:

It indeed celebrates sexual relationship, as an epithalamion should do; yet the relationship it celebrates is not the sacred link of marriage but rather the intoxication of homoerotic desire: ecstatic, transient, and deeply sinful. [...] In other words, Hopkins wrote a poem for himself, rather than for his brother.<sup>103</sup>

Nevertheless, however joyful this scene of pederastic and homoerotic ‘froliclavish’ appears, Hopkins’s poem is also tinged with a sadness and a danger, the import and importance of which becomes clear only when it is considered, partially, as a loving remembrance of Digby Dolben, that young poet who had imagined death as a nuptial embrace, that young poet who was later buried in his family’s vault beneath the high altar of St Mary the Virgin’s Church, Finedon, an altar certainly the destination of many a bride and bridegroom (see ‘Appendix Twenty-Three’).<sup>104</sup>

Here in the ‘Epithalamion’ is indeed imagery like that which Hopkins uses to describe his own expectation of the physical appearance of Bridges’s bride Monica: ‘as fancy painted [...] very faintly, in watered sepia’ (1 June 1886, *Letters I*, p.225). More than a rustic spot where boys from Stonyhurst College bathe, more than a pool aflow with masturbatory connotations, more than a place suitable for pederastic expression and phallic imagery — the bushybower of Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’ is the symbolic and

nostalgic spot ‘where the stream widens into a small pool’, the place where his beloved Dolben drowned, ending the one chance Hopkins seems to have had for meeting (and perhaps in some way actualising) romantic love in his lifetime. But, after that?

I to him turn with tears  
Who to wedlock, his wonder wedlock,  
Deals triumph and immortal years. (‘Wedding March’, lines 10-12)

The ‘Epithalamion’ is Hopkins’s ‘fairyland’ watered by ‘cries countless’; his ‘watered sepia’ become ‘fancy painted’; his sadness become beauty; his St Winefred’s blood become a well. It is Hopkins’s ‘song of the wedding chamber’, but for ‘dearest him that lives alas! away’. But ultimately, it is one of those ‘beautiful dripping fragments’ (to use Whitman’s wording)<sup>105</sup>, a fragment not so much in itself as in our current understanding of it. Waiting ‘beautiful’ and ‘dripping’, like one of those ‘boys from the town / Bathing’, this finished masterpiece impatiently awaits its next dive into the pool of literary criticism, its next ‘diver’s dip, / Clutched hands through claspèd knees’. I hope I have, at the very least, given Hopkins’s poem just one more ‘turn and turn about’ — and, as a lively swimmer, it will certainly demand many more.

## Notes for Chapter Three

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<sup>1</sup> Wendell Stacy Johnson, 'Sexuality and Inscape', *Hopkins Quarterly*, 3 (1976), pp.59-66 (p.59).

<sup>2</sup> Norman White, 'Hopkins' Epithalamion', *Hopkins Quarterly*, 4 (1977-78), pp.141-59 (pp.159; 157). Other quotes from Norman White are from *Hopkins: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), abbreviated as *Hopkins*; and *Gerard Manley Hopkins in Wales* (Bridgend, Wales: Seren [Poetry Wales Press], 1998), abbreviated as *Wales*.

<sup>3</sup> John Ferns, "'Bright Lines": A Re-reading of Hopkins's "Epithalamion"', *Hopkins Quarterly*, 15 (1988), pp.165-77 (p.175).

<sup>4</sup> James W. Earl, "'The One Rapture of an Inspiration"', *Thought*, 65 (1990), pp.550-62 (p.560).

<sup>5</sup> In 'Hopkins's "Bellbright Bodies": The Dialectics of Desire in His Writings', *TSSL*, 45.1 (2003), pp.114-40, Dennis Sobolev suggests (particularly on p.132) that the 'Epithalamion' represents a momentary 'moral' lapse for Hopkins and his poetry, and that 'his religious faith and intellectual honesty make him return to what he represents in his other poems', a return 'to his experience of the fragmented body and the tormented mind'. Sobolev's argument would be easier to maintain if it were not for the still-extant manuscript drafts of the poem, drafts that indicate that the poem was not a momentary effusion, but involved a process of careful thought and poetic crafting. This poem is not just a 'slip', like the Freudian slip of writing 'freshmen' instead of 'freshness' (which will be explored later).

<sup>6</sup> All quotations from Hopkins's poetry are from *The Poetical Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); abbreviated as *OET*. Since this chapter is a close reading of the 'Epithalamion', I have expected that my reader will keep the poem open and at hand (hence, I have provided the poem in 'Appendix Eighteen'). For this reason, I have not provided line numbers for the 'Epithalamion' (which would have been a continual distraction in reading), though I have provided line numbers for all of the other poems considered. Besides the *OET*, the other primary sources I have used are those most authoritative and typical, and all references to these texts are given parenthetically:

*The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Humphry House, completed by Graham Storey (London: Oxford University Press, 1959); abbreviated as *Journals*. *The Sermons and Devotional Writings of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Christopher Devlin, SJ (London: Oxford University Press, 1959); abbreviated as *Sermons*.

*The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, ed. by C. C. Abbott, 2<sup>nd</sup> imp. rev. (London: Oxford University Press, 1955). *The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon*, ed. by C. C. Abbott, 2<sup>nd</sup> imp. rev. (London: Oxford University Press, 1955). *Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins Including His Correspondence with Coventry Patmore*, ed. by C. C. Abbott, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1956). These are abbreviated as *Letters* I, II, and III, respectively.

*The Early Poetic Manuscripts and Note-books of Gerard Manley Hopkins in Facsimile*, ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (New York: Garland Press, 1989). *The Later Poetic Manuscripts of Gerard Manley Hopkins in Facsimile*, ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (New York: Garland Press, 1991). These are abbreviated as *Facsimiles* I and II, respectively.

<sup>7</sup> C. C. Abbott notes (*Letters* I, p.268): 'Here a passage, which in print fills 17 lines, is omitted. It deals with a family matter in a heavily facetious tone, and concludes, A TRUCE TO THIS BUFFOONERY. Though relatively unimportant, it should be restored later'. See MacKenzie's explanation about what was excised (*OET*, pp.489-90).

<sup>8</sup> Richard Dellamora, *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), p.43. See pp.42-57, "'Spousal Love" in the Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins'.

<sup>9</sup> Simon Humphries, "'All By Turn and Turn About": The Indeterminacy of Hopkins' "Epithalamion"', *Victorian Poetry*, 38.3 (2000), pp.343-63 (p.343).

<sup>10</sup> Robert Bernard Martin, *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Very Private Life* (New York: Flamingo, 1992), p.387.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Lynch, 'Recovering Hopkins, Recovering Ourselves', *Hopkins Quarterly*, 6 (1979), pp.107-17 (p.112). The most telling avoidance of the implications of Hopkins's poem can be found in the two un insightful pages of text devoted to it by Julia F. Saville in her *A Queer Chivalry: The Homoerotic Asceticism of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), pp.189-91. This avoidance is particularly questionable in a critic who also wrote 'The Romance of Boys Bathing: Poetic Precedents and Respondents to the Paintings of Henry Scott Tuke', in *Victorian Sexual Dissidence*, ed. by Richard Dellamora (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp.253-77. This avoidance is slightly alluded to by Sobolev, pp.128-29.

<sup>12</sup> Humphries, p.344.

<sup>13</sup> Sobolev, p.127.

<sup>14</sup> John G. Robinson, *In Extremity: A Study of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p.95. In 'Motives for Guilt-Free Pederasty: Some Literary Considerations', *Sociological Review*, 24.1 (1976), pp.97-114, Brian Taylor considers this 'religious sanction' among the Uranians: 'A number of techniques can be delineated in this respect. Initially, pederastic love could be adjudged as a God-given emotion which therefore transcended human considerations of morality' (p.104).

<sup>15</sup> Dellamora, *Masculine Desire*, p.42.

<sup>16</sup> Nixon writes in *Gerard Manley Hopkins and His Contemporaries: Liddon, Newman, Darwin, and Pater* (New York: Garland Press, 1994): 'Hardly an unfinished fragment as was for years alleged, the poem ends by returning to the sylvan scene of the opening, forming a ring-like shape' (p.193). Although my *Victorian Poetry* article on the 'Epithalamion' appeared before his article elsewhere, I find that I did fulfil one of Sobolev's expectations:

Yet in order to prove that the homoerotic subtext of Hopkins's 'Epithalamion' does exist, it must be foregrounded and analyzed by means of a direct close reading of the poem. Only such an analysis can become an alternative to both the unsuccessful allegorizations of the poem and the arbitrary unsystematic search for its homosexual elements. (p.129)

Besides attempting to chart the changes in Hopkins Studies relating to Hopkins's sexuality, Sobolev's article provides an intriguing interpretation of Hopkins's 'Epithalamion', though I disagree with it on a number of points. Firstly, Sobolev maintains, surprisingly, that the poem remained a fragment (p.132). Secondly, I thoroughly disagree with his claims that 'to put it briefly, the poem dramatizes a metonymical fulfillment of homoerotic desire' (p.131) and later 'to put it briefly, Hopkins's "Epithalamion" achieves precarious poetic equilibrium between the articulation and concealment of his homoeroticism. And, though a poetic success, this equilibrium can hardly be called a moral victory' (p.132). By arguing that the poem 'is structured around different strategies of self-censorship and its avoidance' (p.132), Sobolev seems not to have grasped the contradictory nature of Hopkins which I explored in 'Chapter Two' of this dissertation, or the fact that the 'victory' here might, in fact, be Hopkins's full embracing and perhaps acceptance of the homoerotic and pederastic 'inscape' within himself. Thirdly, if the poem is, as I will subsequently argue, an epithalamion written with Hopkins's beloved Digby Dolben in mind, then the disregard for any permanence which Sobolev illustrates by saying that 'the relationship it celebrates is not the sacred link of marriage but rather the intoxication of homoerotic desire: ecstatic, transient, and deeply sinful' (p.132) must be reconsidered. Why a homoerotic relationship must be inherently 'transient' and 'deeply sinful' (even if this is considered by Sobolev to be Hopkins's own perspective) needs to be elucidated, which Sobolev does not do. Since Dolben had been dead for decades before Hopkins composed his 'Epithalamion', we must consider Sobolev's claim of 'deeply sinful' against his earlier claim about the body of Christ in Hopkins's Bedford Leigh sermon and the dead sailor in Hopkins's 'Loss of the Eurydice': 'The beauty of a dead [body] is placed beyond the horizon of desire, and hence it can become a "legitimate" vehicle for the expression of homoerotic sentiment' (p.124).

<sup>17</sup> Martin, p.391.

<sup>18</sup>

In the 'Epithalamion', Hopkins may indeed be responding to Pater — as he did in the fragmentary '[Who Shaped These Walls]' (*OET*, no. 135), drafted on the only extant letter between these two friends, Pater's acceptance of an invitation to dinner. Notice particularly the first portion of the then-scandalous 'Conclusion' to Pater's *Renaissance*: 'Let us begin with that which is without — our physical life. Fix upon it in one of its more exquisite intervals, the moment, for instance, of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat. What is the whole physical life in that moment but a combination of natural elements to which science gives their names?' (1893, p.186).

All quotations from Pater are taken from the following, and are given parenthetically: *Appreciations: With an Essay on Style*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910); abbreviated as *Appreciations*. *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1885); abbreviated as *Marius*. *Plato and Platonism: A Series of Lectures*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910); abbreviated as *Platonism*. *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); abbreviated as *Renaissance* 1893.

<sup>19</sup> *The Works of Thomas Carlyle in Thirty Volumes* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1897), V: *Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, p.11.

<sup>20</sup> *The Correspondence of Henry David Thoreau*, ed. by Walter Harding and Carl Bode (New York: New York University Press, 1958), p.445.

<sup>21</sup> For a more typical response by English homoerotic and pederastic readers, see Timothy d'Arch Smith, *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge and

Kegan Paul, 1970), pp.3-4, where he asserts that ‘there can be no doubt that this book [*Leaves of Grass*] [...] contributed very largely to the Uranian spirit’; Gregory Woods, “‘Still on My Lips’: Walt Whitman in Britain’, in *The Continuing Presence of Walt Whitman: The Life after the Life*, ed. by Robert K. Martin (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1992), pp.129-40; Gregory Woods, *A History of Gay Literature: The Male Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp.176-80, where he labels Whitman ‘the most influential modern homosexual writer in late nineteenth-century Britain’, sending ‘shock-waves through the furtive gentility of Britain’s Uranian community’. For Whitman’s influence on J. A. Symonds, see Phyllis Grosskurth, ed., *The Memoirs of John Addington Symonds* (New York: Hutchinson, 1984), pp.246-47; Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp.87, 90, and 130.

<sup>22</sup> *Song of Myself*, in *Leaves of Grass: Comprehensive Reader’s Edition*, ed. by Harold W. Blodgett and Sculley Bradley (New York: New York University Press, 1965), pp.28-89. All other Whitman passages, unless specified, come from this volume. *Song of Myself* is abbreviated as *SM*. All references to these texts are given parenthetically.

<sup>23</sup> Byrne R. S. Fone, *Masculine Landscapes: Walt Whitman and the Homoerotic Text* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992), p.216. See also Byrne R. S. Fone, ‘This Other Eden: Arcadia and the Homosexual Imagination’, *Journal of Homosexuality*, 8.3-4 (1983), pp.13-34.

<sup>24</sup> Pater delivered this material in a series of lectures at Brasenose College, Oxford, in the Hilary Term of 1891 (see Donoghue, chapter 25). That Pater is simply pointing out what was clearly depicted in Greco-Roman culture is evident through the Warren Cup, about which Pollini suggests: ‘Even the homosexual lovemaking represented on the vessel is, in my opinion, intended to be of an ideal type, informed by the old Classical Greek pederastic notion of an *erastês-erômenos* relationship. On the Warren Cup, however, I would suggest that this ideal concept of Greek love is transformed into a master-slave relationship that was in keeping with the social and sexual norms of Roman lovemaking’ (p.28).

<sup>25</sup> A clear elucidation of the relationship between the *erômenos* and *erastês* (‘hearer’ and ‘inspirer’) can be found in K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), p.91. For an analysis of this relationship dynamic as used by Oxonians like Pater, see Dowling, *Hellenism*, particularly pp.83 and 102. To those readers aghast at my classification of Hopkins as a Decadent, let me ask where they would have placed the poem — had it been published directly after being written — otherwise than beside ‘Ballade of Boys Bathing’ by Frederick Rolfe (Baron Corvo), appearing in the first instalment of *Art Review* (April 1890), that Decadent vehicle, often of pederastic expression, published just two years after the ‘Epithalamion’ was written. Rolfe would have had no hesitation in classifying Hopkins’s poem with his own, so why do we?

<sup>26</sup> Dellamora, *Masculine Desire*, p.45.

<sup>27</sup> Fone, *Masculine*, p.149.

<sup>28</sup> Michael Moon, *Disseminating Whitman: Revision and Corporeality in ‘Leaves of Grass’* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), p.65.

<sup>29</sup> Lynch suggests that ‘most of the natural phenomena Hopkins admires [...] are masculinized’ (p.111). Sobolev presents a counter-argument that ‘the belief that Hopkins masculinizes nature is mistaken; consequently, no homoerotic subtext can be found in Hopkins’s love for nature and its expression in his “nature sonnets” [1877-78]’ (pp.126; 136, accompanying note).

<sup>30</sup> While discussing Saville’s *Queer Chivalry*, Sobolev comments: ‘One of the major goals of [Jacques] Lacan was to avoid sexual “reductionism”, which characterized both the popular psychoanalysis of his time and its application in literary criticism of the fifties and sixties, with its notorious search for “phallic imagery”’ (p.124). I fail to see how the search for or recognition of ‘phallic imagery’ is necessarily ‘notorious’, particularly concerning a poet whose imagery is as homoerotically and pederastically suggestive as Hopkins’s is. The phallus, with all of its implications, cultural resonances, and personal connections, has ever been a focal point for those sharing Hopkins’s desires, as is displayed by innumerable pornographic images — from cave drawings to Greek herms, from silver Roman cups to the glass-fruit dildos of Aretino’s bawdy tales, from von Gloeden’s albumen prints to glossy gay magazines, not to mention the legion of pornographic sites on the Internet. Such ‘phallic imagery’ has ever been a component of human experience, as J. A. Symonds explains:

Greek art, like Greek mythology, embodied a finely graduated half-unconscious analysis of human nature. The mystery of procreation was indicated by phalli on the Hermæ. Unbridled appetite found incarnation in Priapus, who, moreover, was never a Greek god, but a Lampsacene adopted from the Asian coast by the Romans. (*A Problem in Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion* (London: Privately printed, [1901]), p.66)

The importance of these phallic Herms to the ancient Greeks is emphasised by Victoria Wohl in her ‘The Eros of Alcibiades’, *Classical Antiquity*, 18.2 (1999), pp.349-85: ‘One morning in the Spring of 415 BC, Athens awoke to find all the Herms in the city mutilated. These statues that stood at crossroads and in front of houses had been cut about the face and also, Aristophanes hints, castrated. This act of impiety caused much consternation: it was taken as a grave omen [...] Thucydides describes in some detail the panic that ensued and how suspicion came to rest on the general Alcibiades’ (p.349).

<sup>31</sup> Ferns, p.166.

<sup>32</sup> Fone, *Masculine*, p.147.

<sup>33</sup> Sobolev, p.130.

<sup>34</sup> *Whitman’s Manuscripts: ‘Leaves of Grass’ (1860): A Parallel Text*, ed. by Fredson Bowers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), p.68.

<sup>35</sup> My reading of this passage from ‘Hurrahing in Harvest’ is idiosyncratic, based partly on my subsequent reading of the limitations of an intimacy with Nature that Hopkins expresses in ‘Ribblesdale’.

<sup>36</sup> Fone, *Masculine*, p.173.

<sup>37</sup> For an explanation of the bathing atmosphere at Victorian schools, see Martin, p.14.

<sup>38</sup> *OET*, p.491, note.

<sup>39</sup> Peter Swaab tintinnabulates that ‘the metaphors — dolphins, bells — are sensuous without being sensual, and the tumble of the elements describes a planetary blessing, not a sexual allure’. This quotation is from his article ‘Hopkins and the Pushed Peach’, *Critical Quarterly*, 37.3 (1995), pp.43-60 (p.56).

<sup>40</sup> Sobolev, p.130.

<sup>41</sup> During Hopkins’s lifetime, Walker’s painting (‘Appendix Nineteen’) was bought by William Graham in 1869, and later by Cuthbert Quilter in 1886. For the possible influence of Walker’s *Bathers* on Hopkins’s poem, see Joseph Bristow, “‘Churlsgate’: Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Working-Class Male Body”, *ELH*, 59 (1992), pp.693-711 (p.706); Joseph A. Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting* (New York: Scholar Press, 1995), pp.257-58. For Justus George Lawler’s counter-argument that ‘what is relevant is that there is no evidence Hopkins knew Walker’s *Bathers*’, see *Hopkins Re-Constructed* (New York: Continuum, 1998), pp.68-73. Hopkins’s brother Arthur, who was an artist heavily influenced by Frederick Walker, painted a bathing scene which would also have appealed to his brother — see ‘Appendix Twenty-Four’. In ‘Near and Far: Homoeroticism, Labour, and Hamo Thornycroft’s *Mower*’, *Art History*, 26.1 (2003), pp.26-55, Michael Hatt notes that Gosse’s beloved Thornycroft ‘saw [Frederick Walker’s] *The Bathers* on more than one occasion when dining with Cuthbert Quilter, who bought the painting in 1886, and recorded in his diary that it is “my favourite picture by an Englishman”’ (p.41).

<sup>42</sup> MacDonald Hastings, *Jesuit Child* (New York: St Martin’s, 1972), p.57.

<sup>43</sup> See *Facsimiles II* for MacKenzie’s attempt at diversion: ‘*distracted professor!*’ (p.327). Regarding MacKenzie’s comment, Sobolev writes: ‘These “freshmen”, however, cease to be a simple howler when one takes into account Hopkins’s notes [...] where he writes about physical attraction to his fellow students’ (p.130). *OED* defines ‘freshman’ as ‘a newcomer, a novice; a student during his or her first year’.

<sup>44</sup> *Walt Whitman: The Early Poems and the Fiction*, ed. by Thomas L. Brasher (New York: New York University Press, 1963).

<sup>45</sup> What was unique about Tuke’s position was that his artworks — unlike the texts of the Uranian poets who considered much the same theme — were neither marginal nor marginalised: ‘The fact that the canvas was purchased by the Chantrey Bequest for the national collections made Tuke famous as well as made legitimate the male nude as a subject for painting. The homoerotic significance of *August Blue* was not lost on contemporaries’ (Kestner, p.262). ‘While these [Uranian] poets were clearly a marginal group of writers, publishing in fringe journals, Tuke was well known and highly acclaimed in mainstream art circles’ (Saville, ‘Romance’, p.254).

‘The motif of boys bathing *en plein air* flirts with effeminacy with peculiar suggestiveness, for while its secluded spaces can evoke the tradition of romance, they simultaneously eschew both dandyism and brooding or languid sensuality’ (Saville, ‘Romance’, p.256).



<sup>46</sup> In 'Winckelmann, Historical Difference, and the Problem of the Boy', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 25 (1992), pp.523-44, Kevin Parker makes a similar claim about Winckelmann: 'When evaluating particular works of Greek figurative sculpture, Winckelmann assumes the sensibilities of the Greeks. The youthful male figure for him, as for the Greeks, was a thing of extraordinary, even dangerous beauty' (p.540).

<sup>47</sup> Thomas Dilworth, 'Hopkins's "To What Serves Mortal Beauty"', *The Explicator*, 48 (1990), pp.264-66 (p.265).

<sup>48</sup> Swaab does not seem to appreciate what 'keeps warm / Men's wits' — at least men like Hopkins: 'Poet and reader, then, are watching the stranger watching the boys, a cooling intellectual symmetry' (p.56).

<sup>49</sup> Sobolev comments: 'It is clear enough that having entered this carnal pastoral world, the stranger is doomed to participation, however vicarious, in its life' (p.130).

<sup>50</sup>

This poem is based on two actual brothers: the 'my lad' was Henry Broadbent (born in 1866; not quite twelve when he figured in Hopkins's poem) and James (the younger of the two) — see Francis Keegan, 'Gerard Manley Hopkins at Mount St. Mary's College, Spinkhill, 1877-1878', *Hopkins Quarterly*, 6.1 (1971), pp.11-34 (pp.26-27). James's role is more clearly explained later in this chapter.

<sup>51</sup> Bristow, 'Churlsgace', p.704.

<sup>52</sup> Water and radiant warmth are boundlessly symbolic for Uranians like John Gambriel Francis Nicholson, whose *A Garland of Ladslove* (London: [Murray], 1911) contains these lines: 'Fair was childhood, little boy, / Rippling stream of mirth and joy; / As you watch its deepening rill / Naught you see but sunshine still!' (p.10).

<sup>53</sup> Bristow, 'Churlsgace', p.704.

<sup>54</sup> See Linda Dowling, 'Ruskin's Pied Beauty and the Construction of a "Homosexual" Code', *Victorian Newsletter*, 75 (1989), pp.1-8 (pp.5-6). See also Saville, *Queer*, pp.122-23. J. A. Symonds comments on this word as well: 'In that passage of the *Symposium* where Plato notices the Spartan law of love as *Poikilos*, he speaks with disapprobation of the Bæotians, who were not restrained by custom and opinion within the same strict limits' — *Greek Ethics* [1901], p.21.

<sup>55</sup> An example of this playful use of diction with internal suggestiveness can be found in Matthew Campbell, *Rhythm and Will in Victorian Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.204-05, dealing with Hopkins's repeated use of 'I am' at the end of 'That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the Comfort of the Resurrection', as well as the resultant internal play of 'I am' in the phrase 'immortal diamond' ('d—I am—ond'). The standard for evaluation of Hopkins's word-choices is chapter five, 'Inscaping the Word', of W. A. M. Peters, *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Critical Essay towards the Understanding of his Poetry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), pp.140-71. Subsequent to my own analysis of 'boisterous', Sobolev made the following comment: 'The choice of diction reflects (and in this case prefigures) the homoerotic dimension of the meaning. The word "boisterous" and a few more or less explicitly sexual images at the very beginning of "Epithalamion" [...] foreshadow the explicit eroticism of the middle section of the poem' (p.129).

<sup>56</sup> Ferns, p.168.

<sup>57</sup> James R. Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p.310.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p.197.

<sup>59</sup> Grosskurth, ed., *Memoirs*, p.167. See Joseph Cady, "'What Cannot Be": John Addington Symonds' Memoirs and Official Mapping of Victorian Homosexuality', *Victorian Newsletter*, 81 (1992), pp.47-51.

<sup>60</sup> *OED* defines 'glans' as 'a unicellular nut having the base enclosed in a cupule, as the acorn, beech mast, etc.'

<sup>61</sup> My interpretation of Hopkins's phrase 'flake-leaves light', an interpretation which suggests that it is ejaculatory in nature, runs parallel to the 'leaf-light' wafer of 'The Bugler's First Communion', which I interpret subsequently and similarly.

<sup>62</sup> From 'An American Primer', in Francis Murphy, ed., *Walt Whitman: A Critical Anthology* (Baltimore, MD: Penguin, 1969).

<sup>63</sup> Moon, p.72.

<sup>64</sup> White, *Wales*, p.20.

<sup>65</sup> White, *Hopkins*, p.411.

<sup>66</sup> Fone, *Masculine*, p.166.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p.147.

<sup>68</sup> Dellamora, *Masculine Desire*, p.54.

<sup>69</sup> Woods, 'Still', p.132.

<sup>70</sup> Martin, p.297. In *The Breaking of Style: Hopkins, Heaney, Graham* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), Helen Vendler suggests that this peach metaphor 'takes on such unconscious sexual analogy that a psychoanalytic reading finds it almost risible' (p.23).

<sup>71</sup> Gregory Woods, *Articulate Flesh: Male Homo-eroticism and Modern Poetry* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), p.45.

<sup>72</sup> This poem is based on two actual brothers: the 'my lad' was Henry Broadbent (b.1866; not quite twelve when he figured in Hopkins's poem) and James (the younger of the two) — see Keegan, pp.26-27. Keegan's article is the fullest exploration of Hopkins's Mount St Mary's College experiences, including information about his students, particularly his favourite, Herbert Berkeley. About this pedagogical moment between Hopkins and Berkeley, Martin writes: 'Hopkins deeply needed affection, however rigid his exterior, and he may have been on the verge of wanting too much in this case' (pp.272-73).

<sup>73</sup> Fone makes a similar comment regarding Whitman's textual acts of fellatio: 'The sacramental union has taken place, and the eucharistic semen has been shared' (*Masculine*, p.183).

<sup>74</sup> Many readers — and many with more theological scruple than myself — will object that I have merely converted the Eucharistic spectacle of Hopkins's 'Bugler's First Communion' into my own 'Bugger's First Communion'. Such may be the case, though mine is not the first time an 'L' has been altered either to enhance or diminish Hopkins's Eucharistic suggestiveness. Notice MacKenzie at work, as he explains in his 'Introduction' to the *OET*:

Occasionally I have made an editorial decision because of the markedly better sense which flows from a change. In No. 71 ['The Half-way House'], l. 10, the Eucharist may with theological propriety be described as 'love's proper food' (as my text now runs), but as Christ in this poem is called 'Love' (the personification of love), abstruse scruples might be roused by the traditional reading: 'Love when here [i.e., Christ while he was a man], they say, / Or once or never took Love's proper food'. (p.xlix; all parentheses and brackets are MacKenzie's, except for my identification of the title for No. 71)

See also Saville's consideration of the homoerotic potential in the doctrine of the Real Presence and the sacrament of the Eucharist (*Queer*, pp.25-26; 39-41).

<sup>75</sup> John Addington Symonds, *Studies in Sexual Inversion* (privately printed, 1931), p.19.

<sup>76</sup> Kincaid, p.226. See *Letters I*, p.29: Claiming that he is prompted by his sister, Hopkins requests the music Bridges had written for 'O earlier shall the rose[bud]s blow' — a poem on just this theme of withering boyhood by the early Uranian, William Johnson (*later Cory*), whose *Ionica* (1858) was certainly familiar to Hopkins, especially since Johnson was an Assistant Master at Eton while Bridges, Dolben, and others from Hopkins's circle were students, and was much loved by the student body. Bridges mentions Johnson's enthusiasm for Dolben's poetry, as well as his poor transcribing skills (see *Dolben*, pp.xxi, lvi, lviii, and 136-38), and there is no reason to believe that Bridges did not share these details with Hopkins, who would have been most interested in anything Dolbenian. Curiously, there is no scholarship to date exploring Johnson's probable influence on Dolben, Bridges, or Hopkins. In my 'Conclusion', I deal with Johnson's reciprocal influence over Dolben (as well as Hopkins and Bridges, by connection).

<sup>77</sup> Kincaid, p.235.

<sup>78</sup> Nixon, p.176.

<sup>79</sup> Kincaid, p.227. Kincaid's quotation covers 'paedophilia' in general (involving attraction towards boys and/or girls); however, since I have chosen not to employ a clinical term like 'paedophilia' in this dissertation, I have limited

Kincaid's statement to only its connection to boys, in its 'pederastic' sense.

<sup>80</sup> Bristow, 'Churlsgace', p.700.

<sup>81</sup> *The Poems of Digby Mackworth Dolben*, ed. by Robert Bridges, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1915); abbreviated as *Dolben* 1915. Bridges's 'Memoir' is also taken from this volume.

<sup>82</sup> *OED* defines 'warble' as '*falconry*. Of a hawk: cross (the wings) together over the back after rousing and mantling'. It defines 'rouse' as '*falconry*. Of a hawk: raise and shake (the feathers)'; and 'mantle' as 'of a perched bird of prey: spread the wings over the outstretched legs, spread the wings and tail so as to cover food'.

<sup>83</sup> Ferns, p.174. The watery window of this epithalamic cathedral is reminiscent of the stained glass of St Margaret's Church near Binsey, Oxfordshire, Hopkins's encounter with which is described by Martin (pp.64-65). In addition, though serendipity secured its placement immediately following MacKenzie's facsimile of Hopkins's 'Epithalamion', Hopkins's pencil sketch 'Cleaning Dr. Molloy's Windows' (H.i.49', *Facsimiles* II, p.329; see 'Appendix Twenty-Five') reveals a man who is framed by a water-washed window which undoubtedly envelops him with refracted light. If composed near the time Hopkins was drafting his 'Epithalamion', this sketch might provide a visual source for the poem's coupling of water and window, revealing a man illumined by both.

<sup>84</sup> While considering the voyeuristic interaction between readers and the young protagonist of *David Copperfield*, Kincaid uses exactly the same phrasing as Hopkins: '*He looks about him*, he observes. He looks back at us, exactly what readers hiding in the bushes do not want' (p.306, emphasis added).

<sup>85</sup> Ferns, p.175.

<sup>86</sup> Humphries, p.345.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p.353.

<sup>88</sup> *OED* notes that 'coffer' is derived from and retains as one of its meanings 'a coffin'.

<sup>89</sup> White, *Hopkins*, p.110. Bridges writes: 'It was at this visit [to Oxford in February 1865], and only then, that [Dolben] met Gerard Hopkins; but he must have been a good deal with him' (*Dolben* 1915, pp.lxxii-iii).

<sup>90</sup> White, *Hopkins*, p.110.

<sup>91</sup> Martin, pp.86; 251. Poems such as 'The Lily' and 'A Letter' (*Dolben* 1915, pp.59; 60-63) — particularly the latter — are bountiful with suggestive links between Dolben's poetry and Hopkins's 'Epithalamion'.

<sup>92</sup> Bridges qualifies this location in the 'Memoir' for the 2<sup>nd</sup> edn; in the 1<sup>st</sup> edn, it simply reads: 'He went, late in the afternoon to bathe with Mr. Prichard's son Walter' — Robert Bridges, ed., *The Poems of Digby Mackworth Dolben*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1911), pp.cvi-cvii. For Dolben's love of swimming, see p.xcix; for a description of this pool, see p.cxvii.

<sup>93</sup> Lawler, *Re-Constructed*, p.86. I will refrain from commenting much on this piece of Bloomianism. I am sure the Hopkinsian 'Master of All Things' (Lawler, not God) will accuse me of using the same 'deception' that Martin uses: trying to re-con the reader with a sexual interpretation of Hopkins that 'any honest reader' would never consider convincing (p.88). Much of Lawler's acidity is flung at critics like Michael Lynch, critics who posit a homoerotic reading of Hopkins's works. Lawler's vehement attack on Lynch's integrity should be weighed against Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's 'Memorial for Michael Lynch': 'I think Michael loved truth more than anything else in the world. He loved it aesthetically as well as morally and politically. We all know that the people he loved were those he could tell the truth to and those he felt sure would tell it to him' (as read at his memorial service, August 1991) <<http://www.duke.edu/~sedgwic/WRITING/ LYNCH.htm>> (Sedgwick's personal homepage) [accessed 25 June 2004].

<sup>94</sup> Lawler, *Re-Constructed*, p.83.

<sup>95</sup> For Lawler's counter-argument that 'what is relevant is that there is no evidence Hopkins knew Walker's *Bathers*', see *ibid.*, pp.68-73.

<sup>96</sup> Kestner asserts that 'a key painting in the tradition of representing the male nude, replete with many of these [homoerotic and ephebic] associations, is Frederick Walker's *The Bathers*, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1867' (p.255). Kestner also notes that 'the canvas was re-exhibited in 1876' (p.257).

<sup>97</sup> See *Journals*, pp.147; 306, note.

<sup>98</sup> Martin, p.80.

<sup>99</sup> White, *Hopkins*, pp.114-15. Sobolev suggests that ‘in the aftermath of their publication [Martin’s and White’s biographies in 1992], Hopkins critics divided into two groups: to the first group belong those critics who think that Martin plays Hopkins’s alleged homosexuality up; to the second, those who think that White plays it down’ (p.116). See also Alison G. Sulloway, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Victorian Temper* (London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1972); Paddy Kitchen, *Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London: H. Hamilton, 1978), pp.62-76. For Dolben’s closeness to Coles, who often served as his confidant/confessor, see *Dolben* 1915, p.xxv.

<sup>100</sup> ‘The markings on the death’s head hawkmoth have led to it being seen a bad omen, a harbinger of war, death and disease. [...] While not dangerous, it has inspired fear throughout the ages. Throughout Europe its appearance in a candlelit room was considered an omen of death. In France, dust from its wings was thought to cause blindness; while in Poland, where it is known as the “wandering death-bird”, its strange cry was said to be the moaning of a grief-stricken child’ — Terri Judd, ““Silence of the Lambs” Moth Has Starring Role in an English Garden’, *The Independent* (online edn) (15 September 2004) <<http://www.millennium-debate.org/ind15sept042.htm>> [accessed 20 October 2004].

<sup>101</sup> Humphries, p.352.

<sup>102</sup> Curiously, Hopkins began writing the ‘Epithalamion’ for his brother Everard’s wedding, a wedding held in April 1888, the same month that d’Arch Smith asserts as the birth-month of the Uranian movement: ‘The date of the commencement of the Uranian movement [...] may accurately be placed at 1 April 1888 when the poem “Hyacinthus”, appeared in the *Artist*’ (p.24).

<sup>103</sup> Sobolev, p.132.

<sup>104</sup> I am grateful to Fr John Humphries, vicar of St Mary the Virgin’s Church, Finedon, Northamptonshire, for supplying me with information and photographs of the Dolben vault, which is on the east end of the church. He writes: ‘The Dolben vault is not accessible from inside the church, but it is directly beneath the high altar. I believe that two bodies were removed from the vault at some time and reburied in the churchyard to make room for another Dolben. I also believe that the church was altered at some time, a widow on the south side and a window on the north side being walled up in order to take the weight of the sanctuary when the vault was carved out’ (From correspondence between Fr Humphries and myself, 1-2 February 2004).

<sup>105</sup> Whitman, ‘Spontaneous Me’, line 7, from the cluster *Children of Adam*.

— Chapter Four —

**‘A Sort of Chivalrous Conscience’:  
Pater’s *Marius the Epicurean* and Pederastic Pedagogy**

I will not sing my little puny songs.  
[...]  
Therefore in passiveness I will lie still,  
And let the multitudinous music of the Greek  
Pass into me, till I am musical.  
(Digby Mackworth Dolben, ‘After Reading Aeschylus’)<sup>1</sup>

Puzzled by the degree of intimacy between ‘a shy, reticent scholar-artist’ and ‘a self-silenced, ascetic priest-poet’, David Anthony Downes speculates: ‘It has been frequently said that Gerard Manley Hopkins and Walter Pater were friends. The statement is a true one, though exactly what it means, perhaps, will never be known’.<sup>2</sup> Apprehensive that such speculations might lead to elaboration on their erotic sensibilities, Linda Dowling cautions that ‘given the fragmentary biographical materials we possess about both Hopkins and Pater, any assertion about the “homoerotic” nature of their experience or imagination may seem at best recklessly premature and at worst damnably presumptuous’.<sup>3</sup> However, since in Victorian England ‘homosexual behaviour became subject to increased legal penalties, notably by the Labouchere Amendment of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 which extended the law to cover all male homosexual acts, whether committed in public or private’,<sup>4</sup> expecting ‘verifiable data’ concerning their unconventional desires (or, in Pater’s case, perhaps relationships) is the ultimate scholarly presumption.

By leaving no journal or diary, no authorised (auto)biography, and only a few trite letters, Pater fostered an absolute absence of directly biographical evidence, becoming ‘arguably the most private Victorian’,<sup>5</sup> or as Denis Donoghue humorously explains:

Reciting Pater’s life, we have to look for him in the cloud of his occasional writings. He is rarely visible anywhere else. There are weeks or even months in which he seems to have taken literally his

favorite motif of evanescence and drifted away. We assume that he is still alive, but the evidence for his breathing is meager.<sup>6</sup>

Although, to some extent, manuscripts relevant to such an assessment of Hopkins were purged after his death — now providing what is often only fragmentary evidence — Hopkins, unlike Pater, did leave behind plentiful and divergent biographical materials in journals, letters, sermons, confession notes, and poems, among other things. Nevertheless, Pater's writings such as *The Renaissance* and *Marius the Epicurean* do opaquely disclose his own life and sensations, even if 'the evidence for his breathing is meager'.

At the time when Hopkins, an Oxford undergraduate, began coaching with Pater, as preparation for his finals in *Literae Humaniores* (or Greats), Pater was an obscure Fellow in Classics at Brasenose College, Oxford, a Fellow busily preparing a series of lectures on the history of philosophy and 'erecting a shell around himself, deliberately isolating himself from old friends'.<sup>7</sup> As an intuitive undergraduate, Hopkins must have ascertained, to some degree, what lurked behind his academic coach's elaborate privacy, a privacy reminiscent of that which surrounds Pater's protagonist Marius, whose demeanour drives mere acquaintances to inquire: 'Why thus reserved? — they asked, concerning the orderly, self-possessed youth, whose speech and carriage seemed so carefully measured'.<sup>8</sup> Donoghue explains this reserve as, '[Pater] represents, however mildly, the perfection of standing aside'<sup>9</sup> — a 'standing aside' which is displayed by Pater's later responses to public and pulpit attacks on his *Renaissance*:

Instead of defending himself, Pater internalized his subversive values and retained them in the form of difference. Provided he did not express them in a public or tendentious form, he was reasonably safe, even though he continued to be associated with irregularity of sentiment and desire. So he retained, as private property, feelings that could not be avowed.<sup>10</sup>

Since he shared Pater's 'irregularity of sentiment and desire', Hopkins must have perceived and partially appreciated the reasons and the reasoning behind his Greats coach's reserve, for he too would cultivate much the same reserve, remaining ever, in diverse ways, Pater's most constant of students.

Downes's claim that 'exactly what it means [that Hopkins and Pater were friends], perhaps, will never be known' is bastioned by various biographical lacunae, with scholars even disagreeing on the circumstances under which they initially met. In *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Very Private Life*, Robert Bernard Martin suggests that 'Hopkins had been very much aware of Pater for at least two years, having heard from Samuel Brooke about the essay that he had read to the Old Mortality Society in 1864, advocating beauty as the standard by which to judge morality'.<sup>11</sup> Equally credible is Downes's suggestion<sup>12</sup> that Benjamin Jowett, Regius Professor of Greek — and later Master of Balliol College and an 'agent of revolutionary change' by infusing Oxford with Platonism and Platonic tutorials (all that 'Jowetry', in Oxford slang)<sup>13</sup> — introduced Hopkins to Pater, to whom he would later send Hopkins for Greats coaching. Jowett had himself coached Pater between 1860 and 1862, and had 'thought [so] highly of Pater as an undergraduate'<sup>14</sup> that he had been willing to provide this private tuition in Greek without charge.<sup>15</sup> However, this admiration would dissipate in the coming decade as Jowett became increasingly aware that, for Pater, pedagogic moments often abounded with pederastic motive (perhaps even motion). According to Lesley Higgins, 'Pater persisted in trying to reclaim for the Platonic canon a politics of desire which the more sexually orthodox Jowett — as translator-agent — was trying to silence and erase', a reclamation Pater achieved through 'readings [which] recoded the Platonic texts and their cultural complements (sculpture, drama, myth) as the site of, and inspiration for, a valorized homoerotic culture'.<sup>16</sup> As a result, Jowett came to label Pater a 'demoralizing moralizer',<sup>17</sup> though this label, according to J. A. Symonds, was equally applicable to Jowett, as Linda Dowling notes:

For as Symonds establishes long-term and fully sexual relationships with working-class men outside of England in the 1880s, he begins to regard the nongenital or nonphysical eroticism of the Platonic doctrine of eros with a deepening mistrust. [...] With this realization, Symonds comes to a bitter new assessment of his old teacher Jowett, as though Jowett's Socratic 'corruption' had somehow consisted in tempting suggestible young men down the delusive path to spiritual procreancy rather than fleshly excess.<sup>18</sup>

[My only reservation about these comments is Dowling's use of the broad term 'working-class men outside of England', which seems to suggest that Symonds's attractions were entirely to 'men'. Though they usually were (in practice), they were not always so, especially when Symonds was dealing with textual fantasy or purchasing visual fantasies from the photographic studio of Wilhelm von Gloeden. Notice that Symonds's beloved Augusto Zanon, a Venetian porter (a photograph is included as 'Appendix Twenty-Six') has the youthful features sought by the pederastic Uranians.]<sup>19</sup>

The pederastic potential of such a pedagogy — the spiritual path of 'Jowetry' extended to a literal 'temping [of] suggestible young men' — is revealed through the elusive Pater-Hardinge scandal, though Dowling emphasises that 'only the most fugitive rumors of this long-suppressed and still shadowy episode have survived until now to suggest that Pater may have enacted as well as inculcated the Socratic eros'.<sup>20</sup> Even though the scandalous evidence is supplied second-hand, Dowling, Richard Dellamora, and others have tended to assert that Jowett, motivated in 1874 by various disclosures, moved to counter permanently Pater's attempts at further university advancement. It was in Jowett's nature to be paternalistic: in this case, perhaps insightfully, Jowett seems to have decided that a low profile would best suit his prodigal, unrepentant intellectual-son, especially while on campus. Current critical assumption about these evolving events encapsulates into the following: 'Though [Pater] was aware that he would be strongly opposed, he knew that he merited the position [of Junior Proctor]. Nonetheless, opposition took an unexpected turn when Benjamin Jowett [...] black-mailed Pater by threatening to disclose some incriminating letters',<sup>21</sup> letters which revealed that Pater had 'become sexually involved with a Balliol undergraduate',<sup>22</sup> a youth named William Money Hardinge (b. 1855), 'a nineteen-year-old student who had a tendency, before faced with consequences, to advertise his homosexuality'.<sup>23</sup> Hardinge's homoeroticism was so 'advertised' that he was nicknamed 'the Balliol Bugger', a nickname which Donoghue explains: 'A gifted poet, winner of the Newdigate [Poetry] Prize in 1876, [Hardinge] was mainly known for his sexual activities'.<sup>24</sup>



Some of the details of this evolving event, an event which nearly became a significant scandal, are provided by a letter, dated 1 March 1874, from Alfred Milner to Philip Lyttelton Gell (both of whom were close undergraduate friends of Hardinge):

The very fact, that Hardinge had not yet irretrievably committed himself with Pater was all the more reason why the evil should be prevented. It seems more strongly absurd to say, that one should not interfere till the mischief was done. And it is vain to pretend that there was not evidence of the strongest character against Hardinge. When a man confesses to lying in another man's arms kissing him & *having been found doing it*, as there is the strongest evidence to prove, or when letters pass between them in wh. they address one another as 'darling' & sign themselves 'yours lovingly', & such a letter *I* have seen, when verses are written from one man to another too vile to blot this paper, what hope can you have, that a criminal act, if not committed already, may not be committed any day?<sup>25</sup>

[Poignantly, this letter was written two days before Pater's close friend Simeon Solomon would be arrested for homoerotic offences in a public urinal in France.]

Worries about the above kisses, fondlings, verses, and epistolary addresses reached Richard Lewis Nettleship (1846-92), a Fellow of Balliol; and, subsequently, Jowett himself, then Master of the College. Dowling summarises one version of how these letters reached Jowett, as recorded by Arthur Christopher Benson (1862-1925), one of Pater's earliest biographers:

One possible reconstruction: [William Hurrell] Mallock took the incriminating letters to Jowett in order to confront and embarrass him with inescapable proof of the literally demoralizing effects of liberal teaching at Oxford, for which Jowett, who had in the past recommended Pater to Balliol pupils as a private coach in philosophy, might be held responsible.<sup>26</sup>

However these letters reached him, as a result of their disclosures Jowett endeavoured to contain the scandal, as well as to prevent its repetition: 'Report of the nature of the letters would have been enough for Jowett; he would have felt justified, even without seeing them, in sending Hardinge down [from Oxford] for a few months till the dust settled, and in having a sharp interview with Pater'.<sup>27</sup> However, as Donoghue stresses, 'there is no evidence that Jowett used the letters — or even talk of them — to warn Pater against putting himself forward for any university appointments. On the other hand, a word from Jowett would have been enough to set Oxford against Pater, whose reputation was already dubious'.<sup>28</sup>

Despite the propriety of his public and collegiate personae, Benjamin Jowett was, it must be remembered, the pre-eminent translator and populariser of Plato in his day, and understood (interestedly or not) those pederastic desires which had impregnated ancient Greek life and philosophical dialogues, desires flowing variously through his own translations of the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, as well as through the lives of his Oxford contemporaries and protégés like Pater and Symonds. For that reason, paternalistic Jowett may merely have advised Pater to seek Falstaff's 'fable of green fields'<sup>29</sup> somewhere at a distance from Oxford undergraduates, particularly those of Jowett's own Balliol College. Knowing the refined tastes of this prodigal whom he had himself refined, Jowett would have appreciated that Pater's attractions had an intellectual/artistic component, a component unlikely to be found at Pater's own Brasenose College, as Higgins explains: 'Quite frankly, [Pater's] college was an intellectual backwater. Balliol had Jowett, Lincoln had Mark Pattison, Christ Church had Henry Liddell — and Brasenose had its own beer'.<sup>30</sup> In fact, 'its lone literary distinction was that every Shrove Tuesday a new set of "Ale verses" was recited at the college's pancake supper party'.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, even if Jowett's request had merely been for Pater to go afield or at least to frolic at Brasenose, Pater seems not to have obliged: 'In his private life Pater was not entirely circumspect. Even after the episode with Hardinge, he continued to cultivate good-looking young men, especially undergraduates of an athletic disposition'.<sup>32</sup> However, Pater also had London interests, interests that could provide as much drama, if not as much intellectual stimulation, as Marc-André Raffalovich relates: 'I am pleased to remember that [Pater] several times met Harry Eversfield, so successful as the boy in Pinero's play'.<sup>33</sup>

Although the Pater-Hardinge scandal occurred in the decade following Hopkins's Greats coaching in 1866, Dellamora suggests that even that coaching was a 'pedagogic moment [which] permitted them to share a sense of masculine desire informing one's

perception of organic existence',<sup>34</sup> a pedagogic moment in which 'Hopkins probably learned as much from his tutor's asides and from [his] atmosphere of aestheticism as he did from formal instruction'.<sup>35</sup> Only a single, fragmentary sentence remains to sketch this atmosphere of aestheticism pregnant with homoerotic and pederastic potential, Hopkins's journal entry for 17 June 1868: 'To lunch with Pater, then to Mr. Solomon's studio and the Academy' (*Journals*, p.167). When this journal entry is placed alongside one from two years prior, a striking change of tone becomes evident: 'Coaching with W. H. Pater this term. Walked with him on Monday evening last, April 30. Fine evening bitterly cold. "Bleak-faced Neology in cap and gown": no cap and gown but very bleak. Same evening Hexameron met here' (2 May 1866, *Journals*, p.133). The Hexameron, meeting in Hopkins's rooms on the same evening as that walk with Pater, was an essay society of which Hopkins was a founding member, a society partially created to combat a growing agnosticism on campus, an agnosticism symbolised by 'one Paper which obtained great notoriety at the beginning of this Term [because it] was directed against the immortality of the soul. It was written by a junior Fellow of a College' (Henry Parry Liddon's letter to the Bishop of Salisbury, 17 March 1864, as quoted in *Journals*, p.353, note). That 'junior Fellow of a College' was none other than Pater himself; and the paper, his 'Fichte's Ideal Student', delivered on 20 February 1864 to the Old Mortality Society, a society which Donoghue describes as 'a web of hypothetically erotic relations which may or may not come to anything but in the meantime desultorily occupy the same space', and which Dowling describes as 'the unique moment of Oxford masculine comradeship, a window or halcyon interval of particularly intense male homosociality'.<sup>36</sup> Despite his earlier aversion to Pater's 'bleak-faced Neology' and his own membership in the Hexameron Society founded to combat that Neology (or Rationalism at variance with the received interpretation of scripture), Hopkins seems to have attended at least one such meeting —

on Thursday, 31 May 1866 — probably invited by Pater to hear him deliver a paper, about which Hopkins records: ‘Pater talking two hours against Xtianity’ (*Journals*, p.138).<sup>37</sup>

Two years later, much had changed: Hopkins is found accompanying Pater to lunch, then to the studio of the notorious Simeon Solomon, at 12 Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy Square, London, a studio in which he would have seen a number of paintings and drawings tinged with the pederastic, the homoerotic, and the lesbian (see ‘Appendix Twenty-Seven’ for some representative pieces by Solomon from this period).<sup>38</sup> Probably still in the company of Pater and Solomon, Hopkins then went to the Royal Academy Exhibition, where he lingered before an oil painting by Frederic Leighton (1830-96; *later* Lord Leighton), *Jonathan’s Token to David*, a painting which Hopkins noted in his journal (*Journals*, p.167), a painting which must have appealed strongly to his sensibilities, as well as to those of Pater and Solomon (see ‘Appendix Twenty-Eight’ for this painting and several others by Leighton with similar pederastic appeal). Unfortunately, Hopkins did not live long enough to see Leighton’s further development of this theme, *Hit!* (1893),<sup>39</sup> of which Joseph A. Kestner writes:

The pedagogic relationship of the older male to the youth, with potentially strong erotic elements, reappeared in Leighton’s *Hit!* of 1893, a canvas of a youth teaching a boy to hold a bow and shoot at a target. [...] The erotic nature of Leighton’s canvas is confirmed by preparatory drawings for *Hit!*: in two drawings, the young man is nuzzling the youth; in one drawing the nude boy stands beside the seated youth; in the other he stands between his legs, with the outline of the bow all but disappeared, making the sketch highly erotic in the tradition of the *erastês* and the *erômenos* [the ‘inspirer’ and the ‘hearer’ of Greek pederasty]. Attempts to claim that this is father and son, as in the notice from the *Athenæum*, deflect the homoeroticism of the drawings and are refuted by the age of the instructor. The aspect of ephebic training also appears in Leighton’s *Jonathan’s Token to David*, exhibited in 1868, showing Jonathan accompanied by a young lad as he prepares to shoot the arrow warning his beloved David that Saul intends to have him slain.<sup>40</sup>

Lunching with Pater, visiting Solomon’s studio, lingering before Leighton’s *Jonathan’s Token to David* — such was a typical day for a Uranian disciple of Decadence. Since Hopkins kept such a schedule, it is difficult to accept Martin’s claim that ‘there is no reason to think that Hopkins was in any way involved in the world in which the others moved’,<sup>41</sup> a world soon to be shaken by Solomon’s arrest and sentence for homoerotic

offences, for erotic adventures in public urinals. If, at the Royal Academy on that June day in 1868, Hopkins had accompanied Solomon to the urinal, there is no record.<sup>42</sup> Seriously, the reluctance among scholars such as Martin and Dowling to associate Hopkins directly with the blatant homoeroticism and pederasty of Pater's coterie seems untenable, especially if Hopkins kept the company of the likes of Simeon Solomon. Besides Solomon, Pater's coterie included various Oscars, one being Oscar Browning, a Master of Eton dismissed 'for insubordination, according to the official explanation, for pederastic excess, according to the unofficial one' — a pederast who, through 'the influence of personal friends, [...] was able to secure a new post at King's College, Cambridge'.<sup>43</sup> Had Hopkins's journal been as detailed as Mark Pattison's of 1878, it might have read something like this:

To Pater's to tea, where Oscar Browning [...] was more like Socrates than ever. He conversed in one corner with 4 feminine looking youths 'paw dandling' there in one fivesome, while the Miss Paters & I sate looking on in another corner — Presently Walter Pater, who, I had been told, was 'upstairs' appeared, attended by 2 more youths of similar appearance.<sup>44</sup>

Whatever conclusions are drawn about Hopkins's consorting with Pater and his coterie, the assertion that 'Hopkins still kept doubtful company'<sup>45</sup> seems rather established, even if one does not go as far as Donoghue: 'Hopkins and Pater were divided on religious belief, but their interest in art, aesthetics, and homoerotic sentiment kept a mild friendship going'.<sup>46</sup>

This reluctance to associate Hopkins with the erotic Decadence of Pater's coterie — a coterie which included at various times the Uranian poets Marc-André Raffalovich, Lionel Johnson (1867-1902), John Gray (1866-1944), and Stanislaus Eric, Count Stenbock (1860-95); the artist Simeon Solomon; the writers J. A. Symonds, Edmund Gosse, and Oscar Wilde<sup>47</sup>; the wealthy connoisseur and Uranian poet Edward Perry Warren, who later acquired the silver Roman *scyphus* considered in 'Chapter One'; Richard Monckton Milnes (1809-85), 'who owned what was then perhaps the largest collection of erotic books in Britain'<sup>48</sup>; and the publisher of much of the Uranian verse, Charles Kegan Paul

(1828-1902) — this reluctance does not obscure what a friendship between Hopkins and Pater, whether mild or intimate, implies. Years later, although certainly aware of the various scandals surrounding Pater through friends like Gosse and through texts like *The New Republic* by W. H. Mallock (1849-1923),<sup>49</sup> Hopkins's dearest and most protective friend, Robert Bridges, nevertheless 'reactivated personal ties between Hopkins and Pater',<sup>50</sup> such that, after his return to Oxford in 1878, Hopkins regularly visited Pater, partly facilitated by proximity, for Pater's house on Bradmore Road was only minutes away from St Aloysius's Church where Hopkins was then Curate. As chronicle of this suggestive friendship, only a few, pedestrian passages remain, such as Hopkins's casual comment to his mother in February 1879: 'I went yesterday to dine with the Paters' (*Letters* III, p.151). Similarly, Pater's only extant letter to Hopkins is a terse response from 20 May 1879 —

My dear Hopkins,  
It will give me great pleasure to accept your kind invitation to dinner on Thursday at 5.30.  
Very sincerely yours,  
W. H. Pater (*Facsimiles* II, p.176)

— though its salutation, Higgins stresses, 'was one which Pater reserved for close friends only'.<sup>51</sup> That these now 'close friends' met extensively between 1878 and 1879 is substantiated by a letter from Hopkins to his friend A. W. M. Baillie: 'By the by when I was at Oxford Pater was one of the men I saw most of' (22 May 1880, *Letters* III, p.246). These casual claims become particularly insightful when one considers the number of scandals, contained or publicised, which were then besieging Pater and his immediate coterie: Pater's utterly decried *Renaissance* editions of 1873 and 1877; Pater's discovered intimacy with Hardinge in 1874; Solomon's arrest and conviction on sodomy charges in 1873, and again in 1874 (for the latter, receiving a sentence of three months in prison); W. H. Mallock's *New Republic: Culture, Faith, and Philosophy in an English Country House*, published in *Belgravia* from June till December 1875 (and in book form in 1877),

portraying Pater as the pederastic ‘Mr. Rose’ flitting about ‘Leslie’, a thinly disguised Hardinge<sup>52</sup> (see ‘Appendix Twenty-Nine’); Oscar Browning’s removal from Eton under suspicion of pederasty in 1875 (which, unlike William Johnson’s earlier dismissal from Eton and Solomon’s arrest, had been mentioned, though vaguely, in the press and in the House of Commons). Even if there is no extant evidence that Hopkins knew the specifics of any of these scandals, he would certainly have recognised the dangerous Decadent residue clinging to Pater because of them, for there was much that Hopkins did know.

Concerning the first scandal: Hopkins undoubtedly knew of the public and pulpit reactions to both editions of *The Renaissance*:

Widely denounced as a sinister invitation to hedonism, *The Renaissance* elicited a rhetoric of outrage that conjoined all the norms of English life in their common vulnerability to Pater’s subversive creed. Thus W. T. Courthope spoke for many in 1876 when he denounced Pater’s volume as a betrayal not only of English society, but of English masculinity: ‘In common, we believe, with most Englishmen, we repudiate the effeminate desires which Mr. Pater, the mouthpiece of our artistic “culture”, would encourage in society’. The suspicions insinuated by the label ‘effeminate’ of course became increasingly damaging during the century as this quality became more narrowly and explicitly associated with homosexual behavior.<sup>53</sup>

Concerning the second scandal: R. L. Nettleship and Benjamin Jowett, both of whom were involved in the containment and handling of the Pater-Hardinge ‘affair’, had strong academic and personal ties to Hopkins, whom they had known since his undergraduate days and for whom they would later supply the two academic references which would secure his appointment to a Classics professorship in Dublin in 1884. Anticipating his possible renewal of friendship with Pater, they might well have advised or hinted that Hopkins would do well to avoid such company and its possible taint, especially as a Roman Catholic curate in an overly Anglican Oxford, an Oxford which would look upon a Jesuit with suspicion anyway. Concerning the third scandal: Hopkins might well have known from Pater or someone else about Solomon’s conviction. Since Hopkins had met Solomon at least twice in 1868, the second time clearly in the company of Pater (then one of Solomon’s closest friends), one might expect Hopkins to inquire about this convicted ‘sodomite’, however naively, especially since Pater had various pieces of Solomon’s

artwork lingering about his Bradmore Road residence. Concerning the fourth scandal: Hopkins definitely knew of Mallock's *New Republic*, with its portrayal of Pater as 'Mr. Rose', for he wrote jokingly to his mother on 12 February 1879: 'Sir Gore (ghastly as this is, what else can you say? — his name in a book of Mallock's would become Sir Bloodclot Reekswell)' (*Letters* III, p.153). Concerning the fifth scandal: Hopkins may not have known of Browning's dismissal from Eton under suspicion of pederasty, but Mark Pattison's diary entry concerning that hand-holding tea at the Paters' in 1878, with the 'paw dandling' Browning in attendance, suggests that Hopkins might well have been introduced to Browning after being stationed in Oxford later that year. Whatever one decides about Hopkins's inclusion amidst this scandalous Paterian world, Donoghue's phrasing seems as true for the Jesuit Hopkins of the late 1870s as for the pre-Jesuit Hopkins of the late 1860s: 'Hopkins still kept doubtful company'.

Although 'after November, 1879, Hopkins made two further visits to Oxford: a brief appearance at St. Aloysius's on 11 September 1883, and a somewhat longer stay in May 1886' — Higgins does not believe that Hopkins had an opportunity to visit Pater again, since Pater had 'resigned his Brasenose tutorship in 1883 in order to concentrate on writing *Marius the Epicurean*'.<sup>54</sup> Regardless of whether or not they again met, Pater's influence over Hopkins continued, even if only textually, for 'Walter Pater's presence in Gerard Manley Hopkins's life and work was much more than an undergraduate phenomenon'.<sup>55</sup> Concerning Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* and *Imaginary Portraits*, published in 1885 and 1887, respectively, Downes suggests that 'given Hopkins' enormous interest in letters, it is unthinkable that he did not know them',<sup>56</sup> though no extant evidence supports that he did. Even if one embraces the requirement for 'the verifiable' and brushes aside Hopkins's awareness of Pater's mature scholarship and fiction, Hopkins must have been, even as an undergraduate, inordinately versed in Pater's elaborate *Weltanschauung*,



his ‘bleak-faced Neology’. In fact, Pater’s collection of tenets was so consistent that he was able to underscore in the third edition of his *Renaissance* (1888) and afterwards: ‘I have dealt more fully in *Marius the Epicurean* with the thoughts suggested by [this book’s “Conclusion”]’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.186, Pater’s footnote).<sup>57</sup> The last passage of that ‘Conclusion’ encapsulates a *Weltanschauung* which must have proven extremely influential to this young Oxonian and later poet:

We are all under sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve. [...] We have an interval, and then our place knows us no more. Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest, at least among ‘the children of this world’, in art and song. For our one chance lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time. Great passions may give us this quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise, which come naturally to many of us. Only be sure it is passion — that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of such wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake, has most. For art comes to you proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments’ sake. (*Renaissance* 1893, p.190)

Hopkins’s absorption of this *Weltanschauung*, as well as its phrasing, is evident almost immediately: ‘Within two months of meeting his new instructor, “as Pater says” had become a popular qualifying statement’ for Hopkins.<sup>58</sup> This is most clearly displayed in six aesthetically-tinged, philosophical essays written under Pater’s tutelage, essays which constitute *Notebook D.III* of the Hopkins Manuscript Collection at Campion Hall, Oxford — ‘Essays / for W. H. Pater Esq. / Gerard M. Hopkins’. These essays engage, adjust, and adopt various Paterian notions, the foremost of these being the necessity for moments lived ‘simply for those moments’ sake’. That particular Paterian notion, however qualified or made to accord with Christian teaching, constituted a lasting influence (or ‘underthought’) over Hopkins, whose responses to it bespeak more than intellectual sparing between a don and an undergraduate:

The ‘underthoughts’ which link Hopkins’s canon to Pater’s are verbal witnesses to a very rare phenomenon: a friendship, an understanding and rapport based upon personal and intellectual ties lessened by time but never severed. As *Marius the Epicurean* explains, ‘the saint, and the Cyrenaic lover of beauty, it may be thought, would at least understand each other better than either would understand the mere man of the world. Carry their respective positions a point further, shift the terms a little, and they might actually touch’.<sup>59</sup>

Moments lived ‘simply for those moments’ sake’: as early as his ‘Diaphaneitè’ essay — presented appropriately at the Old Mortality Society in July 1864 (and believed to be an embellishment of the no-longer-extant ‘Fichte’s Ideal Student’) — that dictum infuses Pater’s writings with a caution against squandering opportunities, Pater insisting that ‘to most of us only one chance is given in the life of the spirit and the intellect, and circumstances prevent our dexterously seizing that one chance’ (‘Diaphaneitè’, *Miscellaneous*, p.252).<sup>60</sup> Much later, in *Marius the Epicurean*, Pater’s protagonist illustrates such ‘dexterous seizing’ by sacrificing himself for a beloved ‘friend’:

At last, the great act, the critical moment, comes, easily, almost unconsciously. [...] In one quarter of an hour, under a sudden, uncontrollable impulse, hardly weighing what he did, almost as a matter of course and as lightly as one hires a bed for one’s night’s rest on a journey, Marius had taken upon himself all the heavy risk of the position in which Cornelius had then been — the long and wearisome delays of judgment, which were possible; the danger and wretchedness of a long journey in this manner; possibly the danger of death. He had delivered his brother, after the manner he had sometimes vaguely anticipated as a kind of distinction in his destiny; though indeed always with wistful calculation as to what it might cost him: and in the first moment after the thing was actually done, he felt only satisfaction at his courage, at the discovery of his possession of ‘nerve’. (II, pp.207-08)

Over time, this early Paterian notion of moments lived ‘simply for those moments’ sake’ was recast by Pater into ‘martyrdom for friendship’s sake’, a martyrdom which became the principal ennobling act of his mature *Weltanschauung*, an act depicted in his second edition of *The Renaissance* (1877) through the tale *Amis and Amile*, a thirteenth-century French romance, the addition of which allowed Pater to connect ‘medieval, Christian culture with the tradition of homosexual friendship in Greek culture’.<sup>61</sup> According to Pater, *Amis and Amile* had ‘a friendship pure and generous, pushed to a sort of passionate exaltation, and more than faithful unto death. Such comradeship, though instances of it are to be found everywhere, is still especially a classical motive’ (‘French’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.7). As with his ‘Conclusion’, Pater most fully depicts this ‘classical motive’ — expressed in *Amis and Amile* as an exultant and passionate friendship ‘more than faithful unto death’ — in *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas* (1885), a novel which not only portrays the sensations and ideas of a protagonist from Classical Rome, but also

the sensations and ideas of Pater's immediate contemporaries, whom he frequently addresses in authorial asides: 'Let the reader pardon me if here and there I seem to be passing from Marius to his modern representatives — from Rome, to Paris or London' (*Marius*, II, p.19).<sup>62</sup> For Pater, the benefit derived from this constant shift in time and location is that these moments lived 'simply for those moments' sake', whether ancient or modern, constitute a 'cultural continuum', particularly when endowed with 'classical motive' — in direct contradiction to Michel Foucault's claims (as well as those of most Social Constructionists) that such a continuum is inherently anachronistic, whether in word or concept. However, for Pater, culture is always a continuum:

[John] Nichol envisioned history Romantically, in a fashion similar to Edmund Burke, as a vital organic and evolutionary continuum [...] There was no place in this vision for ruptures or discontinuities. As with Blake and Pater, the ages were all thought to be equal now.<sup>63</sup>

By choosing Imperial Rome as his setting, Pater was also contradicting a widely held Victorian belief, here phrased by J. A. Symonds, that this 'classical motive', expressed through pederasty, did not have the same meaning or meaningfulness for the ancient Romans that it had had for the earlier Greeks:

Greece merged in Rome; but, though the Romans aped the arts and manners of the Greeks, they never truly caught the Hellenic spirit. Even Virgil only trod the court of the Gentiles of Greek culture. It was not, therefore, possible that any social custom so peculiar as paiderastia should flourish on Latin soil. Instead of Cleomenes and Epameinondas, we find at Rome Nero the bride of Sporus and Commodus the public prostitute. Alcibiades is replaced by the Mark Antony of Cicero's *Philippic*. Corydon, with artificial notes, takes up the song of Ageanax. The melodies of Meleager are drowned in the harsh discords of Martial. Instead of love, lust was the deity of the boy-lover on the shores of Tiber.<sup>64</sup>

It is to those 'shores of Tiber' that Pater turns in order to trace a continuum from Greece to Rome, from Rome to Paris to London, drawing his reader's attention, sole-thoughted, to one boy there, a boy who will serve as his means of depicting 'Greece merged in Rome', as well as 'the Hellenic spirit' — Marius the Epicurean.

As a wealthy orphan, Marius soon finds himself at a Platonic academy under the private coaching of Flavian, a student three years his senior, in whom Marius immediately perceives 'something [...] a shade disdainful, as [Flavian] stood isolated from the rest for a

moment', something which sets Flavian apart from his companions, establishing him as 'Prince of the school' and allowing him 'an easy dominion over the old Greek master by the fascination of his parts, and over his fellow-scholars by the figure he bore' (*Marius*, I, p.54).<sup>65</sup> Predictably, 'over Marius too his dominion was entire', enhanced because Flavian had been 'appointed to help the younger boy in his studies' (I, p.55). From the moment of their introduction, Flavian begins to dominate Marius through prurient glances, visual insinuations which take a keen hold upon Marius and assure him of their impending 'friendship': '[There was] a pleasantness [...] for [himself, as] the new-comer, in the sombre blue eyes which seemed somehow to be taking a keener hold upon things around than is usual with boys. Marius knew that those proud eyes made kindly note of him for a moment, and felt something like friendship at first sight' (I, p.54). This 'friendship at first sight' soon broadens beyond the tutorial, until Marius 'became virtually [Flavian's] servant in many things', experiencing a fascination that 'had been a sentimental one, depending on the concession to himself of an intimacy, a certain tolerance of his company, [that Flavian] granted to no other' (I, p.55). Marius is taught 'many things' through 'an intimacy granted to no other' — the deliberate vagueness of such a description lending a prurient suggestiveness to Pater's text, a prurient suggestiveness which is intensified by this pedagogical 'friendship' being labelled 'that old feverish attachment to Flavian, which had made [Marius], at times, like an uneasy slave' (I, p.231). However 'uneasy', Marius nonetheless yields himself to that 'feverish attachment to Flavian' — in much the same way that Flavian 'had certainly yielded himself, though still with untouched health in a world where manhood comes early, to the seductions of a luxurious town' (I, p.57). By 'yielding himself' and his developing 'manhood' to the 'seductions of a luxurious town', a younger Flavian had acquired erotic experiences which would later transform him into a sort of 'Prince' with 'dominion over' others, mere 'servants', 'uneasy slaves' overwhelmed

by his ‘proud eyes’ — or, as with Marius, ‘granted’ friendship and perhaps erotic instruction. Not surprisingly, Marius soon becomes fluent concerning Flavian’s lascivious sexual encounters, causing him to wonder

sometimes, in [Flavian’s] freer revelation of himself in conversation, at the extent of his early corruption. How often, afterwards, did evil things present themselves associated malignly with the memory of that beautiful head, and with a kind of borrowed charm and sanction in the natural grace of that! To Marius at a later time, [Flavian] counted for, as it were, an epitome of the whole pagan world itself, in the depth of his corruption under that perfection of form. (I, p.57)

Lost early, Flavian’s sexual innocence was replaced by a ‘depth of corruption’, a corruption that intrigues his contemporaries, as does his ‘perfection of form’: ‘His voice, his glance, were like the breaking in of the solid world upon one, amid the flimsy fictions of a dream. A shadow, handling all things as shadows, had felt a sudden real and poignant heat in them’ (I, p.57). Given the ‘poignant heat’ of the above, it is crucial to remember exactly who is feeling that ‘heat’: ‘the old Greek master [fevered] by the fascination of [Flavian’s] parts’ and ‘his fellow-scholars [fevered] by the figure [Flavian] bore’. In essence, the school’s ‘old Greek master’ is heated by Flavian’s ‘parts’, even if only as a fascination with the erotic possibilities those ‘parts’ could afford; the school’s students are heated by Flavian’s ‘figure’, a more holistic admiration which covers a multitude of latent desires.

Lest readers of *Marius the Epicurean* downplay Flavian’s corrupting influence, Pater further insinuates that

meantime, under his guidance, Marius was learning quickly and abundantly, because with a good-will. There was that in the actual effectiveness of [Flavian’s] figure which stimulated the younger lad to make the most of opportunity; and he had experience already that education added largely to one’s capacity for enjoyment. (I, p.58)

Having reached a potent ‘manhood’, Flavian employs ‘the actual effectiveness of his figure’ to ‘stimulate the younger lad’, a lad who accepts this ‘education’ with ‘good-will’, having learned ‘to make the most of opportunity’, especially an opportunity that ‘added largely to [his] capacity for enjoyment’. Textually, Pater has constructed here a moment of pederastic pedagogy and practice — Flavian ‘stimulat[ing] the younger lad’ both sexually

and intellectually, becoming the ‘inspirer’ to Marius the ‘hearer’. Flavian chooses to augment his erotic tutelage of Marius, his ‘hearer’, with a book: the *Golden Ass* of Lucius Apuleius (123-170 CE), ‘the golden book’, a book which ‘awakened the poetic or romantic capacity, as perhaps some other book might have done, but also gave it actually, as another might not have done, a strongly sensuous direction’ (I, p.58). In a narratorial aside, Pater widens the scope of this textual stimulation, raising to a universal level this interaction between Marius, Flavian, and Apuleius’s book: ‘If our modern education, in its better efforts, really conveys to any of us that kind of idealising power, it does so [...] oftenest by truant reading; and so it happened also, long ago, with Marius and his friend Flavian’ (I, p.58). While these truants are exploring Apuleius’s verses and each other, Marius begins to consider Flavian the embodiment of his own ‘Cyrenaic philosophy, presented thus for the first time, in an image or person, with much beauty and attractiveness’ (I, p.230), the embodiment of a philosophy which inspires its adherents with a ‘Cyrenaic eagerness, just then, to taste and see and touch’ (I, p.199).<sup>66</sup> To see and touch (and blushing, taste) what? — if not Flavian’s ‘beauty and attractiveness’. That is a lingering question made all the more salacious by the playful syntax of the former quotation in its entirety:

[Marius’s] Cyrenaic philosophy, presented thus for the first time, in an image or person, with much beauty and attractiveness, *and touched also, in this way*, with a pathetic sense of personal sorrow — a concrete image, the abstract equivalent of which he discovered afterwards, when that agitating personal influence had settled down for him, clearly enough, into a theory of practice. (pp.230-31, emphasis added)

This *mélange* of ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ — the ‘touched also, in this way’ — has led to a pederastic, pedagogical moment where Marius is overwhelmed by an ‘eagerness [...] to taste and see and touch’ both Flavian’s body and the ‘aesthetic life’ he has come to embody, a feverish eagerness that Marius had caught from the lips of Flavian, in much the same way that the older boy had caught the refrain of his subsequent poem and the plague of his subsequent death: ‘[Flavian] had caught his “refrain”, from the lips of the young men singing, because they could not help it, in the streets of Pisa’ (I, p.105).

Alas, overcome by a fever seemingly caught ‘from the lips of the young men [...] in the streets of Pisa’, ‘Flavian lay at the open window of his lodging, with a burning pain in the head, fancying no covering light and thin enough to be applied to his body’ (I, p.113), a textually advantageous situation for Pater, who situates the nude, dying Flavian at a voyeuristic vantage point. Lying naked at the open window, attended only by Marius (everyone else fearing contamination from the plague), Flavian would, ‘at intervals, return to work at his verses, with a great eagerness to complete and transcribe the poem’, a poem which was ‘in truth a kind of nuptial hymn’ (I, pp.113-14), a serious epithalamion lightened by passages like the following: “*Amor* has put his weapons by and will keep holiday. He has been bidden to go unclad, that none may be wounded by his bow and arrows. But take care! In truth he is none the less armed than usual, though he be all unclad” (I, p.114; see ‘Appendix Thirty’ for Renaissance and Mannerist examples of a pederastic treatment of Cupid, as well as the previously considered images in ‘Appendix One’ and ‘Appendix Two’ A–iv).<sup>67</sup> This is a curious passage indeed, for Flavian’s Cupid — unclad like himself, stripped of all weaponry except for his phallus, a phallus fully capable of spoiling and despoiling — is merely a refashioning of Apuleius’s amorous Cupid. Although Apuleius suggests that, while sleeping naked like Flavian, Cupid resembles little that “winged, bold boy, of evil ways, who wanders armed by night through men’s houses, spoiling their marriages” (I, p.66), Cupid’s “inborn wantonness” (I, p.67) nonetheless ever accompanies his potent beauty, even in repose, a beauty which Pater textually caresses by describing the shoulders of this ‘winged god’, then the way his damp plumage moves across those shoulders, then how ‘smooth he was’:

Cupid himself, reclined there, in his own proper loveliness! [...] [with] the locks of that golden head, pleasant with the unction of the gods, shed down in graceful entanglement behind and before, about the ruddy cheeks and white throat. The pinions of the winged god, yet fresh with the dew, are spotless upon his shoulders; the delicate plumage wavering over them as they lie at rest. Smooth he was. (I, pp.77-78)

In all of his resplendent tactility, this ‘petulant, boyish Cupid of Apuleius’ serves ‘to combine many lines of meditation, already familiar to Marius, into the ideal of a perfect imaginative love, centred upon a type of beauty entirely flawless and clean — an ideal which never wholly faded out of his thoughts’ (I, p.94). That Marius chooses to unify symbolically Flavian — his ‘epitome of the whole pagan world’ and ‘his Cyrenaic philosophy [...] in an image or person’ (I, pp.57; 230) — with the Cupid of Apuleius is not surprising, especially since Flavian’s appearance ‘was like a carved figure in motion [...] but with that indescribable gleam upon it which the words of Homer actually suggested, as perceptible on the visible forms of the gods’ (I, pp.54-55). However, though resembling a god, Flavian is not one, and consequently reposes, in all of his naked, dying splendour, ‘with his sharply contracted hand in that of Marius, to his almost surprised happiness, winning him now to an absolutely self-forgetful devotion’ (I, p.118), a devotion consummated through a rather-nuptial embrace — as Flavian, barely conscious, is held by Marius amid the scattered fragments of his own epithalamion, the *Pervigilium Veneris*<sup>68</sup>: ‘In the darkness Marius lay down beside him, faintly shivering now in the sudden cold, to lend him his own warmth, undeterred by the fear of contagion which had kept other people from passing near the house’ (I, p.119).

Even after Flavian’s death, Marius clings, in memory, to Flavian’s body, the body of a ‘friend’ whom he now clearly addresses as ‘belovèd’:

It was to the sentiment of the body and the affections which it defined — the body, of whose colour and force that wandering Platonic soul was but so frail a residue or abstract — that [Marius] clung. The various pathetic traits of the beloved, suffering, perished body of Flavian, so deeply pondered, had made him a materialist, and with something of the humour of a devotee. (I, p.127)

This seems a Paterian embellishment on Henry Wallis’s painting *The Death of Chatterton* (for which George Meredith served as the model; see ‘Appendix Thirty-One’), though Pater provides his own Roman Thomas Chatterton with a *Divo Amico* to soothe his



passing, to hold his chilling hand, recalling one of the last poems composed by John Keats, Chatterton's staunchest defender:

This living hand, now warm and capable  
Of earnest grasping, would, if it were cold  
And in the icy silence of the tomb,  
So haunt thy days and chill thy dreaming nights  
That thou would wish thine own heart dry of blood  
So in my veins red life might stream again,  
And thou be conscience-calm'd — see here it is  
I hold it towards you — <sup>69</sup>

Solemn years pass before Marius develops another 'friendship', this time with a young Praetorian guard named Cornelius, a 'very honourable-looking youth, in the rich habit of a military knight', whose voice was so entrancing that Marius, rather romantically, 'seemed to hear that voice again in his dreams, uttering his own name' (I, p.167). As they depart together for Rome, these two travellers, who have only just met, begin a conversation that

left [them] with sufficient interest in each other to insure an easy companionship for the remainder of their journey. In time to come, Marius was to depend very much on *the preferences*, the personal judgments, of the comrade who now laid his hand so brotherly on his shoulder. (I, p.168, emphasis added)

These 'preferences' (a word which, even for the Victorians, often possessed homoerotic and pederastic connotations) determined *the intention* behind this new hand laid 'brotherly' upon Marius's shoulder, the hand of an Imperial guard who 'seemed to carry about with him, in that real world of comely usages and privileges to which he belonged, the atmosphere of some still more jealous and exclusive circle' (I, p.170). Unlike Flavian, who had surrounded himself with flamboyance, with the admiring gazes of his fellows, and with an exhibitionist's death at a casement, in the nude, Cornelius surrounds himself with an atmosphere both discrete and graceful, an atmosphere about which he manoeuvres with the ease of an initiate — undoubtedly a physical initiate — for 'the discretion of Cornelius, his energetic clearness and purity, were a charm, rather physical than moral [...] with its warning and exigent restraints' (I, p.231). Cornelius's 'discretion', with its 'warning and

exigent restraints’, displays itself as a physical ‘charm’, a charm which protectively (over)shadows his intimacy with Marius, like ‘the atmosphere of some still more jealous and exclusive circle’, a circle perhaps analogous to our modern ‘homosexual code’ (to use the phrasing of Linda Dowling), a ‘code’ which often gains discretion through ambiguity, an ambiguity about which Pater was himself well versed.<sup>70</sup> Not surprisingly, one of the novel’s most flagrantly ambiguous passages follows a criticism of the Emperor Caesar Marcus Aurelius (121-180 CE), a Platonic philosopher-king, for despising the ‘charm’ of the human body (the emphasis is added):

And here again, in opposition to an inhumanity like *this*, presenting *itself* to [Marius] as nothing less than a kind of sin against nature, the person of Cornelius sanctioned or justified the delight Marius had always had in the body; at first, as but one of the consequences of his material or sensualistic philosophy. To Cornelius, the body of man was unmistakably, as a later seer terms it, the one temple in the world (‘we touch Heaven when we lay our hand upon a human body’), and the proper object of a sort of worship, or sacred service, in which the very finest gold might have its seemliness and due symbolic use. (II, pp.59-60)

A standard reading of the above would suggest that ‘this’ and ‘itself’ both refer to ‘the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius’ (a philosophy expressed in his *Meditations*), with the first sentence translatable into the following:

In opposition to an inhumanity like that presented by the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, a philosophy which Marius believed to be nothing less than a kind of ‘sin against nature’, because it despised the body, the person of Cornelius sanctioned or justified the delight Marius had always had in the body.

Since the antecedent of ‘itself’ is syntactically ambiguous, another reading is possible, an erotic reading in which the antecedent is not the ‘philosophy of Marcus Aurelius’ or ‘this’, but instead ‘the person of Cornelius’, with the sentence translatable into the following:

In opposition to an inhumanity like that presented by the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, a philosophy which despises the body, the person of Cornelius, ‘presenting’ itself to Marius as nothing less than a kind of ‘sin against nature’, sanctioned or justified the delight Marius had always had in the body.

This second alternative — which describes the physical interaction between Marius and Cornelius as a ‘sin against nature’, a conventional Victorian synonym for homoeroticism and pederasty — allows Pater to establish an opposition between the Stoic asceticism of Marcus Aurelius and the Epicurean eroticism of Marius and Cornelius. This subversive

reading is facilitated and substantiated by Cornelius's rather prurient insistence that 'the body of man was [...] the one temple in the world', that 'we touch Heaven when we lay our hands upon a human body'.

Cornelius, 'the comrade who [had] laid his hand so brotherly on [Marius's] shoulder', had inaugurated an intimacy which was not fully appreciated by Marius until their stay together at White-nights, Marius's childhood home: 'It was just then that Marius felt, as he had never done before, the value to himself, the overpowering charm, of his friendship. "More than brother!" — he felt — "like a son also!" contrasting the fatigue of soul which made himself practically an older man, with the other's irrepressible youth' (II, p.204). Amidst the tranquillity of their stay at White-nights and their leisurely journey back to Rome, Marius begins to appreciate the pederastic overtones inherent in his relationship with the 'irrepressibly young' Cornelius (this time, Marius cast in the role of 'inspirer' rather than 'hearer'), overtones accentuated as they wander

hither and thither, leisurely, among the country-places thereabout, [...] [coming] one evening to a little town [...] which had even then its church and legend — the legend and holy relics of the martyr Hyacinthus, a young Roman soldier, whose blood had stained the soil of this place in the days of the emperor Trajan. (II, p.205)

For Pater, the choice of the name 'Hyacinthus' for this martyr — a Roman soldier as young and as Christian as Cornelius — serves as a Classical allusion to the pederastic beloved of Apollo, a boy killed by the machinations of Zephyr, a lesser deity angered that the boy's ardour rested with another. Similarly, a jealous and self-deified Trajan martyred this young Roman Hyacinthus because of the youth's love for Christ, a devotion that Trajan could also not accept gracefully. Unrelated to the martyrdom of St Hyacinth nearly ten centuries later, this martyrdom, as a fictional detail created by Pater, suggests that an analogy is being drawn between Marius's relationship to Cornelius and Apollo's relationship to Hyacinth. Unlike Marius's earlier relationship with Flavian — an interaction with Cyrenaic philosophy and its 'eagerness [...] to taste and see and touch' (I,

p.199) — Marius's relationship with Cornelius is an encapsulation of the perfect and eternal love of 'comrades' expressed by the likes of Apollo and Hyacinth, the core love of Pater's *Weltanschauung*, a love he elucidates in *Plato and Platonism*:

Brothers, comrades, who could not live without each other, they were the most fitting patrons of a place in which friendship, comradeship, like theirs, came to so much. Lovers of youth they remained, those enstarred types of it, arrested thus at that moment of miraculous good fortune as a consecration of the clean, youthful friendship, 'passing even the love of woman' [...] A part of their duty and discipline, it was also their great solace and encouragement. The beloved and the lover [were] side by side through their long days of eager labour, and above all on the battlefield. (p.231)

Beyond such mortal friendships, 'the beloved and the lover side by side' — which between Marius and Flavian elaborated into a kind of touch, between Marius and Cornelius into a kind of art — Marius also interacts with aesthetic and philosophical masterpieces, an interaction which elaborates into a kind of 'abstract friendship', a kind of 'mystic companionship': 'With this mystic companion he had gone a step onward, out of the merely objective pagan world. Here was already a master in that craft of self-direction, which was then coming to play so large a part in the human mind, at the prompting of the Christian church' (*Marius*, II, pp.56-57).<sup>71</sup> Although 'yearning [...] for audible or visible companionship' (II, p.95), Marius finds instead a novel companionship both inaudible and invisible, arising, not from intimacy with highly impassioned 'friends' like Flavian or beloved 'comrades' like Cornelius, but from aesthetic and philosophical masterpieces, masterpieces which allow for an intimate familiarity with eminent minds, with 'souls noble and gifted', whether living or dead:

On this day, certainly, no mysterious light, no irresistibly leading hand from afar reached him; only, the peculiarly tranquillising influence with which it had begun increased steadily upon him. [...] Companionship, indeed, familiarity with souls noble and gifted, or at least sweet to him, had been, through this and that long space of it, the chief delight of the journey: and was it only the general sense and residue of that familiarity, diffused through his memories, which, in a while, suggested the question whether there had not been — besides Flavian, besides Cornelius even, and through the solitude which in spite of ardent friendship he had perhaps loved best of all things — a companion, a perpetual companion, ever at his side throughout; doubling his pleasure in the roses by the way, recipient of his depression or peevishness, above all, as of old, of his grateful recognition of the fact that he himself was there at all? (II, pp.70-72)

As this familiarity intensifies, Marius no longer questions the tentative existence of this 'abstract friend', for 'that divine companion figured no longer as only an occasional

wayfarer beside him, but as the unfailing “assistant”, without whose inspiration and concurrence he could not breathe or see, instrumenting his bodily senses, rounding and supporting his imperfect thoughts’ (II, p.75). Further, ‘that sense of companionship, of a person beside him, evoked the faculty of conscience’ (II, p.76), a conscience which Marius recognises among the early acolytes of Christianity: ‘Surely, in this strange new society he had known for the first time to-day — in this holy family, like a fenced garden — was the fulfilment of all the judgments and preferences of that half-known [abstract] friend, which of late years had been so often his protection in the perplexities of his life’ (II, p.110).<sup>72</sup> Marius’s sense ‘of a living person at his side’ (II, p.212) — a sense which this ‘abstract friend’ seems to provide — serves to tranquillise and to inspire Marius, augmenting his sensations and thoughts, such that even his feverish flailings on his deathbed are transformed into a sensual massage, as he is prepared by a group of Christians for his nuptial consummation with Death, figured as Christ (an image that would have appealed to Digby Dolben):

The people around his bed were praying fervently — *Abi! Abi! anima Christiana! [Depart! Depart! Christian soul!]* In the moments of his extreme helplessness their mystic bread had been placed, had descended like a snow-flake from the sky, between his lips. Soothing fingers had applied to hands and feet, to all those old passage-ways of the senses, through which the world had come and gone from him, now so dark and obstructed, a medicable oil. It was the same people, who, in the grey, austere evening of that day, took up his remains, and buried them secretly, with their accustomed prayers; but with joy also, holding his death, according to their generous view in this matter, to have been of the nature of a martyrdom; and martyrdom, as the church had always said, a kind of sacrament with plenary grace. (II, p.218)

Contrary to his previous fears that ‘from the drops of his blood there would spring no miraculous, poetic flowers’ (II, p.209), Marius’s ‘martyrdom’ springs forth as beautifully as the flower commemorating Apollo’s beloved Hyacinth, for his ‘martyrdom’ results from actualising the Paterian ideal of ‘dexterously seizing’ the profound moment, from a willingness to sacrifice himself by taking the place of his beloved Flavian, who was then under arrest, suspected of being a criminal, a Christian:

At last, the great act, the critical moment, comes, easily, almost unconsciously. [...] In one quarter of an hour, under a sudden, uncontrollable impulse, hardly weighing what he did, almost as a matter of course and as lightly as one hires a bed for one's night's rest on a journey, Marius had taken upon himself all the heavy risk of the position in which Cornelius had then been — the long and wearisome delays of judgment, which were possible; the danger and wretchedness of a long journey in this manner; possibly the danger of death. He had delivered his brother, after the manner he had sometimes vaguely anticipated as a kind of distinction in his destiny. (II, pp.207-08)

By chronicling this imaginary 'martyrdom for friendship's sake' and by casting it as the principal ennobling act of a life well lived, Pater has indeed voiced 'an eloquent utterance', an utterance validating homoerotic and pederastic passions as a heightened form of 'friendship' and 'comradeship', whether experienced in art or in life, an utterance validating a 'cultural continuum', particularly when that continuum is endowed with 'classical motive': 'Had there been one to listen just then, there would have come, from the very depth of his desolation, an eloquent utterance at last, on the irony of men's fates, on the singular accidents of life and death' (II, p.209).

Against the 'eloquent utterance' which ends Pater's novel, Higgins's claim that 'like many Victorians [...] the one aspect of his "being" that [Pater] would and could not explore was his sexual identity, specifically his homoerotic sensibility'<sup>73</sup> seems untenable. When Pater suggests that 'of other people we cannot *really* know even the feelings', each having 'a personality *really* unique' (*Marius* I, p.139, emphasis added), he means only, contrary to Higgins's claim, that *absolute* empathy is elusive. Nevertheless, aesthetic creation does allow a powerful intellect to 'project in an external form that which is most inward in passion or sentiment' ('Winckelmann', *Renaissance* 1893, p.168), allowing others to perceive the world as he does: 'Then, if we suppose [someone to be] an artist, he says to the reader, — I want you to see precisely what I see' ('Style', *Appreciations*, p.31). In the creation of literature, this capacity for inspiring others with one's 'own strength and noble taste in things' (*Platonism*, p.232) allows for the expression of the 'most inward in passion or sentiment', which is especially attractive for a homoerotic or pederastic writer whose 'being' is particularly 'inward', as was the case with both Pater and Hopkins.

Recognising that methods of concealment, as well as revelation, are inherent to literary expression, such individuals acquire scrupulosity in regard to words and their phrasing, something Marius praises in Flavian:

For words, after all, words manipulated with all his delicate force, were to be the apparatus of a war for himself. To be forcibly impressed, in the first place; and in the second, to find means of making visible to others that which was vividly apparent, delightful, of lively interest to himself, to the exclusion of all that was but middling, tame, or but half-true even to him — this scrupulousness of literary art actually awoke in Flavian, for the first time, *a sort of chivalrous conscience*. (I, p.98, emphasis added)

Far more than an idyllic notion, this ‘chivalrous conscience’ becomes, for Flavian,

a principle, the forcible apprehension of which made him jealous and fastidious in the selection of his intellectual food; often listless while others read or gazed diligently; never pretending to be moved out of mere complaisance to other people’s emotions: it served to foster in him a very scrupulous literary sincerity with himself. (I, p.104)

Because of his ‘scrupulous literary sincerity’, Flavian only found palatable those qualities essential for greatness in literary masterpieces, qualities which Pater describes: ‘It is on the quality of the matter it informs or controls, its compass, its variety, its alliance to great ends, or the depth of the note of revolt, or the largeness of hope in it’ (‘Style’, *Appreciations*, p.38). This greatness allows a master of letters to display ‘the unique word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, essay, or song, absolutely proper to the single mental presentation or vision within’ (p.29) — in other words, an ‘absolutely sincere apprehension of what is most real to him’ (p.36). By continual, scrupulous interaction with such literary masterpieces, a reader such as Flavian, with a copy of Apuleius in hand, encounters the interior life of others: ‘Not less surely does it reach a genuine pathos; for the habit of noting and distinguishing one’s own most intimate passages of sentiment makes one sympathetic, begetting, as it must, the power of entering, by all sorts of finer ways, into the intimate recesses of other minds’ (‘Postscript’, *Appreciations*, p.254).

Because it promised the power of ‘entering [...] into the intimate recesses of other minds’, Pater’s subjective approach to art became particularly attractive, by the 1880s, to ‘a new generation of literary men [who] began accepting homosexual sentiment as “part of

the whole range of feeling which waited to be explored”, some claim[ing] that homosexuality was often linked to the “artistic temperament”.<sup>74</sup> This ‘small band of elite “Oxonian souls”’<sup>75</sup> embraced Pater’s Decadent, Uranian vision, a vision proclaiming that ‘all art has a sensuous element, colour, form, sound’ (‘Winckelmann’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.167), a sensuous element which Pater made a habit of teasing from masterpieces of canonical culture, casting over the Victorian appreciation of literature and art a homoerotic and pederastic light which is most noticeable in his treatment of Leonardo da Vinci (1450-1519), about whom he writes: ‘Though [Leonardo] handles sacred subjects continually, he is the most profane of painters’ (*Renaissance* 1893, pp.93-94). As Dellamora observes, ‘Walter Pater promoted within the emergent academic field of literary criticism an oppositional mode of reading motivated by an affirmation of sexual and emotional ties between men’.<sup>76</sup> Although this new generation of literary men, under Pater’s influence, began to employ their ‘artistic temperaments’ to craft profane, cloistral atmospheres conducive to the display of their own ‘erotic sentiments’, Pater extends this sensuous vision beyond his Oxonian contemporaries, suggesting that ‘not only scholars, but all disinterested lovers of books, will always look to [literature], as to all other fine art, for a refuge, a sort of cloistral refuge, from a certain vulgarity in the actual world’ (‘Style’, *Appreciations*, pp.17-18). Hence, Pater reveals a ‘cultural continuum’, a ‘classical motive’ which flows — despite the obstacles of ‘a certain vulgarity in the actual world’ (as for Gosse, a reference to the Victorian populace) and the claims of modern scholars like Foucault — from the shores of the Tiber to the shores of the Thames, from the Greco-Romans to those of today, as Rictor Norton asserts:

Homosexuality is a broad stream which continues to run despite being dammed up and channelled off by social control. The evidence of history points to repression rather than construction as the shaping force of queer identity and culture. The opportunities for expressing queer desire have been increasingly restricted in modern times, but the desire remains the same.<sup>77</sup>



Because ‘he was still, and must always be, of the poetic temper’ (*Marius*, I, p.154), Pater’s Marius needed such a cloistral refuge from the vulgarity of the outside world, a world unappreciative of ‘revelation, vision, the uncovering of a vision, the *seeing* of a perfect humanity, in a perfect world’ (II, p.212). Although ‘his own temper, his early theoretic scheme of things, would have pushed him on to movement and adventure’, Marius’s temper actually pushed him inwards, a ‘movement of observation only, or even of pure meditation’ (II, p.203), a movement described in Pater’s *Renaissance* as ‘observation [...] dwarfed into the narrow chamber of the individual mind’ (‘Conclusion’, 1893, p.187), a meditative chamber suitable for intimate interaction with existing forms of culture, forms which Pater describes as ‘the brightest enthusiasms the world has to show’ (‘Winckelmann’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.183), enthusiasms which allow the intellect ‘to feel itself alive’ (p.183). Because he had lived his childhood in a ‘coy, retired place’ where nothing happened ‘without its full accompaniment of thought or reverie’ (I, p.20), for Marius ‘the whole of life seemed full of sacred presences’ (p.24). His familiarity with these ‘presences’ became as much ‘a manner of life’ (p.148) as it would for the young Leonardo, about whom Pater observes: ‘He learned [at Florence] the art of going deep, of tracking the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats, the power of an intimate presence in the things he handled’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.81). Dwelling within the ‘subtlest retreats’ — as Leonardo would later, in the Renaissance — Marius’s ‘manner of life’ allowed him to ‘become aware of the possibility of a large dissidence between an inward and somewhat exclusive world of his own vivid apprehensions, and the unimproved, unheightened reality of the world of those about him’ (I, p.134), a world which considered his Cyrenaic idealism as only an elevated, pompous form of Hedonism. The Roman world was unable to recognise that the ‘criterion of values’ for Marius’s Cyrenaic philosophy was ‘not pleasure, but fullness of life, and “insight”’ (I, p.152), in much the same way that the

Victorian world was unable to recognise the same for Pater's Cyrenaic philosophy — even members of his own coterie, such as Wilde. 'I wish they wouldn't call me a "hedonist"', Pater commented to Gosse in 1876, after reading a newspaper article which made reference to him. 'It produces such a bad effect on the minds of people who don't know Greek'.<sup>78</sup> The Victorian world (Wilde excluded, of course) was aghast that this 'hedonistic' Cyrenaic philosophy ever inspired its followers with an 'eagerness, just then, to taste and see and touch' (I, p.190), an eagerness so unlike that 'immobility' which Marius characterises as 'a sort of ideal in the Roman religion' and culture (II, p.176), a characterisation which, by his continual authorial asides, Pater manages to extend, as well, to his own 'immobile' and 'blasé' contemporaries. The Cyrenaic 'eagerness' which Pater advocates motivated Marius to dive into 'that full stream of refined sensation' (II, p.34), to live forever in that

school of Cyrene, in that comparatively fresh Greek world, [where] we may think we see that philosophy where it is least *blasé*, as we say; in its most pleasant, its blithest, and yet perhaps its wisest form, youthfully bright in the youth of European thought. But it grows young again for a while in almost every youthful soul. We hear it spoken of sometimes, as the appropriate utterance of jaded men; but in them it can hardly be sincere, or, by the nature of the case, an enthusiasm. [...] The Cyrenaic doctrine, then, realised as a motive of earnestness or enthusiasm, is not so properly the utterance of the 'jaded Epicurean', as of the strong young man in all the freshness of his thought and feeling, fascinated by the notion of at least lifting his life to the level of some bold, adventurous theory; while, in the first genial heat of existence, physical objects, also fair and strong, beat potently upon his unwearied and widely opened senses. He discovers a great new poem every spring, with a hundred thoughts and feelings never expressed, or at least never expressed so well, before. (II, pp.20-21)

This Cyrenaic 'eagerness' — expressed as the utterances of a 'strong young man in all the freshness of his thought and feeling' — is what attracted Pater both erotically and intellectually, is what inspired him to seek pederastic 'hearers' from among Balliol undergraduates like Hardinge or from among London actors like Eversfield. Pater's desire for contact with such 'unwearied and widely opened senses' is what made him willing to risk scandal and possible arrest, perhaps even Marius's 'martyrdom' for love's sake — though hoping that a protective discretion like Cornelius's would provide for him a cloistral refuge from the vulgar, their gossip, and their draconian laws, would protect him from the fate of Johnson, Solomon, Browning, and Wilde.

As ‘the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world’ (‘Conclusion’, *Renaissance* 1893, pp.187-88), Marius’s refined Cyrenaic doctrine surrounded him with just such a cloistral refuge, despite its attendant loneliness — a loneliness which dissipated under the realisation that his own aesthetic sensibility allowed for the expression of his most inward impressions, something which Pater describes in his *Renaissance*:

The basis of all artistic genius lies in the power of conceiving humanity in a new and striking way, of putting a happy world of its own creation in place of the meaner world of our common days, generating around itself an atmosphere with a novel power of refraction, selecting, transforming, recombining the images it transmits, according to the choice of the imaginative intellect. (‘Winckelmann’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.170)

Acquiring this sensibility, a sensibility which perceives humanity in ‘a new and striking way’, a sensibility which allows one ‘to burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, [and] to maintain this ecstasy’, suggests Pater, ‘is success in life’ (‘Conclusion’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.189). This success bestows a ‘colourless, unclassified purity of life, with its blending and interpenetration of intellectual, spiritual, and physical elements, still folded together, pregnant with the possibilities of a whole world closed within it’ (‘Winckelmann’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.174), an imaginative world impregnated by a Paterian sensibility, as is illustrated by Flavian as he shares his copy of Apuleius with Marius:

The two lads were lounging together over a book, half-buried in a heap of dry corn, in an old granary — the quiet corner to which they had climbed out of the way of their noisier companions on one of their blandest holiday afternoons. They looked round; the western sun smote through the broad chinks of the shutters. How like a picture it all was! and it was precisely the place described in what they were reading, with just that added poetic touch in the book which made it delightful and select, and, in the actual place, the ray of sunlight, transforming the rough grain among the cool brown shadows into heaps of gold. (I, p.59)

Such may have been the glories of an adolescence lived in Imperial Rome — but what of the glories of an adolescence lived in Victorian London? Anticipating this question, Pater responds with a challenge, asserting that ‘life in modern London even, in the heavy glow of summer, is stuff sufficient for the fresh imagination of a youth to build its “palace of

art” of’ (*Marius* II, p.22), a palace where humanity and its mores are ‘freshly’ perceived and expressed, whether in modern London or in ancient Rome. Embracing Pater’s mature dictum that ‘what is needed in the world, over against that [bland existence which others lead], is a certain general, permanent force of compassion — humanity’s standing self-pity’ (*Marius* II, p.180), Marius sought for a ‘humanity, a universal order, the great polity, its aristocracy of elect spirits, the mastery of their example over their successors’, for a ‘fresh’ humanity with mores that are ‘more than an intellectual abstraction’ (II, p.17). Only in the early Christian concept of a ‘supreme city, [an] invisible society, whose conscience had become explicit in its inner circle of inspired souls’ (II, p.16), did Marius find this ‘humanity’. In this ‘fresh’ faith’s ‘humanity, or even in its humanism, in its generous hopefulnes for man, its common sense, and alacrity of cheerful service, its sympathy with all creatures, its appreciation of beauty and daylight’ (II, p.118), Marius found materials from which to build his own ‘palace of art’, inspired by ‘a kindling flame at work in [early Christianity and its rites], which seemed to make everything else Marius had ever known look comparatively vulgar and mean’ (II, p.133).

This subsequent refinement (not change of perspective) was due, in great measure, to the maturing of ideas which Marius had embraced under Flavian’s influence, ideas that were further developed and adjusted through contact with Cornelius and the humanity of Cornelius’s church, ideas which were augmented through intimacy with his own ‘divine companion’: this is an apt expression of the subsequent refinement in Pater’s own perspectives and perceptions, as is made clear by that footnote he later added to the then-infamous ‘Conclusion’ of his *Renaissance*. In fact, this subsequent refinement can be illustrated by comparing a précis of *The Renaissance* with a précis of *Marius the Epicurean* (I have attempted, by donning Pater’s baroque style, to keep these as close as possible to how I believe he would himself have written them):

Expanding his time and vitality, first by refining his sympathy with the old masters — especially Renaissance artists who derived their sweetness from the Classical world and their curious strength from the Medieval, a combination of the profane and the sacred — then by exploring the finer gradations of the modern arts of music, poetry, and painting — an aesthetic critic exposes his sensual organs to the strange pagan beauties of art and mood and personality which are never flaccid, even in Christian culture, beauties which penetrate and stimulate and attune his otherwise brief and trivial life, filling it with as many brilliant sins and exquisite amusements as possible, impregnating him with culture and solace and grace, leaving behind only a relish, a longing for those experiences to happen again. (*Renaissance*, my précis)

In Christianity's humanistic ideal of a youth who, although parting with everything for his cause, still announces his success, as if foreseeing his own worship amid the vulgar pagan world — Marius had found an imaginative stimulus, a possible consciousness, a chivalry analogous to his own ample vision of that perpetual companion who was diffused through his memory of strange souls, transforming his vague hopes into effective desires, doubling his pleasures, bringing him gratitude for all aspects of his life, anticipating one great act, one critical moment, which, though it comes easily, changes himself and his life forever. (*Marius*, my précis)

Notice how the first involves a form of self-refinement through contact with the choicest of aesthetic works, stimulating and attuning one's brief life in order to create a form of exquisite 'self-culture'; the second, a renunciation of everything, even one's brief life, if that is what is required to achieve an ideal, an ideal bastioned by a 'sort of chivalrous conscience'. This refinement of perspective — the distinct difference between the Pater of *The Renaissance* and the Pater of *Marius the Epicurean* — is something which even many in his coterie seemed unable to grasp. Although, in 'Chapter Five', I will deal more fully with how this relates to Wilde, let me merely note that this Paterian concept of a youth 'parting with everything for his cause' was beyond Wilde's comprehension, hence worthy of his humoured or peeved disdain. In *The Critic as Artist*, Wilde expresses through Gilbert that 'self-denial is simply a method by which man arrests his progress, and self-sacrifice a survival of the mutilation of the savage, part of that old worship of pain which is so terrible a factor in the history of the world' (p.1122).<sup>79</sup> While the Pater of *The Renaissance* might well have seconded Wilde's claim, the Pater of *Marius the Epicurean* had come to appreciate both 'self-denial' and 'self-sacrifice', had come to realise that the ultimate refinement of self-culture was knowing how to assist one's comrades as well as the wider culture, how to facilitate the 'cultural continuum' (particularly in its pederastic and homoerotic sense) — even if that assistance required one to remain silent and/or stand

aside, a form of Paterian ‘martyrdom’ ever accompanied by Marius’s fear that ‘from the drops of his blood there would spring no miraculous, poetic flowers’ (II, p.209), an acquiescence which accepts banishment along with those scurrilous free spirits whom Dante relegates to the Vestibule of Hell as ‘unworthy alike of heaven and hell [...] [and placed in] the middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals’ (‘Sandro Botticelli’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.43).

Given the advantages of having acquired an aesthetic education, complete with ‘all the finer sorts of literature’ (*Marius* I, p.148), complete with an appreciation of the vulgarity and meanness of conventional humanity, Pater, like his persona Marius, felt morally compelled to enlighten others, to assist the wider culture — even though Pater recognised that this ‘assistance’ might only ever be appreciated by a very limited Decadent and Uranian audience (this is Pater’s conciliatory, not dissident impulse). Pater was fully aware that his own Cyrenaic doctrine ‘with its worship of beauty — of the body — of physical beauty’ would only ‘perform its legitimate moral function, as a “counsel of perfection”, for the few’ (II, p.32), a moral function which Pater extends to religious counsel, for ‘religious progress, like all purely spiritual progress, is confined to a few’ (‘Winckelmann’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.161). In Leonardo da Vinci, Pater found an exemplar of this aesthetic and spiritual counsel, for Leonardo ‘seemed to his contemporaries to be the possessor of some unsanctified and secret wisdom’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.78), a wisdom which transformed his studio into a form of Platonic academy, especially for

Andrea Salaino, beloved of Leonardo for his curled and waving hair [...] and afterwards his favourite pupil and servant. Of all the interests in living men and women which may have filled his life at Milan, this attachment alone is recorded. And in return Salaino identified himself so entirely with Leonardo, that the picture of *St. Anne*, in the Louvre, has been attributed to him. It illustrates Leonardo’s usual choice of pupils [...] men with just enough genius to be capable of initiation into his secret, for the sake of which they were ready to efface their own individuality. [...] Out of the secret places of a unique temperament [Leonardo] brought strange blossoms and fruits hitherto unknown. (1893, pp.91-92)<sup>80</sup>

As with Leonardo, Marius ‘lived so intently in the world, yet with an air so disengaged, [that it] gave him a peculiar expression of intellectual confidence, as of one who had indeed been initiated into a great secret. [...] The veil, which was to be lifted up for him, lay over the works of old mastery in art’ (*Marius*, I, pp.157-58). This intellectual confidence, a confidence which emboldened and enabled Marius to unexpurgate the subtleties of ancient art, had been gained through

refining all the instruments of inward and outward intuition, of developing all their capacities, of testing and exercising oneself in them, till one’s whole nature should become a complex medium of reception, towards the vision — the beautiful vision, if one really cared to make it such — of our actual experience in the world. Not the conveyance of an abstract body of truths or principles, would be the aim of the right education of oneself, or of another, but the conveyance of an art — an art in some degree peculiar and special to each individual. (I, pp.143-44)

At a Classical academy, an academy resembling, at least in pederastic import, the studio of Leonardo — ‘this school, one of many imitations of Plato’s Academy in the old Athenian garden, lay in a quiet suburb of Pisa, and had its grove of cypresses, its porticoes, a house for the master, its chapel and images’ (I, p.50) — Marius had gained that idiosyncratic, academic education which Pater, in his collection of lectures *Plato and Platonism*, claims is ‘a highly conscious reassertion of one of the two constituent elements in the Hellenic genius, of the spirit of the highlands namely in which the early Dorian forefathers of the Lacedæmonians *had secreted their peculiar disposition*, in contrast with the mobile, the marine and fluid temper of the littoral Ionian people’ (pp.200-01, emphasis added). Pater’s verb ‘secreted’ is a portmanteau of erotic suggestion, especially if ‘disposition’ is interpreted erotically: the Dorian ‘disposition’ is *secret—ed*, conveyed in secret from an ‘inspirer’ to a ‘hearer’; the Dorian ‘disposition’ is *secrete—d*, conveyed as a fluid (semen) from ‘inspirer’ to ‘hearer’. However, as Symonds explains in his *A Problem in Greek Ethics*, this erotic relationship conveyed more than erotic pleasure for the Dorians, more than a ‘disposition’ fostered by ejaculations secreted in secret:

The lover taught, the hearer learned; and so from man to man was handed down the tradition of heroism, the peculiar tone and temper of the state to which, in particular among the Greeks, the Dorians clung with obstinate pertinacity. Xenophon distinctly states that love was maintained

among the Spartans with a view to education; and when we consider the customs of the state, by which boys were separated early from their homes and the influences of the family were almost wholly wanting, it is not difficult to understand the importance of the pederastic institution. The Lacedæmonian lover might represent his friend in the Assembly. He was answerable for his good conduct, and stood before him as a pattern of manliness, courage, and prudence. Of the nature of his teaching we may form some notion from the precepts addressed by the Megarian Theognis to the youth Kurnus. In battle the lovers fought side by side.<sup>81</sup>

‘Praised for its sanity by Benjamin Jowett and the other Oxford dons’,<sup>82</sup> Pater’s *Plato and Platonism* asserted discretely that ‘the institutions of Sparta [which Symonds describes above] bore directly upon those of Victorian England’<sup>83</sup> — or, more aptly, ‘bore directly into’ the educational institutions of Victorian England, especially after educators such as William Johnson (*later* Cory) and Oscar Browning had begun ‘secreting their peculiar disposition’ into the orifices, carnal or cerebral, of many a submissive Etonian. Surprisingly, few of Pater’s contemporaries, including Jowett, seem to have recognised or particularly considered the book’s subtle veneration of Dorian (or, early Spartan) pederastic practices:

These bodies [of the young male Spartans], moreover, are shaped by a discipline in which normative Victorian masculinity is perpetually violated: this emphatically conservative and masculine society articulates its social authority through the anathematized practice of pederasty. Yet Pater’s sympathy to this transgressive discipline was not idiosyncratic: in contemporary reviews, [...] Pater’s account of Sparta was ‘universally admired’.<sup>84</sup>

Whether through Spartan discipline or Platonic dialogues, such pederastic practices engendered a receptive temperament or ‘disposition’ in the young Greeks of antiquity, a temperament of ‘strict indifference’ which Pater believed essential for encountering, whether in literature or in life, the brilliance of an individual like Plato:

The business of the young scholar therefore, in reading Plato, is not to take his side in a controversy, to adopt or refute Plato’s opinions, to modify, or make apology for, what may seem erratic or impossible in him; still less, to furnish himself with arguments on behalf of some theory or conviction of his own. His duty is rather to follow intelligently, but with strict indifference, the mental process there, as he might witness a game of skill; better still, as in reading *Hamlet* or *The Divine Comedy*, so in reading *The Republic*, to watch, for its dramatic interest, the spectacle of a powerful, of a sovereign intellect, translating itself, amid a complex group of conditions which can never in the nature of things occur again, at once pliant and resistant to them, into a great literary monument. (*Platonism*, pp.10-11)<sup>85</sup>

Pruriently, Pater suggests that the brilliance of Plato’s dialogues arises from the same sensuous faculty which made him a superior lover: ‘Just there, then, is the secret of Plato’s



intimate concern with, his power over, the sensible world, the apprehensions of the sensuous faculty: he is a lover, a great lover, somewhat after the manner of Dante' (p.135).<sup>86</sup>

Although sharing many of Pater's acquaintances and desires, as well as writing his only approved biography — well, 'approved' as far as Pater's fastidious and protective sisters Hester and Clara were concerned — Arthur C. Benson nonetheless recognised the moral problems arising from a unification of Plato's pedagogy and Dante's idealised love (a unification found in the passage above), compelling him to question: 'Isn't it really rather dangerous to let boys read Plato, if one is desirous that they should accept conventional moralities?'<sup>87</sup> Symonds also pondered this question, as Dowling relates:

No wonder Symonds in concluding *A Problem in Modern Ethics* (1891), the last of the homosexualist apologias he was to have printed during his lifetime, should suggest that those who insist on punishing homosexuals at law would do better instead to 'turn their attention to the higher education' being carried on in English public schools and universities. For it was just there that the 'best minds of our youth are ... exposed to the influences of a paederastic literature at the same time that they acquire the knowledge and experience of unnatural practices'.<sup>88</sup>

However, one must bear in mind that Benson's question about the dangers arising from boys-reading-Plato concerns 'conventional moralities' only, for Benson would not have been personally scandalised by the pederastic pedagogy that Pater sanctions or advocates: 'While not truly Uranian, Benson nevertheless hovered dangerously near Uranian sympathies'.<sup>89</sup> In fact, Benson would later provide a biographical introduction and notes for the 1905 edition of *Ionica*, a 'classic paean to romantic paiderastia'<sup>90</sup> by William Johnson (*later* Cory), one of the founding and most influential of the Uranians (or, as Timothy d'Arch Smith labels him, one of the most influential 'Uranian precursors'). (I consider this volume in my 'Conclusion'.) Johnson was 'a vigorous intellect, classicist, and master at Eton', and had 'a romantic belief in Platonic paiderastia',<sup>91</sup> the very pederasty which Symonds considers above and which was originally expounded to him in a letter from Johnson (a letter I considered in 'Chapter One'). As with Pater's friend Oscar

Browning a few years later, a scandal drew Johnson (who had formerly been one of Browning's own teachers there) away from his beloved Eton: 'Johnson was to leave Eton abruptly in 1872 after what appears to have been a parent's complaint about his overly intimate relationship with a pupil'.<sup>92</sup> As the provider of a biographical introduction and notes for Johnson's *Ionica* and as the writer of Pater's biography, Benson was one of those best qualified to answer his own rhetorical question, 'Isn't it really rather dangerous to let boys read Plato, if one is desirous that they should accept conventional moralities?'

While visiting Oxford in search of biographical materials about the elusive Pater, Benson gained a definitive answer to his own question, finding that Pater had always been the wanton 'corrupter of youths' that Pattison had observed in 1878 at a hand-holding tea at the Paters', a 'corrupter' returning from 'upstairs' with two 'feminine' boys in tow. In *On the Edge of Paradise: A. C. Benson: The Diarist*, David Newsome observes:

If the writing of *Walter Pater* took under three months, at least the research behind it had proved ticklish and delicate, as [Edmund] Gosse had warned [Arthur Benson] it would. There were 'dark areas' in Pater's life. Benjamin Jowett had gained possession of certain compromising letters which he had threatened Pater he would publish should he ever think of standing for university office. Arthur's reaction was instinctively to defend Pater's male friendships as never being anything but 'frigidly Platonic'. After he had visited Oxford and talked with Herbert Warren at Magdalen about the Aesthetic Movement generally, he was less happy. 'It will want great care', he wrote. This was 'rather a dark place, I'm afraid. But if we give boys Greek books to read and hold up the Greek spirit and the Greek life as a model, it is very difficult to slice out one portion, which was a perfectly normal part of Greek life, and to say that it is abominable etc. etc. A strongly sensuous nature — such as Pater and Symonds — with a strong instinct for beauty, and brought up at an English public school, will almost certainly go wrong, in thought if not in act'.<sup>93</sup>

Warren's assessment of Pater seemed tenable to Benson, especially since Pater had fashioned himself as a receptive student of Plato,<sup>94</sup> a pederastic lover whose philosophical strength came from a 'strongly sensuous nature' which, as with Marius, rested in the education of the eyes — for the artist, as well as the philosopher, implores his students: 'I want you to see precisely what I see' (*Appreciations*, p.31). In fact, Marius felt that

a diligent promotion of the capacity of the eye, inasmuch as in the eye would lie for him the determining influence of life: — he was of the number of those who, in the words of a poet who came long after, must be 'made perfect by the love of visible beauty'. It was a discourse conceived from the point of view of a theory which Marius afterwards found in Plato's *Phaedrus*, [...] which supposes men's spirits to be susceptible to certain influences, diffused, like streams or currents, by fair things or persons visibly present — green fields and children's faces, for instance — into the air

around them; and which, with certain natures, are like potent material essences, conforming the seer to themselves as by some cunning physical necessity. (*Marius*, I, pp.37-38)

This Platonic disposition, a disposition which Pater and his *Marius* both believed to be characteristically present in children, became an ideal for *Marius*, who hoped to maintain ‘the unclouded and receptive soul quitting the world finally, with the same fresh wonder with which it had entered it still unimpaired’ (II, p.214), for this disposition is not limited by chronological age — ‘Winckelmann looked at life with a fresh, childlike eye’<sup>95</sup> — or, as Pater phrases this himself in relation to Winckelmann’s admiration for all things Greek: ‘Greek sensuousness [...] is shameless and childlike’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.177). Robert Currie suggests that Pater had adopted or adapted this view from Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805), causing Pater to believe that, ‘in the nineteenth century, only the child, or the naive genius, might enjoy the immediacy of Greek life’,<sup>96</sup> an ‘immediacy’ that could only be maintained in adulthood through continual interaction with the young, an interaction about which *Marius* elaborates in his diary: ‘I notice often the true character of the fondness of the roughest working-people for their young children. [...] What is of finer soul, or of finer stuff, in things, and *demand delicate touching* — the delicacy of the little child represents to [the roughest worker] that, initiates him into that’ (II, pp.178-79, emphasis added). If even the most illiterate, vulgar, and rough worker is somewhat initiated into this ‘finer soul’ through physical contact with his own children, how much more so for someone with refined sensibilities like *Marius*, someone who, because he is fully initiated into the pleasures and philosophies of the ‘immediacy of Greek life’, feels compelled to perform the ‘legitimate moral function’ of Cyrenaic philosophy, the ‘counsel of perfection, for the few’ (II, p.32) — in this case, a few boys of receptive temperament who could become his inspired ‘hearers’, like the following boy whose physical description seems to ‘demand delicate touching’:

Marius became fluent concerning the promise of one young student [...] and soon afterwards the lad was seen coming along briskly — a lad with gait and figure well enough expressive of the sane mind in the healthy body, though a little slim and worn of feature, and with a pair of eyes expressly designed, it might seem, for fine glancing at the stars. At the sight of Marius he paused suddenly, and with a modest blush on recognising his companion, who straightway took with the youth, *so prettily enthusiastic*, the freedom of an old friend. (II, pp.144-45, emphasis added)

In contrast to Marius's Socratic tutelage, the Sophistic tutelage of Marcus Cornelius Fronto (100-170 CE) — 'a favourite "director" of noble youth' and a contemporary of Marius — bestowed on his 'hearers', like Marcus Aurelius, a complex code of conduct, 'an intimate practical knowledge of manners, physiognomies, smiles, disguises, flatteries, and courtly tricks of every kind — a whole accomplished rhetoric of daily life' (I, pp.220; 219).<sup>97</sup> The Socratic tutelage of Marius, on the other hand, did not advocate continual interaction with or even manipulation of an existent, canonical, wider culture, especially a religiously intolerant culture like Classical Rome or a homophobic culture like Victorian England. Instead, Marius advocated interaction with a submerged and subversive culture (though this culture is the only *authentic* one, from the Uranians' histrionic perspective, as I noted in my 'Preface'), a community of 'enthusiasts' impassioned by pederastic and homoerotic sensibilities, a community which Pater made the very cornerstone of his own attempts to assist the wider culture, despite the assurance that only a few would understand:

Invariably the binding secret remains obscure: it seems to designate a particular state of mind or mode of existence rather than a body of discursive lore, and hence is not to be revealed, only experienced. In this sense, a form of secret society is implicitly constituted by virtually all of Pater's accounts of the reception and transmission of artworks or cultural traditions — as, for example, 'the Hellenic tradition' constructed in 'Winckelmann'. Many critics have commented on the pronounced homoerotic character of these communities of 'enthusiasts', as Pater refers to Winckelmann; certainly the 'secret' into which Leonardo initiates young men seems as much sexual as artistic. [...] Pater's rhetoric clearly suggests a calculated affiliation of his aestheticism with homoerotic subcultures that still remain shadowy in recent social and literary histories of Victorian England.<sup>98</sup>

Beyond accentuating the similarities between Marius's receptive temperament and Christianity's early secrecy, one passage I would like to consider also provides an example of Pater's 'calculated affiliation' with that shadowy, secret society implicitly constituted in his texts, a society of 'enthusiasts' who would have appreciated the pederastic and

homoerotic subtleties concealed behind his description of a Christian sanctuary, of all things. Pater's informed reader, an 'enthusiast', would have recognised in the following a metaphorical insight into Marius's instruction of that 'young student', a boy described as 'so prettily enthusiastic': 'Faithful to the spirit of his early Epicurean philosophy and the impulse to surrender himself, in perfectly liberal inquiry about it, to anything that, as a matter of fact, attracted or impressed him strongly, Marius informed himself with much pains concerning the church in Cecilia's house' (II, p.123). This sentence seems tame enough — that is, till it is brought into proximity with the object of Marius's erotic desires. If Marius had an 'impulse to surrender himself to *anything* that attracted or impressed him strongly', such that he 'informed himself' about it (as he did concerning the church in Cecilia's house), then what about his impulse to become 'fluent concerning the promise of one young student'? Can Marius's 'impulse' be anything other than a salacious desire to 'surrender himself' to that youthful companion? — a boy 'so prettily enthusiastic', a boy who had 'attracted or impressed him [as] strongly' as the Christian church in Cecilia's house, where 'there reigned throughout, an order and purity, an orderly disposition, as if by way of making ready for some gracious spousals. The place itself was like a bride adorned for her husband' (II, p.101). Seen in this light, the boy 'so prettily enthusiastic', in whom Marius is also attracted, becomes a pederastic 'bride adorned for [his] husband', becomes the 'hearer' adorned for nuptials with Marius the 'inspirer'. Furthermore, since these religious rites are described as 'a half-opened book to be read by the duly initiated mind' (II, p.136), they also recall Marius's attendance at the deathbed of his beloved Flavian, a youth whose copy of Apuleius lay half-opened nearby, a youth whose last moments were spent crafting the *Pervigilium Veneris* as a form of epithalamion, a traditional hymn sung as a couple is ushered towards a chamber made ready for the consummation of their 'gracious spousals'. This also recalls Cupid's marriage in Apuleius's verses, a marriage

interwoven with the act of Jupiter being attended by the Olympian version of Marius's beloved boy, the most potent of pederastic icons, Ganymede:

And thereupon [Jupiter] bade Mercury produce Psyche in heaven; and holding out to her his ambrosial cup, 'Take it', he said, 'and live forever: nor shall Cupid ever depart from thee'. And the gods sat down together to the marriage-feast. On the first couch lay the bridegroom, and Psyche in his bosom. *His rustic serving-boy bare* the wine to Jupiter; and Bacchus to the rest. (I, p.92, emphasis added)

A pederastic education capable of cultivating a rustic Trojan shepherd into the servant and beloved of Jupiter, of elevating a Ganymede from a 'rustic serving-boy bare' to the 'rustic serving-boy [who] bare the wine to Jupiter' (Pater playfully choosing his verb to allow for pederastic 'underthought') — such an education is most clearly elucidated by Pater in his essay on the archaeologist and art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann, an essay that Dellamora suggests is so 'deeply felt' because of 'the depth of affinity between these two men', for 'both [Pater and Winckelmann] shared an erotic temperament and wrote especially for young men'.<sup>99</sup> Winckelmann was the author of such works as *Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture* (*Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in Malerei und Bildhauerkunst*, 1755), *The History of Ancient Art* (*Geschichte der Kunst des Alterhums*, 1764), and *Unpublished Ancient Monuments, Explained and Illustrated* (*Monumenti antichi inediti, spiegati ed illustrati*, 1767; see 'Appendix Thirty-Two'). He was also the Papal Antiquary and the tutor of young European aristocrats. In his essay on Winckelmann, Pater daringly explores 'the homoerotic tradition of Western culture at a point of origin in Plato's dialogues', and, even further, (re)considers a historical personage who, more openly than himself, 'pursued romantic attachments with young men'.<sup>100</sup>

Appointed to tutor Friedrich Wilhelm Peter Lamprecht (1728-1797), son of the chief magistrate of Hadmersleben, in Sachsen Anhalt, Germany,<sup>101</sup> Winckelmann soon exceeded his tutorial role, his illicit 'friendship' with the younger Lamprecht evolving into

‘the great love of Winckelmann’s life’.<sup>102</sup> This situation became ‘a composition in pedagogy and passion’, such that ‘when Winckelmann left the Lamprecht family house in the spring of 1743 to take up a position as assistant headmaster in a school in Seehausen, the young Lamprecht followed, taking up residence in Winckelmann’s room and continuing with his lessons’ for the next five years, lessons flushed with a ‘desire that blends eros, pedagogy and aesthetics’.<sup>103</sup> Twenty years passed before Winckelmann encountered the ‘one more Lamprecht in his life’, a young baron of Livonia, Friedrich Reinhold von Berg (1736-1809), with whom, some scholars assert, he shared ‘a specific instance of homoerotic practice’.<sup>104</sup> Winckelmann later instructed other aristocrats — ‘young princes from Germany’ — and this instruction was ‘marked by the same elan and pedagogic purpose as his friendships with Lamprecht and Berg’: his most noteworthy student of this period being ‘Leopold III Friedrich Franz [1740-1817], the ruling prince of Anhalt-Dessau who was twenty-five when he sought out Winckelmann in Rome’.<sup>105</sup> In these descriptions, Winckelmann is noticeably defined as a homoerotic and pederastic ‘inspirer’, an ‘inspirer’ equal to a Jove or Socrates or Marius or Leonardo, though an ‘inspirer’ who would, unfortunately, be murdered before he had an opportunity to meet what would have been his principal ‘hearer’, the young Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who remained a lifelong admirer: ‘Pater imagines what would have happened if Winckelmann and Goethe had met. It is a homosexual fantasy’.<sup>106</sup>

To elaborate more fully than I did in my ‘Introduction’: if, as Kevin Parker suggests, ‘Winckelmann’s relation to the Greeks is rather explicitly erotic’ and ‘informed by a certain very stylized homoerotics’,<sup>107</sup> then Pater’s relation to Winckelmann is much more so, for his essay about this archaeologist and art critic literally undulates with stylised homoeroticism — though ‘Greek enthusiasm’ or ‘pederasty’ suits far better Winckelmann’s style and the style of Pater’s responsive essay — a blend of Platonism,

pederasty, and aesthetic instruction cultivated to inspire young ‘aristocrats’ (extremely young when compared to Winckelmann). The following description of Winckelmann’s approach to the youthful figure in antique art (and, subsequently, in actual flesh) seems almost an approach to a naked Flavian reclined at a window or a dew-bespotted Cupid in much the same pose:

Again, Greek sculpture deals almost exclusively with youth, where the moulding of the bodily organs is still as if suspended between growth and completion, indicated but not emphasised; where the transition from curve to curve is so delicate and elusive, that Winckelmann compares it to a quiet sea, which, although we understand it to be in motion, we nevertheless regard as an image of repose; where, therefore, the exact degree of development is so hard to apprehend. (*Renaissance* 1893, p.174)

Yet, Winckelmann’s ‘temperament’ did apprehend those physical subtleties, for he had developed, according to Pater, bold ‘new senses’ which endowed him with a pederastic acumen in regard to puerile beauty, a Grecian subject hitherto taboo in Western culture, at least after the ascension of Christianity:

And that world in which others had moved with so much embarrassment, seems to call out in Winckelmann new senses fitted to deal with it. He is in touch with it; it penetrates him, and becomes part of his temperament. He remodels his writings with constant renewal of insight; he catches the thread of a whole sequence of laws in some hollowing of the hand, or dividing of the hair; he seems to realise that fancy of the reminiscence of a forgotten knowledge hidden for a time in the mind itself. (1893, pp.154-55)

Pater suggests that ‘this key to the understanding of the Greek spirit, Winckelmann possessed in his own nature’ (1893, p.175), possessed as a serenity of temperament which influenced his ‘handling of the sensuous side of Greek art’, a serenity recognisable in his ‘absence of any sense of want, or corruption, or shame’ (p.176). The method of Winckelmann’s ‘handling of the sensuous side’ is given a rather phallic thrust, rhetorically, when Pater claims that ‘penetrating into the antique world by his passion, his temperament, [Winckelmann] enunciated no formal principles, always hard and one-sided’ (p.176). With such descriptions (as pederastic and as homoerotic as those of his biographical subject), Pater asserts that ‘nothing was to enter into [Winckelmann’s] life unpenetrated by its central enthusiasm’ (p.144), an enthusiasm which even in ‘the protracted longing of his



youth is not a vague, romantic longing’, for Winckelmann ‘knows what he longs for, what he wills. Within its severe limits his enthusiasm burns like lava’ (p.148), an enthusiasm and an ‘affinity with Hellenism [...] not merely intellectual’ (p.152), an enthusiasm arising from ‘his romantic, fervent friendships with young men’:

This enthusiasm, dependent as it is to a great degree on bodily temperament, has a power of reinforcing the purer emotions of the intellect with an almost physical excitement. That this affinity with Hellenism was not merely intellectual, that the subtler threads of temperament were inwoven in it, is proved by his romantic, fervent friendships with young men. He *has known*, he says, many young men more beautiful than Guido [Reni]’s archangel. These friendships, bringing him *into contact* with the pride of human form, and staining the thoughts with its bloom, perfected his reconciliation to the spirit of Greek sculpture. (p.152, emphasis added)

Brought ‘into contact’ with ‘the pride of human form’, Winckelmann had indeed ‘known many young men more beautiful than Guido [Reni]’s archangel’, had ‘known’ them in the intimate ways that the men of Sodom had, for Pater is employing here, as already noted, the language of Genesis 19.5 — ‘And [the men of Sodom] called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them’ (KJV); ‘[...] Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them’ (NIV). By implication, Pater suggests that ‘we see [in these “romantic, fervent friendships”] the native tendency of Winckelmann to escape from abstract theory to intuition, to the exercise of sight and touch’ (1893, p.147). Pater assumes that Winckelmann, inspired by the beauty of these young German aristocrats, performed with them pedagogical ‘exercises of sight and touch’, an assumption supported by that anecdote from the memoirs of Jacques Casanova which recounts how, prancing ‘unannounced into Winckelmann’s rooms in Rome one day’, Casanova interrupted just such a pedagogical ‘exercise of sight and touch’ (as already considered in my ‘Introduction’). Remember that, after Winckelmann ‘had straightened his trousers and the young man he had been surprised with had beat a hasty retreat’,<sup>108</sup> Winckelmann justified his activities to Casanova as follows, though here provided in a fuller form:

You know I am not only not a pederast, but for all of my life I have said it is inconceivable that such a taste can have so seduced the human race. If I say this after what you have just witnessed, you will think me a hypocrite. But this is the way it is: During my long studies I have come to admire and then to adore the ancients who, as you know, were almost all buggerers without concealing it, and many of them immortalized the handsome objects of their tenderness in their poems, not to speak of superb monuments. They went so far as to bring up their taste as evidence of the purity of their morals. [...] With the clear realization of such truths, I cast a glance at myself and felt disdain, a kind of reproach for not at all resembling my heroes. I found myself, at least as far as my love life was concerned, as unworthy of esteem, and not being able to overcome this conceit by cold theory, I decided to illumine myself through practice, hoping that by analysing the matter my mind would acquire the light necessary for distinguishing between true and false. Thus determined, it has been three or four years that I have been working at this business, choosing the cutest Smerdiases of Rome, but it has done no good. When I get down to it, *non arrivo* [not reaching climax]. I see in my confusion that a woman is preferable in any case, but outside of not caring about this I fear a bad reputation, for what would one say here in Rome, particularly where I am well known, if one could say that I had a mistress?<sup>109</sup>

Although awkwardly compromised, although recasting his interrupted ‘tutorial’ as an attempt ‘to illumine’ himself through pederastic practise, Winckelmann nonetheless admitted candidly to Casanova that his own Classicism was an attempt to reconstruct the pederastic culture which had flourished among the ancients — ‘almost all [of whom were] buggerers without concealing it’ — a Hellenic culture which often lingers only as pitiable fragments buried beneath the earth or in the (sub)consciousness of man, as Pater explains:

This testimony to the authority of the Hellenic tradition, its fitness to satisfy some vital requirement of the intellect, which Winckelmann contributes as a solitary man of genius, is offered also by the general history of the mind. The spiritual forces of the past, which have prompted and informed the culture of a succeeding age, live, indeed, within that culture, but with an absorbed, underground life. *The Hellenic element alone has not been so absorbed, or content with this underground life; from time to time it has started to the surface; culture has been drawn back to its sources to be clarified and corrected. Hellenism is not merely an absorbed element in our intellectual life; it is a conscious tradition in it.* (*Renaissance* 1893, p.158, emphasis added)

Neither absorbed nor content with its underground life, this ‘Hellenic element’ had also ‘started to the surface’ in Victorian culture, as a seedling nurtured by Pater and his coterie. Nevertheless, as Wilde would later illustrate textually and literally, ‘those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril’, a peril which extended beyond those who tilled the Uranian soil to those who gathered what Hopkins (in that fragmentary poem composed upon Pater’s dinner acceptance) calls the ‘brightest blooms’, blooms with the ‘sweetest nectar’. There were real dangers that arose from cultivating this pederastic flower and ‘staining the thoughts with its bloom’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.152), and the particular

blooms that sprang from Pater's own cultivation of this 'Hellenic element' were only appreciated and discretely sanctioned by those who, like Winckelmann, had the 'key to the understanding of the Greek spirit' in their own 'natures' — those who, like Hopkins and Wilde, were masters of the Classics studied in Oxford's *Literae Humaniores* (or Greats), a bountiful bouquet of Greco-Roman pederastic nuances. After gathering a score of pederastic blooms from the dialogues of Plato, the apprenticeships of Leonardo, and the criticisms of Winckelmann, Pater crafted, particularly in his *Renaissance*, a pedagogical laurel which would wreath the scholarly and sexual temperaments of many an Oxonian like Hopkins, as well as many a modern 'Uranian' (even if they know it not).

Despite the fact that, when Pater's essay on Winckelmann appeared in the *Westminster Review* in January 1867, it did so anonymously, Hopkins is likely to have known much of its substance, even if he was not assured of Pater's authorship (given that Hopkins knew the essay at all). This essay on Winckelmann was published six months before Hopkins graduated from Oxford, while he was busily preparing with Pater for his finals in Greats, a period during which, Nixon asserts, 'Pater would have shared much of his scholarship with Hopkins'.<sup>110</sup> Perhaps after a rhetorical question like 'And what does the spirit need in the face of modern life?' — a question with its attendant answer of 'The sense of freedom' ('Winckelmann', *Renaissance* 1893, p.184) — Pater had vaguely insinuated to Hopkins 'the theme of sexual freedom latent in Winckelmann's notion of Greek nakedness'.<sup>111</sup> Much later, as a mature poet and professor himself, Hopkins must have ruminated over those discussions he had had with Pater, discussions impregnated by a Winckelmannesque appreciation for Hellenic pederasty, a pedagogical tradition that occasionally surfaces in Western culture, blooming in the likes of Hopkins's 'Epithalamion', a poem fulfilling Pater's insistence that the artistic goal is 'to create — to live, perhaps, a little beyond the allotted span, in some fragment even, of perfect

expression [...] something to hold by and rest on, amid the *perpetual flux*' (*Marius*, I, p.155), something stable amid the Heraclitean changes in life and culture that Hopkins considers in 'That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the Comfort of the Resurrection'. Beyond its intrinsic poetic value (discussed in the previous chapter), the Paterian quality of Hopkins's 'Epithalamion' — according to Nixon, an expression of the 'Paterian notions of the wholeness of male sexuality'<sup>112</sup> — seriously challenges Norman White's dismissal of the poem as an improvisational fragment, as a collection of 'landscape descriptions [which] have no force of plot behind them'.<sup>113</sup> As a poetical masterpiece, Hopkins's 'Epithalamion' seems to warrant what Marius refers to as 'an ampler vision, which should take up into itself and explain this world's delightful shows, as the scattered fragments of a poetry, till then but half-understood, might be taken up into the text of a lost epic, recovered at last' (II, p.214). This would certainly fulfil part of the title of Michael Lynch's article about the poet's homoeroticism — 'Recovering Hopkins, Recovering Ourselves'.<sup>114</sup>

Exhibiting the same literary scrupulosity which, in Flavian, Pater describes as 'a sort of chivalrous conscience', Hopkins, in his 'Epithalamion', 'manipulated [words] with all his delicate force, [...] making visible to others that which was vividly apparent, delightful, of lively interest to himself' (*Marius*, I, p.98) — which was a woodland where bathing boys abound and where a prurient stranger advances until, erotically inspired by the boys' nakedness, he undresses and bathes alone, in a vacillating stream aflow with masturbatory connotations. Like the church in Cecilia's house, this 'branchy bunched bushybowered wood' within which Hopkins has chosen to conceal his most delicate, homoerotic and pederastic expression is 'a bride adorned for her husband' (II, p.101), an appropriate place indeed for a nuptial epithalamion. Contrary to White's insistence that these 'landscape descriptions have no force of plot behind them', the 'Epithalamion', as

well as its landscape, is planted with a ‘temperament’ rather than plotted with action, a ‘receptive temperament’ that Pater had instilled in his students like Hopkins, imploring his ‘hearers’ ‘to watch, for its dramatic interest, the spectacle [...] of a sovereign intellect, translating itself, amid a complex group of conditions which can never in the nature of things occur again’ (*Platonism*, p.11). Essentially, the ‘Epithalamion’ allows Hopkins to translate his own ‘sovereign intellect’, to display ‘the power of entering [...] into the intimate recesses of other minds’ (‘Postscript’, *Appreciations*, p.254), in this case his own. For Hopkins as well as for Pater, these ‘secret places of a unique temperament’ (‘Leonardo’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.92) ‘seem to designate a particular state of mind or mode of existence rather than a body of discursive lore, and hence [are] not to be revealed, only experienced’,<sup>115</sup> experienced as an education of the senses, an education which, for Hopkins as much as for the continuum of Plato, Marius, Leonardo, Winckelmann, and Pater, ‘blends eros, pedagogy and aesthetics’.<sup>116</sup> For Pater, this involves the acquisition of ‘appreciation’, of ‘style’, of the skill to influence others in turn:

Greatness of literary art depends on a rich and expressive style which places it architecturally within the great structure of human life, using fine, scholarly speech to express an inner vision which informs and controls, has compass and variety, is allied to great ends, has depths of revolt and largeness of hope — the writer giving each unique phrase, sentence, structural member, and the entire composition a similar unity with its subject and with itself, providing a cloistral refuge from the vulgarity of the actual world, allowing his readers to see precisely what he sees, to enter into the intimate recesses of his own mind and sentiments. (*Appreciations*, my précis, donning Pater’s style)

After addressing his reader as his ‘hearer’ — the beloved of traditional pederastic pedagogy — Hopkins invites his reader to participate aesthetically in the creation of a mutual fantasy, to experience the transformation of a voyeuristic stranger from ‘listless’ to ‘froliclavish’. This is the skill of ‘influence’ about which Pater speaks. ‘The basis of all artistic genius’, writes Pater, ‘lies in the power of conceiving humanity in a new and striking way, of putting a happy world of its own creation in place of the meaner world of our common days’ (‘Winckelmann’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.170), a world created through an

‘interpenetration of intellectual, spiritual, and physical elements’ (p.174), a world abounding with a ‘Cyrenaic eagerness [...] to taste and see and touch’ (*Marius*, I, p.199), an eagerness to dive into what Marius calls ‘that full stream of refined sensation’ (II, p.34). For Hopkins, this ‘full stream of refined sensation’ spills forth from youthful bodies, bodies of ‘limber liquid youth’ which yield ‘tender as a pushed peach’ (‘Bugler’s First Communion’, lines 22-23), bodies which ‘Winckelmann compares [...] to a quiet sea, which, although we understand it to be in motion, we nevertheless regard as an image of repose’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.174). In contrast to Winckelmann’s youthful bodies in their sculptural repose, Hopkins’s are ‘fretted’ by a masturbatory fever which drives them to hurl themselves into a river ‘boisterously beautiful’, a fever which also drives the prurient imagination of a ‘listless stranger beckoned by their noise’, a stranger who gazes, unseen, until

This garland of their gambol flashes in his breast  
 Into such a sudden zest  
 Of summertime joys  
 That he hies to a pool neighbouring.

This ‘pool neighbouring’ is a place of seclusion where the stranger (perhaps ashamed to swim naked with the randy boys) can appease his own sensual urges, a place described as ‘sweetest, freshest, shadowiest; / Fairyland’. Impassioned far by the boys’ voluptuous accents, Hopkins’s ‘listless’ stranger undresses and bathes alone, allowing the water, described as a ‘heavenfallen freshness’, to ‘break across his limbs / Long’, an act which changes his state from ‘listless’ to ‘froliclavish’ as he embraces and is embraced by the watery hand of God. Through this baptismal conversion, Hopkins illustrates Pater’s tripartite division of humanity: ‘Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest, at least among “the children of this world”, in art and song’ (‘Conclusion’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.190). Hopkins’s epithalamic stranger exchanges his ‘listlessness’ for ‘high passions’ (‘higher’ certainly than the passions of the bathing boys);

and, wiser still, Hopkins's 'hearer' and narrator together construct a pederastic and homoerotic epithalamion, a poetic unification of Greco-Roman 'art and song'. However, few artists, Pater observes, capture a 'quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love' (p.190), all of which accompany Hopkins's creation of the 'Epithalamion'. Beyond the naked bathers and their voyeur bathed in 'high passions', both the narrator and the 'hearer', the artistic participants of Hopkins's 'Epithalamion', are bathed in insight, in that 'quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love' — especially given the elegiac quality of the poem as it relates to Digby Dolben (which I illustrated at the end of 'Chapter Three'). For Hopkins, as for Marius, 'the whole of life seemed full of sacred presences' (I, p.24), presences that bestow not only passion (however 'high'), but also serenity, 'the absence of any sense of want, or corruption, or shame' ('Winckelmann', *Renaissance* 1893, p.176). While on a spiritual retreat in early September 1873, Hopkins seems to have acquired just such a 'serenity' in relation to Dolben, who had died, disturbingly for Hopkins, outside of the Roman Catholic fold: 'I received as I think a great mercy about Dolben' (*Journals*, p.236).<sup>117</sup> Elsewhere, on several occasions, Hopkins uses this same phrasing to describe an assurance he felt he had been 'granted' of someone's salvation, in the following case, his grandfather's:

I receive it without questioning as a mark that my prayers have been heard and that the queen of heaven has saved a Christian soul from enemies more terrible than a fleet of infidels. Do not make light of this, for it is perhaps the seventh time that I think I have had some token from heaven in connection with the death of people in whom I am interested. (Letter to his mother, 9 October 1877, *Letters* III, p.148)

This 'serenity' about Dolben, with its accompanying elegiac tint (however questionable the circumstances from which it derived), adds the final flourish to Hopkins's strikingly Paterian 'Epithalamion', for 'there [had] come, from the very depth of his desolation, an eloquent utterance at last, on the irony of men's fates, on the singular accidents of life and death' (*Marius*, II, p.209).

If, as Pater insists, the greatness of literary art depends on ‘the quality of the matter it informs or controls, its compass, its variety, its alliance to great ends, or the depth of the note of revolt, or the largeness of hope in it’ (‘Style’, *Appreciations*, p.38), then, contrary to White’s dismissal of Hopkins’s poem as ‘second-hand impressions pasted together’,<sup>118</sup> the ‘Epithalamion’ is indeed a masterpiece, displaying *all* of the qualities Pater deemed essential in art: for, as my last chapter elucidated, Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’ serves as an imaginative lesson in Keatsian beauty and serenity; as a protest against conventional morality and its conception of the body; as a lyrical blending of Classical, Romantic, Christian, and Victorian themes; as an elegy on the death of his own beloved Dolben; as an affirmation of sexual freedom and mortal beauty; as a pederastic creed as controversial as anything that would be written in the decades following by the other English Uranians. Missing the plot, the temperament, and the mastery of Hopkins’s ‘Epithalamion’ — as has been the case for modern literary criticism — stems, almost entirely, from a refusal to recognise Hopkins as Pater’s Decadent pupil, a pupil fully versed in the pederastic culture which flourished among the ancients (‘almost all buggerers without concealing it’) as well as among his own contemporaries, a pupil who had developed that homoerotic and pederastic ‘temperament’ which Pater describes as ‘a sort of chivalrous conscience’, and the later Uranians, as the ‘New Chivalry’. White’s mistake stems from a belief that ‘the person who most influenced Gerard Hopkins’s writings was John Ruskin’.<sup>119</sup> Hopkins often was, it must be admitted, strikingly Ruskinian in his love of Aristotelian particulars and their arrangements; however, it was at the foot of Pater, with his love of Platonic pedagogy and pederasty, that Hopkins would ever remain. While ‘Pater imagines what would have happened if Winckelmann and Goethe had met [...] a homosexual fantasy’,<sup>120</sup> I can imagine what would have happened if Pater and Hopkins had not met — a pederastic and ‘homosexual’ vacuity. The result would have been an utterly different Hopkins, a



Hopkins far less Decadent and Uranian, a Hopkins far less suggestive, multifaceted, and grand. The result would also have been an utterly different Pater, a Pater whose pederastic pedagogy would not have had its greatest flowering — a flowering not in his own works, but in a work by his ablest ‘hearer’, ‘the fit executant’ who would seize and size Pater’s elaborate *Weltanschauung* into a single, masterful poem.

Epitaph:  
 ‘Like a Sweet Aroma in Early Manhood’:  
 Pater and Hopkins Draped with the Emerald Flag

The boy, who had been to a dance the night before, remained asleep. He lay with his limbs uncovered. He lay unashamed, embraced and penetrated by the sun. The lips were parted, the down on the upper was touched with gold, the hair broken into countless glories, the body was a delicate amber. To anyone he would have seemed beautiful, and to Maurice who reached him by two paths he became the World’s desire.  
 (E. M. Forster, *Maurice*)<sup>121</sup>

‘A musical composer’s notes, we know, are not themselves till the fit executant comes, who can put all they may be into them’,<sup>122</sup> wrote Walter Pater in ‘Emerald Uthwart’, a short story about how, as members of a conservative society, Victorian or our own, ‘you thwart’ a youth who tries ‘to burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, [who tries] to maintain this [Paterian] ecstasy’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.189).<sup>123</sup> This claim about the ‘fit executant’ may have been as true for Pater’s doctrines as for any composer’s notes, perhaps gaining their fullest expression through an epithalamion by one of his students. Gerard Manley Hopkins may well have been the ‘fit executant’ of Pater’s homoerotic and pederastic doctrines, doctrines derived from an erotic nature which they had both come to appreciate in themselves while yet undergraduates at Oxford, for ‘often the presence of this nature is felt like a sweet aroma in early manhood’ (‘Emerald’, *Miscellaneous*, p.253).

Whilst Pater was his Greats coach and Digby Dolben his desired beloved, Hopkins must have resembled Pater's protagonist Emerald, 'a rather sensuous boy!' (p.201), with qualities like those preferred and praised by Plato: 'conservative Sparta and its youth; whose unsparing discipline had doubtless something to do with the fact that it was the handsomest and best-formed in all Greece' (p.210).<sup>124</sup> Like the young Spartans, Pater's Emerald displays a receptive disposition which another 'great lover of boys and young men', according to Pater, praised as "full of affections, full of powers, full of occupation", for "the younger part of us especially (more naturally than the older) receive the tidings that there are things to be loved and things to be done which shall never pass away" (p.198). As with these youths, Emerald had received such 'tidings' through a pederastic intimacy in which he was the receptive partner, both physically and intellectually: 'Submissiveness! — It had the force of genius with Emerald Uthwart. In that very matter *he had but yielded to a senior against his own inclination*' (p.217, emphasis added), a senior under whose influence 'scholarship attains something of a religious colour' (p.218). Winckelmann would certainly have appreciated Emerald's submissiveness, as well as Pater's enthusiastic description of it, a wordplay which recalls Hopkins's fragmentary statement about a 'three-healed timber [...] right rooting in the bare butt's wincing navel' (*OET*, p.155).<sup>125</sup> A 'surface' reading of its 'overthought' suggests that Emerald 'had *but* yielded to a senior' in the sense of 'had *only* yielded to a senior', yielded in some way, likely intellectually. A 'symbolic' reading of its 'underthought' suggests that Emerald 'had *butt-yielded* to a senior' — even if, initially, he had done so 'against his own inclination', 'wincing' at the prospect of complete pederastic openness and submissiveness, Hopkins's 'bare butt's wincing navel'. As a result of eventually yielding, 'his submissiveness [...] made him therefore, of course, unlike those around him', for it 'was a secret, a thing, you might say, "which no one knoweth, saving he that

receiveth it” (p.219), an erotic and intellectual openness transforming ‘he that receiveth it’ (the vagueness of ‘it’ allowing for transgressive vagaries) into someone like Flavian’s Marius or Leonardo’s Salaino or Winckelmann’s Lamprecht or Pater’s Hardinge or Hopkins’s ‘hearer’, someone noticeably different from ‘those around him’, someone who would have appreciated the eroticism which swells in the following description of Emerald’s own maturing ‘manhood’:

*Preceptores, condiscipuli*, alike [equivalent to Marius’s old Greek master and fellow students], marvel at a sort of delicacy coming into the habits, the person, of that tall, bashful, broad-shouldered, very Kentish, lad; so unaffectedly nevertheless, that it is understood after all to be but the smartness properly significant of change to early manhood, like the down on his lip. Wistful anticipations of manhood are in fact aroused in him, thoughts of the future; his ambition takes effective outline. The well-worn, perhaps conventional, beauties of their ‘dead’ Greek and Latin books, associated directly now with the living companion beside him [the senior to whom he had ‘but yielded’], really shine for him at last with their pristine freshness; seem more than to fulfil their claim upon the patience, the attention, of modern youth. (p.213)<sup>126</sup>

Although, like Whitman, Emerald could find no ‘fit expression’ for his erotic intimacy with that senior, for his ‘love that dare not speak its name’ — he did find, through the symbolism of Pater’s art, what Marius describes as ‘an eloquent utterance at last’:

He finds the Greek or the Latin model of their antique friendship or tries to find it, in the books they read together. None fits exactly. It is of military glory they are really thinking, amid those ecclesiastical surroundings, where however surplices and uniforms are often mingled together; how they will lie, in costly glory, costly to them, side by side, (as they work and walk and play now, side by side) in the cathedral aisle, with a tattered flag perhaps above them, and under a single epitaph. (p.214)

If scholars were to drape Hopkins and Pater, both of whom advanced, advocated, and/or practised a similar pederastic pedagogy, both of whom were motivated by ‘a chivalrous conscience’, both of whom lent a hand to puerile pupils whom they pruriently called ‘hearers’, both of whom found their erotic desires ‘costly to them’ — if scholars were to drape them under one flag, could that flag be any other than the symbol that Whitman calls ‘the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven’, a ‘branchy bunchy bushybowered’ flag capable of concealing pederastic and homoerotic intimations or intimacies from the unappreciative, embarrassed, or spiteful glances of society, an emerald flag flown only by those ‘you thwart’? What then for a ‘single epitaph’? Could

scholars place Pater and Hopkins under any more befitting an epitaph than ‘Uranian’? ‘Uranian’ is the ‘fit expression’, the one expression which would link them, as part of a continuum, with the pederastic poets, prose writers, and painters who flourished in England from William Johnson (*later Cory*; 1823-92) to Ralph Nicholas Chubb (1892-1960), those Uranian descendents of the Victorian Decadents, whose father had been none other than Pater himself. ‘Uranian’ is indeed an apt epitaph for two literary artists inspired ever by Grecian passion and poesy, a passion and poesy ‘fathered’, as was the ‘foam-born’ Aphrodite, from ejaculate that had spilled forth from Uranus’ severed genitals,<sup>127</sup> genitals that, despite being considered impotent for conventional procreativity, had filled the world with passionate creativity, had given birth to love.<sup>128</sup> Hopkins — a professed celibate who dubbed himself ‘Time’s eunuch’ ([‘Thou Art Indeed Just’], line 13) — expresses much the same about his own verse:

The fine delight that fathers thought; the strong  
 Spur, live and lancing like the blowpipe flame,  
 Breathes once and, quenched faster than it came,  
 Leaves yet the mind a mother of immortal song.<sup>129</sup>

My claim about the aptness of this ‘single epitaph’ is not entirely novel, for it was made by the Uranians themselves, situating Pater, as they did, within their own fold, and beneath the folds of the emerald flag they flew. In the *Academy* of October 1902, Lionel Johnson — a Uranian poet, Roman Catholic, and friend of the late Pater — published ‘Walter Pater’, a memorial which concludes:

Patient beneath his Oxford trees and towers  
 He still is gently ours:  
 Hierarch of the spirit, pure and strong,  
 Worthy Uranian song. (lines 53-56)<sup>130</sup>

Meanwhile, there were other Uranians *without* ‘a chivalrous conscience’, Decadent types who were attempting to rally the same troops under much the same emerald symbolism, though preferring an emerald carnation sprouting from the buttonhole of their evening dress.<sup>131</sup> Unlike their Paterian counterparts, these other Uranians bestowed *only*

‘passion’, passion devoid of ‘serenity’ or ‘purity’ or an ‘absence of any sense of want, or corruption, or shame’,<sup>132</sup> passion devoid of the refined qualities which Pater and Lionel Johnson considered essential:

Yet the most radical claim of the new Uranian poetry [represented by writers like Lionel Johnson] would always be that it sang the praises of a mode of spiritual and emotional attachment that was, at some ultimate level, innocent or asexual.<sup>133</sup>

The great significance of [Lionel] Johnson’s work as a Uranian poet thus becomes his attempt to defend the older tradition of pederastic Hellenism in the face of the newer sexual realism in male love asserted in the early 1890s by such writers as Symonds and [Theodore] Wratislaw and indeed by [Lord Alfred] Douglas himself.<sup>134</sup>

The foremost of those who were popularising and actualising the ‘newer sexual realism’ was Oscar Wilde. Although Dowling displays reticence about including Wilde in her list of Uranians above (despite including his lover, Lord Alfred), she nonetheless relates: ‘Pater never ceased to realize that the danger to homoerotic Hellenism might in fact come not from the predictably uncomprehending barbarians alone but also from the Greeks themselves: Socrates’ teaching had been corrupted by Alcibiades, his own had been mistaken by Wilde’.<sup>135</sup> What demarcated these two Uranian camps — Pater’s and Wilde’s — was not their choice of the emerald flag or the emerald flower, but the way they saw the same pederastic and homoerotic positionality, the way they (mis)constructed and (mis)construed Pater’s elaborate *Weltanschauung*, the way they handled ‘the distinction that Pater drew between his Platonic aestheticism and the more bodily and decadent aestheticism that was being associated with Wilde’.<sup>136</sup> Since Wilde and his coterie provided the second of these camps or paths, it is to Wilde as Alcibiades that I now turn.<sup>137</sup>

## Notes for Chapter Four

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<sup>1</sup> *The Poems of Digby Mackworth Dolben*, ed. by Robert Bridges, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1911), p.23. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (1915), this appears on p.26.

<sup>2</sup> David Anthony Downes, *Victorian Portraits: Hopkins and Pater* (New York: Bookman, 1965), pp.31; 13.

<sup>3</sup> Linda Dowling, 'Ruskin's Pied Beauty and the Construction of a "Homosexual" Code', *Victorian Newsletter*, 75 (1989), pp.1-8 (p.1). The publication date of this article suggests that Dowling did not yet have access to the corrective insights about Hopkins provided by the *Facsimile* volumes, which may explain her subsequent change of tone.

<sup>4</sup> David Hilliard, 'Unenglish and Unmanly: Anglo-Catholicism and Homosexuality', *Victorian Studies*, 25 (1982), pp.181-210 (pp.182-83).

<sup>5</sup> Jude V. Nixon, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and His Contemporaries: Liddon, Newman, Darwin, and Pater* (New York: Garland Press, 1994), p.168. Downes recounts: 'As Gosse noted, Pater kept no diary, wrote few letters, preserved no records of his friends and experiences' (see *Portraits*, pp.30-31). In 'The "Outing" of Walter Pater', *Nineteenth Century Literature*, 48.4 (1994), pp.480-506, William F. Shuter notes that 'until quite recently Pater's sexual history has remained a blank. Pater himself left no record of a sexual relationship of any sort, and Edmund Gosse described him to Benson as "the most secluded of men"' (p.481).

<sup>6</sup> Denis Donoghue, *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (New York: Knopf, 1995), p.23.

<sup>7</sup> Alison G. Sulloway, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Victorian Temper* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), p.44.

<sup>8</sup> Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1885); abbreviated as *Marius*. This particular quotation is from vol. I, p.129.

All quotations from Pater's other works are taken from the following: *Appreciations: With an Essay on Style*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910); abbreviated as *Appreciations*. *Miscellaneous Studies: A Series of Essays*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910); abbreviated as *Miscellaneous*. *Plato and Platonism: A Series of Lectures*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910); abbreviated as *Platonism*. *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); abbreviated as *Renaissance 1893*.

<sup>9</sup> Donoghue, p.8. Donoghue further explains that 'Pater's position is consistent with his antinomianism: the artist is neither for nor against the law, he stands aside from it' (p.132). In "'Culture and Corruption": Paterian Self-Development versus Gothic Degeneration in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*', *Papers on Language & Literature*, 39.4 (2003), pp.339-64, Nils Claussøn observes that 'the self-development novel does not generically require that its protagonist lead a double life: Pater's heroes — Marius and Gaston — do not. But the homosexual theme of Wilde's novel does require that Dorian live a double life' (p.349).

<sup>10</sup> Donoghue, p.69.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Bernard Martin, *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Very Private Life* (New York: Flamingo, 1992), p.131. See also Donoghue, pp.29-30.

<sup>12</sup> Downes, *Portraits*, p.22.

<sup>13</sup> Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), p.64.

<sup>14</sup> Downes, *Portraits*, p.22.

<sup>15</sup> Jowett was 'so struck with his power that he very generously offered to coach him for nothing' — as related in Edmund Gosse, *Critical Kit-Kats* (New York: Dodd and Mead, 1896), p.248.

<sup>16</sup> Lesley Higgins, 'Jowett and Pater: Trafficking in Platonic Wares', *Victorian Studies*, 37.1 (1993), pp.43-72 (p.45). Jowett's linguistic discretions are explained by Higgins: 'Jowett was too much of a scholar to omit from the *Phaedrus*, the *Symposium*, or any other text, passages which describe male-male relations. [...] Jowett depended on the superficial gender "neutrality" of English — and innocuous, sentimentalized words such as "lover" and "beloved" — to mute the frank Greek discourse, to empty out all significance of male-male erotic motives, consequences, and activities' (p.48).

Like Pater, Jowett may have seen no advantage in unifying his public roles and his private self, opting instead for a division between them, especially in regard to the erotic views of the ancients he studied and of his own. On one hand, Jowett chose to diminish the eroticism of Plato; on the other, he had private friendships with those who attempted to accentuate Greek erotics, most notably Pater and Symonds. In 'The Romance of Boys Bathing: Poetic Precedents and Respondents to the Paintings of Henry Scott Tuke', in *Victorian Sexual Dissidence*, ed. by Richard Dellamora (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp.253-77, Julia F. Saville notes that 'when Symonds died in April 1893, Jowett wrote his epitaph, concluding it with the words "Farewell, my dearest friend. No one in his heart sustained his friends more than you did, nor was more benevolent to the simple and unlearned"' (pp.261-62). Jowett seems to have been far more accepting of his friends' (in)discretions than most critics give him credit for, and his breach with Pater (if there was such a breach) probably arose from a fear of Pater's absolute lack of discretion (or at least self-cover) in his probable relationship with Hardinge. It certainly did not arise from a lack of personal feeling or intellectual appreciation for Pater. Pater occasionally jettisoned his own friends under similar circumstances: his breach with Wilde, in like fashion, is considered in 'Chapter Five'.

<sup>17</sup> As quoted in Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.103. For Pater as a sort of Socrates to his circle, consider these comments by Alexander Michaelson [Marc-André Raffalovich], in his 'Walter Pater: In Memoriam', *Blackfriars*, 9 (1928), pp.469-70:

There would have been something irresistible about Pater at the height of his power had he cared to exert his personal influence. Those unacquainted with his writings, or prejudiced by Mallock's *New Republic*, could describe him as 'a black, white, ingratiatory vampire'. Of course we who knew and loved him saw and understood the feelings of that delightful youth (now a distinguished novelist) when first face to face with that Minotaur. And we were not less aware when we watched with malicious amusement the less delightful and vainer youths who expected to make an impression. What fun it must have been, what fun it was, for aspirants to praise of so rare a quality when they compared notes. Well! it was worthwhile to have performed in his presence, he would never think the worse of one for that. Few men, I suppose, have been kinder and more affectionate to young men *as they were*; it is so much easier to be kind and affectionate to the men we imagine.

<sup>18</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.128; see pp.128-30 for the development of Symonds's argument.

<sup>19</sup> In *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), Timothy d'Arch Smith primarily agrees with Dowling's claim: 'Symonds cannot be included within the Uranian group proper because of his preference for grown men as a physical ideal and because of his death in 1893, an early and formative year of the movement' (p.12).

<sup>20</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.101.

<sup>21</sup> Richard Dellamora, 'An Essay in Sexual Liberation, Victorian Style: Walter Pater's "Two Early French Stories"', in *Literary Visions of Homosexuality*, ed. by Stuart Kellogg (New York: Haworth, 1983), pp.139-50 (p.148). To Benson, Gosse explained the influence of this upon Pater: 'Pater's whole nature changed under the strain, after the dreadful interview with Jowett. He became old, crushed, despairing, and this dreadful weight lasted for years; it was years before he realized that Jowett would not use them' — as quoted in R. M. Seiler, ed., *Walter Pater: A Life Remembered* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1987), p.258.

<sup>22</sup> Martin, p.300. Pater's friend J. A. Symonds (whose acquaintance he had made in 1860) found himself in much the same situation:

In November 1862 one of Symonds's resentful friends, G. H. Shorting, circulated to six Fellows of Magdalen [College, Oxford,] certain love-poems and passages of love-letters from Symonds. The implication was that Symonds intended corrupting the choristers of Magdalen. An inquiry was held in the college. On December 28 Symonds was acquitted, but the episode put him under such strain that his health deteriorated. He resigned his fellowship at Magdalen and moved to London. (Donoghue, pp.39-40)

<sup>23</sup> Billie Andrew Inman, 'Estrangement and Connection: Walter Pater, Benjamin Jowett, and William M. Hardinge', in *Pater in the 1990s*, ed. by Laurel Brake and Ian Small (Greensboro: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp.1-20 (p.13). See also Dowling, *Hellenism*, pp.100-03, 106-09, and 114; Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde* (New York: Knopf, 1988), pp.60-61. Although most critics have accepted Inman's interpretation of the evidence presented, Shuter suggests another possible interpretation, in which Pater was merely the verbal plaything of Hardinge, an undergraduate who was attempting to be provocative and scandalous by claiming that he was having a homoerotic relationship with someone, with the scandalous Pater an obvious victim to fill this suggestive, fantasy role:

I question only that the conclusions have in fact been demonstrated by the evidence and arguments thus far advanced. That we have the evidence to evaluate at all we owe of course to the thorough and indefatigable research of Billie Inman, whose paper may well contain all we are ever likely to learn about this episode in Pater's life. It is a measure of my debt to Inman's work that even when I question her reading of the evidence



I do so on the basis of data she has gathered. ('Outing', p.482)

<sup>24</sup> Donoghue, pp.58; 59. 'I still differ as to Hardinge's supposed innocuousness (to coin a word). His reputation as the "Balliol B . . . r" is injuring the College as a whole, though I think with you, that it did not harm individuals' (as quoted in Inman, 'Estrangement', pp.8-9).

<sup>25</sup> As quoted in Inman, 'Estrangement', pp.7-8.

<sup>26</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.109. To Benson, Gosse related that 'it was W. H. Mallock who took the terrible letters to Jowett, which gave Jowett such power' — as quoted in Seiler, p.258.

<sup>27</sup> Donoghue, p.61.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.61-62.

<sup>29</sup> For an elucidation of various pederastic elements in the relationship between John Falstaff and Prince Hal, see Heather Findlay, 'Renaissance Pederasty and Pedagogy: The "Case" of Shakespeare's Falstaff', *Yale Journal of Criticism*, 3.1 (1989), pp.229-38. That Falstaff, a pederastic 'inspirer', had a final dream of a 'fable [or, *table*] of green fields' makes me question Gerald Monsman's following comment in 'The Platonic Eros of Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde: "Love's Reflected Image" in the 1890s', *English Literature in Transition (1880-1920)*, 45.1 (2002), pp.26-45:

Although Pater's Greek citation is a species of creative misquotation, his 'effluence of beauty' wording appears substantially in this form twice in the *Phaedrus*, initially at 251b as referenced here in *Marius*. Whereas Plato's effluence of beauty depicts Greek love — much to the discomfort of such Victorian editors as W. H. Thompson and Benjamin Jowett — Pater virtually purges the phrase of its original erotic overtones. Surely even the most programmatic reading could not find sexual innuendo in Pater's 'green fields and children's faces'. (p.32)

Despite its innocuous appearance, I would suggest instead that Pater is making a rather prurient pederastic suggestion, an allusion to Falstaff's dying dream of Arcadia, a dream which, in Falstaff's case, would certainly have been bountiful in sexual innuendo.

<sup>30</sup> Lesley Higgins, 'Essaying "W. H. Pater Esq.": New Perspectives on the Tutor/Student Relationship Between Pater and Hopkins', in *Pater in the 1990s*, ed. by Laurel Brake and Ian Small (Greensboro: ELT Press, University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp.77-94 (p.80).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 'Essaying', note 13.

<sup>32</sup> Donoghue, p.69. '[Pater's] desire for young men was strong, otherwise he would not have taken such risks in consorting with them, but between himself and people of his own generation he generally kept his distance or added to it' (p.54).

<sup>33</sup> As quoted in *ibid.*, p.69.

<sup>34</sup> Richard Dellamora, *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), p.49.

<sup>35</sup> Martin, pp.132-33.

<sup>36</sup> Donoghue, p.156; Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.85. See also Gerald Monsman, 'Old Mortality at Oxford', *Studies in Philology*, 67 (1970), pp.359-89.

<sup>37</sup> In correspondence with me on 20 August 2004, Gerald Monsman, who wrote the authoritative book on the subject, *Oxford University's Old Mortality Society: A Study in Victorian Romanticism* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1998), responded to my suggestion that Hopkins may have heard Pater read a paper to a group subsequent to the Old Mortality — since the Old Mortals, who met on Saturdays, 'did not last after 1866, although reunions continued to be held for another decade' (p.110). Monsman's response was, 'Wow! a fascinating possibility that makes more sense than a tutorial or a conversation'.

<sup>38</sup> In 'Canons and Causes', *The Hudson Review*, 56.1 (2003), pp.168-74, John Loughery notes that 'Oscar Wilde owned Solomon's *Love among the Schoolboys* [1866]' (pp.171-72), a drawing Hopkins might well have seen at Solomon's studio.

In 'A Man-Made Arcadia Enshrining Male Beauty', *New York Times* (13 August 200), 'Art/Architecture' section, pp.30-31, Vicki Goldberg notes an often-ignored influence upon Leighton: 'Von Gloeden's work was a treasure trove for artists. In his own time, he had an influence on F. Holland Day, Frederic Leighton, Alma Tadema and Maxfield Parish' (p.31).

<sup>39</sup> I am thankful to Roberto C. Ferrari of Florida Atlantic University for securing for me the following detail: 'Simeon Solomon moved to 12 Fitzroy Street in January 1868. I do not have a definite date but know from a letter he wrote to Frederick Leyland that he already lived at this address by the beginning of February 1868' (e-mail from 26 July 2004). I am grateful to Reena Suleman, Curator of Collections and Research at Leighton House, for securing for me that Leighton's painting *Hit!* is in the collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (e-mail from 5 July 2004). See also Leonor and Richard Ormond, *Lord Leighton* (New Haven, CT: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art [London], Yale University Press, 1975).

<sup>40</sup> Joseph A. Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting* (New York: Scholar Press, 1995), p.253. In a more generalised way, Kestner suggests:

For British Victorian paintings of the male nude, a nexus of ideas formed around the tradition of the ephebia and of the *erastês/erômenos* relation, the latter marked by an older man and a youth in the canvas, the former by elements such as sequestration, liminality and nudity. [...] The element of ephebic education, with possible strong homoerotic elements, appears in several representations of the male nude by Frederic Leighton. (p.250)

<sup>41</sup> Martin, p.178.

<sup>42</sup> For a fabulously decadent account of Prince Edward being locked into a bathroom with Solomon's and Pater's friend Oscar Browning, see Theo Aronson, *Prince Eddy and the Homosexual Underworld* (London: Barnes & Noble, 1995), pp.70-73. Donoghue suggests that 'Solomon's prose poem *A Vision of Love Revealed in Sleep* (1871) owes a great deal to Pater and to theories of symbolism in Pater's vicinity' (p.38). There is a copy of Solomon's *A Vision of Love Revealed in Sleep* (London: F. S. Ellis, 1871) at the University of Rochester which bears the following inscription to Edward Burne-Jones: 'With Simeon's affectionate regards to Ned. June 25<sup>th</sup> 1871'. It should be noted that Solomon was, at one time, a close friend of Burne-Jones, who was a close friend of R. W. Dixon, later a close friend of Hopkins.

<sup>43</sup> Dowling, 'Ruskin's', p.7. In 'Simeon Solomon and the Biblical Construction of Marginal Identity in Victorian England', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 33.3-4 (1997), pp.97-119, Gayle M. Seymour describes Browning with the following parenthetical: 'Eton don Oscar Browning (with whom Solomon travelled to Italy in 1869 and 1870 and through whom the artist was able to establish numerous friendships with adolescent boys at Eton)' (p.113). However, Seymour is clearly blurring the point by claiming Solomon had made 'numerous friendships with adolescent boys' — for 'friendship' is rather a (trans)muted way of saying 'pederastic relationship' or 'pederastic dalliance'. This more accurate phrasing would partially defeat her next sentence: 'Clearly, Solomon was defining himself as homosexual and presenting himself as such, at least when he was safely in the company of other homosexuals' (p.113). That is not 'clear': what is 'clear' is that Solomon was defining himself as a pederast and presenting himself as such, at least when he was safely in the company of other pederasts — especially given the evidence of his attraction to Browning's adolescent Eton boys.

<sup>44</sup> From his diary entry for 5 May 1878; as quoted in *The Letters of Walter Pater*, p.xxxiv.

<sup>45</sup> Donoghue, p.33.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p.34.

<sup>47</sup> That Hopkins did not consider Symonds overly 'scandalous' is revealed by the following comment in a letter to his mother: 'I went to call on Mr. Green, fellow of Balliol, professor of Moral Philosophy. His wife, a very kind creature, is sister to John Addington Symonds the critic' (12 February 1879, *Letters* III, p.152). References to Gosse appear from time to time in Hopkins's letters to Bridges, who was one of his acquaintances — in fact, Gosse was interested in publishing some of Hopkins's poetry, which reveals that Bridges had shown the poetry to him (or Coventry Patmore had done so). After Hopkins's death, Bridges warned the Hopkins Family not to allow Gosse to edit Hopkins's poetry or life.

<sup>48</sup> Seymour, p.113. Besides his courtship of Florence Nightingale, Richard Monckton Milnes, First Baron Houghton, is probably most remembered for his library, which included an extensive collection of the Marquis de Sade and a bookmark made of human skin.

<sup>49</sup> The pederastic nuances surrounding Pater seem to have been very evident to his Oxford contemporaries. At Oxford in 1880, C. E. Hutchinson wrote and distributed a pamphlet that connected Pater with 'Mr. Rose' in Mallock's *New*

*Republic*, a pamphlet titled *Boy-Worship* (see Dowling, *Hellenism*, pp.111-14).

<sup>50</sup> Lesley Higgins, 'The "Piecemeal Peace" of Hopkins's Return to Oxford, 1878-1879', in *Gerard Manley Hopkins and Critical Discourse*, ed. by Eugene Hollahan (New York: AMS, 1993), pp.167-82 (p.173).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p.175.

<sup>52</sup> See Billie Andrew Inman, *Walter Pater's Reading: A Bibliography of His Library Borrowings and Literary References, 1857-1873* (New York: Garland, 1981), pp.30-35; 232-37. For Raffalovich's gloss that 'Leslie' is Hardinge, as well as for Pater's disappointing encounter with Hardinge later in life, see Donoghue, p.61.

<sup>53</sup> James Eli Adams, 'Gentleman, Dandy, Priest: Manliness and Social Authority in Pater's Aestheticism', *ELH*, 59 (1992), pp.441-66 (p.441).

<sup>54</sup> Higgins, 'Piecemeal', p.180.

<sup>55</sup> Higgins, 'Essaying', p.77.

<sup>56</sup> Downes, *Portraits*, p.46.

<sup>57</sup> About this footnote added to *The Renaissance*, William Shuter writes: 'Pater has not changed his mind; he has only explained it more fully' — 'Pater, Wilde, Douglas and the Impact of "Greats"', *English Literature in Transition (1880-1920)*, 3 (2003), pp.250-78 (p.266). This desire to 'explain it more fully' is also evident in the writings of others in or around Pater's circle:

Pater published *Marius the Epicurean*, his Bildungsroman, in 1885, when he was in his 46<sup>th</sup> year; Wilde wrote *De Profundis* in 1897, when he was in his 43<sup>rd</sup> year; Douglas wrote his *Autobiography* in 1927, when he was 57. While all three writers reflect on the earlier views they have abandoned or modified, they differ in the stress they place on the continuity between their earlier and later selves. Insofar, however, as this continuity is stressed, it is represented in language we recognize as belonging to the discourse of Greats. (pp.265-66)

<sup>58</sup> Higgins, 'Essaying', p.80.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p.94.

<sup>60</sup> 'Diaphanéité', in *Miscellaneous Studies*, pp.247-54.

In his diary, Samuel Brooke — a Corpus Christi undergraduate; close friend of Hopkins; former, disgruntled member of the Old Mortality Society; and main formulator of the Hexameron Society to counterbalance the Old Mortals — wrote that Pater's lecture was 'one of the most thoroughly infidel productions' he had ever heard, and denounced him to other Oxonians, especially H. P. Liddon. The portions of Brooke's diary that deal with this episode are published in Robert Seiler, ed., *Walter Pater: A Life Remembered* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1987), pp.11-13.

<sup>61</sup> Dellamora, 'French', p.143.

<sup>62</sup> Donoghue writes: '*Marius the Epicurean* is more a spiritual romance than a novel' (p.188).

<sup>63</sup> Franklin E. Court, *Institutionalizing English Literature: The Culture and Politics of Literary Study, 1750-1900* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), p.139.

<sup>64</sup> John Addington Symonds, *A Problem in Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion* (London: Privately printed, [1901]), p.72.

<sup>65</sup> In 'Simeon Solomon: Artist and Myth', in *Solomon, a Family of Painters: Abraham Solomon (1823-1862), Rebecca Solomon (1832-1886), Simeon Solomon (1840-1905)* (London: Inner London Education Authority, 1985), pp.24-27, Lionel Lambourne suggests that Solomon was Pater's model for Flavian in *Marius the Epicurean*.

<sup>66</sup> The Cyrenaic School of Philosophy, which flourished in the city of Cyrene from about 400 to 300 BCE, was notable for its tenets of hierarchical Hedonism derived from Socrates and Protagoras. Late Cyrenaicism and Epicureanism are only distinguishable from each other in details, not fundamental principles, though, for Marius and for Pater, the distinct details that Epicurus advocated — that a proper knowledge of death makes one enjoy life the more, that wise men avoid taking part in public affairs, that one should not marry and beget children — were important. Donoghue glosses Pater's Cyrenaicism as 'the assertion that the best way to live is to crowd as many pulsations as possible into one's inevitably brief life, and that the best way to do this is by cultivating art for art's sake' (p.57).

<sup>67</sup> For an anecdote about Solomon (who may have served as the model for Pater's Flavian) coming to a costume party as Cupid, see James M. Saslow, *Pictures and Passions: A History of Homosexuality in the Visual Arts* (New York: Viking, 1999), pp.179-81. I thank Prof. Saslow for corresponding with me by e-mail about this point.

<sup>68</sup> The *Pervigilium Veneris* (or 'Vigil of Venus') is a Latin poem of ninety-three verses, probably written in the second or third century CE, which celebrates the annual rejuvenation of Nature through the goddess Venus. Of Pater's attribution of this poem to Flavian, a poem that Pater has here translated, Donoghue suggests that it is 'a freedom Pater takes because no other poet is known to have written it' (p.193). He also suggests that 'Pater's affection for Late Latin, his special feeling for writings of the Silver Age [is] one of the marks of a sensibility hesitating upon the decadence it prefigures' (p.226).

<sup>69</sup> Elizabeth Cook, ed., *John Keats* (Oxford Authors series) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.331.

<sup>70</sup> Thomas Hardy, who was not one of Pater's intimate circle, could only relate the following impression after meeting Pater in 1886: Pater seemed to be 'carrying weighty ideas without spilling them' — as quoted in *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy*, ed. by Michael Millgate (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985), p.187. Donoghue asserts that this 'discretion' involved a conscious split into a private self and a constructed, public self: 'In the middle world one may choose to live by nearly any values, so long as one doesn't overtly challenge the dominant forces of law and government. Or one can divide one's life into two parts, public and private, and live differently in each' (p.317).

<sup>71</sup> What must be kept in mind is that Marius's preferred proximity to early Christianity arises *only* because he finds no other alternative from which to choose: 'To understand the influence over him of what follows you must remember that it was an experience which came in the midst of a deep sense of vacuity in things. The fairest products of the earth seemed to be dropping to pieces, as if in men's very hands, around him; and still, how real was their sorrow, and his!' (II, pp.130-31).

<sup>72</sup> This interest in certain aspects of early Christianity has a biographical referent for Pater: 'Knowing that the peace of heart he once knew was ultimately a religious state, Pater began in 1878 attending the very Catholic liturgical services at St. Alban's, Holborn, and St. Austin's in the New Kent Road. These highly ritualistic services, reviving the spirit of early Christianity, began to bring some rest to his disquietude and also rendered special satisfactions to his aesthetic nature' (Downes, *Portraits*, pp.59-60). Hilliard explains the added incentive behind Pater's visits, at least to one of these churches: 'Among those who regularly visited St. Austin's and enjoyed its colourful ritual (without believing yet in Christianity) was Walter Pater, aesthete and historian of the Renaissance. His intimate friend was Richard Charles Jackson (Brother à Becket), a lay brother and so-called professor of Church History at the priory. At Pater's request Jackson wrote a poem for his birthday:

... Your darling soul I say is enflamed with love for me;  
Your very eyes do move I cry with sympathy:  
Your darling feet and hands are blessings ruled by love,  
As forth was sent from out the Ark a turtle dove!' (p.193)

<sup>73</sup> Higgins, 'Piecemeal', p.177.

<sup>74</sup> Hilliard, p.197.

<sup>75</sup> As quoted in Clay Daniel, 'The Religion of Culture: Arnold's Priest and Pater's Mystic', *Victorian Newsletter*, 72 (1987), pp.9-11 (p.11).

<sup>76</sup> Richard Dellamora, *Apocalyptic Overtures: Sexual Politics and the Sense of an Ending* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994), p.67.

<sup>77</sup> Rictor Norton, 'Essentialism', *A Critique of Social Constructionism and Postmodern Queer Theory*, 1 June 2002 <<http://www.infopt.demon.co.uk/social03.htm>> [accessed 18 September 2004].

<sup>78</sup> As quoted in Seiler, p.191.

<sup>79</sup> Oscar Wilde, *The Critic as Artist*, in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994), pp.1108-55 (p.1122).

<sup>80</sup> In Walter Pater, *The Renaissance*, ed. by Kenneth Clark (New York: Collins, 1961), Clark observes that 'there is no such painter as Andrea Salaino. The name seems to be due to a confusion between Andrea Solario and Giacomo Salai. The latter was the boy with curly hair who joined Leonardo in 1490 and stayed with him throughout his life' (p.116, note).

<sup>81</sup> Symonds, *Greek Ethics* [1901], p.13.

<sup>82</sup> Robert and Janice A. Keefe, *Walter Pater and the Gods of Disorder* (Athens: Ohio State University Press, 1988), p.16.

<sup>83</sup> Dowling, 'Ruskin's', p.3. The full quote reads: 'It is clear, for example, that Pater himself believed that the institutions of Sparta bore directly upon those of Victorian England: the parallels he draws between the education of Spartan youth and the public schools and universities of England are too insistent for us to think otherwise'.

<sup>84</sup> Adams, p.461. Dorian pederasty was first dealt with in detail by Karl Otfried Müller in his *Die Dorier: Geschichten hellnischer Stämme und Städte*, which was translated into English by Henry Tufnell and George Cornwall Lewis as *The History and Antiquities of the Doric Race*, 2 vols, (London: John Murray, 1830). This book considers Greek pederasty to have been essential within Greek culture. Dowling writes: 'Whatever we decide, it is clear that Müller's *Dorians* was a favorite book with Pater' ('Ruskin's', p.3). For 'Dorianism' as a broader concept for Pater and his contemporaries, see Dellamora, *Apocalyptic*, chapter 2.

<sup>85</sup> In 'Pater as Don', *Prose Studies*, 11 (1988), pp.41-60, William Shuter writes: 'In the study of Plato [according to Pater] no examinable skill is so essential as a receptive disposition, for Plato's philosophy "does not provide a proposition, nor a system of propositions, but forms a temper"' (p.53).

<sup>86</sup> Dowling writes: 'Pater [...] seems to have been persuaded that an education conducted along the old lines of Greek paiderastia [...] would genuinely fulfil the liberal ideal of education' (*Hellenism*, p.102).

<sup>87</sup> David Newsome, *On the Edge of Paradise: A. C. Benson: The Diarist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p.194. About Benson's comments on Pater, Shuter writes: '[Pater's homoerotic temperament] was therefore always something of an open secret [...] By way of confirmation Benson merely points to the body of Pater's work, which, he supposes, speaks for itself' ('Outing', p.480).

<sup>88</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.129.

<sup>89</sup> D'Arch Smith, p.7.

<sup>90</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.114. William Johnson (*later* Cory), *Ionica* [Parts I and II], by William Cory, with biographical intro. and notes by Arthur C. Benson (London: Allen & Unwin, 1905).

<sup>91</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.86.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p.87, note. For Kincaid's discussion of both Johnson and Browning, see *Child-Loving*, pp.232-34. D'Arch Smith notes that Oscar Browning had been one of Cory's pupils at Eton (p.6).

<sup>93</sup> Newsome, p.192.

<sup>94</sup> For an explanation of the progression from the 'receptive' to the 'active' role in Decadence, see my 'Chapter Five'.

<sup>95</sup> Richard Dellamora, 'The Androgynous Body in Pater's "Winckelmann"', *Browning Institute Studies*, 11 (1983), pp.51-68 (p.64). See also Donoghue, p.183.

<sup>96</sup> Robert Currie, 'Pater's Rational Cosmos', *Philological Quarterly*, 59 (1980), pp.95-104 (p.101).

<sup>97</sup> Marcus Aurelius was eighteen at the time Fronto began to address him as 'Beloved Boy'.

<sup>98</sup> Adams, p.454.

<sup>99</sup> Dellamora, 'Androgynous', p.51.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.52; 53.

<sup>101</sup> Denis M. Sweet, 'The Personal, the Political, and the Aesthetic: Johann Joachim Winckelmann's German Enlightenment Life', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 16 (1988), pp.147-62 (p.151). See also Whitney Davis, 'Winckelmann Divided: Mourning the Death of Art History', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 27.1-2 (1994), pp.141-59. In 'The Discreet Charm of the Belvedere: Submerged Homosexuality in Eighteenth-Century Writing on Art', *German Life and Letters*,

52.2 (1999), pp.123-35, Jeff Morrison notes about the ‘students’ of Winckelmann: ‘These men would then be brought to Italy after a period of preparatory study for individual tutoring. At its simplest we could have here a pragmatic, eighteenth-century adaptation of the Socratic method. But it is surely more than this. We have a striking coincidence of sexual agenda and pedagogic method, a coincidence so strong that the two become inseparable’ (p.128).

<sup>102</sup> Kevin Parker, ‘Winckelmann, Historical Difference, and the Problem of the Boy’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 25 (1992), pp.523-44 (p.532).

<sup>103</sup> Sweet, pp.152-53.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.153-54.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p.155.

<sup>106</sup> Donoghue, p.157.

<sup>107</sup> Parker, pp.528; 532.

<sup>108</sup> Sweet, p.149.

<sup>109</sup> As quoted in translation, in *ibid.*, pp.149-50. Morrison suggests that ‘perhaps some dark intuition of this took Winckelmann south to Italy — and so nearer to Greece, where homosexuality, scholarship and art had historically proven a productive combination’ (p.126). See also Robert Aldrich, *The Seduction of the Mediterranean: Writing, Art and Homosexual Fantasy* (London: Routledge, 1993); Joseph A. Boone, ‘Vacation Cruises; or, The Homoerotics of Orientalism’, *PMLA*, 110.1 (1995), pp.89-107.

<sup>110</sup> Nixon, p.168.

<sup>111</sup> Henry Hatfield, *Aesthetic Paganism in German Literature from Winckelmann to the Death of Goethe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), p.21.

<sup>112</sup> Nixon, p.194.

<sup>113</sup> Norman White, ‘Hopkins’ Epithalamion’, *Hopkins Quarterly*, 3-4 (1977-78), pp.141-59 (p.157).

<sup>114</sup> See Michael Lynch, ‘Recovering Hopkins, Recovering Ourselves’, *Hopkins Quarterly*, 6 (1979), pp.107-17.

<sup>115</sup> Adams, p.454.

<sup>116</sup> Sweet, p.153. This education also had religion thrown into the mix, which would have made it far more congenial for Hopkins: ‘The interdependence of the rhetorics of aesthetics, religion and of homosexuality in the case of Winckelmann should, then, be clear’ (Morrison, ‘Discreet’, p.132).

<sup>117</sup> This probably involves the fact that ‘after [Dolben’s] death, there was found among his papers the beginning of a letter to his father asking to be absolved of his promise not to be baptised [into the Roman Catholic Church until after graduating from university], in case of any dangerous accident or illness’ (*Dolben* 1915, p.cvii). Hopkins may have learned of this letter and embraced the hope that it had lent Dolben a degree of plenary grace.

<sup>118</sup> White, ‘Epithalamion’, p.159.

<sup>119</sup> Norman White, *Gerard Manley Hopkins in Wales* (Bridgend, Wales: Seren [Poetry Wales Press], 1998), p.7.

<sup>120</sup> Donoghue, p.157.

<sup>121</sup> E. M. Forster, *Maurice* (New York: Norton, 1981), pp.146-47.

<sup>122</sup> Walter Pater, ‘Emerald Uthwart’, in *Miscellaneous Studies: A Series of Essays*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910), pp.197-246 (p.221).

<sup>123</sup> Pater’s choice of the name ‘Uthwart’ also derives from its possible pronunciation as ‘athwart’, a word with implications of ‘queer’: ‘The word “queer”, of course, itself means *across* — coming from the Indo-European root *-twerkw*, which also yields the German *quer* (transverse), Latin *torquere* (to twist), English *athwart*’ — see Eve

Kosofsky Sedgwick, 'Six Queer Habits' <<http://www.duke.edu/~sedgwick/WRITING/HABITS.htm>> (her personal homepage) [accessed 25 June 2004].

<sup>124</sup> Shuter observes:

In 'Emerald Uthwart', written while he was offering his lectures on Plato and Platonism, Pater gave a full-length imaginative portrait of his 'ingenuous and docile' youth. The rigors of Uthwart's mental and ethical training at school and at Oxford are explicitly compared to those prescribed in the *Republic*, and the paiderastic eros of his relationship with the slightly older James Stokes is represented in the language of the *Phaedrus*. ('Greats', p.254)

<sup>125</sup> The etymology of 'butt' (in the sense of physiognomy) seems to derive from Middle English, probably akin to Middle English *buttok*, 'buttock' (*OED*). 'Butt' also has the meaning of 'a backstop for catching arrows shot at a target' — a meaning which allows for Hopkins's playfulness.

<sup>126</sup> In *The History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. by George Lamb (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956), Henri I. Marrou explains:

For the Greeks, education — *paidea* — meant, essentially, a profound and intimate relationship, a personal union between a young man and an elder who was at once his model and his initiator — a relationship on to which the fire of passion threw warm and turbid reflections. Throughout Greek history the relationship between master and pupil was to remain that between a lover and his beloved. (p.31)

<sup>127</sup> From Hesiod, *Theogony*, lines 176-206. It is my belief that the 'Uranians' conceived of their name dualistically, as deriving from the 'heavenly' love described in Plato as well as from Aphrodite's birth as described by Hesiod.

The octave of Theodore Wratislaw's 'To a Sicilian Boy', in *Caprices* (1893), seems to allude to this Uranian dimension of the birth of Venus, and of Cupid consequently:

Love, I adore the contours of thy shape,  
Thine exquisite breasts and arms adorable;  
The wonders of thine heavenly throat compel  
Such fire of love as even my dreams escape:  
I love thee *as the sea-foam loves the cape*,  
Or as the shore the sea's enchanting spell:  
In sweets the blossoms of thy mouth excel  
The tenderest bloom of peach or purple grape. (emphasis added)

<sup>128</sup> In Tom Stoppard's play *The Invention of Love* (1997), the Classicist and poet A. E. Housman encounters, on his posthumous journey down the river Styx, the intellectual currents of Victorian Oxford life, people such as Jowett, Pater (with Hardinge), and Wilde. Stoppard's title suggests an appreciation that this form of love had found, in individuals like Housman, a new invention of itself.

<sup>129</sup> Gerard Manley Hopkins, 'To R. B.', lines 1-4, from *The Poetical Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p.204.

<sup>130</sup> Lionel Pigot Johnson, *Poetical Works of Lionel Johnson* (London: E. Mathews, 1915). For Lionel Johnson's idealisation of Pater, see Dowling, *Hellenism*, pp.137-38; for his attacks on Symonds and his overt erotics, see pp.135-37.

<sup>131</sup> See Karl Beckson, 'Oscar Wilde and the Green Carnation', *English Literature in Transition (1880-1920)*, 43.4 (2000), pp.387-97.

<sup>132</sup> See Peter Swaab, 'Hopkins and the Pushed Peach', *Critical Quarterly*, 37.3 (1995), pp.43-60. Swaab makes much the same division: 'If we are to see Hopkins in relation to Victorian voices of homosexuality, then he has much more in common with figures mainly conciliatory with social orthodoxies (Symonds, Carpenter, arguably Pater) than with pervasively dissident figures such as Swinburne, Solomon, and Wilde' (p.50).

<sup>133</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.115.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p.137. In 1893, Wratislaw published his sonnet 'To a Sicilian Boy', a sonnet that is representative of this realism, particularly *via* its title/address.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p.140. D'Arch Smith broadens this, suggesting that, in much of the Decadence of the 1890s, 'the aesthetics of Pater and the Greek ideal were being slightly perverted and misinterpreted' (p.2). I would replace the word 'slightly'

with 'highly'. Monsman describes this aptly as 'Oscar Wilde's seductive (mis)constructions of Paterian aesthetic theories' ('Platonic', p.28). That Wilde never acknowledged this himself is revealed by a letter, dated 18 February 1898, Wilde claiming that 'to have altered my life would have been to have admitted that Uranian love is ignoble' — Rupert Hart-Davis, ed., *The Letters of Oscar Wilde* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1962), p.327.

<sup>136</sup> Monsman, 'Platonic', p.26.

<sup>137</sup> I am here differentiating between two forms of erotic positioning, as well as the fulfilment and outcome of such an erotic attachment (I explore this differentiation more fully in 'Chapter Five' and in my 'Conclusion'). My differentiation is not in contrast with Brian Reade's claim in *Sexual Heretics: Male Homosexuality in English Literature from 1850 to 1900* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970) that there were two forms of Victorian derivation for the thing he labels 'homosexual sentiment' during the period (about this claim I am in tentative agreement):

By 1870 two contrasted streams of homosexual sentiment were especially noteworthy: one from the Oxford Movement with its undercurrent of emotional friendship as expressed by Newman and Faber; the other from the muscular Christianity of Dr Arnold at Rugby School, a somewhat inarticulate trend. Although these two streams were opposed, in fact they were joined at the point in a friendship where emphasis is placed on overtones of self-sacrifice. (p.29)

Since 'self-sacrifice' for love's sake was the Paterian ideal, Pater and his 'philosophy' can be seen as the confluence, around 1873, of these two Victorian streams — though these two streams would, in turn, separate again and differently. After their confluence in Pater, these two streams separated into those Uranians with a 'chivalrous conscience' like Hopkins, and those without, like Wilde. For the first group, 'Emerald' was a flag to be flown; for the second, a carnation to be flaunted.



— Chapter Five —

**‘Liable to Misconstruction’:  
Wilde as Priapic Educationalist**

‘Each Man Kills the Thing’:  
Pater’s Evaluation of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Harken to me. I have an emerald, a great round emerald, which Caesar’s minion sent me. If you look through this emerald you can see things which happen at a great distance. Caesar himself carries such an emerald when he goes to the circus. But my emerald is larger. I know well that it is larger. It is the largest emerald in the whole world. You would like that, would you not? Ask it of me and I will give it you.

(Oscar Wilde, *Salomé*)<sup>1</sup>

Informed of the death of his former friend and mentor Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde immediately retorted: ‘Was he ever alive?’<sup>2</sup> Such was Wilde’s biting jest in 1894, a year before he would find himself the defendant in the most (in)famous of Victorian trials, as well as ‘the most famous pederast in the world’s history’.<sup>3</sup> Wilde’s question sprang from a perspective on Pater which J. A. Symonds also shared, a perspective Symonds expresses in a letter to Henry Dakyns as ‘[Pater’s] view of life gives me the creeps [...] I am sure it is a ghastly sham’, and in a letter to Mary Robinson as ‘I have always thought it the theory of one who has not lived & loved’.<sup>4</sup> Denis Donoghue suggests that Symonds’s letters imply that ‘if Pater is indeed a lover of young men, I wish he would act boldly upon his desires and stop etherealizing them in that sickly way’.<sup>5</sup> According to Linda Dowling, this assessment stems from Symonds’s own attempt, in word and act, to discard ‘the crippling sexual sublimation of the Platonic eros’ advocated by Pater, while still keeping ‘the ideal of Dorian comradeship’ — in essence, an attempt ‘to free himself and the English Uranians from one half of the inheritance of Oxford Hellenism’.<sup>6</sup> Having concluded that Pater and

his views had been crippled by the ‘sexual sublimation’ advocated by Socrates and his Victorian acolyte, Benjamin Jowett, both Symonds and Wilde decided instead to emulate Alcibiades by embracing the erotic potential tacitly afforded Socratic eros, an erotic potential it had always been accused of actualising anyway (see ‘Appendix Thirty-Three’ for an example) — though Wilde, with Alcibiades’ drunken flair, would make a grander entrance into the Victorian symposium than would Symonds.

Wilde and Pater had once been close friends, one a flamboyant dandy on the vanguard of late Victorian society, the other a reserved Oxford don whose appearances before the public were usually in print. The breach between these two friends, who had met in 1877 while Wilde was still an undergraduate at Magdalen College, Oxford,<sup>7</sup> was the result of a bevy of ‘boys’ and a single text. This bevy included John Henry Gray (1866-1934), a Decadent poet and later Roman Catholic priest, a ‘stunner’ soon to be supplanted in Wilde’s affections by Lord Alfred Douglas (‘Bosie’, 1870-1945), a promiscuous aristocrat who dabbled in Uranian verse as well as his Oxford studies, who flaunted a lack of discretion which would ultimately cause Wilde’s demise and imprisonment. As early as 1891, Pater had begun to concede that Wilde was far too dangerous a person to know — probably through details provided by their mutual friend Lionel Johnson (a cousin of Lord Alfred, whom he had fatefully introduced to Wilde<sup>8</sup>). Pater responded accordingly. The text which additionally provoked this breach, a text equally indiscreet, was *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, still in manuscript in 1890 when it was shown to Pater in hopes that he would review it, which he later did.<sup>9</sup> In fact, Wilde’s loves and the accompanying text were intimately bound together, as Richard Ellmann explains:

To give the hero of his novel the name of ‘Gray’ was a form of courtship. Wilde probably named his hero not to point to a model, but to flatter Gray by identifying him with Dorian. Gray took the hint, and in letters to Wilde signed himself ‘Dorian’. Their intimacy was common talk.<sup>10</sup>

Not surprisingly, Pater took the occasion of his review not to flatter, elucidate, or cloak, but to distance himself as much as possible from both Dorian and his corrupter, Lord Henry Wotton — both of whom were unmistakably modelled on himself and the ideas he had expressed in his volume *The Renaissance*, for ‘Wilde evidently intended [Lord Henry] to be recognizably Paterian’.<sup>11</sup> Although, in principle, Pater would have seconded Wilde’s claim that ‘life itself was the first, the greatest, of the arts’<sup>12</sup> — in his signed review, ‘A Novel by Mr. Oscar Wilde’, published in the periodical *The Bookman* in November 1891, Pater complained that

a true Epicureanism aims at a complete though harmonious development of man’s entire organism. To lose the moral sense therefore, for instance, the sense of sin and righteousness, as Mr. Wilde’s hero — his heroes are bent on doing as speedily, as completely as they can, is to lose, or lower, organisation, to become less complex, to pass from a higher to a lower degree of development [...] Lord Henry, and even more the, from the first, suicidal hero [Dorian], loses too much in life to be a true Epicurean — loses so much in the way of impressions, of pleasant memories, and subsequent hopes, which [Basil] Hallward, by a really Epicurean economy, manages to secure.<sup>13</sup>

By late autumn 1891, Pater had become familiar enough with Wilde’s dangerous companions — the fictive Dorian Gray, the affected John Gray, and perhaps even the affronting Lord Alfred — familiar enough to desire distance:

Pater’s sense of the relation between Lord Alfred and Wilde, added to common rumor about Wilde’s sexual life, made him decide that minor textual changes in *Dorian Gray* were not enough. He could have avoided having anything further to do with the book. Instead, with unusual boldness, he arranged to review it and took the occasion to repudiate not only Lord Henry but his creator.<sup>14</sup>

Of Dorian, it was said that ‘these whispered scandals only lent him, in the eyes of many, his strange and dangerous charm’ (*Dorian* 1890, p.74)<sup>15</sup> — but Pater was never one of the many. As Pater’s earlier responses to the scandals of Oscar Browning and Simeon Solomon reveal, he could tolerate ‘dangerous charm’ only as long as he himself did not risk being caught in the panther cage: ‘[Pater] became prudent, but only when a scandal obtruded’.<sup>16</sup> As Donoghue further explains: ‘Most of Pater’s friendships during his later years, if friendship is not too strong a word for them, were with writers [...] and he retained them in his circle unless prudence indicated that he should be rid of them’.<sup>17</sup> Confronted with Wilde’s ‘dangerous charm’ in both its flamboyant and fictive forms,

‘Pater realized that in the minds of Wilde’s popular readership the ethics of Basil’s timorous Platonism did not offset the gusto with which Dorian’s flowers of evil blossomed. And in the inevitable controversy, Pater had no intention of carrying the blame for Wilde’s exuberance’.<sup>18</sup> As Wilde would explain to Robert Baldwin Ross (1869-1918) years later: ‘Dear Pater was always frightened of my propaganda’.<sup>19</sup>

In this particular case, the result, for Pater, was a pressing choice between public discretion and personal friendship. Wilde’s cultivations in love and literature had become too overt, scandalous, and propagandistic for Pater’s own sense of security, such that Pater in turn began to cultivate as much distance between himself and his friend, in person and in print, as courtesy would allow: ‘[Lionel] Johnson’s life was weird enough to interest Pater but not to make him afraid that he would be drawn into it. [...] This was the main worry in Pater’s friendship with Wilde’.<sup>20</sup> Pater was hoping — perhaps hopelessly — that he would, by cultivating this distance, spare himself the cage threatening to close around Wilde and those nearby, a cage crafted legally by the Labouchere Amendment of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 (which clarified the criminality of same-sex erotic practices) and emotively by the Cleveland Street Scandal of 1889 (which exposed a ‘rent-boy’ ring at 19 Cleveland Street in London’s West End, a sort of ‘telegraph-boy brothel’ frequented by gentlemen and aristocrats, including Prince Edward — or so the Public Record Office documents concerning the investigation, released in 1975, suggest).<sup>21</sup> Wilde’s connection to that underworld, at least textually, was boldly asserted by a review of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* published in *The Scots Observer* soon after the novel appeared in its original form, in *Lippincott’s Magazine* in 1890:

Mr Wilde has brains, and art, and style; but if he can write for none but outlawed noblemen and perverted telegraph-boys, the sooner he takes to tailoring (or some other decent trade) the better for his own reputation and the public morals.<sup>22</sup>

[See ‘Appendix Thirty-Four’ for the title pages of the 1890 and 1891 versions.]

The problem is that Wilde did follow this reviewer's advice, did take up 'tailoring' — which involved frequenting the elaborately decorated and perfumed rooms of Alfred Taylor, rooms where Taylor had amassed a collection of young 'stunners' from London's working classes, 'renters', male prostitutes all:

What seems to characterize all Wilde's affairs is that he got to know the boys as individuals, treated them handsomely, allowed them to refuse his attentions without becoming rancorous, and did not corrupt them. They were already prostitutes. The excitement of doing something considered wrong, and the professional avarice of the blackmailing, extortionate, faithless boys, may have been as important for Wilde as sexual gratification.<sup>23</sup>

Wilde thus preoccupied himself with 'trade', with 'rent-boys' from 'grey, monstrous London [...] with its myriads of people, its sordid sinners, and its splendid sins' (*Dorian* 1891, p.47), living a life he would later explain to Ross: 'I have fallen in and out of love, and fluttered hawks and doves alike. How evil it is to buy Love, and how evil to sell it! And yet what purple hours one can snatch from that grey slowly moving thing we call Time! My mouth is twisted with kissing, and I feed on fevers'.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile, Pater was at Oxford, living and writing 'The Aesthetic Life'.<sup>25</sup> Had Pater lived a year longer than he did — bypassing his heart attack of 30 July 1894 — he would, like most Victorians, have witnessed Wilde's publicised conviction, imprisonment, and complete disgrace, a disgrace facilitated by disclosures about Wilde's involvement with those young 'renters', his relationship with Lord Alfred, and his well-stained, hotel bed-sheets. As the 'gutter press' liked to chide in various ways, Wilde had become the ultimate embodiment of the 'Ass-thete'.<sup>26</sup> When it came to 'The Aesthetic Life' (not the 'Ass-thetic'), Pater's instincts — even his instinct for dying — were uncommonly superb, which is what Henry James expresses in a letter to Edmund Gosse on 10 August 1894, soon after Pater's burial at St Giles' Cemetery, Oxford: '[His death] presents itself to me — so far as I know it — as one of the successful, felicitous lives, and the time & manner of the death a part of the success'.<sup>27</sup> James was to prove prophetic. Had Pater lived a little longer, he would have found himself inextricably bound within the scandalous tangle of Wilde, Lord Alfred, a

dozen ‘renters’, soiled bed-sheets, and *Dorian Gray* — a tangle he could hardly have avoided as inspirer of much that the resultant trial condemned, a tangle into which he was inevitably drawn, though posthumously.

On 3 April 1895, under cross-examination from Edward Carson during his first trial, Wilde claimed that he had never deleted anything from *Dorian Gray*, but had actually made an addition: ‘In one case it was pointed out to me, not in a newspaper or anything of that sort, but by the only critic of the century whose opinion I set high, Mr. Walter Pater — that a certain passage was liable to misconstruction, and I made an addition’.<sup>28</sup> For Wilde, addition was always preferable to deletion, for he did not agree with Pater — ‘the only critic of the century whose opinion I set high’ — that ‘the true artist may be best recognised by his tact of omission’ (*Appreciations*, p.18).<sup>29</sup> Wilde subsequently testified that Pater had sent him several letters regarding *Dorian Gray* (letters no longer extant), the result being his own modification of that overly suggestive passage ‘liable to misconstruction’.<sup>30</sup> That passage may have been, as Donald Lawler suggests,<sup>31</sup> the one in which Basil Hallward questions Dorian about the ruin of his intimates: ‘Why is your friendship so fateful to young men?’ (*Dorian* 1890, p.79). At this point in the novel, Basil begins to provide a list for rhetorical support — the boy in the Guards, Sir Henry Ashton, Adrian Singleton, Lord Kent’s son, the young Duke of Perth — a list which Dorian shortens in the 1891 version by interrupting: ‘Stop, Basil. You are talking about things of which you know nothing’ (*Dorian* 1891, p.112). This is indeed a passage ‘liable to misconstruction’, a passage with a suggestiveness to which Pater would have been extremely sensitive.

Like the painter Basil, whom he praised in his *Bookman* review, Pater always advised discretion, even in things only ‘liable to misconstruction’; however, discretion was a quality Wilde rarely, if ever, enjoyed, and for Wilde enjoyment was everything. Pater’s

indiscretions were usually textual; Wilde's often sexual — perhaps leading to Wilde's charming retort upon hearing of his former friend's death: 'Was he ever alive?' Well, Pater had lived (even if only textually), and his texts were, for Wilde, an inescapable influence, as Wilde's prison reading-lists reveal.

In *De Profundis*, Wilde asserts that 'with freedom, books, flowers, and the moon, who could not be happy?' (p.1039). Well, during his imprisonment, he had neither freedom nor emerald carnations (and only occasionally the variable moon), but books he was eventually permitted, upon approved request:

[In] July 1895 Wilde was allowed to choose fifteen books to be sent to him in prison: they included *The Renaissance*. Two months later he got *Greek Studies*, *Appreciations*, and *Imaginary Portraits*. Robert Ross, visiting Wilde in prison in May 1896, undertook to send him *Gaston de Latour* when it came out on October 6. A further list, submitted to the prison authorities on December 3, 1896, included Pater's posthumous *Miscellaneous Studies* (1895).<sup>32</sup>

Another list, dated 29 July 1897, requests 'Walter Pater's posthumous volume of essays'; however, this was one of several volumes struck off the list by the prison governor.<sup>33</sup> Amidst this veritable library of Pater, this small cell in the appropriately christened 'Reading Gaol', Wilde constructed an epic epistle addressed 'Dear Bosie', a letter now called *De Profundis*<sup>34</sup> — the language of Pater employed in explanation of the ways he had himself been corrupted, initially by touches textual, then by touches sexual. This second touch (particularly that of Lord Alfred, whose life revolved, in Wilde's phrasing, around 'boys, brandy, and betting'<sup>35</sup>) has received much, perhaps too much consideration of late in films, biographies, and criticism; but, it is to that first, perhaps more interesting touch that I now turn. Those 'boys' came and went, but Pater's *Renaissance* was a permanent object to have and to hold: 'I never travel anywhere without it; [...] it is the very flower of decadence; the last trumpet should have sounded the moment it was written'.<sup>36</sup> Even in prison, Wilde's hand was ever upon that 'holy writ' of Decadence, prompting him to relate to Lord Alfred: 'I remember during my first term at Oxford reading in Pater's

*Renaissance* — that book which has had such a strange influence over my life' (*De Profundis*, p.1022).

The most controversial section of *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (titled *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* in its first edition, read by Wilde) — hence, the section with the 'widest currency' and 'influence' — was its 'Conclusion'. About Wilde's relationship to this volume, Ellmann relates: 'Much of it, especially the celebrated "Conclusion", he had by heart'.<sup>37</sup> This 'Conclusion' later acquired the following footnote by Pater:

This brief 'Conclusion' was omitted in the second edition of this book, as I conceived it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall. On the whole, I have thought it best to reprint it here, with some slight changes which bring it closer to my original meaning. I have dealt more fully in *Marius the Epicurean* with the thoughts suggested by it. (*Renaissance* 1893, p.186, emphasis added)<sup>38</sup>

George Moore, an acquaintance of both Pater and Wilde, emphasises the same phrasing while considering the influence and the evasiveness of Pater's style — 'all those lurking half-meanings and that evanescent suggestion'.<sup>39</sup> 'Half-meanings' and 'suggestion' — these were the ways that Pater's textual touch, however scandalous, nonetheless maintained its discretion, as Lesley Higgins, James Eli Adams, and Matthew Potolsky explain, respectively:

Pater, therefore, learned the art of indirection from two masterful practitioners, Socrates and Plato; he pursued a complementary approach in his own work through the multiple voices of ancient Greek writing, myth, and art.<sup>40</sup>

Invariably the binding secret remains obscure: it seems to designate a particular state of mind or mode of existence rather than a body of discursive lore, and hence is not to be revealed, only experienced. [...] Pater's rhetoric clearly suggests a calculated affiliation of his aestheticism with homoerotic subcultures that still remain shadowy in recent social and literary histories of Victorian England.<sup>41</sup>

The apparent danger of Pater's teaching, then, comes down not to the specific ideas he presents, but to the educational model this teaching imposes upon the teacher-student relationship.<sup>42</sup>

Masked as a consideration of Dorian's 'yellow book' (reminiscent of Flavian's 'golden book' and of Wilde's own description of *The Renaissance* as 'the golden book of spirit and sense, the holy writ of beauty'<sup>43</sup>), Wilde says much the same about Pater's style, though his



description is far more insightful, and is Higgins, Adams, and Potolsky elevated stylistically to the level of art:

The style in which it was written was that curious jewelled style, vivid and obscure at once, full of *argot* and of archaisms, of technical expressions and of elaborate paraphrases, that characterizes the work of some of the finest artists of the French school of *Décadents*. There were in it metaphors as monstrous as orchids, and as evil in color. The life of the senses was described in the terms of mystical philosophy. One hardly knew at times whether one was reading the spiritual ecstasies of some mediæval saint or the morbid confessions of a modern sinner. It was a poisonous book. The heavy odor of incense seemed to cling about its pages and to trouble the brain. The mere cadence of the sentences, the subtle monotony of their music, so full as it was of complex refrains and movements elaborately repeated, produced in the mind of the lad [Dorian], as he passed from chapter to chapter, a form of reverie, a malady of dreaming, that made him unconscious of the falling day and creeping shadows. (*Dorian* 1890, p.64)

Like all of his writings, Pater's *Renaissance* was obscure to some, vivid to others, depending on who was reading.<sup>44</sup> Critical consensus suggests that Pater's intended audience was a select group of Oxford (under)graduates,<sup>45</sup> most of whom had homoerotic and/or pederastic 'dispositions', most of whom had studied *Literae Humaniores*, hence could read Plato in the original (augmented by recent translations by Pater's mentor Benjamin Jowett, for 'the predominance and pre-eminence of "Jowett's Plato" was significantly unchallenged for more than sixty years'<sup>46</sup>). Therefore, after Pater had hung his own portrait gallery of Renaissance personalities (including such disparate characters as the non-Renaissance Winckelmann), a portrait gallery presented indirectly *via* the nuances of Plato — this select group, this coterie, found itself mirrored within a historical continuum, saw itself reflected as distinct and laudable, possessing an elite 'consciousness' or 'sensibility' which would be defended publicly, several decades later, in Wilde's brazen, courtroom apologia.<sup>47</sup> What Wilde failed to anticipate was that his own apologia would become the last expression of this 'suggestive' language of erotic indirection, a language which had begun to peter out with Symonds's death in 1893 and Pater's in 1894, an opaque and multifaceted language which was replaced, during Wilde's three trials in 1895, with turbulent directness, a directness which infiltrated the language of law, psychology,

journalism, and the street, a directness which encouraged taxonomies such as ‘the homosexual’.<sup>48</sup>

However, for several millennia before 1895, the indirect, ‘suggestive’ language of Plato had served as a vehicle for homoerotic and pederastic expression, so much so that Arthur C. Benson, Pater’s first and sisterly-approved biographer, would confide to his own diary: ‘Isn’t it really rather dangerous to let boys read Plato, if one is desirous that they should accept conventional moralities?’<sup>49</sup> The *real* dangers attributed to Pater’s ‘suggestive’ language and the education it inculcated are noted by Potolsky:

There has long been a threatening air surrounding accounts of Walter Pater’s influence on his students and disciples. The reserved Oxford don, whose staid but quietly subversive writings set the tone of the English *fin de siècle*, is regularly credited with destroying lives, undermining morals and contributing to the perversion of countless students.<sup>50</sup>

The dangers of Paterian education would seem to emerge in retrospect, only after their real consequences manifested themselves in the lives of the students.<sup>51</sup>

So, when Basil says of Dorian that ‘in some curious ways [...] his personality has suggested to me an entirely new manner in art, an entirely new mode of style’ (1890, p.9), this select group would have recognised that this ‘new manner’, this ‘new mode of style’ which Dorian’s ‘personality’ suggested to Basil, was homoerotic and/or pederastic in tint or bent, hence atypical for a Victorian. As Lord Henry contemplates: ‘Was it not Plato, that artist in thought, who had first analysed it? Was it not [Michelangelo] Buonarotti who had carved it in the coloured marbles of a sonnet-sequence? But in our own century it was strange’ (1891, p.40).

While Pater could expect his own readers, his literary coterie, to be well-versed in Plato, Wilde could subsequently expect those same readers to be well-versed in Pater, could expect that they would recognise the Decadent seed from which his own *Dorian Gray* had sprung, Pater’s *Renaissance*. While Donoghue merely relates that ‘it is possible that Pater’s book, rather than Joris-Karl Huysmans’s *A Rebours* or another claimant, is the “yellow book” Wilde’s Lord Henry sends to Dorian Gray, who imitates it in his progress to

immorality',<sup>52</sup> Gerald Monsman provides a convincing motive behind Wilde's allowance or fostering of multiple claimants, even if Pater's *Renaissance* is the obvious choice: 'Wilde may have partially deflected criticism away from Pater by hinting that the model for Dorian's poisonous book was Huysmans's *A Rebours* (1884), [however] Pater's theme of the transfiguring book lurks behind Dorian's corrupting volume'.<sup>53</sup> Wilde muddies the water even further by claiming that 'the book that poisoned, or made perfect, Dorian Gray does not exist; it is a fancy of mine merely'.<sup>54</sup> Whether or not the 'yellow book' is, as I believe, Pater's *Renaissance*, it is relatively certain that, besides his popular readership, a readership alternatively curious and scandalised, Wilde had also inherited a select group of readers, a literary coterie which would have recognised the subtle shadow of Pater lingering over Wilde's only signed novel.<sup>55</sup> This coterie would have recalled passages like the following while reading *Dorian Gray*:

[For Lionardo,] in such studies some interfusion of the extremes of beauty and terror shaped itself, as an image that might be seen and touched, in the mind of this gracious youth, so fixed that for the rest of his life it never left him; and as catching glimpses of it in the strange eyes or hair of chance people, he would follow such about the streets of Florence till the sun went down, of whom many sketches of his remain. Some of these are full of a curious beauty, that remote beauty apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully; who, starting with acknowledged types of beauty, have refined as far upon these, as these refine upon the world of common forms. (*Renaissance* 1873, p.97)

In fact, the informed reader — the select, Decadent, Oxonian reader — would probably have recognised the very kernel from which, I believe, *Dorian Gray* had sprung, the end of Pater's most famous of cameos, that of *La Gioconda*:

The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and modern thought has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life. Certainly Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea. ('Lionardo', *Renaissance* 1873, p.119)

If Lady Lisa is, as Pater asserts, the embodiment of the old fancy of perpetual life, then Dorian Gray is her younger, more Uranian nephew, the new fancy of perpetual youth — for, until the novel's anticlimactic last page, Dorian retains his boyish, underage appearance; or, as Dorian puts it, 'I shall be of age in less than a year', and later, 'I was a

school-boy when you knew me' (*Dorian* 1890, pp.34; 54). Dorian seems to encapsulate the type of schoolboy that Pater's Leonardo would have pursued through Florence, Huysmans's Des Esseintes through Paris. Des Esseintes's prurient exploits with such a schoolboy seem to have infused Wilde's novel — for Wilde had indeed derived much of the visual and episodic texture of his own novel from *A Rebours* — and the following episode is quoted in full because it also demonstrates the subtle innuendo Wilde and his Dorian would have employed while attempting to acquire such a boy from amid the byways of London:

Still chewing the bitter cud of his disillusionment, [Des Esseintes] was walking one day all alone in the Avenue de Latour-Maubourg when he was accosted near the Invalides by a young man, almost a boy, who begged him to tell him the shortest way to go to the Rue de Babylone. Des Esseintes indicated his road and, as he was crossing the Esplanade too, they set off together.

The lad's voice, insisting, it seemed to his companion quite needlessly, on fuller instructions as to the way; — 'Then you think, do you? that by turning left, I should be taking the longer road; but I was told that if I cut obliquely across the Avenue, I should get there all the quicker'; — was timid and appealing at the same time, very low and very gentle.

Des Esseintes looked him up and down. He seemed to have just left school, was poorly dressed in a little cheviot jacket tight round the hips and barely coming below the break of the loins, a pair of close-fitting black breeches, a turn-down collar cut low to display a puffed cravat, deep blue with white lines, La Vallière shape. In his hand he carried a class book bound in boards, and on his head was a brown, flat-brimmed bowler hat.

The face was at once pathetic and strangely attractive; pale and drawn, with regular features shaded by long black locks, it was lit up by great liquid eyes, the lids circled with blue, set near the nose, which was splashed with a few golden freckles and under which lurked a little mouth, but with fleshy lips divided by a line in the middle like a ripe cherry.

They examined each other for a moment, eye to eye; then the young man dropped his and stepped nearer; soon his arm was rubbing against Des Esseintes', who slackened his pace, gazing with a thoughtful look at the lad's swaying walk.

And lo! from this chance meeting sprang a mistrustful friendship that nevertheless was prolonged for months. To this day, Des Esseintes could not think of it without a shudder; never had he experienced a more alluring liaison or one that laid a more imperious spell on his senses; never had he run such risks, nor had he ever been so well content with such a grievous sort of satisfaction.<sup>56</sup>

Although Dorian begins as such a schoolboy, he will subsequently develop into a pederastic Des Esseintes in his own right, in pursuit of other schoolboys. Wilde further heightens his own novel's pederastic import by 'the fancy of perpetual youth': although Dorian may chronologically 'come of age', outwardly he will ever remain a schoolboy, an 'Adonis' like 'ivory and rose-leaves', 'a Narcissus' with the 'face of Antinoüs', a mystical representation of the 'harmony of soul and body' (1890, pp.4-9; see 'Appendix Thirty-

Five' for Roman sculptures of Antinoüs). Given Basil's painterly touches, Dorian's 'perpetual youth', and Wilde's exploration of 'curious beauty' — it should come as little surprise that *The Renaissance* essay most embossed on *Dorian Gray* is 'Lionardo da Vinci', a claim which I will demonstrate amidst my consideration of Wilde's 1890 and 1891 versions of the novel.

Wilde's readers arrive at an aesthetic moment, the painter Basil Hallward perfecting his portrait of this Adonis-Narcissus-Antinoüs and suddenly realising: 'I really can't exhibit it. I have put too much of myself into it' (*Dorian* 1890, pp.3-4). Overshadowing his aesthetic triumph is a burgeoning fear that the 'shallow prying eyes' of the general public (1890, p.10) will recognise the eroticism expressed in its creation, will recognise the lingering glance of love:

Two months ago I went to a crush at Lady Brandon's [...] I suddenly became conscious that some one was looking at me. I turned half-way round, and saw Dorian Gray for the first time. When our eyes met, I felt that I was growing pale. A curious instinct of terror came over me. I knew that I had come face to face with some one whose mere personality was so fascinating that, if I allowed it to do so, it would absorb my whole nature, my whole soul, my very art itself. (1890, p.6)<sup>57</sup>

It is those eyes — the eyes of his sitter Dorian — which begin, in turn, to recognise the depth of infatuation underlying Basil's painted surfaces, especially given that Basil's subsequent paintings are merely variations of Dorian-in-disguise. Besides that, Dorian is being schooled by Lord Henry to look below the 'shallow' surfaces of both canvases and humanity, to 'pry' deeply into artistic motives and personal desires, to do what Pater praises in Leonardo: 'He learned [...] the art of going deep, of tracking the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats, the power of an intimate presence in the things he handled' (*Renaissance* 1873, p.96). Dorian learns 'the art of going deep' through the tutelage of Lord Henry, that 'inspirer' who is Wilde's most Paterian creation. Throughout the novel, Lord Henry espouses theories that are 'poisons so subtle' (*Dorian* 1890, p.30) that their influence is barely felt by those they influence — such that Dorian 'was [only] dimly conscious that entirely fresh influences were at work within him' (1891, p.29; 1890

reads ‘fresh impulses’, p.14). As a submissive ‘hearer’, Dorian imbibes all of Lord Henry’s ‘wrong, fascinating, poisonous, delightful theories’ (1890, p.35), especially after Lord Henry recommends that he ‘cure the soul by means of the senses’:

There were poisons so subtle that to know their properties one had to sicken of them. There were maladies so strange that one had to pass through them if one sought to understand their nature. And, yet, what a great reward one received! How wonderful the whole world became to one! (1890, pp.16; 30)

Lord Henry’s corrupting ‘influence’ is described as a series of distilled ‘poisons’, ‘poisons’ that a receptive Dorian imbibes from those ‘wrong, fascinating, poisonous, delightful theories’ until he begins to receive their ‘great reward’.

Meanwhile, Lord Henry luxuriates in Dorian’s receptive disposition and his own influence over it: ‘Talking to [Dorian] was like playing upon an exquisite violin. He answered to every touch and thrill of the bow. ... There was something terribly enthralling in the exercise of influence’ (1891, p.39). Moreover, Lord Henry fully appreciates that such an ‘exercise of influence’ is also exerted by potent personalities captured artistically, a truth which Dorian will later realise for himself under the spell of Sibyl Vane’s theatricality: ‘She makes [her audience] as responsive as a violin’ (1890, p.36). In other words, both Lord Henry and Sibyl force their audience — namely Dorian — into responsiveness, into a sympathy with themselves and their motives, a sympathy which Jowett expresses, in translation, through Socrates:

But nobler far is the serious pursuit of the dialectician, who finds a congenial soul, and then with knowledge engrafts and sows words which are able to help themselves and him who planted them, and are not unfruitful, but have in them seeds which may bear fruit in other natures, nurtured in other ways — making the seed everlasting and the possessors happy to the utmost extent of human happiness. (from the *Phaedrus*, as translated by Benjamin Jowett)<sup>58</sup>

However, unlike Socrates’ philosopher (whose motives are noble) and Sibyl (whose motives involve little more than the aesthetic expressiveness characteristic of Basil), when Lord Henry suggests that ‘one should sympathise with the colour, the beauty, the joy of life’, Wilde’s readers know that Lord Henry is not sowing ‘the seed everlasting’ which Socrates claims will make ‘the possessors happy to the utmost extent of human happiness’.

Instead, the ‘great reward’ which Lord Henry promises is a heightened sympathy with life’s ‘poisons’, life’s ‘sins’ — for ‘sin is the only color-element left in modern life’, though a colour-element as complex as ‘a Persian carpet’ (1891, p.42; 1890, p.35; 1891, p.44). As he ‘lounged in the Park, or strolled down Piccadilly’ (1890, p.24), places famed for illicit rendezvous,<sup>59</sup> Dorian made a habit of acquiring those sins so various — sins far more complex than those Des Esseintes found with his Parisian school-boy. ‘This grey, monstrous London of ours, with its myriads of people, its sordid sinners, and its splendid sins’ (1891, p.47; the 1890 version reads ‘its splendid sinners, and its sordid sins’, p.24) — that is a passage clearly plundered from Pater: ‘[In] the streets of Milan, moved a people as fantastic, changeful, and dreamlike. To Lionardo least of all men could there be anything poisonous in the exotic flowers of sentiment which grew there. It was a life of exquisite amusements [...] and brilliant sins’ (*Renaissance* 1873, pp.101-02). With the sordid bravado of Robert Browning’s Fra Lippo Lippi, Wilde and his Dorian simply knot together their soiled bed-sheets, escape from the Paterian loft of aesthetic contemplation, and rush off to find more palpable pleasures in the moonlit streets of Florence, Milan, Hyde Park, or Piccadilly. Like those once-pristine bed-sheets, Pater’s description of Leonardo, so brilliant, so exquisite, is twisted into another shape and purpose by Wilde, is made sordid, made *Gray*.

Nevertheless, even sins as fantastic, mercurial, and dreamlike as a kaleidoscope or a Persian-carpet lose their puzzlement, become merely a blended palate of grey, after too much contemplation or indulgence: they then afford little save boredom, especially amidst the Decadent necessity to be ‘always searching for new sensations’ (*Dorian* 1890, p.17). As Lord Henry laughingly admits, ‘The only horrible thing in the world is *ennui*. [...] That is the one sin for which there is no forgiveness’ (1891, p.146), an admission which Donoghue explains: ‘In Pater and in the decadence he and Huysmans gave warrant for, the

price one pays for extreme achievements of refinement is that there is no return from them, even as a vacation exercise, to common forms of existence. There is only further refinement, the last curiosity'.<sup>60</sup> Increasingly bored with this continual search for further sensations, for further refinements, Dorian does indeed become horrible, more blandly grey — 'callous, concentrated on evil, with stained mien, and soul hungry for rebellion' (1891, p.137), 'filled [...] with that pride of rebellion that is half the fascination of sin, and smiling, with secret pleasure' (1890, p.73) — or, as Pater notes of Leonardo: 'This agitation, this perpetual delay, give him an air of weariness and ennui' (*Renaissance* 1873, p.106). At the end of the novel, Lord Henry exclaims, 'Ah, Dorian, how happy you are! What an exquisite life you have had! You have drunk deeply of everything. You have crushed the grapes against your palate' (*Dorian* 1890, p.96). Happy, no — exquisite, yes. Dorian has indeed drunk deeply of everything, especially those Decadent poisons for which he has acquired a definite and definitive taste. However, as with most forms of palatable connoisseurship, preference is given to the crushed grape left to ferment: so, not surprisingly, Dorian finds the most potent vintages of Decadent poison in refinements of an earlier age.

In a particularly Paterian passage from chapter three, Wilde reminds his readers that 'now and then a complex personality took the place and assumed the office of art; was indeed, in its way, a real work of art, Life having its elaborate masterpieces, just as poetry has, or sculpture, or painting' (*Dorian* 1890, pp.30-31). For Dorian, Lord Henry's personality had done just that. Having donned the mask of Lord Henry, Wilde asserts poignantly that 'life itself was the first, the greatest, of the arts', such that 'if a man treats life artistically, his brain is his heart' (1890, p.66; 1891, p.153). In essence, this Decadent syllogism posits that whatever a man can imagine his life can express, for 'there was no mood of the mind that had not its counterpart in the sensuous life' (1890, p.69). Under the



influence of this theory of blended art and life, Dorian comes to recognise that he also has ‘ancestors in literature [and art]’, complex personalities who, like Lord Henry, could take ‘the place and assumed the office of art’. Dorian feels ‘that he had known them all, those strange terrible figures that had passed across the stage of the world and made sin so marvellous, and evil so full of subtlety’ (1891, p.108; the 1890 version reads ‘so full of wonder’, p.76). Those figures, those complex personalities introduced to Dorian through Lord Henry’s cultivated conversation and books, become the principal influences over him, poisons so ‘subtle’, poisons so ‘fatal’, such that he would wonder: ‘Had some strange poisonous germ crept from body to body till it had reached his own?’ (1890, p.75).

Dorian also ‘crept from body to body till it [...] reached his own’ — his family portrait gallery. While wandering this gallery, he became especially intrigued by his ancestor Philip Herbert, who was, according to a memoir from the time of the monarchs Elizabeth and James, “‘caressed by the court for his handsome face, which kept him not long company’” (1890, p.75).<sup>61</sup> After this anecdote, an anecdote which leaves the reader wondering whether the Royal Court had caressed his ancestor’s face literally or metaphorically, Dorian continues:

Yet one had ancestors in literature, as well as in one’s own race, nearer perhaps in type and temperament, many of them, and certainly with an influence of which one was more absolutely conscious. [...] He felt that he had known them all, those strange terrible figures that had passed across the stage of the world and made sin so marvellous, and evil so full of wonder. (1890, pp.75-76)

After positing a veritable museum of homoerotic and pederastic ancestors and their cultural residue, a museum from which Dorian’s gallery constitutes only a slight portion, Wilde, as one might expect, proceeds to convert *The Picture of Dorian Gray* into an elaborate catalogue of ancestral artists and philosophers who shared this ‘temperament’ — a continuum passing through Plato, Michelangelo, Montaigne, Shakespeare, and Winckelmann — a list of lovers who find their proper encapsulation in Basil (as Pater’s

review seems to suggest), a truth which also seems to have been belatedly recognised by Dorian in the novel and Wilde in the defendant's box:

Basil would have helped him to resist Lord Henry's influence, and the still more poisonous influences that came from his own temperament. The love that [Basil] bore him — for it was really love — had something noble and intellectual in it. It was not that mere physical admiration of beauty that is born of the senses, and that dies when the senses tire. It was such love as Michael Angelo had known, and Montaigne, and Winckelmann, and Shakespeare himself. Yes, Basil could have saved him. But it was too late now. (*Dorian* 1890, p.60)

The 'Love that dare not speak its name' in this century is such a great affection of an elder for a younger man as there was between David and Jonathan, such as Plato made the very basis of his philosophy, and such as you find in the sonnets of Michaelangelo and Shakespeare. It is that deep, spiritual affection that is as pure as it is perfect. It dictates and pervades great works of art like those of Shakespeare and Michaelangelo, and those two letters of mine [to Lord Alfred], such as they are. It is in this century misunderstood, so much misunderstood that it may be described as the 'Love that dare not speak its name', and on account of it I am placed where I am now. (from Wilde's apology during his first trial in 1895)<sup>62</sup>

The elaborate catalogue which is *Dorian Gray* also includes monarchs and their favourites — Richard II, James I, Edward II and his beloved Piers Gaveston — their presence masked by a masque of jewelled pomp and gift-giving:

Richard II. had a coat, valued at thirty thousand marks, which was covered with balas rubies. [...] The favourites of James I. wore ear-rings of emeralds set in gold filigrane. Edward II. gave to Piers Gaveston a suit of red-gold armor studded with jacinths, and a collar of gold roses set with turquoise-stones, and a skull-cap *parsemé* with pearls. [...] How exquisite life had once been! How gorgeous in its pomp and decoration! (1890, p.71)<sup>63</sup>

Then, lest the homoerotic and pederastic elements of religion be overlooked, Wilde darts St Sebastian into his catalogue (1890, p.73).<sup>64</sup> This Wildean exploration of erotic portraiture has its precedent in Pater's own erotic portrait of Leonardo (as well as the other portraits which constitute *The Renaissance*):

[Leonardo] learned here the art of going deep, of tracking the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats, the power of an intimate presence in the things he handled. [...] And not into nature only; but [Leonardo] plunged also into human personality, and became above all a painter of portraits; faces of a modelling more skilful than has been seen before or since, embodied with a reality which almost amounts to illusion on dark air. To take a character as it was, and delicately sound its stops, suited one so curious in observation, curious in invention. (*Renaissance* 1873, pp.96; 104)

Many of the figures who form this Wildean catalogue of ancestors were portrayed for Dorian for the first time in what he later dubs the 'yellow book', a dangerously direct allusion to Pater's *Renaissance* lacking only the italicisation of its title — 'The Renaissance knew of strange manners of poisoning [...] Dorian Gray had been poisoned

by a book' (1890, p.77). This 'yellow book' had been lent to Dorian by Lord Henry, who roguishly intended its strange, suggestive manner of poisoning to overwhelm Dorian (despite the assertion he later makes to the contrary), as Ellmann explains:

When Dorian tells Lord Henry that the pseudo-*A Rebours* has corrupted him, his friend denies that this could happen. 'As for being poisoned by a book, there is no such thing as that. Art has no influence upon action. It annihilates the desire to act. It is superbly sterile. The books that the world calls immoral are books that show the world its own shame. That is all'. But a book has completed for Dorian what Lord Henry began. We are not allowed to accept [Lord Henry] Wotton's judgment, for it has already been made clear that he himself, when he was sixteen, had been overwhelmed by a book. His book is also left unnamed, but its identity can be established from his talk. Lord Henry is forever quoting, or misquoting, without acknowledgment, from Pater's *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*.<sup>65</sup>

Over time, the 'prying' Dorian came to recognise Lord Henry's intention behind loaning this volume: 'Yet you poisoned me with a book once. I should not forgive that. Harry, promise me that you will never lend that book to any one. It does harm' (1890, p.97).

What a grand sentence is 'I should not forgive that' — one of those flagrant-yet-subtle displays of the opaque style Wilde had learned from Pater and his *Renaissance*, a portmanteau relying on a hinged meaning, potential for 'surface' and 'symbol' at once (to quote Wilde's own 'Preface' to *Dorian Gray*). *Should not* is curious phrasing at best, perhaps meaning *shall not*, perhaps meaning *ought not* — the first declares the unforgivable, the second recognises playfully something almost forgiven already, for Dorian does indeed recognise that the lending of this book is consistent with Lord Henry's Decadent personality and 'wrong, fascinating, poisonous, delightful theories':

For years, Dorian Gray could not free himself from the influence of this book. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he never sought to free himself from it. He procured from Paris no less than nine large paper copies of the first edition, and had them bound in different colours, so that they might suit his various moods and the changing fancies of a nature over which he seemed, at times, to have almost entirely lost control. The hero, the wonderful young Parisian, in whom the romantic and the scientific temperaments were so strangely blended, became to him a kind of pre-figuring type of himself. And, indeed, the whole book seemed to him to contain the story of his own life, written before he had lived it. (1891, p.97)

[The 1890 version reads 'could not free himself from the memory of this book', of which he had acquired a mere 'five large-paper copies of the first edition' (p.65).]

The recognisable symptom of this book's strange manner of poisoning is its arousal of the curiosity of sin, an arousal encapsulated most fully in a chapter from that 'dangerous novel' (in the 1891 edition, 'wonderful novel') which Dorian re-reads repeatedly:

The hero of the dangerous novel that had so influenced his life had himself had this curious fancy. In a chapter of the book he tells how, crowned with laurel, lest lightning might strike him, he had sat, as Tiberius, in a garden at Capri, reading the shameful books of Elephantis, while dwarfs and peacocks strutted round him and the flute-player mocked the swinger of the censor; and, as Caligula, had caroused with the green-shirted jockeys in their stables, and supped in an ivory manger with a jewel-frontleted horse; and, as Domitian, had wondered through a corridor lined with marble mirrors, looking round with haggard eyes for the reflection of the dagger that was to end his days, and sick with that ennui [...] that comes on those to whom life denies nothing; and had peered through a clear emerald at the red shambles of the Circus [...] and heard men cry on Nero Cæsar as he passed by; and, as Elagabalus, had painted his face with colors, and plied the distaff among the women. (1890, p.76)<sup>66</sup>

The Roman allusions in this 'curious fancy' would have passed unintelligibly by Wilde's casual or common readers, readers without the 'clear emerald' of an education in *Literae Humaniores* to clarify their view, to enable them to appreciate the utter decadence and danger that these allusions express — especially given the fact that, even as late as 1993, the passage from which much of this was taken required a fluency in Latin to grasp, since it had never been translated into English:

A passage from Seutonius's *Lives of the Caesars* describes Tiberius's use of erotica. (It is still not available in English translation [as of 1993]; the *Loeb Classical Series* leaves the offending text in Latin.) In addition to having his bedroom on Capri decorated with two expensive paintings by Parrhasios with obscene subject matter (one showing the *Archigallus* or eunuch high priest of Cybele in an indecent act, the other Meleager performing cunnilingus on Atalanta), Tiberius had pictures illustrating sexual positions placed throughout rooms used for copulation: 'He decorated rooms located in different places with images and statuettes reproducing the most lascivious paintings and sculpture, which he amplified according to the books of Elephantis, so that no position he might order would fail to be represented'.<sup>67</sup>

By repeatedly wandering through the erotic spectacle which was Tiberius' pleasure-palace (itself a catalogue of erotica worthy of *The Kama Sutra*), Wilde and his Dorian, 'the hero of [his] dangerous novel', repeatedly lift the poisoned chalice to their own and their readers' lips, although most readers would never have recognised the draught it contains or its erotic import so curious, so erotic.

While snubbing Sibyl Vane (an actress who plays those Shakespearean roles which would have been allocated, on the Elizabethan stage, to a boy — as Wilde elaborates in his

‘Portrait of Mr. W. H.’), while holding up the poisoned chalice to Sibyl’s lips, Dorian reveals the stages of his own poisoning by saying, ‘You have killed my love. You used to stir my imagination. Now you don’t even stir my curiosity. You simply produce no effect’ (1890, p.40). Initially, the influence of a personality or a work of art stirs the curiosity, then the imagination (which, for someone whose ‘brain is his heart’, is the seat of desire). The first is passive, the second active. Lord Henry insinuates as much to Basil, pointing out the latter’s own influence over Dorian: ‘Your portrait of him has quickened his appreciation of the personal appearance of other people. It has had that excellent effect, among others’ (1890, p.33). All of the passages above taste of the tincture of Pater’s *Renaissance*, particularly the draught of ‘Lionardo’:

[In] the streets of Milan, moved a people as fantastic, changeful, and dreamlike. To Lionardo least of all men could there be anything poisonous in the exotic flowers of sentiment which grew there. It was a life of exquisite amusements [...] and brilliant sins; and it suited the quality of his genius, composed in almost equal parts of curiosity and the desire of beauty, *to take things* as they came. (‘Lionardo’, *Renaissance* 1873, pp.101-02, emphasis added)

Although, initially, Dorian merely indulges in passive appreciation, a voyeuristic indulgence in Sibyl’s theatricality, he is later moved to act, ‘to take things’, to assert his ‘manhood’: in the culmination of this, Dorian grows bored and cruel, and a distraught Sibyl takes a draught of literal poison — prussic acid. Like his ancestor Leonardo, Dorian admits: ‘I love beautiful things that one can touch and handle’ (*Dorian* 1890, p.54). The erotic import of this statement is heightened by a subsequent comment to Basil: ‘But the artistic temperament that they create, or at any rate reveal, is still more to me. [...] You have not realized how I have developed. I was a school-boy when you knew me. I am a man now. I have new passions, new thoughts, new ideas. I am different’ (1890, p.54). In essence, Dorian has begun to mirror Wilde and his love of ‘beautiful things that one can touch and handle’ and later discard: ‘I used to be utterly reckless of young lives: I used to take up a boy, love him “passionately”, and then grow bored with him, and often take no notice of him. That is what I regret in my past life’.<sup>68</sup>

Curiosity leads to desire; desire leads to contact; contact leads to a requirement that the beautiful thing which has already been touched and handled be possessed, be *had*: ‘Eternal youth, infinite passion, pleasures subtle and secret, wild joys and wilder sins, — he was *to have* all these things’ (*Dorian* 1890, p.51, emphasis added). Beautiful things, whether aesthetic or fleshy, stir in Dorian obdurate passions, passions which require not only that beauty be touched and handled and possessed, but ultimately, ravished — with Dorian thrusting his claim of ‘I am a man now’ into the receptive body of humanity. For Dorian, desire has shifted to necessity: ‘There were passions in him that *would* find their terrible outlet, dreams that *would* make the shadow of their evil real’ (*Dorian* 1890, p.60, emphasis added). However, almost unexpectedly, Dorian finds that, by giving his passions outlet, by making his dreams real and expressed, by getting ‘to know’ beauty in every way (in the fullest biblical sense), his passions are only further stirred: ‘The more he knew, the more he desired to know. He had mad hungers that grew more ravenous as he fed them’ (1890, p.66).

Dorian’s earlier influences, the living personality of Lord Henry and the personalities of those living only in such as Pater’s *Renaissance* — earlier influences which aroused his curiosity, taught him what was possible, strengthened his desires and his imaginative skills, provoked him to use his own ‘sinful’ imagination — these same influences begin to inspire him to create his own curious sins, sins as yet undepicted in art, as yet unconsidered by man, all ‘those sins that seemed to be already stirring in spirit and in flesh, — those curious unpictured sins whose very mystery lent them their subtlety and their charm’ (*Dorian* 1890, p.62).

‘Culture and corruption [...] I have known something of both’ (*Dorian* 1890, p.94) — Dorian speaks of ‘culture’ and ‘corruption’ almost as *past* influences, recognising with Pater and Lord Henry that he should indeed know something of both; for, like his fellow

Decadents, Dorian considers ‘culture and corruption’ inextricably linked: ‘Culture and corruption [...] I have know something of both. It seems to me curious now that they should *ever* be found together’ (Wilde probably intends ‘ever’ here in the sense of ‘always’). As an artistic, philosophical, and practical movement, Decadence considered ‘culture and corruption’ at length, and recognised or established a link between them, a link that the Decadents found in their ‘ancestors in literature’ and in themselves, a link which culminates in a ‘suggestive’, eroticised style. Pater notes much the same of Leonardo: ‘Curiosity and the desire of beauty — these are the two elementary forces in Lionardo’s genius; curiosity often in conflict with the desire of beauty, but generating, in union with it, a type of subtle and curious grace’ (*Renaissance* 1873, p.102). A style, a ‘subtle and curious grace’ — this is exactly what Lord Henry has cultivated in Dorian through ‘culture and corruption’, cultivated until the poisonous fangs are Dorian’s own.

When Lord Henry complains of the painter Basil that ‘he had no curiosity. It was his chief defect’ (1890, p.96), his point is that Basil does not understand this venomous quality (this stylised grace which is a mixture of curiosity and desire), whether the venomous quality resides in Lord Henry or in Dorian or in himself. It is a puzzled Basil who questions Dorian naively: ‘Why is your friendship so fateful [or fatal] to young men?’ After providing a substantial list of ruined youths for rhetorical support, Basil charges Dorian with corrupting everyone ‘whom you become intimate with’ (1890, p.80), filling them ‘with a madness for pleasure’ (1891, p.112). This ‘madness for pleasure’ was the subtle poison common among all the Victorian Decadents, at least those who were not infused, like Hopkins, with the ‘sort of chivalrous conscience’ which Pater and his Uranians championed (as I explored in ‘Chapter Four’).

‘The common’ — Pater portrays Leonardo as ‘one who has thoughts for himself alone, [which is recognisable in] his high indifferentism, his intolerance of the common

forms of things' (*Renaissance* 1873, p.90), and Wilde portrays Dorian as much the same. But, what of those 'uncommon' poisons — 'those curious *unpictured* sins whose very mystery lent them their subtlety and their charm'? What new colour-element of sin would Dorian, master of so many sinful colours, offer as a fateful (fatal) gift to later generations of young men? What flower of beauty would Dorian cultivate while motivated by feelings resembling those of Leonardo?

Other artists have been as careless of present or future applause, in self-forgetfulness, or because they set moral or political ends above the ends of art; but in [Leonardo] this solitary culture of beauty seems to have hung upon a kind of self-love, and a carelessness in the work of art of all but art itself. Out of the secret places of a unique temperament he brought strange blossoms and fruits hitherto unknown; and for him the novel impression conveyed, the exquisite effect woven, counted as an end in itself — a perfect end. (*Renaissance* 1873, pp.110-11)

Dorian would achieve a colour-element, a Persian carpet more mysterious and subtle, a flower more poisonous and charming than his friend Lord Henry could ever even have contemplated — a pleasure in the ultimate societal crime, a crime beyond that of murdering Basil, which led Dorian's former intimate Alan Campbell to charge: 'You have gone from corruption to corruption, and now you have culminated in crime' (*Dorian* 1890, p.92). Alan assumes that the crime of murder is the 'culmination' of Dorian's corruption: it is not. It is merely the beginning of a new selection of pleasures, colours, flavours. Basil's murder has merely roused Dorian — or, to use the murdered Basil's own words, has merely suggested to him 'an entirely new manner in art, an entirely new mode of style' (1890, p.9). The broader society of Decadents, personalities like Lord Henry and Pater, would have considered the 'culmination' of corruption to be its own replication: tempting and corrupting Innocents until those Innocents themselves become Decadents capable of tempting and corrupting in turn. This is the cyclical sin for which many a Socrates has been accused, thwarted, punished, or executed — such that even Dorian claims that 'he would never again tempt innocence. He would be good' (1890, p.98), as if the hallmark of 'goodness' is a refusal to tempt or corrupt innocence.



For ‘common’ Decadence (if Decadence can be labelled such a paradoxical thing), the pattern is circular in its replication: a Decadent uses his influential style, whether revealed in art or in life, to spark the curiosity of an Innocent. The Innocent, who is now curious, is enticed by the Decadent’s style to imbibe sinful poisons, whether as theories, attitudes, or actions, poisons whose only consequence is to increase the Innocent’s appetite for them. As a result, the Innocent begins to lose his innocence — hence, becomes ‘corrupted’ — through a futile attempt to satisfy his ever growing and ever more complex appetites. Corruption merely leads to corruption merely leads to corruption, until boredom forces the newly created Decadent (who was formerly the Innocent) to re-evaluate this process — in other words, forces him to become imaginative. Though he may try otherwise, this re-evaluation inevitably takes two Decadent forms, each becoming a pleasure in itself: the pleasure of opting not to ‘tempt innocence’, and the pleasure of opting to corrupt as a form of art, as ‘corruption for corruption’s sake’. The first Decadent form is evident in Dorian’s boast that he did not debauch a particular village girl of late — ‘Suddenly I determined to leave her as flower-like as I had found her’ (1890, p.94).<sup>69</sup> However, Lord Henry taunts Dorian with the impossibility of such a fantasy, positing that Dorian, despite his intentions, has at the very least broken the girl’s heart or given her desires that none of her class could ever fulfil; in fact, perhaps she has already drowned herself, like Lizzy Siddal in John Everett Millais’s famous painting, ‘in some mill-pond, with water-lilies round her, like Ophelia’ (1890, pp.94-95). The second Decadent form needs no further elaboration after the preceding analysis of *Dorian Gray*, for Wilde and his circle communicated this ‘corruption for corruption’s sake’ fluently enough through their exploits with telegraph-boys and their influence over young intellectuals like André Gide (1869-1951): ‘Wilde, I believe, did me nothing but harm. In his company I lost the habit of thinking. I had more varied emotions, but had forgotten how to bring order into them’.<sup>70</sup>

The first of these pleasures — *opting not to tempt innocence* — improves the Decadent's self-mastery, patience, selectivity, and subtlety; the second — *opting to corrupt as a form of art* — improves the Decadent's variety, scope, influence, and style. In both cases, the Decadent's potential for poisoning remains the same, a potential he cannot help but actualise, for his subtlety, his influence, and his style have become one with his life and his art, such that even in imprisonment or suicide, the Decadent cannot bereave himself of his own influence. In the end, Dorian may die physically, but his influence — captured as an image (Basil's restored painting) and as a legend (Wilde's novel) — has secured for him a certain degree of permanence, with Dorian merely becoming, at the very least, one of those 'ancestors' exerting his influence over the future through art and legend. Much the same can be said of Wilde, as aesthete, writer, transgressor, and 'martyr' for 'the cause'.

So, inevitably, the cycle begins anew, the Innocent replacing the Decadent who influenced him, continuing the lineage of influence which Pater so fully, perhaps fatally captured in *The Renaissance*, his chronicle of the continuum of Decadent procreation or rebirth. In the following passage, Wilde elucidates the pattern and desire of 'common' Decadence, as well as the ways Lord Henry luxuriates in these:

And how charming [Dorian] had been at dinner the night before, as, with startled eyes and lips parted in frightened pleasure, he had sat opposite to [Lord Henry] at the club, the red candleshades staining to a richer rose the wakening wonder of his face. Talking to [Dorian] was like playing upon an exquisite violin. He answered to every touch and thrill of the bow. ... There was something terribly enthralling in the exercise of influence. No other activity was like it. To project one's soul into some gracious form, and let it tarry there for a moment; to hear one's own intellectual views echoed back to one with all the added music of passion and youth; to convey one's temperament into another as though it were a subtle fluid or a strange perfume; there was a real joy in that — perhaps the most satisfying joy left to us in an age so limited and vulgar as our own, an age grossly carnal in its pleasures, and grossly common in its aims. ... He was a marvellous type, too, this lad, whom by so curious a chance [Lord Henry] had met in Basil's studio; or could be fashioned into a marvellous type, at any rate. Grace was his, and the white purity of boyhood, and beauty such as old Greek marbles kept for us. There was nothing that one could not do with him. He could be made a Titan or a toy. (*Dorian* 1891, pp.39-40)

Nevertheless, however influenced by Lord Henry he is, Dorian is not a 'common Decadent' is he? What then is the culmination of Dorian's idiosyncratic, procreant 'aesthetic'?

I wish to argue that Dorian has taken ‘art for art’s sake’ to an extreme which even Decadents like Lord Henry would consider untenable, an extreme which probably furthered Pater’s decision to side, in his literary review, with the naive, murdered Basil. Dorian has moved beyond ‘corruption for corruption’s sake’ (echoing Lord Henry’s claim that ‘there was something terribly enthralling in the exercise of influence. No other activity was like it’), has move to ‘crime for crime’s sake’, Wilde finding a slight model for this pleasure in Huysmans’s *A Rebours*:

It was some years ago now since one evening in the Rue de Rivoli, [Des Esseintes] had come across a young scamp of sixteen or so, a pale-faced, quick-eyed child, as seductive as a girl. He was sucking laboriously at a cigarette.

[Des Esseintes then took the boy to Madame Laure’s brothel and paid for his pleasures with several prostitutes, which led Madame Laure to comment:] ‘Ah, I understand; you rascal, you like ’em young, do you?’ Des Esseintes shrugged his shoulders. — ‘You’re wide of the mark! oh! miles away from it’, he laughed; ‘the plain truth is I am simply trying to train a murderer’.

[Des Esseintes then explained to her his intention in introducing the boy to the Parisian underworld:] ‘Then [this young man] will take to thieving to pay for his visits here; he will stop at nothing that he may take his usual diversions on this divan in this fine gas-lit apartment. [...] If the worst comes to the worst, he will, I hope, one fine day kill the gentleman who turns up just at the wrong moment as he is breaking open his desk; then my object will be attained, I shall have contributed, so far as in me lay, to create a scoundrel, an enemy the more for the odious society that wrings so heavy a ransom from us all’.<sup>71</sup>

As with this young scamp’s acquired addiction to refined brothel pleasures, Wilde’s readers are told — after Dorian has murdered Basil — that ‘anything becomes a pleasure if one does it too often’ (*Dorian* 1891, p.152), undoubtedly even the pleasure of murder. Hence, Dorian serves to encapsulate both Des Esseintes and ‘this young scamp of sixteen’ whom Des Esseintes hopes to cultivate into a murderer. However, if this young scamp, enticed by his loins, does find himself in a situation where murder becomes necessary, it will be for self-preservation, not for dispelling his ennui, as it will for Dorian. Notice the full speech from Wilde’s novel: “‘Oh! anything becomes a pleasure if one does it too often”, cried Lord Henry, laughing. “That is one of the most important secrets of life. I should fancy, however, that murder is always a mistake. One should never do anything that one cannot talk about after dinner”’. For Lord Henry, the dangers of murder involve conversation; for Dorian, commission.

‘The Renaissance knew of strange manners of poisoning’ (1890, p.77), Dorian remarks — and the following is the most poignant moment of literal poisoning in *The Renaissance*:

The year 1483 — the year of the birth of Raffaele and the thirty-first of Lionardo’s life — is fixed as the date of [Lionardo’s] visit to Milan by the letter in which he recommends himself to Ludovico Sforza [the Duke of Milan], and offers to tell him for a price strange secrets in the art of war. It was that Sforza who murdered his young nephew [Gian Galleazzo] by slow poison, yet was so susceptible to religious impressions that he turned his worst passions into a kind of religious cultus, and who took for his device the mulberry tree — symbol, in its long delay and sudden yielding of flowers and fruit together, of a wisdom which economises all forces for an opportunity of sudden and sure effect. (1873, pp.100-01)

Such passages were Decadent seeds which suddenly and surely yielded in Wilde and his like-minded contemporaries (real or fictive) a flower and a fruit that Pater (as well as Des Esseintes and Lord Henry) would have contemplated but would have avoided picking, a flower and a fruit of which Dorian and his predecessor Ludovico Sforza (1451-1508) had become ardent horticulturalists. For Dorian and Sforza, the ‘sudden and sure effect’ of murder, even ‘by slow poison’, was ‘something terribly enthralling’, for ‘no other activity was like it’. Pater’s consideration of Sforza is admittedly disturbing, with Pater seeming to enjoy the contrast between slowly poisoning a nephew and slowly developing a religious sentimentalism; but the explanation for this is rather simple. Wilde always enjoyed a pleasure; Pater, a paradox. When Donoghue writes that ‘in Pater [...] death is the mother of beauty and the cause of our seeing beautiful things with a correspondingly acute sense of their transience’,<sup>72</sup> his wording is precise: ‘Death is [...] the cause of our *seeing* beautiful things’. This Paterian paradox recalls the fictional defence of Michelangelo made by Donatien-Alphonse-Francois, the Marquis de Sade, in his novel *Justine: or Good Conduct Well Chastised* (1791), a defence of Michelangelo for murdering a young man in order to copy his agonies for a Crucifixion: ‘And when Michelangelo wished to render a Christ after Nature, did he make the crucifixion of a young man the occasion for a fit of remorse? Why no: he copied the boy in his death agonies’.<sup>73</sup> That is the unravelling of the paradox for Pater, however Decadent, however cruel such a paradox might be. On the

other hand, for Wilde the appreciation of ‘death agonies’ is something far different, certainly involving more than that change of aesthetic perspective which transforms the reader and the writer into what Seamus Heaney aptly calls the ‘artful voyeur’.<sup>74</sup>

It is against Wilde’s description of Dorian as ‘callous, concentrated on evil, with stained mien, and soul hungry for rebellion’ (*Dorian* 1891, p.137) that I wish to consider again Pater’s review of *Dorian Gray*, particularly the following passage:

A true Epicureanism aims at a complete though harmonious development of man’s entire organism. To lose the moral sense therefore, for instance, the sense of sin and righteousness, as Mr. Wilde’s hero — his heroes are bent on doing as speedily, as completely as they can, is to lose, or lower, organisation, to become less complex, to pass from a higher to a lower degree of development [...] Lord Henry, and even more the, from the first, suicidal hero [Dorian], loses too much in life to be a true Epicurean — loses so much in the way of impressions, of pleasant memories, and subsequent hopes, which [Basil] Hallward, by a really Epicurean economy, manages to secure. (pp.59-60)

According to Pater, Dorian loses ‘too much of life to be a true Epicurean’, to have ‘a really Epicurean economy’ — a personal economy translatable into ‘impressions’, ‘pleasant memories’, and ‘subsequent hopes’. By invoking ‘Epicureanism’ several times, Pater, in essence, transforms the occasion of his *Bookman* review into an opportunity to redirect readers away from Wilde’s immoral *Dorian Gray* and towards his own moral *Marius the Epicurean*. This tactic is more than a mere stratagem for self-preservation on Pater’s part. Remember that the most controversial and influential section of Pater’s *Renaissance*, the ‘Conclusion’ which had had such a permanent influence over Wilde, who memorised it in its entirety, later bore the following footnote:

This brief ‘Conclusion’ was omitted in the second edition of this book, as I conceived it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall. On the whole, I have thought it best to reprint it here, with some slight changes which bring it closer to my original meaning. I have dealt more fully in *Marius the Epicurean* with the thoughts suggested by it. (1893, p.186)

As Pater’s only completed novel, as the fuller expression of those Decadent views which Wilde had found so entrancing and memorable in *The Renaissance*, *Marius the Epicurean* — which Yeats considered ‘an example and the chief embodiment of Pater’s dangerous teaching’<sup>75</sup> — is the one book curiously missing from Wilde’s prison reading-lists. A

veritable library of Pater without Pater's second masterpiece, the later, more fully developed 'yellow book'? Its absence is especially noteworthy given that, as Nils Clausson observes of *Dorian Gray*, 'the novel's indebtedness to Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* [...] is well established'.<sup>76</sup> Its absence from Wilde's prison reading-lists is perhaps much more revealing than the actual contents of those lists. So why no *Marius*? I believe a rudimentary juxtaposition of the diaries of the two protagonists will serve as an answer.

Accused of corrupting and subsequently destroying a score of Innocents, Dorian invites Basil upstairs to his childhood school-room to view his concealed diary, a diary which Wilde's readers know to be nothing less than the horribly disfigured portrait of Dorian which Basil had painted long ago, a portrait which is now a revelation of absolute corruption expressed through varnished oil:

'My God! Don't tell me that you are bad, and corrupt, and shameful'.

Dorian Gray smiled. There was a curl of contempt in his lips. 'Come upstairs, Basil', he said, quietly. 'I keep a diary of my life from day to day, and it never leaves the room in which it is written. I shall show it to you if you come with me'. (*Dorian* 1891, p.114)<sup>77</sup>

In contrast to Dorian's fouled portrait, the following bespeaks the flavour of Marius's diary:

It had become a habit with Marius — one of his modernisms — developed by his assistance at those 'conversations' of [Emperor] Aurelius with himself, to keep a register of the movements of his own private thoughts or humours; not continuously indeed, but sometimes for lengthy intervals, during which it was no idle self-indulgence, but a necessity of his intellectual life, to 'confess himself', with an intimacy, seemingly rare among the ancients. (*Marius* 1885, II, p.171)

[From Marius's diary:] 'How little I myself really need, when people leave me alone, with the intellectual powers at work serenely. The drops of falling water, a few wild flowers with their priceless fragrance, even a few tufts of half-dead leaves, changing colour in the quiet of a room that has but light and shadow in it; these, for a susceptible mind, might well do duty for all the glory of Augustus. I notice often the true character of the fondness of the roughest working-people for their young children, a delicate appreciation, not only of their serviceable affection, but of their visible graces: and indeed, in this country, the children are almost always worth looking at. I see daily, in fine weather, a child like a delicate nosegay, run to meet the rudest of brick-makers as he comes from work. She is not at all afraid to hang upon his rough hand: and through her, he reaches out to, he makes his own, something out of that great world, so distant from him yet so real, of humanity's refinements. What is of finer soul, or of finer stuff, in things, and demands delicate touching — the delicacy of the little child represents to him that, initiates him into that. There, surely, is a touch of the *secular* gold, of a perpetual age of gold'. (*Ibid.*, pp.178-79)

[From Marius's diary:] 'And what is needed in the world, over against that, is a certain general, permanent force of compassion — humanity's standing self-pity — as an elementary ingredient of our social atmosphere, if we are to live in it at all. I wonder, sometimes, how man has cajoled himself into the bearing of his burden so far, seeing how every step his labour has won for him, from age to age, in the capacity of apprehension, must needs increase his dejection; as if the increase of knowledge were but the revelation of the radical hopelessness of his position: and I would that there were one even as I, behind this vain show of things!' (Ibid., p.180)

[From Marius's diary:] 'In the mere clinging of human creatures to each other, nay! in one's own solitary self-pity, even amidst what might seem absolute loss, I seem to touch the eternal. A certain very real new thing is evolved in that pitiful contact, which, on a review of all the perplexity of life, satisfies the moral sense, and removes that appearance of unkindness in the soul of things themselves, and assures us that not everything has been in vain'. (Ibid., pp.181-82)

'Satisfies the moral sense', 'removes the appearance of unkindness', 'assures us that not everything has been in vain' — that is what Pater meant by an 'Epicurean economy' with its 'impressions', 'pleasant memories', and 'subsequent hopes'. Ellmann explains this concisely: '[Pater] objected that Dorian's and Lord Henry's hedonism left no place for the higher pleasures of generosity and renunciation'.<sup>78</sup> Unlike Pater's Marius, Wilde's Dorian has no moral sense, is the very appearance of unkindness (particularly as exposed by the 'truth' of his soiled portrait), and ever assures himself and Wilde's readers that he has lived for vanities alone (and not in spirit of a Dutch *vanitas* painting exhorting the viewer to consider mortality and repent). The ultimate result is that Dorian — 'callous, concentrated on evil, with stained mien, and soul hungry for rebellion' — has become the monster in which we, members of a more 'civilised' society a hundred years after Wilde's fiction, now revel.

From August to November of 1888, while Wilde was busily crafting *Dorian Gray*, 'Jack the Ripper' was busily introducing Wilde's London and the modern world to one of its still-current fascinations — the serial-killer<sup>79</sup> — a figure who serves to encapsulate several Decadent issues, as Wilde clearly recognised:

An obsession with unrequited love, violence, and death characterized the Decadents on both sides of the [English] channel. The presentation of love as unnatural and dangerous had its roots in the self-consciously gay writing of Oscar Wilde and the young French and English poets who admired him. [...] Masquerade, duplicity, and concealment seem to go hand in hand with violence.<sup>80</sup>

[For Decadents like Wilde,] gay texts more openly equated death and violence with the forbidden.<sup>81</sup>

In his essay 'Pen, Pencil and Poison: A Study in Green', Wilde usurps the tone and the theme of Thomas De Quincey's 'On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts' (1827), and mischievously explores the disposition of one such murderer:

Charles Lamb's friend, Thomas Griffiths Wainwright [1794-1852] [...] [was] of an extremely artistic temperament, [and] followed many masters other than art, being not merely a poet and a painter, an art-critic, an antiquarian, and a writer of prose, an amateur of beautiful things and a dilettante of things delightful, but also a forger of no mean or ordinary capabilities, and as a subtle and secret poisoner almost without rival in this or any age. (p.1093)

However, compared to the Whitechapel Murders of 1888, the exploits of Wainwright were mere trifles, as Wilde would have recognised.

Daily newspaper coverage of the Whitechapel Murders and the attendant gossip surrounding these events would have provided Wilde with a continual stream of murderous titillation, something to 'talk about after dinner'. Wilde's interest in these investigations may have increased substantially after 7 November 1888, the day Francis Tumblety (1833-1903) was arrested on charges of 'gross indecency' committed with four young men — John Doughty, Arthur Brice, Albert Fisher, and James Crowley (see 'Appendix Thirty-Six').<sup>82</sup> Five days later, Tumblety, an American medical doctor of sorts, was also charged on suspicion of having committed the Whitechapel Murders, a charge Scotland Yard could not adequately substantiate. Although the British press never publicised Tumblety's arrest (maintaining a silence prompted perhaps by Scotland Yard), North American newspapers did so immediately, which suggests that Wilde might very well have learned of the charges *via* gossip within his Uranian circle or *via* details from American or Canadian newspapers, especially since a number of his friends and acquaintances were North American expatriates, such as Robert Ross from Canada and Edward Perry Warren from America. Four charges of sodomy and five charges of murder<sup>83</sup> — that was indeed a catalogue of 'sins' worthy of a Dorian Gray. However, on 16 November, James L. Hannay, a magistrate of the Marlborough Street Magistrates Court, released Tumblety on bail, from whence he fled to the Continent on 24 November, assuring his own sanctuary and perhaps



Wilde's ennui, for even Wainwright, deported to a Tasmanian prison-colony, was a more palpable a figure to contemplate than a fleeing Tumblety — though the latter still garners considerable attention, since he remains, for many specialists, the most viable suspect for the role of 'Jack the Ripper', particularly since this 'sodomite' kept and avidly displayed, as something to 'talk about after dinner' in tones of disgust, a collection of embalmed uteri of every class of women.<sup>84</sup> Tumblety's collection of uteri makes Frederick Rolfe's revulsion towards the 'female body' — those 'parrots crossed with jelly-fish' (see my 'Chapter One') — seem rather tame by comparison.

Whether Tumblety was or was not 'Jack the Ripper' is not as striking as the fact that a disproportionate number of the other 'prime suspects' were connected in some way to the 'male brothel' at 19 Cleveland Street and its scandal involving the 'postal boys' — such as Prince Albert Victor Christian Edward (1864-92; known informally as 'Eddy') and James Kenneth Stephen (1859-92) — or were in its proximity, as was the case with the painter Walter Sickert (1860-1942), who lived at 6 Cleveland Street, virtually opposite number 19. In the case of another suspect, Montague John DrUITT (1857-88; who attended Winchester and New College, Oxford, graduating in 1880 with third class honours in *Literae Humaniores*), he had recently been dismissed from his post as Assistant Master at Blackheath Proprietary School, London, for 'serious trouble' (a euphemism for the fate of pederastic pedagogues like William Johnson and Oscar Browning), and was found drowned in the Thames on 31 December 1888, a suicide which correlated with the end of 'Jack the Ripper' as a newspaper headline, suggesting to the Victorian press and to Scotland Yard (which subsequently closed its investigation, after noting in DrUITT's file, 'He was sexually insane and from private information I have little doubt but that his own family believed him to have been the murderer') that the infamous 'Jack' had taken his own life.<sup>85</sup>

What is striking here — even after a dismissal of the above suspicions as ‘spurious speculation’ — is that a correlation was drawn (at least by the Scotland Yard investigators) between pederastic/homoerotic dalliances like those of Tumblety, Druitt, Stephen, Prince Eddy, and others in Cleveland Street and the propensity to commit the most famous criminal rampage of the Victorian period. In the hierarchy of ‘sins’, the pederastic was (and often still is) seen as the pinnacle, an observation which I made in ‘Chapter One’ in relation to a 1993 review of a new supplement to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, a review in which the anonymous reviewer, even though noting the inclusion of various murderers, states that ‘the vilest person here commemorated is probably Frederick Rolfe, “Baron Corvo”’.<sup>86</sup> For this reviewer, what makes Rolfe the ‘vilest person here commemorated’ is undoubtedly that he was a Uranian writer and an unrepentant pederast. For modern Western culture, there is at least one ‘sin’ viler than murder, and that is actualised pederasty: an individual capable of committing a pederastic act was (is) capable of anything, even the Whitechapel Murders. Wilde seems to have acknowledged this contemporary correlation — at least from society’s perspective — hence his pederastic Dorian becomes ‘the Sforza who murdered his young nephew [Gian Galleazzo] by slow poison’, becomes the budding Uranian replacement for Wainwright’s more gruesome descendent, ‘Jack the Ripper’.

We ‘Moderns’ find ourselves saying with Lord Henry, ‘I should like to know some one who had committed a real murder’ (*Dorian* 1891, p.147) — perhaps to substantiate our own theories on the matter: ‘I should fancy that crime was to [the lower orders of society] what art is to us, simply a method of procuring extraordinary sensations’ (1891, p.152). Although we, like Lord Henry, find our curiosity sparked by the Sforzas and the Wainwrights and the Rippers and the Dorians and the Hannibal Lectors of this world — all of those who kill for pleasure — we, members of a more ‘civilised’ society, disclaim

any actual understanding, and claim instead that a Decadence which allows for murder with neither ‘motive’ nor ‘insanity’ (those two concepts required by our great bastions of law and psychology) is impossible. Nevertheless, ‘Dorian manages the murder, and the disposal of the body, as if De Quincey were right about murder’s being one of the fine arts’.<sup>87</sup> For Wilde, as for his Dorian, all that murder-as-pleasure or murder-as-a-fine-art requires is a gradated reconsideration, a moral negation distinct from Pater’s aesthetic contemplation of the murderous Sforza or Gerard Manley Hopkins’s quasi-religious half-hope of an Afghan death for his bugler boy. Notice how, after killing his friend Basil (*Dorian* 1891, p.117), Dorian begins to reconsider him: ‘Poor Basil! what a horrible way for *a man* to die!’ (1891, p.121, emphasis added). His ‘friend’ becomes merely a ‘man’, then merely a ‘thing’: ‘[Besides] a horrible smell of nitric acid in the room [...] *the thing* that had been sitting at the table was gone’ (1891, p.127, emphasis added). This reconsideration is more concisely expressed in a repeated refrain from Wilde’s ‘The Ballad of Reading Gaol’, a poem whose hero is executed for slitting his wife’s throat with a razor (recalling the *modus operandi* of ‘Jack the Ripper’): ‘Each man kills the thing he loves’.<sup>88</sup> Such a reconsideration — his ‘friend’ ultimately becoming ‘the thing’ — is in drastic antipathy to Marius’s evaluation of the gladiatorials in the Roman amphitheatre:

There was something in a tolerance like that, in the bare fact that [Emperor] Aurelius could sit patiently through a [gladiatorial] scene like that, which seemed to Marius to mark [Emperor Aurelius] as eternally his inferior on the question of righteousness; to set them on opposite sides, in some great conflict, of which this difference was but one presentment. (*Marius* 1885, I, p.237)

Or, this act of charity and utter forgiveness:

Yet when a certain woman gathered for interment the insulted remains of Nero, the pagan world surmised that she must be a Christian: only a Christian would have been likely to conceive so chivalrous a devotion towards wretchedness. ‘We refuse to be witnesses even of a homicide commanded by the laws’, pleads a Christian apologist, ‘we take no part in your cruel sports nor in the spectacles of the amphitheatre, and we hold that to witness a murder is the same thing as to commit one’. (II, pp.115-16)

Against such moral indictment and depth, Wilde and his murderous Dorian seem, at best, strikingly shallow and affected, despite the fact that Wilde has fashioned his Dorian so that

‘he has something of the glamour of a Faust rather than the foulness of a murderer and drug addict’.<sup>89</sup> As Wilde would later hypocritically preach to Lord Alfred on six separate occasions in *De Profundis*, ‘The supreme vice is shallowness’ (pp.981, 1002, 1005, 1020, 1021, 1056).<sup>90</sup> Prison seems, at least on the ‘surface’, to have altered one of Wilde’s ‘Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young’, that ‘only the shallow know themselves’ (p.1244). Not surprisingly, even in prison Wilde shallowly preferred the amoral Walter Pater he found in *The Renaissance* (1873) to the moral Walter Pater he found in *Marius the Epicurean* (1885). To Wilde’s disdain, Pater had the worst of all habits — the habit of maturing.

Although Dorian could kill both his conscience and Basil, he nonetheless had to admit, ‘The dead linger sometimes. The man upstairs will not go away’ (*Dorian* 1891, p.124) — well, not until his former intimate Alan Campbell arrives with nitric acid. For dissolving away Pater, Wilde chose instead the acidity and diversion of his wit, asking the one question which he himself could best have answered: ‘Was [Pater] ever alive?’ A few years after asking that acidic question, Wilde awoke in Reading Gaol. Under those circumstances, he also awoke to the realisation that he had misread Pater’s *Renaissance*, had mapped his life according to faulty and shallow coordinates gleaned from a ‘golden book’, had failed to comprehend Pater’s apprehension that *The Renaissance* ‘might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall’. Wilde had indeed been misled, had indeed taken the lesser of the ‘two Uranian paths’ — the path of Pandemotic lust rather than Uranian love, the unfortunate path that Alcibiades had taken long before, straight to the statue of Priapus, whose pedestal (for the Romans) always bore an epigrammatic warning such as ‘If I do seize you, you shall be so stretched that you will think your anus never had any wrinkles’ or ‘O, wayfarer, thou shalt fear this god and hold thy hand high: this is worth thy while, for lo! there stands ready thy cross, the phallus’.<sup>91</sup>

Therefore, it is understandable that Wilde had no place in his life or his prison cell for a book which would have acted as a conscience, which would have echoed Basil's dismay: 'My God! don't tell me that you are bad, and corrupt, and shameful'. Pater's *Marius* would have done just that. It would have reminded Wilde — self-dubbed 'the pariah-dog of the nineteenth century'<sup>92</sup> — of exactly what he had sacrificed and killed through the hubris of his legal attack on Lord Alfred's father, the Marquess of Queensberry, as well as through the sordid evidence submitted against him during his subsequent trials for 'gross indecency': not only his own reputation and literary career and family and health, but also the aspirations of many like Symonds and Pater who had attempted to keep a tactful, homoerotic and pederastic flourish while yet in the public eye. The impact of Wilde's fall is readily observable on the first group:

The real immoral certainty lay in Oscar's appalling disregard of innocent bystanders who stood to be devastated by his pursuit of physical pleasures that, he later admitted, 'wreck the soul': his wife and two boys, of course; his mother; his close friends; the poor family butler; and many a young man, one imagines, whom he amused himself with and then carelessly discarded. His ass-theticism was criminal more in the figurative than the literal sense.<sup>93</sup>

Its impact on the second group is more oblique (like the group itself), as Dowling explains: 'In this moment of March 1895 all the expanded scope Symonds had so cautiously, Pater so covertly, and Wilde so carelessly endeavoured to win for homoerotic imagination and experience would seemingly vanish overnight'.<sup>94</sup> However, Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray* would continue to live beyond its author, as a lingering influence over many of the Uranians and their texts and artworks. Although 'the aesthetics of Pater and the Greek ideal were being slightly perverted and misinterpreted' by Wilde and his coterie, suggests d'Arch Smith too slightly, their works like *Dorian Gray* did 'set off a flood of pederastic material in the form of verse, prose and paintings as well as initiating a new trend in the art of photography'.<sup>95</sup> In essence, Dorian became one of those 'ancestors in literature', such that, after his immortalisation on the canvas of fiction, pederastic and homoerotic literature

would ever afterwards be branded, to some extent, as Wilde's progeny — branded with his 'wild joys and wilder sins', branded with the blemish of the murderous Cain.

Nevertheless, Wilde also had descendents who were neither textual nor pictorial — two charming and distanced sons, Cyril (1885-1915) and Vyvyan (1886-1967) (see 'Appendix Thirty-Seven'), sons whom Wilde seems to have intended to follow in his own heavy, Decadent footsteps, footsteps left across their nursery in the form of fairy tales. One of those tales, 'The Young King', is particularly subversive, with a pederastic import I will soon consider at some length — but first, I need to defend a claim that, for Victorian Decadents like Wilde, precocious children like Cyril and Vyvyan could, given the proper environment, perceive such an erotic import. To substantiate this claim, I turn now to Henry James's novel *What Maisie Knew* (1897) — though, to reach Maisie, I needs must make an short excursion to a child who was a master of mirrors; for, as Wilde stresses in *Salomé*, 'Only in mirrors should one look, for mirrors do but show us masks'.<sup>96</sup>

### 'Somebody Killed Something: That's Clear': James's Approach to Childhood Knowing

'It seems very pretty', [Alice] said when she had finished [reading 'Jabberwocky'], 'but it's *rather* hard to understand!' (You see she didn't like to confess, even to herself, that she couldn't make it out at all.) 'Somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas — only I don't exactly know what they are! However, *somebody* killed *something*: that's clear, at any rate —' (Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*)<sup>97</sup>

It may not seem that Alice has gotten much from the poem 'Jabberwocky' — though eventually in *Through the Looking-Glass* she will have its problematic diction explained by the most famous of eggheads, Humpty Dumpty. Despite being oblivious to its almost-Wittgensteinian language-games, its Anglo-Saxon parody, and its flurry of neologisms, Alice flawlessly latches onto its core meaning, so much so that I think few adults could

better her three word précis: ‘Somebody killed something’. Despite her gaps in understanding, despite her inability to define that ‘somebody’ or ‘something’, Alice does gather the import of what she has read, does recognise that someone has killed ‘the thing’.

In the preface to his novel *What Maisie Knew*, Henry James asserts (as readers might themselves suspect) that ‘the infant mind would at the best leave great gaps and voids’ in its understanding (p.ix).<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, James later remarks, ‘Small children have many more perceptions than they have terms to translate them; their vision is at any moment much richer, their apprehension even constantly stronger, than their prompt, their at all producible, vocabulary’ (p.x). James’s observations and Lewis Carroll’s language-games find their proper gloss in two of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s most notable of propositions: ‘The limits of my language mean the limits of my world’, and further ‘That the world is *my* world, shows itself in the fact that the limits of the language (*the* language which I understand) mean the limits of *my* world’.<sup>99</sup> Despite ‘great gaps and voids’, children’s perceptions are often ‘much richer’ than they ‘have terms to translate them’ into — hence, their inability to formulate adequate speech-acts poses ‘the limits of [their] world’, as well as provides an opportunity for the more mature to fill those ‘great gaps and voids’ with the pleasantries of Marius’s childhood, until ‘the whole of life seemed full of sacred presences’ (I, p.24); or else, selfishly, to convert the child into ‘a deep little porcelain cup in which biting acids could be mixed’.

Before considering Oscar Wilde’s sons as the intended audience for ‘The Young King’, I would like to turn to James’s novel, which is about a turbulent divorce and its aftermath as viewed by a child, drawing particular attention to a few passages which illustrate how far a child’s language — and, consequently, societal navigation — can be expanded, even under questionable and morally reprehensible circumstances. In the novel, mothers and fathers continually change partners and names, while Maisie herself becomes

the pretext for all sorts of adult sexual intrigue. Neglected and exploited by everyone around her, Maisie provides James with an opportunity to consider how far ‘overthought’ and ‘underthought’ can pass between adult and child — and the amount of passage, James suggests, is considerable.

*What Maisie Knew* is, according to James’s narrator, the story of ‘innocence so saturated with knowledge’ (p.183), a knowledge that Maisie has derived through the continual (mis)use relatives have made of her as a plaything, a plaything in games they assume she will never fully comprehend:

‘Poor little monkey!’ [her mother] at last exclaimed; and the words were an epitaph for the tomb of Maisie’s childhood. She was abandoned to her fate. What was clear to any spectator was that the only link binding her to either parent was this lamentable fact of her being a ready vessel for bitterness, a deep little porcelain cup in which biting acids could be mixed. They had wanted her not for any good they could do her, but for the harm they could, with her unconscious aid, do each other. [...] These were the opposed principles in which Maisie was to be educated. (pp.5-6)

The following snippet of conversation, made upon Maisie’s return after six months spent with her father, reveals the first expression of this ‘use’:

‘And did your beastly papa, my precious angel, send any message to your own loving mamma?’  
[...]  
‘He said I was to tell you, from him’, she faithfully reported, ‘that you’re a nasty horrid pig!’ (p.13)

Such is the beginning of Maisie’s education. However, Maisie soon enough decides, insightfully, not to play along, for ‘she had a new feeling, the feeling of danger; on which a new remedy rose to meet it, the idea of an inner self or, in other words, of concealment’ (p.15).<sup>100</sup> Maisie soon realises the existence of ‘underthought’, that ‘everything had something behind it: life was like a long, long corridor with rows of closed doors. She had learned that at these doors it was wise not to knock’ (pp.33-34); or, as the narrator further relates, ‘she had grown up among things as to which her foremost knowledge was that she was never to ask about them’ (p.33). However, the ‘why’ of this is also within Maisie’s grasp or, at the very least, her voyeuristic gaze:

It was in the nature of things to be none of a small child’s business, even when a small child had from the first been deluded into a fear that she might be too much initiated. [...] [Maisie] learned on



the other hand soon to recognise how at last, sometimes, patient little silences and intelligent little looks could be rewarded by delightful little glimpses. (p.161)

As James's narrator explains, Maisie's 'sharpened sense of spectatorship' — described as 'an odd air of being present at her history [...] as if she could only get at experience by flattening her nose against a pane of glass' (p.107) — brought 'a high quickening of Maisie's direct perceptions' (p.99). As James emphasises in one of his notebooks: 'EVERYTHING TAKES PLACE BEFORE MAISIE'.<sup>101</sup>

For the adults in James's novel, innocence and its language 'limit' (its supposed language barrier) serve rhetorical functions about which the child is only indirectly consequential. Accused of retaining letters to Maisie from her mother, Miss Overmore (who will later become Mrs Beale, the girl's stepmother) responds: 'They were not fit for the innocent child to see' (p.45) — though it must be admitted that nothing contained in those letters could have been any more scandalous than her own conversations with young Maisie or within the range of Maisie's 'spectatorship'. Notice her rather-comical protest to Sir Claude — Maisie's new stepfather and soon to be her own illicit lover (using Maisie, of course, as the pretext for meeting and carrying out their affair):

'How you talk to her!' cried Mrs. Beale.  
'No worse than you!' he gaily answered. (p.130)

At one point, Sir Claude admits to Maisie:

'I'm talking to you in the most extraordinary way — I'm always talking to you in the most extraordinary way, ain't I? One would think you were about sixty and that I — I don't know what any one would think I am. Unless a beastly cad!' (p.334)

At another point, he makes a few lurid comments to Maisie about own his wife, Maisie's mother:

'I beg your pardon [...] for appearing to discuss that sort of possibility under your sharp little nose. But the fact is I *forget* half the time that Ida's your sainted mother'.  
'So do I!' said Maisie. (p.104)

These passages illustrate how thoroughly Maisie is treated as someone not exactly an adult, not exactly a child. As a result, the language and other games in the novel blur the

distinction between the ‘conventional’ and the ‘unconventional’ — with the ‘conventional’ leading, inevitably, to the ‘unconventional’, particularly for Sir Claude, whose very name, in James’s hands, seems an awkward clumping of the refined and the base. Sir Claude had a habit of presenting Maisie with children’s games, the instructions to which were far too complex for Maisie and her elderly governess to decipher; however, rather than admit their ignorance to Sir Claude, the girl and her governess spend the time they are believed to be playing these games discussing ‘him’ and the games of his relationships:

[Sir Claude presented her with] ever so many games in boxes, with printed directions. [...] The games were, as he said, to while away the evening hour; and the evening hour indeed often passed in futile attempts [on the part of Mrs. Wix, the child’s governess] to master what ‘it said’ on the papers. When he asked the pair how they liked the games they always replied ‘Oh immensely!’ but they had earnest discussions as to whether they hadn’t better appeal to him frankly for aid to understand them. This was a course their delicacy shrank from [...] The answer on the winter nights to the puzzle of cards and counters and little bewildering pamphlets was just to draw up to the fire and talk about him; and if the truth must be told this edifying interchange constituted for the time the little girl’s chief education. (pp.71-73)<sup>102</sup>

In truth, these ‘conventional’ games pale into insignificance next to the games played by Maisie’s mother and her new husband, by Maisie’s father and his new wife, and by the two new stepparents together.<sup>103</sup> Hence, this game-motif becomes the *leit-motif* running through the fireside chats Maisie has with her governess Mrs Wix:

‘Well, my dear, it’s [your mother’s] game, and we must just hold on like grim death’. Maisie could interpret at her leisure these ominous words. Her reflexions indeed at this moment thickened apace. [...] She perceived [...] that something beyond her knowledge had taken place in the house. The things beyond her knowledge — numerous enough in truth — had not hitherto, she believed, been the things that had been nearest to her: she had even had in the past a smug conviction that in the domestic labyrinth she always kept the clue. (pp.89-90)

Or, as James’s reader is told elsewhere, ‘There was little indeed in the commerce of her companions that [Maisie’s] precocious experience couldn’t explain’ (p.53) — for, ‘our young lady was led [...] to arrive at a dim apprehension of the unuttered and the unknown’ (p.168).

To demonstrate Maisie’s ‘knowing’ and its relationship to spectatorship, gaming, and language, I wish to take a bit of a lengthy stroll in Kensington Garden with her and her stepfather, seven pages of James’s novel which I have condensed below:

‘Upon my word he *is* making up to her!’

[Sir Claude’s] allusion was to a couple who, side by side, at the end of the glade, were moving in the same direction as themselves. These distant figures, in their slow stroll (which kept them so close together that their heads, drooping a little forward, almost touched), presented the back of a lady who looked tall, who was evidently a very fine woman, and that of a gentleman whose left hand appeared to be passed well into her arm [...]

‘Why mercy — if it isn’t mamma!’

Sir Claude paused with a stare. ‘Mamma? But mamma’s at Brussels’.

Maisie, with her eyes on the lady, wondered. ‘At Brussels?’

‘She’s gone to play a match’.

‘At billiards? [‘Billiards was her great accomplishment’ (p.7)] You didn’t tell me’.

‘Of course I didn’t!’ Sir Claude ejaculated. ‘There’s plenty I don’t tell you. She went on Wednesday’.

The couple had added to their distance, but Maisie’s eyes more than kept pace with them. ‘Then she has come back’.

Sir Claude watched the lady. ‘It’s much more likely she never went!’

‘It’s mamma!’ the child said with decision.

They had stood still, but Sir Claude had made the most of his opportunity, and it happened that just at this moment, at the end of the vista, the others halted and, still showing their backs, seemed to stay talking. ‘Right you are, my duck!’ he exclaimed at last. ‘It’s my own sweet wife!’

He had spoken with a laugh, but he had changed colour, and Maisie quickly looked away from him.

‘Then who is it with her?’

‘Blest if I know!’ said Sir Claude. [...]

[Maisie] studied the gentleman’s back. ‘Then is this Lord Eric?’

For a moment her companion made no answer [...] ‘What do you know about Lord Eric?’

She tried innocently to be odd in return. ‘Oh I know more than you think! Is it Lord Eric?’ she repeated.

‘It may be. Blest if I care!’

Their friends had slightly separated and now, as Sir Claude spoke, suddenly faced round, showing all the splendour of her ladyship and all the mystery of her comrade.

Maisie held her breath. ‘They’re coming!’

‘Let them come’. And Sir Claude, pulling out his cigarettes, began to strike a light.

‘We shall meet them!’

‘No. They’ll meet *us*’.

Maisie stood her ground. ‘They see us. Just look’.

Sir Claude threw away his match. ‘Come straight on’. The others, in the return, evidently startled, had half-paused again, keeping well apart. ‘She’s horribly surprised and wants to slope’, he continued. ‘But it’s too late’. [...]

‘Then what will she do?’

Sir Claude puffed his cigarette. ‘She’s quickly thinking’. He appeared to enjoy it.

[Her mother] had wavered but an instant. [...]

Maisie felt really so frightened that before she knew it she had passed her hand into Sir Claude’s arm. [...] ‘What *will* she do now?’

‘Try to pretend it’s me’.

‘You?’

‘Why that I’m up to something’.

In another minute [her mother] had justified this prediction, erect there before them like a figure of justice in full dress. [...] ‘What are you doing with my daughter? [...] I know your game and have something now to say to you about it’.

Sir Claude gave a squeeze of the child’s arm. ‘Didn’t I tell you she’d have, [Maisie]?’

‘You’re uncommonly afraid to hear it’, [her mother] went on; ‘but, if you think she’ll protect you from it you’re mightily mistaken. [...] Should you like her to know, my dear [husband]?’

Maisie had a sense of her [mother] launching the question with effect; yet [she] was also conscious of hoping that Sir Claude would declare that preference. We have already learned that she had come to like people’s liking her to ‘know’. (This passage is from pp.139-45)

‘To know’ — this ‘knowing’, although not as developed in her as in her decadent parents and stepparents, allows Maisie nonetheless to navigate such situations with relative ease, to

reach the core meaning or ‘underthought’ of such situations, all of which draws attention to the imaginative quality and the irony of her mother’s later statement that

‘there have been things between us — between Sir Claude and me — which I needn’t go into, you little nuisance, because you wouldn’t understand them’. It suited her to convey that Maisie had been kept, so far as *she* was concerned or could imagine, in a holy ignorance and that she must take for granted a supreme simplicity. (p.218)

To solidify this point, I would like to draw attention to one more passage — this time, quite a bit shorter — the moment Maisie is told by Mrs Wix of the return of her stepfather to their hotel in France (where, of course, he has come principally for an adulterous dalliance with her stepmother):

‘My poor dear, he has come!’  
 ‘Sir Claude?’ Maisie, clearing the little bed-rug with the width of her spring, felt the polished floor under her bare feet.  
 ‘He crossed in the night; he got in early’. Mrs. Wix’s head jerked stiffly backward. ‘He’s there’.  
 ‘And you’ve seen him?’  
 ‘No. He’s there — he’s there’, Mrs. Wix repeated. [...]  
 ‘Do you mean he’s in the salon?’ Maisie asked again.  
 ‘He’s *with* her’, Mrs. Wix desolately said. ‘He’s with her’, she reiterated.  
 ‘Do you mean in her own room?’ Maisie continued.  
 She waited an instant. ‘God knows!’ (This passage is from pp.310-12)<sup>104</sup>

Well, not only God. Perhaps the more accurate conclusion to this interchange between Maisie and her governess is found in the last two lines of the novel:

‘Oh, I know!’ the child replied.  
 Mrs. Wix gave a sidelong look. She still had room for wonder at what Maisie knew. (p.363)

In relation to my present concern about literature *for* children (particularly as it relates to my next exploration, Wilde’s sons as the intended audience for ‘The Young King’), and not just literature *about* children, consider one short passage from *What Maisie Knew*, the last pleasant moment spent between the girl and her stepfather, Sir Claude. It is indeed, for me, the most ironic moment in the novel, as well as the most important (given my present speculations about Maisie and her ‘knowing’) for considering James’s protagonist as a reader of children’s literature:

They stood there and smiled, [Sir Claude] with all the newspapers under his arm and [Maisie] with three books, one yellow and two pink. He had told her the pink were for herself and the yellow one

for Mrs. Beale, implying in an interesting way that these were the natural divisions in France of literature for the young and for the old. (p.344)

This is indeed humorous — Maisie's two pink volumes in comparison to her stepmother's more salacious 'yellow book' — as if one could question, save for a division in vocabulary, Maisie's ability to understand fully the contents of that French volume for 'the old'. One could speculate on the titles of the pink volumes, perhaps British or American imports like sentimental *Little Lord Fauntleroy* or moralising *Little Women*, all unworthy of a sensitive and experienced child like Maisie, especially since, as John C. McCloskey notes: 'There is little now in the situation, of which [Maisie] is the center, that eludes her. Her perception, her power of inference, her insight into character and motive make her expertly at home in the world from which her demand for exclusive possession will shortly force her, an adolescent, to merge'.<sup>105</sup>

It has not been uncommon for critics, from F. R. Leavis onwards, to complain that James (un)intentionally made *What Maisie Knew* into a comedy by giving his small heroine uncanny powers of moral navigation and personal insight.<sup>106</sup> This I will not assert, but rather that Maisie is a representative of a distinct species among the young (a species in which Lewis Carroll's Alice would equally have found her place): those treated as potential or fractal adults. *In Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture*, James R. Kincaid claims that

few would question that the innocent child was manufactured by Rousseau, with refinements by Wordsworth and a thousand lesser writers, interior decorators, and producers of greeting cards. Prior to the eighteenth century, says [Philippe] Ariès, nobody worried about soiling childish innocence because 'nobody thought that this innocence really existed'. Now, however, [in the Victorian period,] the notion that the child was innocent, valuable, and weak became common.<sup>107</sup>

Maisie and Alice are neither innocent nor valuable nor weak (at least in the context of the texts which present them); yet, neither are they soiled by their trips down the rabbit-hole.<sup>108</sup> They are merely more 'knowing' than most adults (whether Victorian parents or those of today) would prefer, children who would rather not play games in paper boxes or read

timid books in pink covers. They might, more scandalously and disconcertingly, expect relevance, beauty of language, unpatronising plots, and the answer to all questions. (In my ‘Conclusion’, this will be explored in relationship to Guy Davenport’s protagonist Hugo.)

‘But, Maisie and Alice are fictions’ is the obvious retort to this assertion. Yes, the sort of fictions which lead one to recall another set of precocious children (from a family with quite a few children), two sons and a daughter unrestricted by their famous father in almost any way — allowed to speak as equals to the adults of his circle, to mingle with his evening guests, to visit the studios of painters who specialised in the nude (and even to take lessons), to frequent salons full of freethinking artists and poets, to read any book. That the son Henry should become an unprecedented master of the English novel; that the son William should become a master of psychology as well as the founder of Pragmatism; that the daughter Alice should become a memorable diarist, perhaps as interesting as Dorothy Wordsworth — that would indeed be a triumvirate worthy of fiction, those three children from among the children of Henry James, Sr.<sup>109</sup>

Ever the narcissistic father, Oscar Wilde seems to have expected much the same ‘knowing’ to be reflected in the mirror of his own sons Cyril and Vyvyan, as is suggested by the subversive fair tales he wrote for them, particularly the pederastic *tour de force* ‘The Young King’, to which I now turn.

### ‘Little Porcelain Cup in Which Biting Acids Could Be Mixed’: Wilde’s Sons as the Audience for ‘The Young King’

I dreamed of the moisture of warm wet lips  
Upon my lips.

Then sudden the shades of the night took wing,  
And I saw that love was a beautiful thing,  
For I clasped to my breast my curl-crowned king,  
My sweet boy-king. (John Francis Bloxam, from ‘At Dawn’)<sup>110</sup>

The lines above, from a poem by John Francis Bloxam (1873-1928), were published, perhaps unsurprisingly, in the only issue of *The Chameleon: A Bazaar of Dangerous and Smiling Chances* (December 1894; its cover-page appears as ‘Appendix Thirty-Eight’), an Oxford periodical which, as Timothy d’Arch Smith relates, ‘received the full glare of publicity and ridicule in the Wilde trials’,<sup>111</sup> due mostly to a short story titled ‘The Priest and the Acolyte’, also written by Bloxam. That particular story aptly illustrates Martha Vicinus’s claim that ‘throughout Europe the boy became a vessel into which an author — and a reader — could pour his or her anxieties, fantasies, and sexual desires’,<sup>112</sup> especially since the story centres around Ronald, a priest whose vague yearnings become strikingly tactile after the appearance of Wilfred, the boy who is to serve as his ceremonial acolyte:

The priest sprang through the open window, and seizing the slim little figure in his arms, he carried him into the room. He drew the curtains and, sinking into the deep arm-chair, laid the little fair head upon his breast, kissing his curls again and again.<sup>113</sup>

To the priest’s pleased surprise, the boy returns his affection:

When they met in the vestry next morning, the lad raised his beautiful flower-like face, and the priest, gently putting his arms round him, kissed him tenderly on the lips.

‘My darling! my darling!’ was all he said; but the lad returned his kiss with a smile of wonderful almost heavenly love, in a silence that seemed to whisper something more than words.

Their secret intimacy flourishes until, one fateful evening, the rector of the church surprises the priest and acolyte *in flagrante delicto*:

The little lad sat on his knees with his arms closely pressed round [the priest’s] neck and his golden curls laid against the priest’s close-cut hair; his white nightshirt contrasting strangely and beautifully with the dull black of the other’s long cassock.

Recognising that their discovered intimacy, duly confessed, would inevitably spell their doom, or at least part them forever, this pederastic couple conducts a final, fatal communion, tinct with poison:

Just before the consecration the priest took a tiny phial from the pocket of his cassock, blessed it, and poured the contents into the chalice. [...] [The priest] took the beautiful gold chalice, set with precious stones, in his hand; he turned towards [the boy]; but when he saw the light in the beautiful face he turned again to the crucifix with a low moan. For one instant his courage failed him; then he turned to the little fellow again, and held the chalice to his lips [...] The instant he had received,

Ronald fell on his knees beside him and drained the chalice to the last drop. He set it down and threw his arms round the beautiful figure of his dearly loved acolyte. Their lips met in one last kiss of perfect love, and all was over.

This synthesis of pederasty and the dangerous chalice was not Bloxam's invention: from Classical Greece to Renaissance Italy to Victorian England, those upon the symposial couch, as in Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio's *Bacchus* (see 'Appendix Thirty-Nine'), were prone to extend the *kylix* (resembling a *scyphus* like the Warren Cup), a traditional pederastic gift for a beloved boy, the eroticism of such a symposial act heightened by the undraping of the sash and the presence of an overripe and bursting pomegranate, a traditional symbol of sexual experience.<sup>114</sup>

Given the pederastic import of the above, it is not surprising that, once the Oxford University authorities became aware of its contents, this particular student periodical did not survive into a second issue. *The Chameleon's* editor, who was none other than Bloxam himself, also printed in this solitary issue Lord Alfred Douglas's poem 'Two Loves', with its (in)famous line 'I am the love that dare not speak its name'; and Wilde's 'Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young', an epigrammatic series which, in association with 'Two Loves' and 'The Priest and the Acolyte', would be exploited against him during his trials. The last of these 'Phrases and Philosophies' — 'To love oneself is the beginning of a life-long romance' — is made incarnate in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, a novel of narcissistic self-love, a novel itself for 'the Use of the Young'. What Wilde's contemporary readership failed to appreciate (and his readership today still fails to appreciate) is that *Dorian Gray* — in many ways the most Decadent of Victorian texts — was not initially composed to popularise the sensual values of Walter Pater's *Renaissance* or to rewrite Joris-Karl Huysmans's *A Rebours*, but as a children's tale, a detail explained by Wilde's principal biographer, Richard Ellmann:

The ideas and themes he scattered were sometimes reaped by his young admirers. The novelist W. B. Maxwell, while a boy, had heard many stories from Wilde, and wrote one of them down and published it. He confessed to Wilde, whose face clouded, then cleared as he mixed approval with



reproach, ‘Stealing my story was the act of a gentleman, but not telling me you had stolen it was to ignore the claims of friendship’. Then he suddenly became serious: ‘You mustn’t take a story that I told you of a man and a picture. No, absolutely, I want that for myself. I fully mean to write it, and I should be terribly upset if I were forestalled’. This first mention of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* antedated by several years, Maxwell says, the actual composition.<sup>115</sup>

Wilde’s novel was one of the most decried of the century, decried as the absolute flowering of the evils of Decadence: how much more repugnant would that flower have been had his Victorian detractors known that it had initially been told to a ‘boy’ (though his dates suggest that he might well have been in his teens)<sup>116</sup> named William Babington Maxwell (1866-1938), the son of his friends? Basil’s question to Dorian about the ruin of his intimates could equally have been levelled at Wilde: ‘Why is your friendship so fateful to young men?’ (*Dorian* 1890, p.79). That the earliest form of *Dorian Gray* had been told to a boy or young man also draws into question Wilde’s retort, made in a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* in December 1891, that his second volume of fairy tales had not been intended specifically for the young:

The writer of this review [...] starts by asking an extremely silly question, and that is, whether or not I have written this book for the purpose of giving pleasure to the British child. Having expressed grave doubts on this subject, a subject on which I cannot conceive any fairly-educated person having any doubts at all, he proceeds, apparently quite seriously, to make the extremely limited vocabulary at the disposal of the British child the standard by which the prose of an artist is to be judged! Now in building this *House of Pomegranates* I had about as much intention of pleasing the British child as I had of pleasing the British public.<sup>117</sup>

‘Giving pleasure to the British child’ might not have been Wilde’s principal intention in constructing his second volume of fairy tales, *A House of Pomegranates* (1891), but he seems to have drawn a distinction, at least for himself, between the typical ‘British child’ and the likes of Maxwell or his own sons — especially since his son Vyvyan would later admit, ‘He told us *all* his own written fairy stories suitably adapted for our young minds’ (emphasis added).<sup>118</sup> Wilde, as I will later suggest, was less intent on ‘giving pleasure to the British child’ than on ‘getting pleasure from the British child’, especially if, as Lord Henry asserts, the ultimate pleasure is the exercise of influence, ‘to convey one’s temperament into another as though it were a subtle fluid [...] There was a real joy in that’

(*Dorian* 1891, p.40). Besides, Wilde's comments to the *Pall Mall Gazette* were essential — a flagrant diversion — especially since he was not at liberty to assert that he had written those tales with an audience of children in mind, lest he be accused of attempting to 'corrupt the innocent', which was, in fact, what he was trying to do. However, Wilde did have less-famous contemporaries whose tales for boys could abound in pederastic flourish without drawing much or any publicity (even when those contemporaries were attempting to court attention). In a piece of unbelievably Decadent self-advertisement, Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson (1868-1942; sometimes referred to as 'The Father of Modern American Gay Literature'), writing under the pseudonym of Xavier Mayne, parades the pederastic nuances of his own subversive boys books, particularly *Left to Themselves: Being the Ordeal of Gerald and Philip* (published in the same year as Wilde's *House of Pomegranates*):

Fiction for young people that has uranian hints naturally is thought the last sort for circulating among British boys and girls. [Nevertheless,] in 'White Cockades', a little tale of the flight of the Younger Pretender, by E. I. Stevenson, issued in Edinburgh some years ago, passionate devotion from a rustic youth toward the prince, and its recognition are half-hinted as homosexual in essence. The sentiment of uranian adolescence is more distinguishable in another book for lads, 'Philip and Gerald', by the same hand: a romantic story in which a youth in his latter teens is irresistibly attracted to a much younger lad; and becomes, *con amore*, responsible for the latter's personal safety, in a series of unexpected events that throw them together — for life.<sup>119</sup>

Wilde always garnered too much attention from the general public for him to be as overt and scandalous as Prime-Stevenson (pseudonym or no); nevertheless, Wilde did construct 'tales for boys' which are full of the 'sentiment of uranian adolescence', despite his comments to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, as Naomi Wood asserts:

Oscar Wilde's fairy tales are not often discussed in this [erotic] context, though his sexuality has been discussed extensively by a panoply of critics in the century since his death. Oscar Wilde's fairy tales encode the vision of an idealistic pederast, a man who loves beautiful youths; the style and content of his fairy tales offer a vision of love and beauty that urges a different aesthetic and moral relationship to the world and experience from the heavily censored and didactic productions of the Grimm brothers. Oscar Wilde's fairy tales rhetorically create a new, morally sensual child by enacting Walter Pater's aesthetics.<sup>120</sup>

Although specific pederastic practice is certainly not to be gleaned from the fairy tales, the fairy tales use the ideals and images surrounding Classical and contemporary homosexual discourses to offer an alternative, idealized form of love and morality, one that emphasizes spiritual procreancy, unselfish self-sacrifice, and, paradoxically, immersion in sensual experience as the means to true spirituality.<sup>121</sup>

Wilde's most conspicuous example of a pederastic fairy tale — 'a distinctly more transgressive, though still by no means obtrusive, assertion of homosexual themes'<sup>122</sup> — is 'The Young King' from *A House of Pomegranates*.

Wilde's tale begins with a pair of sensual images, images seemingly constructed as an invitation for his own sons Cyril and Vyvyan to admire voyeuristically the young king as exhibitionist — the first, this youth reclining provocatively in a sensual pose; the second, racing about the woodlands, barely clothed:

The lad — for he was only a lad, being but sixteen years of age — [...] had flung himself back with a deep sigh of relief on the soft cushions of his embroidered couch, lying there, wild-eyed and open-mouthed, like a brown woodland Faun, or some young animal of the forest newly snared by the hunters.

And indeed, it was the hunters who had found him, coming upon him almost by chance as, bare-limbed and pipe in hand, he was following the flock of the poor goatherd who had brought him up, and whose son he had always fancied himself to be. ('King', p.213)

The pruriency of this passage is heightened exponentially when placed alongside biographical evidence for Wilde, such as these passages from three letters to Robert Ross:

My dearest Bobbie,  
Bosie has insisted on stopping here for sandwiches. He is quite like a narcissus — so white and gold. I will come either Wednesday or Thursday night to your rooms. Send me a line. Bosie is so tired: he lies like a hyacinth on the sofa, and I worship him.  
You dear boy.  
Ever yours  
Oscar<sup>123</sup>

There is a great deal of beauty here [in Morocco]. The Kabyle boys are quite lovely [...] Bosie and I have taken to hashish: it is quite exquisite: three puffs of smoke, and then peace and love.<sup>124</sup>

The mountains of Kabylia [are] full of villages peopled by fauns [...] We were followed by lovely brown things from forest to forest.<sup>125</sup>

The young king, 'a brown woodland Faun', clearly has his equivalent in the boys of Kabyle, 'lovely brown things' that followed Wilde and Lord Alfred about the Moroccan woodlands (and certainly back to their rooms for 'peace and love', and a little remuneration) — though, in his later, more domesticated and palatial state, the young king would lie 'on the soft cushions of his embroidered couch [...] wild-eyed and open-mouthed', resembling the 'hyacinth on the sofa' who was Wilde's beloved Lord Alfred.

Wilde's sons would also have heard that the young king had a 'strange passion for beauty that was destined to have so great an influence over his life' ('King', p.214), a phrase which has its echo in their father's claim to Lord Alfred that '[Walter] Pater's *Renaissance* [...] has had such a strange influence over my life' (*De Profundis*, p.1022), a phrase which reverberates in this tale because, as Wood asserts, 'Pater's aesthetic credo in *The Renaissance* clearly informs Wilde's fairy tales'.<sup>126</sup> Further, Pater's volume informs this particular tale with a certain deadliness that is not merely textual. As Dorian explains, 'The Renaissance knew of strange manners of poisoning' (*Dorian* 1890, p.77) — one of the most memorable of these, according to Pater, at the hand of Ludovico Sforza 'who murdered his young nephew by slow poison' (*Renaissance* 1893, p.85). The figure of Sforza seems almost detectable behind the explanation of the death of the young king's mother, soon after giving him birth: 'Grief, or the plague, as the court physician stated, or, as some suggested, a swift Italian poison administered in a cup of spiced wine, slew, within an hour of her waking, the white girl who had given him birth' ('King', p.213).

Wilde's sons would also have been told that, because of this 'strange passion for beauty', the young king had a penchant for exploring his own palace, and that rumours describe him being found

kneeling in real adoration before a great picture that had just been brought from Venice, and that seemed to herald the worship of some new gods. On another occasion he had been missed for several hours, and after a lengthened search had been discovered in a little chamber in one of the northern turrets of the palace gazing, as one in a trance, at a Greek gem carved with the figure of Adonis. He had been seen, so the tale ran, pressing his warm lips to the marble brow of an antique statue that had been discovered in the bed of the river on the occasion of the building of the stone bridge, and was inscribed with the name of the Bithynian slave of Hadrian. He had passed a whole night in noting the effect of the moonlight on a silver image of Endymion. ('King', p.214)

The passage above displays the young king as fascinated by those Classical epebes whom Dorian Gray had come to encapsulate for the painter Basil, since Dorian was an 'Adonis', 'a Narcissus' with the 'face of Antinoüs', the physical manifestation of the 'harmony of soul and body' (*Dorian* 1890, pp.4-9). In fact, the young king found himself reflected by these aesthetic images, particularly in his bedroom, where 'a laughing Narcissus in green

bronze held a polished mirror above his head', thus duplicating the Narcissistic image, the face of the young king reflected by the mirror held in Narcissus's patinaed hand, a cogent symbol that 'to love oneself is the beginning of a life-long romance', however fatal that narcissism is to oneself or to others.

As Pater relates in his *Renaissance*, Johannes Winckelmann had been similarly stirred by these erotically suggestive, Grecian images: 'Suddenly he is in contact with that life, still fervent in the relics of plastic art' (p.146), for 'Greek sculpture deals almost exclusively with youth, where the moulding of the bodily organs is still as if suspended between growth and completion' (p.174). However, Winckelmann later found this 'moulding of the bodily organs' in something far more solid than poetry, far less frigid than marble:

That his affinity with Hellenism was not merely intellectual, that the subtler threads of temperament were inwoven in it, is proved by his romantic, fervent friendships with young men. He has known, he says, many young men more beautiful than Guido [Reni]'s archangel. These friendships [succeeded in] bringing him into contact with the pride of human form. (p.152)

Similarly, the young king also had more than Grecian marbles to stare upon, to caress, and to kiss, for he had 'many young men more beautiful than Guido's archangel' in his service, young companions who answered to his every wish and whim:

[The young king] would sometimes be accompanied by the slim, fair-haired Court pages, with their floating mantles, and gay fluttering ribands; but more often he would be alone, feeling through a certain quick instinct, which was almost a divination, that the secrets of art are best learned in secret. ('King', p.214)

And [after relating to his courtiers his three dreams revealing the inhumanity surrounding the making of his regalia,] he bade them all leave him, save one page whom he kept as his companion, a lad a year younger than himself. Him he kept for his service, and when he had bathed himself in clear water [...] he put on [his goatherder clothing], and in his hand he took his rude shepherd's staff.

And the little page opened his big blue eyes in wonder, and said smiling to him, 'My lord, I see thy robe and thy sceptre, but where is thy crown?' (p.220)

[See 'Appendix Forty' for an example of an eroticised court page fulfilling his intimate 'duties'.]

This fairy tale began with several invitations to admire voyeuristically — the first, the image of the young king reclining in a sensual pose; the second, of the young king racing about the woodlands, barely clothed — and it ends, after a dozen such voyeuristic

spectacles, with one which Wilde seems to have incorporated specifically with Cyril and Vyvyan in mind, for it relates to a repeated image from one of their favourite fairy tales, ‘The Selfish Giant’ — ‘[the trees] covered themselves with blossoms’ (p.284). When the nobles enter the cathedral, swords drawn to slay the young king for his degradation of his office and their esteem, they discover him awaiting his investiture and praying before the image of Christ:

And lo! through the painted windows came the sunlight streaming upon him, and the sunbeams wove round him a tissued robe that was fairer than the robe that had been fashioned for his pleasure. The dead staff blossomed [with] bare lilies that were whiter than pearls. The dry thorn blossomed [with] bare roses that were redder than rubies. Whiter than fine pearls were the lilies, and their stems were of bright silver. Redder than male rubies were the roses, and their leaves were of beaten gold. [...] He stood there in a king’s raiment, and the Glory of God filled the place. [...] And the people fell upon their knees in awe, and the nobles sheathed their swords and did homage, and the Bishop’s face grew pale, and his hands trembled. ‘A greater than I hath crowned thee’, he cried, and he knelt before him.

And the young King came down from the high altar, and passed home through the midst of the people. But no man dared look upon his face, for it was like the face of an angel. (‘King’, pp.221-22)

Although Cyril and Vyvyan would have heard that ‘no man dared look upon [the young king’s] face’ after his staff had been ‘covered with flowers’ and ‘the Glory of God [had] filled the place’, they would also have heard that ‘it was like the face of an angel’ — for the narrator, their father, always dared to look upon the face of beauty that others feared (however dangerous such a glance might be), and was inviting his sons to do so as well.

Although the sensual imagery of ‘The Young King’ may well have passed by Wilde’s sons unnoticed — if one posits that they were less ‘knowing’ than Maisie, Alice, or the James children — the tale nonetheless provides Decadent, pederastic opportunities, especially if Wilde’s sons were to inquire, ‘What is a Faun?’ ‘Who are the “new gods”?’ ‘Why does he love Adonis and Endymion so much?’ ‘Who was the Bithynian slave of Hadrian?’ ‘What do Court pages do?’

The most dangerous sentence in ‘The Young King’ — a sentence which ignores all discretion, all parental tact — seems explicitly structured to illicit such a question from either Cyril or Vyvyan, the answer to which must needs be pederastic, for it would be

impossible to answer otherwise: ‘[The young king] had been seen, so the tale ran, pressing his warm lips to the marble brow of an antique statue that had been discovered in the bed of the river on the occasion of the building of the stone bridge, and was inscribed with the name of the Bithynian slave of Hadrian’. This sentence seems to implore either Cyril or Vyvyan to inquire, ‘What is his name?’ — hence, providing an occasion for their father to insinuate or to expound about the pederastic relationship between Emperor Hadrian (76-138 CE) and the Bithynian boy Antinoüs (111-130 CE), about a love that, from the Victorian period till today, ‘dares not speak its name’. Their father would have had much to say on that particular theme, since his letters to Ross abound with allusions to his feverish ‘nights with Antinoüs’.<sup>127</sup>

However, there is more here than mere textual insinuation; for, as Gary Schmidgall observes, ‘One sad result of this coincidence was that the avocation of youth-chasing on one hand and the vocation of fatherhood on the other began to produce unattractive, sometimes poignant coincidences’<sup>128</sup> — one of those ‘poignant coincidences’ arising because, unlike Vyvyan, ‘Cyril was rather more like the kinds of young men Oscar instinctively gravitated toward in his liaisons’,<sup>129</sup> which might explain why Vyvyan, who resembled his father more in disposition (and, later in life, became of his father’s most sympathetic of scholars), almost always remained unmentioned in his father’s conversations and letters, while ‘I could not bear the idea of being separated from Cyril, that beautiful, loving, loveable child of mine, my friend of all friends, my companion beyond all companions’.<sup>130</sup> However, preference aside, they were both his progeny, and Wilde seems to have enfolded them — Cyril in particular — directly into the dangerous, erotic atmosphere he had structured around himself, a poignant example being a summer holiday spent at the sea:

The Wilde family spent August and September of 1894 at the seaside in Worthing [...] Bosie was also a visitor at Worthing, and this was also when Oscar became friendly with an eighteen-year-old named Conway who was a newspaper boy on the pier at Brighton. [...] The boy became part of the

family circle, a playmate, in effect, to both Oscar and his sons. But, as the Queensberry Plea of justification stated, ‘The said Oscar Fingal O’Flahertie Wills Wilde upon several occasions in the months of August and September in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and ninety-four [...] at the Albion Hotel Brighton in the same County did solicit and incite one Alfonso Harold Conway to commit sodomy and other acts of gross indecency and immorality with him’.<sup>131</sup>

It would certainly be more decorous to brush aside the pederastic import of this, to claim that this Worthing holiday had merely provided an opportunity for Wilde to spend a few paternal months with his sons, while also enjoying midnight frolics with Lord Alfred and the newly acquired Conway. Such a claim would be easier to make if it were not for Wilde’s appreciation that his lover, Lord Alfred, had only three passions — ‘boys, brandy, and betting’<sup>132</sup> — and that what Lord Alfred was ‘betting on’ was the prospect of ‘bedding with’ Cyril, the model for Wilde’s ‘young king’.

Before considering a vignette about Lord Alfred’s erotic feelings for Cyril, it is crucial to consider and mark one comment by Robert Ross, Wilde’s most protective friend and former lover, as well as his literary and financial executor: ‘The only [published] personal reflections to which any importance or belief can be attached are those by Monsieur André Gide and Ernest La Jeunesse’.<sup>133</sup> Ross’s comment provides André Gide’s autobiographical remembrances a degree of authenticity afforded to only one other, and it is in this light that one must consider the following vignette. Gide records that, after Lord Alfred had described Cyril’s beauty to him, Lord Alfred whispered ‘with a self-satisfied smile, “He will be for me”’.<sup>134</sup> As with anyone given to betting, Lord Alfred was counting on a little luck and a slight advantage, an advantage which Wilde’s fairy tale might easily have provided, for this tale was a Decadent seed planted by Cyril’s father, a father whose lover hoped to reap it, and would likely have acted upon those desires for the ‘young king’ so ‘wild-eyed’ had Wilde’s conviction and imprisonment for ‘gross indecency’ not interposed. As a result of their father’s trials and incarceration, Cyril and Vyvyan never saw him again. Whisked away to the Continent to avoid the taint of his and Lord Alfred’s lingering stains, they left behind everything Wildean, even his name, becoming instead



Cyril and Vyvyan Holland. The last word about this troubling episode rightly belongs to Cyril, who expresses that, after decades of contemplation,

the more convinced I became that, first and foremost, I must be a *man*. There was to be no cry of decadent artist, of effeminate aesthete, of weak-kneed degenerate. [...] I am no wild, passionate, irresponsible hero. I live by thought, not by emotion.<sup>135</sup>

Cyril's comments, encapsulated in the allusive 'I am no wild', reveal the disparity between Wilde's expectations and the fate of the sons whom he had hoped would follow in his own Decadent footsteps, footsteps left across their nursery in the form of fairy tales, the most prurient being 'The Young King'. Wilde's sordid trials and complete disgrace insured that his influence over his sons would not continue as he had envisioned — and assured, as well, that Lord Alfred would lose his 'chance' with Cyril, a chance which Wilde seems not to have been particularly averse about facilitating, for none knew his beloved Bosie's character and desires better than he.

For over a hundred years, legions of parents have unwittingly scattered Wilde's utterly Decadent, pederastic fairy tales across the nurseries of the world. It is an enduring benefit to Wilde's enduring fame that he had learned from Pater the secret of an enduringly evasive style — 'all those lurking half-meanings and that evanescent suggestion'.<sup>136</sup> Otherwise, bonfires aplenty would probably have consumed his works for children long ago. However, to see 'the red shambles of the Circus' properly, one must peer 'through a clear emerald' owned by a fiddling Nero<sup>137</sup> — which is Wilde's symbolic way of expressing that one needs a Decadent perspective like the one he possessed and few 'enlightened' parents do. Fairy tales have always seemed a rather innocuous genre (at least the English variety), the last place one would expect to find an utterly Decadent, pederastic playfulness: however, once Wilde's 'agenda' is recognised, his fairy tales literally explode with erotic nuance.

Before returning to Wilde, consider the following passage of typical erotica, a masturbatory fantasy a bit banal, the sort of thing parents would consider criminal or

nearly criminal to read to a child, an act which would undoubtedly constitute ‘corrupting the innocent’:

His penis was very limp, so it took a long time to get himself going. ‘Now I am going off!’ he cried, and made himself very stiff and straight. ‘Delightful’, he cried, ‘I shall go on like this forever’. Fortunately nobody saw him or heard him. Then he began to feel a curious tingling sensation all over him. ‘Now I am going to explode’, he cried. And he certainly did explode. There was no doubt about it.

The above may appear incompatible with my present considerations, a trite example of erotica lacking any Wildean flair. Nonetheless, the above is, in actuality, one of Wilde’s fairy tales stripped of its ‘surface’ — or, to phrase this symbolically, seen through Nero’s ‘clear emerald’ — a dangerously clear perspective Wilde thwarts for the typical reader by a few alterations, a few additions. Replace the word ‘penis’ with ‘rocket’ (an object very close in contour), add a few bombastic sound-effects, and ‘The Remarkable Rocket’ is ready for insertion into *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* (1888):

The Rocket was very damp, so he took a long time to burn. At last, however, the fire caught him. ‘Now I am going off!’ he cried, and he made himself very stiff and straight. ‘I know I shall go much higher than the stars, much higher than the moon, much higher than the sun. In fact, I shall go so high that — ’  
 Fizz! Fizz! Fizz! and he went straight up into the air.  
 ‘Delightful!’ he cried, ‘I shall go on like this for ever. What a success I am!’  
 But nobody saw him.  
 Then he began to feel a curious tingling sensation all over him.  
 ‘Now I am going to explode’, he cried. ‘I shall set the whole world on fire, and make such a noise that nobody will talk about anything else for a whole year’. And he certainly did explode. Bang! Bang! Bang! went the gunpowder. There was no doubt about it.  
 But nobody heard him, not even the two little boys, for they were sound asleep. (p.301)

The above recalls Wilde’s later Worthing holiday with his sons, and his bombastic sexual exploits there with Lord Alfred and Conway, though ‘nobody heard [them], not even the two little boys, for they were sound asleep’, or seemed to be (not that anyone was paying attention, except perhaps for Bosie).

Through such fairy tales, Wilde had found a vehicle for his own pederastic ‘agenda’, as well as a perfect cover for expressing what could not have been expressed so easily in another form, especially if he wished to extend his influence over ‘the British child’. Wilde had indeed assumed the duties of Rev. Canon Chasuble from *The*

*Importance of Being Earnest*, Chasuble claiming, ‘I am not by any means a bigoted Paedobaptist’ (Act II, p.383) — implying that, though he is a ‘Paedobaptist’ (or ‘sprinkler of children’), he is not of the bigoted sort. Wilde — another ‘Paedobaptist’, another ‘sprinkler of children’, another individual who liked ‘to convey [his] temperament [over] another as though it were a subtle fluid’ — has been permitted to sprinkle his ‘subtle fluid’ over the nurseries of the world because parents, fortunately for Wilde, generally have an inability to read below the surface (particularly the surface of ‘Paedobaptistry’) and generally have no knowledge of the import of his ‘Preface’ to *Dorian Gray*: ‘All art is at once surface and symbol. Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril’ (1891, p.17) — though, in this particular case, an even greater peril may await the children of those who fail to do so.

The utter disparity between Pater’s ‘Epicureanism’ and Wilde’s ‘Paedobaptistry’ displays how divergent the two Uranian paths really are — one leading to Platonic aestheticism, the other to Priapic satiation; one leading to ‘a sort of chivalrous conscience’, the other to ‘a madness for pleasure’. This disparity involves the personal ethics of whether the proximity to the object of desire should be crossed or not, involves the presence or absence of self-mastery, involves a concern for the ‘problem of [and to] the boy’.

For Pater, this problem is filtered through one of his favoured concepts, *ascêsis* (rigorous ‘self-control’, ‘self-discipline’, or ‘self-mastery’)<sup>138</sup> — and to be ‘no master of myself’, Hopkins asserts, ‘is the worst failure of all’ (Retreat notes of 1888, *Sermons*, p.262). This failure to exercise self-mastery ruined more than Wilde himself, for it also ruined many of those boys and young men who had come into contact with him and his aesthetic/erotic residues. Wilde and his coterie had taken the easier, less profound of the two Uranian paths, hence would never have appreciated the expression of love and the

beauty of self-martyrdom that Uranians like Pater and Hopkins sought to actualise, to legitimise, and to capture aesthetically, a love and a self-martyrdom cogently and heart-wrenchingly explained in a letter by the novelist Terence Hanbury White (1906-64), who would, half a century later, walk the same ‘elevated’ Uranian path with a boy named Zed:

I have fallen in love with Zed. [...] It would be unthinkable to make Zed unhappy with the weight of this impractical, unsuitable love. It would be against his human dignity. Besides, I love him for being happy and innocent, so it would be destroying what I loved. He could not stand the weight of the world against such feelings — not that they are bad in themselves. It is the public opinion that makes them so. In any case, on every score of his happiness, not my safety, the whole situation is an impossible one. All I can do is behave like a gentleman. It has been my hideous fate to be born with an infinite capacity for love and joy with no hope of using them.

I do not believe that some sort of sexual relationship with Zed would do him harm — he would probably think and call them *triflic*. I do not believe I could hurt him spiritually or mentally. I do not believe that perverts are made so by seduction. I do not think that sex is evil, except when it is cruel or degrading, as in rape, sodomy, etc., or that I am evil or that he could be. But the practical facts of life are an impenetrable barrier — the laws of God, the laws of Man. His age, his parents, his self-esteem, his self-reliance, the progress of his development in a social system hostile to the heart, the brightness of his being which has made this what a home should be for three whole weeks of utter holiday, the fact that the old exist for the benefit of the young, not vice versa, the factual impossibilities set up by law and custom, the unthinkable-ness of turning him into a lonely or sad or eclipsed or furtive person — every possible detail of what is expedient, not what is moral, offers the fox to my bosom, and I must let it gnaw.<sup>139</sup>

White’s comment that ‘the practical facts of life are an impenetrable barrier [...] [which] offers the fox to my bosom, and I must let it gnaw’ is the most profound expression of ‘elevated’ Uranian sentiment I have as yet encountered in my studies, and reveals that the Uranian continuum is still a vital aspect of the human condition and of aesthetic contemplation, reaching far beyond that ‘small band of elite “Oxonian souls”’<sup>140</sup> which many would dismiss as an aberrant or abhorrent cluster of ‘crazy’ Victorian poets or Oxford eccentrics, a cluster which our ‘legitimate’ powers — social, medical, ethical, religious, legal, political, scholarly, and familial — would dismiss as maladjusted, psychotic, immoral, sinful, unlawful, fringe, objectionable, and/or intrusive. Despite such dismissals, the Uranian continuum continues to flower, even today.

For that reason, I wish to conclude with a consideration of that continuum — at least its more ‘elevated’ path taken by Pater and Hopkins and White and contemporary writers such as Guy Davenport — hoping to trace several of its manifestations from its

earliest Victorian flowering to today. Befittingly, I will begin at the beginning, by considering the influence of the earliest Uranian, William Johnson (*later* Cory), and his *Ionica* (1858) over the poems of Digby Mackworth Dolben, as well as Johnson's responses to those poems after Dolben's death — providing a lesson in pederastic pedagogy, elevated friendship, erotic dalliance, and thwarted love, a lesson which serves to elucidate the pederastic continuum stretching, unbroken, from Greco-Roman times to our own, a continuum which also flowered in the works of such writers as E. M. Forster and Guy Davenport.

## Notes for Chapter Five

Publication declaration: A version of the section on *Dorian Gray* was previously published as “‘Pen, Pencil and Poison’ Wilde-Style”, *Scientific Papers of the University of Pardubice, Series C*, 8, 2002 (Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice, 2003), pp.41-60 (ISSN: 1211-6629, ISBN: 80-7194-537-4). A version of the section on *What Maisie Knew* was previously published as “‘The Faint Intelligence’: Vocabulary and Its Void in Lewis Carroll’s ‘Jabberwocky’ and Henry James’s *What Maisie Knew*”, *Children’s Literature in English at the Turn of the Millennium* (Hradec Králové: The British Council, Gaudeamus, 2002), pp.129-38 (ISBN: 80-7041-940-7). A version of the section on ‘The Young King’ was previously published as “‘Little Porcelain Cup in Which Biting Acids Could Be Mixed’: Wilde’s Sons as the Audience for ‘The Young King’”, *New Interpretations of Cultural Phenomena* (Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice, 2004), pp.23-32 (ISBN: 80-7194-710-5).

- <sup>1</sup> Oscar Wilde, *Salomé*, in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994), pp.583-605 (p.601).
- <sup>2</sup> Recorded by Max Beerbohm — as quoted in Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde*, rev. edn (New York: Knopf, 1988), p.52. ‘In later life he disparaged Pater as man, as writer, and as an influence, as Robert Ross noted with some distress’ (p.52).
- <sup>3</sup> Rupert Croft-Cooke, *Feasting with Panthers: A New Consideration of Some Late Victorian Writers* (London: W. H. Allen, 1967), p.176.
- <sup>4</sup> Letter to Henry Dakyns, 20 February 1873 — from Herbert M. Schueller and Robert L. Peters, eds, *The Letters of John Addington Symonds*, 2 vols (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1967), II, p.273. Letter to Mary Robinson, 30 March 1885 — from R. M. Seiler, ed., *Walter Pater: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), p.124.
- <sup>5</sup> Denis Donoghue, *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (New York: Knopf, 1995), p.40.
- <sup>6</sup> Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), p.130. For Symonds’s distrust of ‘Uranian eros’ and his rejection of it as an outworn fashion, see pp.128-38.
- <sup>7</sup> See Ellmann, pp.83-84; Donoghue, p.81.
- <sup>8</sup> Ellmann, p.324. See Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.136. In ‘Oscar Wilde: The Myth of Martyrdom’, *Historian*, 77 (2003), pp.30-38, Trevor Fisher asserts that ‘[Wilde] had joined a culture in which the inhabitants maintained a more than Masonic secrecy to survive in a hostile environment. Nevertheless, despite the intense hostility of the Victorian Moral Majority to anything which looked like unrespectable behaviour, discreet homosexuals could follow their inclinations with few consequences’ (p.32). Fisher further suggests that ‘Wilde and Douglas, however, conducted themselves with such astonishing indiscretion that it is remarkable they survived as long as they did’ (p.34).
- <sup>9</sup> Donoghue, p.83. See *An Inquiry into Oscar Wilde’s Revisions of ‘The Picture of Dorian Gray’* (New York: Garland, 1988), pp.38, 63, and 114, where Donald Lawler suggests that Pater ‘was privy to Wilde’s first manuscript revisions and had been asked to make suggestions for improvement’.
- <sup>10</sup> Ellmann, p.308.
- <sup>11</sup> Donoghue, p.85. Lord Henry’s verbal sparring is clearly derived from Pater’s *Renaissance* (often bordering on plagiarism); but, Lord Henry’s name seems to have derived from another source — the scandalous aristocrat Lord Henry Somerset, who had been forced to flee to the Continent after his irate wife publicised his sexual relationship with a young commoner named Henry Smith (Somerset had met Henry when the boy was only seven, but they seem not to have become intimate until Henry was about seventeen). Although, in a review for the *Pall Mall Gazette* (30 March 1889), Wilde chided the exiled Lord Henry for his *Songs of Adieu* — ‘He has nothing to say and says it’ — Wilde seems to have later reconsidered the potential of this erotic exile, and decided to give him ‘something to say’: the choicest of Pater’s expressions — see Timothy d’Arch Smith, *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English ‘Uranian’ Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), pp.24-27. See also Robert K. Martin, ‘Parody and Homage: The Presence of Pater in *Dorian Gray*’, *Victorian Newsletter*, 63 (1983), pp.15-18. In ‘Self-Plagiarism, Creativity and Craftsmanship in Oscar Wilde’, *English Literature in Transition (1880-1920)*, 41.1 (1998), pp.6-23, Josephine M. Guy relates: ‘So when in “The Critic as Artist” Wilde uses Arnold’s language, or Pater’s in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the strategy is knowing and careful — their ideas are never passed off as Wilde’s own. Rather, in these instances, borrowing has become a strategy of allusion, an act of display rather than disguise’ (p.7).
- <sup>12</sup> In this chapter, all quotations from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* derive from two sources: the original Lippincott version of 1890 (used as the base text), as well as the authoritative version published by Harper Collins. The reason for employing one or the other is the markedly better sense or more suggestive phrasing that one version might provide, as well as the presence of those discussions about murder which are absent from the Lippincott version. Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in *Lippincott’s Monthly Magazine: A Popular Journal of General Literature, Science, and Politics*, 46 (July – December 1890), pp.3-100 [Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott]; abbreviated as *Dorian* 1890. Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994), pp.17-159; abbreviated as *Dorian* 1891. This particular quotation is from *Dorian* 1890, p.66.  
All other quotations from Wilde’s works are taken from *The Complete Works*.
- <sup>13</sup> Walter Pater, ‘A Novel by Mr. Oscar Wilde’ [Review], *The Bookman: A Monthly Journal for Bookreaders, Bookbuyers and Booksellers*, 1 (November 1891), pp.59-60. This quotation is from pp.59-60.

All other quotations from Pater's works are taken from the following: *Appreciations: With an Essay on Style*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910); abbreviated as *Appreciations*. *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas*, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1885); abbreviated as *Marius*. *Miscellaneous Studies: A Series of Essays*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910); abbreviated as *Miscellaneous*. *Plato and Platonism: A Series of Lectures*, Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1910); abbreviated as *Platonism*. *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (London: Macmillan, 1873); abbreviated as *Renaissance 1873*. *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); abbreviated as *Renaissance 1893*.

<sup>14</sup> Donoghue, p.84.

<sup>15</sup> 'If anything, the severe legal penalties encouraged rather than deterred the antinomian Wilde' (Fisher, p.32).

<sup>16</sup> Donoghue, p.36. Pater's friendships with both Oscar Browning and Simeon Solomon were certainly deeper than his sense of propriety or discretion. As Donoghue notes about Browning's scandal at Eton: 'None of these considerations made him unacceptable to Pater or to the Fellows of King's College, Cambridge' (p.37). As for Solomon's arrests and imprisonment: 'Pater at least went to the trouble of discussing the [1873] arrest with Solomon's sister Rebecca [...] Pater's affection for him was not diminished by the episode' (p.38). Browning's disregard for scandalous associations continued throughout his life, such that, in his *Memories of Sixty Years at Eton, Cambridge and Elsewhere* (London: John Lane, 1910), pp.106-09, 182, Browning still proudly claimed the infamous Solomon as his friend.

<sup>17</sup> Donoghue, p.70.

<sup>18</sup> Gerald Monsman, 'The Platonic Eros of Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde: "Love's Reflected Image" in the 1890s', *English Literature in Transition (1880-1920)*, 45.1 (2002), pp.26-45 (p.39). Monsman asks several apt rhetorical questions relating to this episode: 'When Wilde visited Oxford in February 1890, possibly with a draft of *Dorian Gray*, did Pater see an echo of Mallock's brutal caricature of himself in Lord Henry, whispering evil metaphors into the ear of the young man?' and 'Did Pater realize that his recurring language of erotic suffering and suggestive evocation of strange sins exacerbated sensual tendencies in impressionable minds? His note to the Conclusion of *The Renaissance* indicates he would have' (pp.38; 40). About the intention of Queensberry's attorneys to use *Dorian Gray* as 'primary evidence for the defense [against Wilde's libel charge]', see Moe Meyer, 'Under the Sign of Wilde: An Archaeology of Posing', in *The Politics and Poetics of Camp*, ed. by Moe Meyer (London: Routledge, 1994), pp.75-109 (p.91).

In 'Oscar Wilde, *De Profundis*, and the Rhetoric of Agency', *Papers on Language & Literature*, 37.1 (2001), pp.85-110, David Foster describes this dangerous 'posing' that Pater found so threatening:

The controversy over *Dorian Gray* exacerbated what by 1890 had already become a rich intertext of posing [for Wilde]: the early stories, newspaper and magazine articles and photos, *Punch* caricatures, and word of mouth, all contributed to the complex public persona. The homoerotic overtones of Wilde's posing blended both assertion and evasion, deflecting direct attacks from those who were suspicious of what lay beneath the pose. (p.90)

<sup>19</sup> As quoted in Ellmann, p.84.

<sup>20</sup> Donoghue, p.80.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of this scandal, as well as the Uranian fascination with telegraph-boys from the General Post Office ('The telegraph-boy appears to have provided the Uranians with a considerable erotic stimulus'), see d'Arch Smith, pp.27-29. See also H. Montgomery Hyde, *The Cleveland Street Scandal* (New York: W. H. Allen, 1976), pp.20-25; Morris Kaplan, 'Did "My Lord Gomorrah" Smile?: Homosexuality, Class and Prostitution in the Cleveland Street Affair', in *Disorder in the Court: Trials and Sexual Conflict at the Turn of the Century*, ed. by George Robb and Nancy Erber (New York: New York University Press, 1999), pp.78-99; Colin Simpson, Lewis Chester, and David Leitch, *The Cleveland Street Affair* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1976).

<sup>22</sup> Thersites [pseudonym of Charles Whibley], [Review of] *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in *The Scots Observer* (5 July 1890), as reprinted in Rupert Hart-Davis, ed., *The Letters of Oscar Wilde* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1962), p.265. In "'Culture and Corruption": Paterian Self-Development versus Gothic Degeneration in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*', *Papers on Language & Literature*, 39.4 (2003), pp.339-64, Nils Clausson claims that 'after June 20, 1890, the date the July issue of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* appeared, "Victorian literature had a different look"' (p.363).

<sup>23</sup> Ellmann, p.390. For Wilde's interaction with Taylor's 'circle', see Ellmann, pp.389-91; for this connection used against Wilde in court, see pp.441-42, 459-64, and 474-75. For considerations of 'renters' and their homoerotic and



pederastic underworld, see Rupert Croft-Cooke, *Feasting with Panthers*; Rupert Croft-Cooke, *The Unrecorded Life of Oscar Wilde* (New York: David McKay, 1972); Michael S. Foldy, *The Trials of Oscar Wilde: Deviance, Morality, and Late-Victorian Society* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); Jeffrey Weeks, 'Inverts, Perverts, and Mary-Annes: Male Prostitution and the Regulation of Homosexuality in England in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. by Martin Bauml Duberman, et. al. (New York: Meridian, 1989), pp.195-211.

<sup>24</sup> Letter to Robert Ross, 14 May 1900, in Rupert Hart-Davis, ed., *The Letters of Oscar Wilde* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1962), p.828.

<sup>25</sup> See Donoghue, pp.290-91.

<sup>26</sup> Schmidgall notes that 'the pun [is the result] of a resourceful menswear firm in Chicago that, capitalizing on the publicity attending Oscar's visit to the city in 1882 sought to catch the eye with an advertisement featuring "Wild 'Oscar,' Or, Balaam, the Ass-thete'" (*Stranger*, p.170).

<sup>27</sup> Rayburn S. Moore, ed., *Selected Letters of Henry James to Edmund Gosse, 1882-1915: A Literary Friendship* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), p.114. 'Death spared [Pater] the tragedy of Wilde's trial, a tragedy we can conceive only as the sacrifice of male homosexuality to male homophobia. But Pater's homoeroticism cannot be presented in the terms of such a discourse' — William F. Shuter, 'The "Outing" of Walter Pater', *Nineteenth Century Literature*, 48.4 (1994), pp.480-506 (p.506).

<sup>28</sup> H. Montgomery Hyde, ed., *The Trials of Oscar Wilde* (London: William Hodge, 1948), p.124.

<sup>29</sup> In 'Pater's Sadness', *Raritan*, 20.2 (2000), pp.136-58, Jacques Khalip writes:

The type of currency that an absent, Paterian life comes unusually to promote is most striking when we recast that absence as the quality of countless 'unmentionables' during the nineteenth century who, like Pater himself, wore their silence, rather than hearts, on their sleeves as repressed proof of the love that dared not speak its name. The price paid by homosexuals is an oblivion that society campaigns for and enforces as the inevitable world both out of and into which homosexuals must be consigned. (p.147)

<sup>30</sup> See Lawler, *Inquiry*, pp.55-56.

<sup>31</sup> Lawler claims that 'there is only one instance in the final revision of *Dorian Gray* in which Wilde made the kind of addition to which he alluded at the trial. It follows a long series of detailed accusations by Basil Hallward of young men who had been ruined by an association with Dorian Gray. This would seem just the sort of passage to which Pater would take exception' (*ibid.*, p.55, note). Monsman observes:

Wilde had begun his novel sometime late in 1889 and finished revising it in April or May of 1890; and he had visited Pater at Oxford on or about 15 February 1890. On that occasion Wilde also called on Lionel Johnson, who reported that Wilde had 'laughed at Pater: and consumed all my cigarettes'. If Pater *did* read the manuscript of *Dorian Gray*, this would have been the occasion, Wilde perhaps finding risible Pater's alarm at the corrupting influence of Dorian on his companions. ('Platonic', p.27)

<sup>32</sup> Donoghue, pp.85-86.

<sup>33</sup> Suzanne Tatian, of Reader Services at the William Andrews Clark Library at the University of California at Los Angeles, kindly corresponded with me regarding a manuscript in the library's collection, 'Autograph list of books requested by Wilde from the prison authorities while at Reading. 1896' (Shelfmark: W6721L R825): 'Our list doesn't include any work of Pater's. [...] Merlin Holland's *The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde* (4<sup>th</sup> Estate, 2000) mentions this and includes a few more lists than what we own. In those lists, works by Pater include *Renaissance*, *Greek Studies*, *Appreciations*, *Imaginary Portraits*, and *Essays*. A list at the P.R.O. from 29 July 1897 included "Walter Pater's posthumous volume of essays" but it was one of several that the new governor struck out'. Laurel McPhee, Assistant Librarian at the Clark Library, kindly seconded the above in another e-mail.

<sup>34</sup> It should be remembered that this title was given at its posthumous publication in 1905.

<sup>35</sup> Letter to Robert Ross, 19 June 1900, *Letters of Wilde*, p.831.

<sup>36</sup> As quoted in Ellmann, p.301.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.47.

<sup>38</sup> While reviewing her friend-and-neighbour's novel for *Macmillan's Magazine* (June 1885), Mrs Humphry Ward suggests that *Marius* serves to recant the 'Conclusion' to *The Renaissance* (Donoghue, p.91). Donoghue partially agrees: 'The book is indeed a revision of the Conclusion [...] But the motto of both books might well be the same: death is the mother of beauty' (p.194). It might have been a recant or a revision, but it proved equally as dangerous, as W. B. Yeats suggests: 'It taught us to walk upon a rope tightly stretched through serene air, and we were left to keep our feet upon a swaying rope in a storm' — in W. B. Yeats, *Autobiographies* (London: Macmillan, 1955), p.303.

<sup>39</sup> George Moore, *Confessions of a Young Man: Avowals*, 9<sup>th</sup> vol. of *The Collected Works of George Moore* in 21 vols (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1922-24), p.166. See also Dowling, *Hellenism*, pp.xv-vi, 92-94.

<sup>40</sup> Lesley Higgins, 'Jowett and Pater: Trafficking in Platonic Wares', *Victorian Studies*, 37.1 (1993), pp.43-72 (p.59).

<sup>41</sup> James Eli Adams, 'Gentleman, Dandy, Priest: Manliness and Social Authority in Pater's Aestheticism', *ELH*, 59 (1992), pp.441-66 (p.454).

<sup>42</sup> Matthew Potolsky, 'Fear of Falling: Walter Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* as a Dangerous Influence', *ELH*, 65.3 (1998), pp.701-29 (p.703).

<sup>43</sup> As quoted in Ellmann, p.83.

<sup>44</sup> 'In rhetorical terms, the appropriate figure is *amplificatio*, by which the writer works his material, as a scientist but also as any laborer or lover [...] Some sentences are instances of "the productive ardour"; they come upon possibilities, contingencies, negligencies, and take them up' (Donoghue, pp.228-29). See Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Against the Grain (A Rebours)* (New York: Dover, 1969), p.186, where Huysmans considers such a style:

Of all forms of literature that of the prose poem was Des Esseintes' chosen favourite. [...] The novel, thus conceived, thus condensed in a page or two, would become a communion, an interchange of thought between a magic-working author and an ideal reader, a mental collaboration by consent between half a score persons of superior intellect scattered up and down the world, a delectable feast for epicures and appreciable by them only.

<sup>45</sup> Five representative cases are: Adams (1992); Clay Daniel, 'The Religion of Culture: Arnold's Priest and Pater's Mystic', *Victorian Newsletter*, 72 (1987), pp.9-11; David Hilliard, 'Unenglish and Unmanly: Anglo-Catholicism and Homosexuality', *Victorian Studies*, 25 (1982), pp.181-210; William F. Shuter, 'Pater as Don', *Prose Studies*, 11 (1988), pp.41-60; Dowling, *Hellenism* (1994). Monsman refers to this group of readers as 'an inner circle of Oxonians' ('Platonic', p.28). In 'The Death of Euphuus: Euphuism and Decadence in Late-Victorian Literature', *English Literature in Transition (1880-1920)*, 45.1 (2002), pp.4-25, Lene Ostermark-Johansen writes: 'To Pater, both the writer himself and the audience for which he wrote were ideally scholars, more specifically philologists, going back to the roots of the individual word through an archaeological or geological excavation of the linguistic deposits of added and abandoned layers of meaning' (p.10).

<sup>46</sup> Higgins, 'Platonic Wares', p.50. As Shuter notes: 'We know from the record of his library borrowings that Pater often studied Jowett's translations, and from a remark he made to Grant Duff we can conclude that, on the whole, he was critical of them; in a clear allusion to Jowett he said, speaking of Plato: "a more photographic translation than we yet have is a *desideratum*"' ('Don', p.55). The difference between Pater's approach to Plato and Jowett's is explained by Higgins: 'At the heart of Pater's enterprise is that which Jowett finds unspeakable: the body' (p.53). Monsman explains how 'central' Platonic thought was to Pater and Wilde: 'Both authors define the influence of beauty and love in terms of Plato's *Phaedrus*' ('Platonic', p.26).

<sup>47</sup> Higgins suggests that 'In general terms, Pater assembled writers and texts from classical and modern culture to constitute a counter- or sub-cultural canon: Ganymede, Zeno, Plato, Socrates, Sappho, Pindar, Myron, Catullus, [Leonardo] da Vinci, Montaigne, and most recently, for Pater, Johannes Winckelmann' ('Platonic Wares', p.59).

<sup>48</sup> Fisher notes that 'once he had arrived in court he found himself powerless to prevent the attention of society being focused on what he called "uranian love" as it had never been before. Queensberry's detectives tore aside the veil of secrecy which had concealed the gay sub-culture. A wave of puritan homophobia swept society and the authorities then had no alternative but to take up the Labouchere amendment' (p.37).

<sup>49</sup> David Newsome, *On the Edge of Paradise: A. C. Benson: The Diarist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p.194.

<sup>50</sup> Potolsky, p.701.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p.704.

<sup>52</sup> Donoghue, p.80.

<sup>53</sup> Monsman, p.40.

<sup>54</sup> Letter to Ralph Payne, 12 February 1894, *Letters of Wilde*, p.352.

<sup>55</sup> Many believe that Wilde had a hand in the writing of the anonymous, pornographic novella *Teleny: or The Reverse of the Medal* (1883).

<sup>56</sup> Huysmans, *A Rebours*, pp.103-04.

<sup>57</sup> 'Basil's "secret" is the emotional turmoil of his infatuation with Dorian, a "romance of feeling" defined by the novel's allusive complexity as both Platonic and Paterian — the worship of a *meirakiskos* (young man) by his intellectually inspired lover' (Monsman, 'Platonic', p.29).

<sup>58</sup> Plato, *On Homosexuality: Lysis, Phaedrus, and Symposium*, trans. by Benjamin Jowett (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1991), pp.98-99.

<sup>59</sup> In 'Say It with Flowers: The Poetry of Marc-André Raffalovich', *College Literature*, 24.1 (1997), pp.11-27, Ed Madden notes: 'In another poem in *Tuberose and Meadowsweet*, "Mystic Love", Raffalovich writes of "London, the ways of Piccadilly", alluding, perhaps, to a specific sexual geography of the city, to Piccadilly as a site for homosexual cruising' (p.19). See also Wolf von Eckardt, Sander L. Gilman, and J. Edward Chamberlain, *Oscar Wilde's London: A Scrapbook of Vices and Virtues, 1880-1900* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1987).

<sup>60</sup> Donoghue, p.186. Besides Pater's *Renaissance*, Wilde probably constructed this fictitious volume from other sources as well, namely Huysmans's *A Rebours* (1884), Benjamin Disraeli's *Vivian Grey* (1826-27), Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), and William Beckford's *The History of the Caliph Vathek* (the translation of which was published in 1786).

<sup>61</sup> In *Memoires of the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James* (1658, attributed to Francis Osborne), the passage reads 'caressed by KING JAMES for his handsome face' — as quoted in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Oxford English Novels series), ed. with intro. by Isobel Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), p.246.

<sup>62</sup> As quoted in Ellmann, p.463. 'Pater, of course, had written about all these intellectual lovers, most recently of Montaigne and "Of Friendship" in *Gaston de Latour* (begun 1888)' (Monsman, 'Platonic', p.29). About his own protagonist, Huysmans relates: 'By a curious accident of heredity, this last scion of a race [Des Esseintes] bore a strong resemblance to the far-off ancestor, the mignon of Princes' (*A Rebours*, p.2).

<sup>63</sup> These are some of the most prominent pederastic/homoerotic figures of English history. A few years after Edward II died, Ranulph Higden explained the method of his death, which indicates its association with his homoeroticism: *cum veru igniti inter celenda confossus ignominioise peremptus* ('He was ignominiously slain with a fiery poker thrust into his anus') — from Caroline Bingham, *The Life and Times of Edward II* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), p.197. What is important here, for all of these historical figures, is not whether the details about them are now considered historically accurate or not, but that they were thought to be accurate by Wilde and other Victorians. Regarding James I, see David M. Bergerson, *King James and Letters of Homoerotic Desire* (Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 1999); Michael B. Young, *King James and the History of Homosexuality* (New York: New York University Press, 2000). For the conception of Richard II, particularly *via* Shakespeare's play, see Mario DiGangi, *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>64</sup> St Sebastian, a favourite of Emperor Diocletian, was appointed Captain of the Guard in the Imperial Roman Army. When Sebastian refused to denounce his acquired Christianity in 286 CE, Diocletian ordered him tied to a tree so that Mauretanian archers could riddle him with arrows, then clubbed to death and cast into a sewer. See his entry in Charles G. Herbermann, et. al., ed., *The Catholic Encyclopaedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline and History of the Catholic Church* (New York: Robert Appleton, 1907-12), vol. XIII.

<sup>65</sup> Ellmann, p.317.

<sup>66</sup> Huysmans also considers the erotic atmosphere surrounding Elagabalus — *A Rebours*, pp.31-32.

- <sup>67</sup> John R. Clarke, 'The Warren Cup and the Context for Representations of Male-to-Male Lovemaking in Augustan and Early Julio-Claudian Art', *Art Bulletin*, 75.2 (1993), pp.275-94 (p.287).
- <sup>68</sup> Letter to Reggie Turner, 21 June 1897, *Letters of Wilde*, p.616.
- <sup>69</sup>
- Of this episode, Monsman writes:  
 If Dorian's 'great renunciation' is to spare a country maiden's virginity, then by contrast his 'excess' must be sexual indulgence. Dorian's soul undergoes the psychic disorder of erotomania described both in *The Republic* (IX) and in the *Phaedrus*. The philosophical lover's antithesis is not one who forgets himself 'in the love of physical visible beauty' but the decadent *non-lover* of Lysias's speech in the *Phaedrus*, one whose sensual desires are unmotivated by intellectual beauty. ('Platonic', p.35)
- <sup>70</sup> From André Gide's diary entry, 1 January 1892, as quoted in Ellmann, p.355. Gide's encounters with Wilde and the influence of those encounters are described at length in André Gide, *If It Die: An Autobiography (Si le grain ne meurt)*, 1924, trans. by Dorothy Bussy (New York: Random House, 1935).
- <sup>71</sup> Huysmans, *A Rebours*, pp.67-69.
- <sup>72</sup> Donoghue, p.24. Similarly, Wolhee Choe notes: 'Pater and Shelley place death, as aesthetic matter, even above life, although Pater pays greater attention to the grave and its attendant sorrows. [...] Contemplating death, Pater suggests, frees us and allows a saner perception of life' — in 'Walter Pater's "Romantic Morality"', *Victorian Newsletter*, 72 (1987), pp.12-17 (p.15).
- <sup>73</sup> Donatien-Alphonse-Francois de Sade, *Justine: or Good Conduct Well Chastised*, chapter 18 — from <[www.glosbusz.com/ebooks/00000028.htm](http://www.glosbusz.com/ebooks/00000028.htm)> [accessed 16 July 2004].
- <sup>74</sup>
- Seamus Heaney, 'Punishment', in *North*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (London: Faber, 1975), p.37 (line 32).
- <sup>75</sup> Potolsky, p.704.
- <sup>76</sup> Clausson, p.343. Clausson further observes that, although 'the early chapters of *Dorian Gray* are dominated by the Paterian self-development plot', 'the Gothic plot in *Dorian Gray* is ultimately hostile to the progressive hopes held out by the Paterian plot of self-actualization' (pp.344; 362).
- <sup>77</sup> In *Dorian* 1890, this begins 'My God! don't tell me that you are infamous!' (p.81).
- <sup>78</sup> Ellmann, p.318.
- <sup>79</sup> For this link between Wilde's novel and Jack the Ripper's crimes (though tritely handled), see Christopher S. Nassaar, 'Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Salome*', *Explicator*, 53.4 (1995), pp.217-20: 'My thesis here is that the influence of Jack the Ripper is discernible in some of Wilde's writings, especially *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Salome*' (p.217).
- <sup>80</sup> Martha Vicinus, 'The Adolescent Boy: Fin de Siècle Femme Fatale', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 5.1 (1994), pp.90-114 (p.93).
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p.98.
- <sup>82</sup> In 'Jack the Ripper: Two Suspects "On Trial"', *British Heritage*, 23.6 (2002), pp.19-25, Paul Begg and Stewart Evans write:  
 Because of his homosexual activities, it has been argued that Tumblety would not have murdered women because he was not attracted to that sex. However, there seems little doubt that he was bisexual and, in any event, there have been other examples of homosexual murderers killing and mutilating women. (p.25)
- <sup>83</sup> The canonical list of the murdered is as follows: Mary Ann Nichols (31 August 1888), Annie Chapman (8 September 1888), Elizabeth Stride and Catharine Eddowes (30 September 1888), and Mary Jane Kelly (9 November 1888).
- <sup>84</sup> All relevant documents for Francis Tumblety can be found in the official compilation — Stewart Evans and Keith Skinner, eds., *Jack the Ripper and the Whitechapel Murders* (Boxed edn) (Richmond: Public Record Office, 2002). For a book-length argument that Tumblety is the most likely murderer, see Stewart Evans and Paul Gainey, *Jack the Ripper: First American Serial Killer* (New York: Kodansha International, 1995). Of particular curiosity is a letter from

John George Littlechild (one of the ‘Ripper’ investigators from Scotland Yard, who was later privately hired to search for evidence against Wilde in 1895) to George R. Sims Esq., 23 September 1913, explaining why Tumblety was a ‘prime suspect’.

<sup>85</sup> The material on these suspects has been gleaned from the following sources: Paul Begg, *Jack the Ripper: The Facts* (London: Robson, 2004); Donald Rumbelow, *The Complete Jack the Ripper* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2002); Philip Sugden, *The Complete History of Jack the Ripper* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1994); Colin Wilson and Robin Odell, *Jack the Ripper: Summing Up and Verdict* (London: Bantam, 1987). I aimed, in dealing with these sources, to gather consistent details; however, because I consider them, individually, a bit dubious as sources (although they seem ‘the standards’ in this area of historical criminology), I have refrained from including them in my ‘Bibliography’ (the works by Stewart Evans in the preceding notes, which seem more scholarly, I have included).

<sup>86</sup> Anonymous, Review, ‘Famous Foundlings — *Dictionary of National Biography: Missing Persons*, Edited by C. S. Nicholls’, *The Economist*, 326.7798 (13 February 1993), pp.91-92.

<sup>87</sup> Ellmann, p.316.

<sup>88</sup> ‘The Ballad of Reading Gaol’, in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994), pp.883-99. This particular phrasing is from line 37.

<sup>89</sup> Ellmann, p.99.

<sup>90</sup> In a letter to Frank Harris, George Bernard Shaw provides the following assessment of Wilde, with whom he held great sympathy: ‘Oscar was not sober, not honest, not industrious’, but society made ‘a hero of him [...] for it is in the nature of people to worship those who have been made to suffer horribly’ — as quoted in Frank Harris, *Oscar Wilde: Including Memories of Oscar Wilde, by George Bernard Shaw* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1959), p.341.

<sup>91</sup> The first epigram is from *Priapeia: sive diversorum poetarum in Priapum lusus, or Sportive Epigrams on Priapus by Diverse Poets, in English Verse and Prose*, trans. by Leonard C. Smithers and Sir Richard Burton (Cosmopoli [a fictitious imprint; probably London]: [n.p.], 1890); the second, from Virgil, *Priapea*, 2.16.

<sup>92</sup> Letter to Leonard Smithers, 11 December 1897, *Letters of Wilde*, p.695.

<sup>93</sup> Schmidgall, *Stranger*, pp.191-92.

<sup>94</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.141.

<sup>95</sup> D’Arch Smith, p.2. I obviously disagree with his use of the word ‘slightly’.

<sup>96</sup> *Salomé*, p.601.

<sup>97</sup> Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* (London: Macmillan, 1872), p.24.

<sup>98</sup> Henry James, *What Maisie Knew* (New York edn) (New York: Scribner, 1908).

<sup>99</sup> Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (Ogden bilingual edn), trans. by C. K. Ogden, with intro. by Bertrand Russell (London: Routledge, 1992), propositions 5.6 and 5.62.

<sup>100</sup> In ‘How Maisie Knows: The Behavioral Path to Knowledge’, *Studies in the Novel*, 15.3 (1983), pp.224-36, Geoffrey D. Smith writes: ‘Silence eventually brings rewards, for while Maisie withdraws from active social participation in the game, she observes and ascertains the rules that govern the adult players’ (p.226).

<sup>101</sup> F. O. Matthiessen and Kenneth B. Murdock, eds, *The Notebooks of Henry James* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.149.

<sup>102</sup> In ‘What Maisie Knows: A Study of Childhood and Adolescence’, *American Literature*, 36.4 (1965), pp.485-513, John C. McCloskey writes:

If one is tempted to regard Maisie as unusually precocious, one must remember that, unlike other children who have been learning in nursery and school those things which society regards as necessary and proper, she has had for years a peculiar empirical education tutored at times in the nature of the circumambient evil by Mrs. Wix, so that by adolescence she has learned the lessons of her environment well enough to appear unusually

astute. (p.506)

<sup>103</sup> In 'Moral Geography in *What Maisie Knew*', *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 48.2 (1978-79), pp.130-48, Jean Frantz Blackall suggests that 'the "games" figures ironically describe her condition and her perceptions of the world' (pp.134-35).

<sup>104</sup> In 'Closely Observed Texts: Learning from Reading: Henry James's novel *What Maisie Knew*', *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, 28.2 (2002), pp.217-33, Graham Shulman writes: 'Maisie enters a new stage of development, a stage of growing conscious awareness of an adult sexual couple. This development in Maisie's consciousness is specifically linked with the inevitable forward movement of time' (p.224).

<sup>105</sup> McCloskey, p.507.

<sup>106</sup> 'There remains, finally, the question of the tone of the novel, initially formulated by F. R. Leavis and Marius Bewley in their debate over whether James's "comedy" here is essentially Dickensian or Jacobean, informed by laughter or horror. The Jacobean argument has been elaborated by Martha Banta [...] and Sallie Sears' (Blackall, pp.146-47). For the novel's similarity to 'an extraordinarily high-spirited comedy', see F. R. Leavis, "'What Maisie Knew", A Disagreement by F. R. Leavis', in Marius Bewley, *Complex Fate: Hawthorne, Henry James and Some Other American Writers*, with an intro. and two interpolations by F. R. Leavis (London: Chatto and Windus, 1952), pp.119-26. For its similarity to a comedy of manners, see J. A. Ward, *The Imagination of Disaster: Evil in the Fiction of Henry James* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), pp.82-83.

<sup>107</sup> James R. Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p.72.

<sup>108</sup> 'This question of how Maisie is affected by what happens to her has in fact been a major debate in critical response to the novel: critics have been evenly divided between two contrasting views of Maisie at the end — damaged and corrupted or undamaged and uncorrupted' (Shulman, p.230).

<sup>109</sup> For elaboration on the permissive atmosphere permitted the James children, see the initial chapters of Sheldon M. Novick, *Henry James: The Young Master* (New York: Random House, 1996).

<sup>110</sup> As quoted in d'Arch Smith, p.56.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.54 (see also pp.54-60).

<sup>112</sup> Vicinus, p.91.

<sup>113</sup> These passages are taken from John Francis Bloxam, 'The Priest and the Acolyte', reprinted in Brian Reade, ed., *Sexual Heretics: Male Homosexuality in English Literature from 1850-1900* (London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1970), pp.349-60.

<sup>114</sup> Pomegranates appear in four of Caravaggio's paintings: *Boy with a Basket of Fruit* (c. 1592), *Bacchus* (c. 1596), *Supper at Emmaus* (c. 1601), and *Still Life with Fruit on a Stone Ledge* (c. 1603). Given the ancient Roman atmosphere of his *Bacchus*, it seems that Caravaggio is linking the bursting pomegranate with the detail that the Romans used its juice as a remedy for infertility and as an aphrodisiac. Further, the fruit is associated with the rape of Persephone, hence with sexual experience and the Underworld. After Demeter's appeal, Zeus requests Persephone's release from Hades; however, before leaving, Persephone eats some pomegranate seeds, which results in her required return to Hades for a third part of each year, symbolising how those seeds are buried only to be reborn. For analysis of Caravaggio's use of fruits for erotic suggestiveness, see Adrienne Von Lates, 'Caravaggio's Peaches and Academic Puns', *Words & Image*, 11.1 (1995), pp.55-60.

<sup>115</sup> Ellmann, p.309.

<sup>116</sup> Ellmann might very well be correct in labelling young Maxwell (as Maxwell does himself), 'a boy'. Whether the earlier, oral version of *Dorian Gray* was told to Maxwell as 'a boy' or as a teenager, it nonetheless suggests that Wilde had been ruminating over the details of this story 'of a man and a picture' for more than a decade before it assumed its published shape in 1890. I have been unable to locate Maxwell's plagiarised story, and must assume that it was published anonymously and/or in some minor journal or newspaper.

<sup>117</sup> *Letters of Wilde*, pp.301-02. In *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization* (New York: Methuen, 1988), Jack David Zipes writes:

Wilde was highly disturbed by the way society conditioned and punished young people if they did not conform to the proper rules. [...] He had always been sensitive to the authoritarian schooling and church rigidity which most English children were expected to tolerate, [and for that reason,] he clearly wanted to subvert the messages conveyed by [Hans Christian] Andersen's tales, but more important his poetical style recalled the rhythms and language of the Bible in order to counter the stringent Christian code. (p.114)

<sup>118</sup> As quoted in Schmidgall, *Stranger*, p.132.

<sup>119</sup> As quoted in James Gifford, 'Left to Themselves: The Subversive Boys Books of Edward Prime-Stevenson (1858-1942)', *Journal of American & Comparative Cultures*, 24.3-4 (2001), pp.113-16 (p.113).

<sup>120</sup> Naomi Wood, 'Creating the Sensual Child: Paterian Aesthetics, Pederasty, and Oscar Wilde's Fairy Tales', *Marvels and Tales: Journal of Fairy-Tale Studies*, 16.2 (2002), pp.156-70 (p.156).

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p.167. According to Schmidgall, 'Oscar would never have been so foolish or artlessly forthright as to compose his tales in such a way as to make them specifically "about" the oppression or repression of homosexual identity [...] I suspect Oscar sprinkled just enough subtly strange hints throughout the stories to let the homosexual cognoscenti know of his fellow-feeling' (*Stranger*, p.153).

<sup>122</sup> Schmidgall, *Stranger*, p.161.

<sup>123</sup> As quoted in Ellmann, p.385.

<sup>124</sup> Letter to Robert Ross from Morocco, c. 25 January 1895, *More Letters of Oscar Wilde*, ed. by Rupert Hart-Davis (London: John Murray, 1985), pp.128-29.

<sup>125</sup> Letter to Robert Ross from Morocco, 25 January 1895, *ibid.*, p.129.

<sup>126</sup> N. Wood, p.161. See also Schmidgall, *Stranger*, p.150.

<sup>127</sup> Letter to Robert Ross, 20 February 1898, *Letters of Wilde*, p.705.

<sup>128</sup> Schmidgall, *Stranger*, p.135.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p.142.

<sup>130</sup> *De Profundis*, p.1005.

<sup>131</sup> Schmidgall, *Stranger*, pp.137-38.

<sup>132</sup> Letter to Robert Ross, 19 June 1900, *Letters of Wilde*, p.831.

<sup>133</sup> As quoted in Ada Leveson, *Letters to the Sphinx from Oscar Wilde, with Reminiscences of the Author by Ada Leveson* (London: Duckworth, 1930), p.14.

<sup>134</sup> See Gide, *If It Die*, pp.300-01.

<sup>135</sup> As quoted in Vyvyan Holland, *Son of Oscar Wilde* (London: R. Hart-Davis, 1954), p.140.

<sup>136</sup> Moore, *Confessions*, p.166.

<sup>137</sup> *Dorian* 1890, p.76.

<sup>138</sup> In his 'Preface' to *The Renaissance*, Pater glosses this term as 'the austere and serious girding of the loins in youth' (1893, p.xxiii). See Donoghue, pp.79; 88.

<sup>139</sup> From Sylvia Townsend Warner, *T. H. White: A Biography* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), pp.277-82, reprinted in Kincaid, *Child-Loving*, pp.205-06.

<sup>140</sup> As quoted in Clay Daniel, 'The Religion of Culture: Arnold's Priest and Pater's Mystic', *Victorian Newsletter*, 72 (1987), pp.9-11 (p.11).

— Conclusion —

**‘The Daring of Poets Later Born’:  
The Uranian Continuum, 1858-2005**

‘Because Beneath the Lake a Treasure Sank’:  
Johnson’s Shaping of *Ionica* and Dolben

Boy, go, convey this purse to Pedringano;  
Thou knowest the prison, closely give it him.  
[...]  
Thou with his pardon shalt attend him still.  
Show him this box, tell him his pardon’s in’t;  
But open’t not, [...] if thou lovest thy life.  
(Lorenzo to his pageboy, *The Spanish Tragedy*)<sup>1</sup>

William Johnson (*later* Cory), who was educated at Eton and King’s College, Cambridge,<sup>2</sup> returned to Eton in 1845 as a Classics master, and taught there until he was dismissed in 1872 for exercising a pederastic pedagogy which Timothy d’Arch Smith describes as a ‘brand of passive inversion’.<sup>3</sup> While at Eton, Johnson had an ‘ability to pick out apt and sympathetic pupils’, which, although praised educationally, created ‘a less palatable, deeper-seated reputation of a wayward personality who “was apt to make favourites”’.<sup>4</sup> Among his ‘favourites’ were boys who would later distinguish themselves as Uranians, such as Howard Overing Sturgis (1855-1920), whose novel *Tim* (1891) is the tale of a love affair between two Eton boys; Reginald Baliol Brett (1852-1930; second Viscount Esher), whose collection of poems *Foam* (1893) is overshadowed by Johnson, of whom Lord Esher writes, ‘A teacher’s voice, so well obeyed, / Whose old tradition lingers yet’<sup>5</sup>; Archibald Philip Primrose (1847-1929; fifth Earl of Rosebery), who later became the British Foreign Secretary, as well as a patron of the Uranian circle in Venice; Oscar Browning, who himself returned to Eton as a master, only to be dismissed in 1875 under the same cloud as Johnson<sup>6</sup>; and Digby Mackworth Dolben, ‘a Christian Uranian’,<sup>7</sup> whose



influence over the group is only pitifully acknowledged, though he is memorable for his posthumous collection of poems edited by his friend and distant cousin, the then Poet Laureate Robert Bridges, and for serving as the muse for Gerard Manley Hopkins, who garlanded the drowned Dolben with a devotion like that of Marius the Epicurean for Flavian, for, in Hopkins's words, 'there can very seldom have happened the loss of so much beauty (in body and mind and life) and of the promise of still more as there has been in his case — seldom I mean, in the whole world' (30 August 1867, *Letters* I, pp.16-17); or, in Bridges's words, 'his early death endeared and sanctified his memory, [and] loving grief would generously grant him the laurels which he had never worn' (*Dolben* 1915, p.viii).

That a number of young Etonians appreciated Johnson's affections and returned them bountifully was a feature of his pedagogy which fostered enemies among his fellows:

The eccentric Cory, surrounded by intelligent and favoured boys, holding himself cynically aloof from the rest [of the Eton faculty] who persistently whispered among themselves that Cory ate opium, fell an easy victim to [headmaster Dr James John] Hornby's axe. Despite his meticulous preparation of lessons, his liberal ideas on education and his sensible and far-sighted tenet that the French language should be as compulsory as Latin in the curriculum, he was politely but firmly asked to resign. He was deeply hurt and he never forgave those who exiled him nor forgot the days with the pupils he loved. 'I have undergone a very strange wounding', he wrote to Francis Warre Cornish, 'I feel a wish to hear children laughing'.<sup>8</sup>

While yet at his beloved Eton — 'my brethren and my home' ('Retrospect of School Life', line 40) — Johnson left his mark upon the Uranian movement, a movement which was, in many ways, his creation — or, in the phrasing of d'Arch Smith, 'Cory gave the Uranians at once an inspiration and an example'.<sup>9</sup> Johnson's influence sprang, in part, from the verses of his *Ionica*, a 'classic paean to romantic paiderastia',<sup>10</sup> privately published in a limited edition by Smith, Elder & Co. in 1858 (at a cost of £40), and supplemented by *Ionica II* in 1877, privately printed by Cambridge University Press. These two collections (the latter constituting little more than a pamphlet) were subsequently reprinted by George Allen as a single volume bound in Eton blue in 1890 (though dated 1891) and reissued in

1905 with a biographical introduction by Arthur C. Benson — not that Benson's trite memoir was needed, since the autobiographical nature of *Ionica* is emphasised by its first poem, 'Desiderato', Johnson imploring his reader to 'seek for his heart within his book' (line 16), a book which constitutes a blazon and an apologia of the pederastic pedagogy for which he would be banished from Eton:

And when I may no longer live,  
They'll say, who know the truth,  
He gave whate'er he had to give  
To freedom and to youth. ('Academus', lines 37-40)

To youth, Johnson bestowed his passions for literature, art, and *carpe diem*, passions he often found reciprocated by his favoured Etonians:

[This boy] dares to speak of what he loves: to-day  
He talked of art, and led me on to teach,  
  
And glanced, as poets glance, at pages  
Full of bright Florence and warm Umbrian skies;  
Not slighting modern greatness, for the wise  
Can sort the treasures of the circling ages. ('Study of Boyhood', lines 23-28)<sup>11</sup>

To freedom, Johnson bestowed a bittersweet renunciation, recognising that youth well-cultivated led to a flight of liberation from all who had mastered it, even through love — an inevitability Johnson characterises with greater finesse than does Hopkins, for Hopkins is plagued with fears for his beloved bugler boy whose 'freshyouth [is] fretted in a bloomfall all portending / That sweet's sweeter ending' ('Bugler's First Communion', lines 30-31). Johnson writes:

Why fret? the hawks I trained are flown:  
'Twas nature bade them range;  
I could not keep their wings half-grown,  
I could not bar the change.  
  
With lattice opened wide I stand  
To watch their eager flight;  
With broken jesses in my hand  
I muse on their delight. ('Reparabo', lines 13-20)

Johnson understood that, beyond Eton's latticework, dangers awaited his young hawks — Hopkinsian embodiments of 'air, pride, plume' ('Windhover', line 9) — dangers they

would have to face alone, though the possibility of their wounded return seems almost wished for by the falconer-poet:

And, oh! if one with sullied plume  
Should droop in mid career,  
My love makes signals: — ‘There is room,  
Oh bleeding wanderer, here’. (‘Reparabo’, lines 21-24)

These lines bespeak far too much humanity and nobility for readers to dismiss Johnson’s sentiments as merely maladjusted, psychotic, immoral, sinful, fringe, objectionable, and/or intrusive, despite the fact that his verses reject the system of controls over the body that Victorian culture attempted to instil (and ours still does) — those permanent ‘jesses’, those ‘mind-forg’d manacles’ — drawing into question many of the established tenants of Victorian culture (and of our own), providing an affront which fronted issues about love, youth, and freedom normally taken as categorical. Despite stringent opposition — social, medical, ethical, religious, legal, political, scholarly, and familial — opposition which would mislabel such a love as his, Johnson fostered and forecasted, perhaps invoked, what would become the distinct positionality I considered in the preceding chapters through the lives and writings of his more-famous contemporaries Hopkins, Pater, and Wilde — a positionality achieved by telling other tales, making other claims, positing other realities than those of his contemporaries or of our own. As the Uranian patron saint, William Johnson (*later* Cory) truly warrants the title ‘Sanctus Paederasta’, for it was he who had passed on to his Etonians and their Oxford contemporaries this eccentric positionality, the Victorian segment of the pederastic continuum stretching unbroken from Greco-Roman times to today.

The salient features, dynamics, disparities, considerations, avoidances, and silences that surround this ‘suspect’ aspect of human existence, the aesthetic, emotional, and erotic expression of which, even today, properly warrants the title Lord Alfred Douglas

bestowed upon it over a hundred years ago — ‘The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name’ — are no more compactly elucidated than in Johnson’s ‘An Invocation’, which begins:

I never prayed for Dryads, to haunt the woods again;  
 More welcome were the presence of hungering, thirsting men,  
 Whose doubts we could unravel, whose hopes we could fulfil,  
 Our wisdom tracing backward, the river to the rill;  
 Were such beloved forerunners one summer day restored,  
 Then, then we might discover the Muse’s mystic hoard. (lines 1-6)

Uncharacteristic for a poetic invocation, the above begins by asserting what will *not* be invoked: the hetero-erotic Dryads, those female spirits presiding over groves and forests when not pursued about their bower of bliss by lusty Satyrs. Not that Johnson spurned the Satyrs, for ‘more welcome [than the Dryads are] the presence of hungering, thirsting men’, those ‘whose hopes’, Johnson admits, ‘we could fulfil’ — though his ‘could’ is noteworthy and emphasised by repetition. Johnson dares to invoke, to vocalise a preference not for the ‘river’ of manhood but for the ‘rill’ of boyhood. Although Johnson asserts that the source of his own poetic inspiration, his Hippocrene, is found in the Helicon of male hearts — ‘And lo! a purer fount is here revealed: / My lady-nature dwells in heart of men’ (with ‘purer’ serving as a pun on *puer*, a Latin and French word for ‘boy’) — it should be noted that what flows therefrom is not a ‘river’ but a puerile ‘rill’, for these lines hold sway in a poem titled ‘A Study of Boyhood’ (lines 39-40). As with the beloved boy in ‘The Handsome Heart’ who serves as Hopkins’s ‘muse of mounting vein’ (line 10), Johnson’s Muse is also singular, disassociating his allusion from the nine, female Muses of mythology.

This passage further implies that if humanity were to treat culture with the same technique Hopkins employs in ‘Inversnaid’ — an ‘inverse made in verse’ — we would find ‘our wisdom tracing backward, the river to the rill’, tracing backwards to the font of Western culture, to the Hippocrene of poetry, to the ‘Muse’s mystic hoard’, to the

‘Hellenic element’, to the pederastic love that, for the Uranians, would increasingly constitute their pride and their defiance, a conception of themselves as the inheritors of a ‘more authentic’ Western culture than their contemporaries understood, as Pater would later expound at length in his *Renaissance*. In a passing comment on Matteo Palmieri’s *La Città di Vita* (a comment I considered in my ‘Preface’), Pater demarcates a position outside of society for himself and his defiant Uranian followers — many of whom had passed through Johnson’s tutelage, at least textually — by lending symbolic virtue to the human ‘incarnation of those angels who, in the revolt of Lucifer, were neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies’ (‘Sandro Botticelli’, *Renaissance* 1893, p.42), those scurrilous free spirits whom Dante relegates to the Vestibule of Hell as ‘unworthy alike of heaven and hell [...] [occupying instead] the middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals’ (p.43).<sup>12</sup> As Pater recognises in this passage, the positionality of the Uranians would likely remain that of the ultimate outsiders (barring some monumental cultural shift, a shift greater than Michel Foucault’s ‘ruptures’ between ‘epistemes’): the Uranians would likely remain boxed, partly of their own accord, inside the vestibule of Western society, if not of Hell.

By invoking the myth of Comatas, Johnson encapsulates this ‘boxed’ positionality more profoundly than Pater does through his own middling vestibule. Comatas, a young goatherd of Thurii on the gulf of Tarentum in southern Italy, after espying the nine Muses amidst their dance, sacrificed a goat in their honour: such an act is a Homeric triviality, almost an expectation, save that the goat was not his own, but his master’s. Comatas’ enraged master (clearly an early Capitalist), after a flourish of curses, sealed the goatherd within a cedarn chest, hoping to starve him to death. Fortunately for the coffered goatherd, the Muses got not only his master’s goat but also his goad. Moved by Comatas’ devotion, the Muses thwarted his death-sentence by sending bees to feed him honey

through a slight crack in the cedarn chest. For Johnson, this particular myth was pregnant with suggestive potential. Ever the Classicist, Johnson absconds this Grecian tale, transforming it into a fable of pederastic positionality, Victorian ‘Otherness’, and Uranian continuity:

Oh dear divine Comatas, I would that thou and I  
Beneath this broken sunlight this leisure day might lie;  
Where trees from distant forests, whose names were strange to thee,  
Should bend their amorous branches within thy reach to be,  
And flowers thine Hellas knew not, which art hath made more fair,  
Should shed their shining petals upon thy fragrant hair. (‘An Invocation’, lines 7-12)

That this allusion has submerged subtlety may seem difficult to appreciate, especially after the contents of the cedarn chest have been duly divulged — however, this poem was intended for a different readership than modern Victorianists, for a readership educated at Eton and/or Oxford in a ‘Greats curriculum’ based on the close reading of Greek and Latin texts, a readership which would have appreciated with John Addington Symonds that ‘paiderastia, or boy-love, was a phenomenon of one of the most brilliant periods of human culture’,<sup>13</sup> the Greco-Roman. Johnson’s direct address to Comatas would have been far more allusive to his Eton/Oxford coterie — a ‘fellowship of pederasts’ — than it would to most readers today, however scholarly, relying as it does on a Hellenistic intertextuality that Mark Andreas Seiler intricately analyses for an entire volume, his conclusions summarised by Robert Schmiel below:

Intertextual reference and self-reflexivity make clear that, in the Komatas fable, bees and honey are metaphors for poet and poetry. It is then apparent that the central story of Lykidas’ song is a parable of sublimation [...] Of what sort is this spiritual poetry which has the power of the real in that it allows the enclosed Komatas to survive? It is the enveloping Other, the complement of existence in a chest.

Theocritus represents [the problem of the conversion or transformation of Eros and Force into a cultural product] in the story of Komatas who, enclosed in a chest, creates an *etos hōrion*. [...] [Various writers of the period] illustrate what we have found to be characteristic of the relationship between the poetry of Callimachos and Theocritus, reciprocal poetic reference, metaphorically the ‘nourishing’ and ‘being-nourished’ of Alexandrian poets.<sup>14</sup>

Or, as Seiler himself explains in a passage less erudite than most:

From references to older texts, the poet’s own, and those of his contemporaries, elements of meaning accrue to the new text which are not accidental but essential for an understanding of the

work's intent. The reciprocal reference between contemporary poets in particular is presented here in the center of the initiation-poem of the *Thalysia* with the familiar metaphor of bees and honey; the reciprocal nourishment of Komatas and the bees is a metaphor for the dialectical principle of intertextuality.<sup>15</sup>

To appreciate the choiceness of Johnson's allusion, one must recognise that the tale of Comatas was, for Alexandrian poets like Callimachus (c. 280–245 BCE) and Theocritus (c. 300-250 BCE),<sup>16</sup> a 'parable of sublimation', of 'nourishing' and 'being-nourished' by honeyed poetry, especially when one is forced to survive within 'the enveloping Other, the complement of existence in a chest', an existence only made tolerable through 'the dialectical principle of [poetic] intertextuality'. This process — a process in which the 'elements of meaning accrue to the new text which are not accidental but essential for an understanding of the work's intent' — facilitated a discrete complexity among its practitioners, a complexity rarely appreciated, attempted, or furthered, for its honeycomb is only (ful)filled through patient artistry, as Hopkins suggests: 'Patience fills / His crisp combs, and that comes those ways we know' ('[Patience, Hard Thing!]', lines 13-14). For the Uranians, this complexity was necessary for the sublimation of their sexuality into poetry and prose, a patient filling of crisp textual honeycomb which resulted in the mastery of a number of strategies for fulfilling what-cannot-be-fulfilled amid denials, scrupulosities, and beliefs; amid ethical, legal, and religious restrictions; amid the concern of Western culture (in general) and Victorian culture (in particular) to limit physical intimation and actualisation of homoerotic and pederastic desires. These Uranian strategies — a continual movement between what Hopkins labels 'overthought' and 'underthought' — are what lent Uranian writing, especially Hopkins's, its stylistic complexity, its multi-faceted psychology, its uncanny audience-awareness, and its sense of daring and irony, a combination uncommon for English letters of that time.

Before considering Uranian intertextual insinuation, it is useful, for contrast, to recall an example of purely textual insinuation, such as that found in the relationship

between J. A. Symonds, Professor John Conington, and William Johnson. After ‘Symonds found himself at Balliol [College, Oxford,] in the autumn of 1858 in a world where perfervid friendships between undergraduates, and to a lesser extent between undergraduates and dons, were commonplace if not quite unremarkable’,<sup>17</sup> Professor Conington, who held the first chair of Latin literature at Oxford, presented Symonds with a gift copy of the just-published *Ionica*.<sup>18</sup> The giving of this book was clearly an act of erotic insinuation, Conington expecting that this freshman would warm to the poetry-tinged-with-pederasty written by his own friend Johnson. Symonds was *not* warmed by these poems ... he was fevered. Immediately and impulsively, ‘he wrote to Johnson at Eton, receiving in reply “a long epistle on pailerastia in modern times, defending it and laying down the principle that affection between people of the same sex is no less natural and rational than the ordinary passionate relations”’.<sup>19</sup> Encouraged by this epistle and Conington’s continued fellowship, Symonds began to insinuate textually on his own, which led, four years later, to the ruin of his university career and his health:

In November 1862 one of Symonds’s resentful friends, G. H. Shorting, circulated to six Fellows of Magdalen certain love-poems and passages of love-letters from Symonds. The implication was that Symonds intended corrupting the choristers of Magdalen. An inquiry was held in the college. On December 28 Symonds was acquitted, but the episode put him under such strain that his health deteriorated. He resigned his fellowship at Magdalen and moved to London.<sup>20</sup>

Because of the desires they provoked, the choristers of Magdalen Chapel were always posing problems for the Uranians (if Hopkins’s confession notes are at all representative); and the Symonds scandal — involving insinuation about those choirboys — displays why the textual was often far more dangerous than the intertextual.<sup>21</sup>

William Johnson fully recognised the dangers inherent to the pederastic flora cultivated in his *Ionica*, flora which would find itself ‘leafing’ and ‘interleafing’ in the lives and textual ‘leaves’ of others, a continual branching of what Lionel Johnson aptly calls ‘their Virtuous Vice’,<sup>22</sup> a branching ultimately expressed by Hopkins’s epithalamic ‘branchy bunchy bushybowered wood’, the place where Johnson was last seen, reclining



imaginatively with Comatas beneath ‘trees from distant forests, whose names were strange to thee’, trees which ‘should bend their amorous branches within thy reach to be’. Johnson and Comatas, engaged in the ‘truant reading’ that Pater praises, seem to be holding a reading party like those in the idylls of Theocritus:

Then thou shouldst calmly listen with ever-changing looks  
To songs of younger minstrels and plots of modern books,  
And wonder at the daring of poets later born,  
Whose thoughts are unto thy thoughts as noon-tide is to morn;  
And little shouldst thou grudge them their greater strength of soul,  
Thy partners in the torch-race, though nearer to the goal. (‘An Invocation’, lines 13-18)

Johnson is assured that Comatas, his mythological goatherd, would be moved through a range of emotions — ‘with ever-changing looks’ — were he to see the Uranian artistry that Johnson had himself nourished: the ‘songs of younger minstrels’ like those of his Etonian students Brett and Dolben; or the ‘plots of modern books’ like those of his student Sturgis. Reminiscent of the bee-carried honey of Alexandrian intertextuality, Johnson’s *Ionica* had become a hoard of honeycomb, a supply of nourishment to sustain others in their solitude, in the cedarn chest where Western culture hopes to starve their desires. At best, Comatas could but ‘wonder at the daring of poets later born’, wonder at the intertextual exchanges between his ‘partners in the torch-race, though nearer to the goal’.

This image of a torch-race seems pat, simplistic, almost clichéd — therein resides its opacity and its opulence. As with the allusion to Comatas, such pejoratives — pat, simplistic, clichéd — seem befitting, but only until the metaphor is set into a Grecian context. Johnson is eliciting in his Classically educated audience thoughts of the ancient Greek enjoyment of the Olympic Games as a blend of pederasty and manly sport, as a voyeuristic spectacle of nude, oiled youths sporting about, garlanded by admiring gazes from the farthest reaches of the Hellenic world. Only in the context of those appreciative gazes, garlands of laurel, and the immortality of sculptured marble — the Greek form of pederastic permanence — does this torch-race emblazon its true import. While, for us

‘Moderns’, such an Olympic spectacle and its attendant residues are merely maladjusted, psychotic, immoral, sinful, fringe, objectionable, and/or intrusive, for Johnson, a Victorian Comatas, such a torch-race kindled his hope for a pederastic victory he did not expect himself to see, a hope expressed on several occasions in *Ionica*, Johnson forecasting that his beloved Etonians, honey-fed on his *Ionica*, would take up his pen, string his lute, brandish his sword, further the pederastic continuum, the intertextuality which he had begun:

And yet, though withered and forlorn,  
 I had renounced what man desires,  
 I'd thought some poet might be born  
 To string my lute with silver wires;  
 At least in brighter days to come  
 Such men as I would not lie dumb. ('A Separation', lines 43-48)

I shall not tread thy battle-field,  
 Nor see the blazon on thy shield;  
 Take thou the sword I could not wield,  
 And leave me, and forget.  
 Be fairer, braver, more admired;  
 So win what feeble hearts desired;  
 Then leave thine arms, when thou art tired,  
 To some one nobler yet. ('A New Year's Day', lines 17-24)

The fourth stanza of 'An Invocation' prefigures the cataloguing of homoerotic and pederastic ancestors which constitutes the entirety of Pater's *Renaissance* and much of Wilde's *Dorian Gray*, those elaborate catalogues of ancestral artists and philosophers who shared this 'temperament', lovers constituting a continuum passing through Plato, Michelangelo, Montaigne, Shakespeare, and Winckelmann:

Yet one had ancestors in literature, as well as in one's own race, nearer perhaps in type and temperament, many of them, and certainly with an influence of which one was more absolutely conscious. [...] He felt that he had known them all, those strange terrible figures that had passed across the stage of the world and made sin so marvellous, and evil so full of wonder. (*Dorian* 1890, pp.75-76)

It is in this vein that the following should be considered:

As when ancestral portraits look gravely from the walls  
 Upon the youthful baron who treads their echoing halls;  
 And whilst he builds new turrets, the thrice ennobled heir  
 Would gladly wake his grandsire his home and feast to share;  
 So from Ægean laurels that hide thine ancient urn

I fain would call thee hither, my sweeter lore to learn. ('An Invocation', lines 19-24)

By simile, Comatas has become the Uranian 'grandsire', Johnson the Uranian 'sire', and the young baron — like a Viscount Esher or Earl of Rosebery — the inheritor of the poetic halls they have left behind, the architectonic residue of their lives. Although turrets are the most phallic of architectural forms, the 'new turrets' that the young baron adds are less important here for their erotic contours than for the distant vistas they provide. These turrets are an apt description of the voyeuristic posturing that is the hallmark of Uranian verse — a construction of vistas, a proximity to the object of desire without that distance being defeated, at least artistically — a voyeuristic temperament unique in English letters, both aesthetically and psychologically, a temperament Johnson captures through addressing his beloved boy as 'Idol, mine Idol, whom this touch profanes' ('Sapphics', line 13).<sup>23</sup> This is the 'elevated' or 'turreted' positionality that Johnson shared with Pater and Hopkins (and that Wilde never understood), a state in which fevered passion is transmuted into eroticised friendship, devotion, and poetry:

Let the grey hermit Friendship hoard  
 Whatever sainted Love bequeathed,  
 And in some hidden scroll record  
 The vows in pious moments breathed. ('Deteriora', lines 31-34)

In *Ionica*, the word 'hoard' repeatedly alludes to the 'Muse's mystic hoard', to the nurturing and being-nurtured by honeyed poetry. However, the sustained solitude of being confined within a cedarn coffer — the Vestibule of Hell into which modern Western culture banishes a Doric lover such as Comatas — emboldens Johnson, despite the honey, to suggest an escape:

Or in thy cedarn prison thou waitest for the bee:  
 Ah, leave that simple honey, and take thy food from me.  
 My sun is stooping westward. Entranced dreamer, haste;  
 There's fruitage in my garden, that I would have thee taste.  
 Now lift the lid a moment: now, Dorian shepherd, speak:  
 Two minds shall flow together, the English and the Greek. ('An Invocation', lines 25-30)

Curiously, the penultimate line of the poem labels Comatas a ‘Dorian shepherd’, which would draw a snide retort from any Classicist that ‘Comatas was a goatherd; the shepherd was Lacon’ — though Johnson is intentionally ‘mistaken’ here, exercising a prurient revisionism, making an intertextual allusion to Theocritus’ fifth *Idyll*, a contest in hexameter couplets between the goatherd Comatas, who boasts of the girls whose favours he enjoys, and the shepherd Lacon, who boasts of the boys (a contest mirrored by Virgil’s third *Eclogue*). Besides the fact that Comatas’ cedarn box provides an apt parallel to Uranian positionality, Johnson’s discretion also warrants that he not be seen spending a summer afternoon discoursing with Lacon, the great defender of actualised pederasty. Nevertheless, by intentionally mislabelling Comatas a ‘shepherd’, Johnson discretely alludes to Theocritus’ idyllic debate between Comatas and Lacon, a debate over the respective virtues of the love of women and of boys. More salaciously, this mislabelling suggests that, despite winning the singing contest, Comatas was nonetheless ‘won over’ by Lacon’s claims for the preference of pederastic ‘shepherding’, with Comatas giving up his goats and girls and becoming instead an avid shepherd of boys. (See ‘Appendix Forty-One’ for a discrete example, in a late-Victorian periodical, of this shift by a Satyr-goatherd away from the Dryadic crowd to the privacy of pederastic ‘shepherding’.) Most readers would never have noticed this act of revisionism; a few pedants would have squawked about the ‘mistake’; but none (as far as I can tell) have ever praised the poet for the brilliance that this simple change displays, an overarching command of intertextual nuance. ‘An Invocation’ concludes with an appeal for the use of this fluid intertextuality, an appeal which is also the most concise elucidation of pederastic pedagogy that a Uranian ever penned — ‘two minds shall flow together, the English and the Greek’. Such a flow can be seen in the intertextual intimacy between Johnson and his former Etonian Digby Mackworth Dolben.

While reading Dolben's poems in manuscript, poems intertextually responsive to his own, Johnson must have felt the feverous pleasure of influence that Wilde's Lord Henry describes:

No other activity was like it. To project one's soul into some gracious form, and let it tarry there for a moment; to hear one's own intellectual views echoed back to one with all the added music of passion and youth; to convey one's temperament into another as though it were a subtle fluid or a strange perfume; there was a real joy in that — perhaps the most satisfying joy left to us in an age so limited and vulgar as our own, an age grossly carnal in its pleasures, and grossly common in its aims. (*Dorian* 1891, pp.39-40)

Johnson would have recognised the echo of his own soul, intellectual views, and temperament in lines such as these by Dolben:

For the sweet temperance of your youth,  
Unconscious chivalry and truth,  
    And simple courtesies;  
A soul as clear as southern lake,  
Yet strong as any cliffs that break  
    The might of northern seas;

For these I loved you well, — and yet  
Could neither you nor I forget,  
    But spent we soberly  
The autumn days, that lay between  
The skirts of glory that had been,  
    Of glory that should be. ('To —', lines 19-30)

Particularly the 'St Michael' stanza of 'Homo Factus Est' caught Johnson's attention, and he 'marvelled that it could have been written by a schoolboy' (*Dolben* 1915, p.lviii).

D'Arch Smith claims that 'had [Dolben] not died in 1867 at the very early age of nineteen he would undoubtedly have become involved with some of the group',<sup>24</sup> a claim with which I disagree. By the time he left Eton at seventeen,<sup>25</sup> Dolben — who 'found himself writing perfect Uranian verse when intending or perhaps pretending to indite religious stanzas'<sup>26</sup> — already possessed an uncanny sense of what constituted 'membership' in the Uranian circle, which is displayed by his discrete circulation of his own verses to sympathetic Uranians such as Johnson and Hopkins. In contrast, this circulation was more restricted in terms of his friend, distant cousin, and Eton prefect<sup>27</sup> Robert Bridges, whose failure to appreciate that the privileges of friendship, family ties,

and proximity do not necessarily extend to private papers provoked an archetypal Uranian bonfire resembling Hopkins's 'slaughter of the innocents':

One evening when I was sitting in [Dolben's] room and moved to pull out the [bureau] drawer where he kept his poems, the usual protest was not made. The drawer was empty; and he told me that he had burned them, every one. I was shocked, and felt some remorse in thinking that it was partly his dislike of my reading them that had led him to destroy them. (*Dolben* 1915, p.xxi)<sup>28</sup>

Of the most romantic of all [Dolben's] extravagancies, that idealization and adoration of his school-friend, which long after they were parted went on developing in his maturer poems, I have a better memory. It was well known to me in 1863, indeed the burning of the poems may have been due to the existence among them of poems to 'Archie' ['Archie Manning' is the pseudonym by which Bridges disguises Martin le Marchant Hadsley Gosselin]: for Dolben would have been almost as reluctant to submit them to me as to the eyes of their unwitting object. (p.xxv)

It slowly dawned on Bridges that Dolben was being cautious about which poems he was permitted to see, adding emphasis to the 'some' in statements like 'I send you some verses, as you were kind enough to wish for them' (p.lxxxiii). Eventually Bridges came to realise that Dolben's 'Greek sympathies' (p.xcix), not artistic coyness, determined which poems he was shown, as well as had fuelled the bonfire he himself had provoked. Despite his youth, Dolben was intuitive enough to recognise that un-Uranian Bridges would never prove a sympathetic audience for much of his verse, which was insightful. Even after a lifetime of contemplation, Bridges, as editor of Dolben's poems, could only conclude, particularly of the earlier poems which he (mis)labels 'sentimental trash' (p.xxiii): 'The reading of these poems makes one see why schoolmasters wish their boys to play games' (p.lv).

Upon discovering that Bridges had been shown several of his poems through a third party, Dolben inquired of him pointedly, though attempting to mask his displeasure: 'You were very welcome to see my verses, though I certainly should not have selected them to show you. *Did Coles or Hopkins give them you, and why?* Please remember to tell me' (*Dolben* 1915, p.xc; the emphasis is Dolben's). Beyond a divergence in opinion over religious devotion, as well as poetic style, the principal difficulty for Bridges as

Dolben's future editor and critic was that his own erotic desires had never run parallel to his cousin's

Strange, all-absorbing Love, who gatherest  
Unto Thy glowing all my pleasant dew,  
Then delicately my garden waterest,  
Drawing the old, to pour it back anew. ('[Strange, all-absorbing Love]', lines 1-4)

Such desires, desires which Dolben shared with Vincent Stuckey Stratton Coles (1845-1929) and with Hopkins, proved problematic for Bridges, for he found himself, as editor, in a modern, scholarly conundrum: Dolben's poems would never allow for an absolute avoidance of this 'strange, all-absorbing Love'; and, given his own Georgian position as Poet Laureate, Bridges could hardly claim anachronism, heighten their 'homosocial' aspects, or disguise them as 'homosexual'. The only option available was a disingenuous excising of some materials and the alteration of others: 'It was Bridges' mission, in editing Dolben's works, to establish the young poet among the upholders of orthodox sexual expression in the face of clear evidence to the contrary'.<sup>29</sup> As Margaret Johnson further notes, a 'major blank in Bridges' account of Dolben's life occurs in the area of his relationships with other young men and masters at Eton',<sup>30</sup> with

the most remarkable example of this [being] his treatment of the poems addressed to [...] Gosselin, many of them mentioning him by name. Bridges insists that Dolben's affection was one-sided and that Gosselin was unaware of the strength of Dolben's emotional attachment to him; nevertheless, he felt it necessary to amend the poetry which might otherwise suggest an improper passion [...] [attempting to make that passion] seem no more than a boyish crush.<sup>31</sup>

As for Dolben's relationships with his masters at Eton, Margaret Johnson recognises that various lacunae exist, though not in the case of William Johnson, whom, she asserts, 'produced a revised edition of Dolben's poems. It has been suggested that Bridges' own edition of Dolben's poetry was undertaken, at least in part, in response to Cory's'.<sup>32</sup> This detail is inaccurate: Johnson never produced an *edition* of Dolben's poems, though he did circulate handwritten copies among sympathetic readers such as J. A. Symonds, who 'already had his eye on [Dolben's] work for he added four stanzas to [Dolben's] poem, "A Song", which he included in *Many Moods*' (1878).<sup>33</sup>

Such Uranian textual and intertextual exchanges involving Dolben's 'honeyed poetry' were what Bridges was attempting to curtail by solidifying his own claims over Dolben's poetic legacy — as family member, as friend, as former schoolmate, and finally as editor. Stultification of this Uranian 'infringement' on his cousin's legacy required that Bridges diminish any claim that, when not mediated through the Christian imagery of John Henry Newman, Frederick William Faber (1814-63), or Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-61), one of Dolben's relatives,<sup>34</sup> Dolben's 'strange, all-absorbing Love' was mediated through the Classical imagery into which he had been initiated by Johnson's pederastic pedagogy. Bridges merely notes that '[Dolben's] school-books brought him into contact with Greek poetry' (*Dolben* 1915, p.lviii). However, in spite of ardent attempts in his 'Memoir' and editorial practices to excise or alter, to foster lacunae, and to chide Johnson for assuming the role of poetic 'grandsire', Bridges has been thwarted nonetheless — by Dolben's intertextually.

Although for one untitled poem Dolben makes a proem from two lines of William Wordsworth's 'The Force of Prayer' — *What is good for a bootless bene? / The Falconer to the lady said* — recalling the falconry imagery of Johnson's 'Reparabo', the poem's most revealing intertextuality is derived from Johnson's treatment of Comatas, with Dolben asserting that 'from the great Poet's lips I thought to take / Some drops of honey for my parchèd mouth' ('[From the Great Poet's Lips]', lines 1-2): Johnson's allusion to Comatas has found another, younger wielder. However, Dolben soon realises that an overdependence upon this intertextual nourishment — the honey from Johnson and from the Greeks Johnson had instilled a love for among his Etonians — has resulted in his own aesthetic passivity and lack of an *Ionica* (in the sense of 'breastplate'<sup>35</sup>), Dolben recalling Johnson's admonishment to his successor to 'leave thine arms, when thou art tired, / To some one nobler yet':



Alas! no armour have I fashioned me,  
 And, having lived on honey in the past,  
 Have gained no strength. (Dolben, 'A Poem without a Name I', lines 49-51)

Even if the cedarn, bee-attended chest (resembling the proverbial 'closet' of modern homosexual discourse) serves to foster creativity, it does so through an excess of solitude, and Dolben clearly desires more palpable contact than 'drops of honey from the great Poet's lips':

We seek for Love to make our own,  
 But clasp him not for all our care  
 Of outspread arms. ('[We Hurry On, Nor Passing]', lines 9-11)

This desire to 'but clasp him' is what Bridges, as editor, found most problematic and unpalatable in dealing with Dolben's poems.

Since he had himself been privy to Johnson's pedagogy at Eton,<sup>36</sup> as well as its influence over his cousin and others, Bridges's chiding of Johnson for taking particular interest in one passage from Dolben's 'Vocation', a passage intertextually related to Johnson's own 'Invocation', seems duplicitous. Nevertheless, Bridges writes: 'It is strange to think of Cory copying out this' (*Dolben* 1915, p.lvi). By such comments, Bridges attempts to distance his cousin, as much as possible, from Johnson and the 'strange, all-absorbing' desires that they shared at Eton, though the only way he can find to do so is through frivolous editorial criticisms:

We know too, from Bridges's unnecessarily derogatory remarks in which he accuses Cory of the unlikely crime of inaccurate transcription and gross liberties with another's text, that [Cory] took an interest in the poems of [...] Dolben.<sup>37</sup>

Bridges's strictures on Cory's transcriptions of Dolben's poems were first made in the four-page addenda and corrigenda he found necessary to issue as a supplement to the first edition of Dolben's poems (London, 1911) and were later incorporated in the text of the second edition of 1915. At first sight, the list of variants is remarkable but it seems clear after a moment's thought that Cory was *revising*, not transcribing.<sup>38</sup>

Although Bridges admits that Dolben's poems 'were jealously guarded by his family and a few close friends' (*Dolben* 1915, p.viii), he never accounts for how copies of those poems found their way into Johnson's hands, and it seems likely that they had been given by Dolben himself. Bridges merely relates that 'from [Johnson's] MS. his friends took other

copies' (p.lviii), as was the case with Lord Esher, who informed Bridges that his own copies of six of these poems were 'made in Wm. Johnson's pupil-room three years after Dolben's death' (as quoted on p.136, note).

Only in the context of attacking Johnson as 'editor' — 'We gladly dismiss Wm. Cory's *heaven* for *hope* with the rest of his corruptions' (*Dolben* 1915, p.138, note) — does Bridges deem it appropriate to quote from Dolben's 'Vocation', a poem which he deceptively claims to be unworthy of inclusion in the collection, and has therefore excised:

If thus divinely fair  
This image, carved in cold unfeeling stone  
What must [Apollo] be, the living god himself!  
My whole soul longs to see him as he is  
In all the glory of immortal youth,  
Clothed in white samite. (from 'Vocation', p.lvi)

Accompanying Dolben's voyeuristic gaze is a forestalled desire to position himself as Hyacinth, the pederastic beloved of Apollo, a boy killed by the machinations of Zephyr, a lesser deity angered that the boy's ardour rested with another. Dolben is ever mindful here that 'Death / Is palpable — and Love' ('A Song', lines 11-12), with an earlier variant proving far more erotic: 'Love / Is palpable — and death' (*Dolben* 1915, p.137, note). This desire to assume the role of Hyacinth, even in his fateful mortality, is hardly surprising, given that Hyacinth was, for the artists of the nineteenth century, the most palpable of pederastic icons, and that visual depictions of his relationship with Apollo constituted a ready source of honeyed imagery for the pederastically inclined (see 'Appendix Forty-Two' for examples). Later in 'Vocation', Dolben exclaims, 'Soon very soon, Apollo, O my love!' (p.lvi). These passages about Apollo, passages which garnered Johnson's lingering admiration, have a Keatsian palpability, a longing for touch that Dolben explains elsewhere, figuring himself as a homoerotic Pygmalion:

And, as the passionate sculptor who kissed  
The lips of marble to red,  
Ask I a breath that is part of my own,  
Yet drawn from a soul more sweet; —

Or, as the shaft that upsoareth alone  
 Undiademed, incomplete,  
 Claim I the glory predestined to me. ('A Song of Eighteen', lines 23-29)

Such phrasing is not an anomaly, for Dolben has a penchant for casting himself in Hellenic roles — 'the glory predestined to me' — and in one case beckons the moon to gaze upon him as 'a new Endymion', as

The boy who, wrapped from moil and moan,  
 With cheeks for ever round and fair,  
 Is dreaming of the nights that were  
 When lips immortal touched his own. ('[Lean Over Me — Ah So]', lines 9-12)

Through such lines, Dolben displays himself to be the poetic beloved that Johnson hoped to invoke, one in whom 'two minds shall flow together, the English and the Greek'.<sup>39</sup>

This confluence of 'the English and the Greek' is strikingly illustrated in 'A Poem without a Name II' (dated December 1866),<sup>40</sup> a love poem which, less discreetly, might have borne the title 'A Love without a Name'. In this poem, Dolben, like an impassioned museum curator, provides a tour of his own Comatas chest, a chest which constitutes a brilliant elucidation of the Uranian positionality, a positionality which would soon become, for this group, a form of self-fashioning no less marked than that of the Elizabethans, though taking a different stance, a stance gilded by an astonishing degree of secrecy. This secrecy was necessary for the Uranians, especially given the arguable immorality and assured illegality of their desires, desires that Dolben has depicted on the walls of his own cedarn chest, that positionality where 'I keep, / Stored in a silent Treasury I know, / The pure reality' (lines 35-37):

Within that Treasure-house of mine I wait,  
 I wait, with Erôs glowing at my side;  
 From him, the mighty artist, I have learned  
 How memories to brushes may be tied;  
 And tho' I moistened all my paints with tears,  
 Yet on my walls as joyous imagery,  
 With golden hopes in framed, now appears  
 As e'er of old was dreamed to vivify  
 Ionian porticoes, when Greece was young,  
 And wreathed with glancing vine Anacreon sung. (lines 48-57)

These allusions to ‘Ionian porticoes’ (an apt, architectonic description of Johnson’s *Ionica*) and to Anacreon (a Greek pederast who had poetically immortalised his favourites Cleobulus, Smerdies, and Leucaspis) set the pederastic tone for Dolben’s subsequent description of the paintings which decorate the interior of his own cedarn chest, the walls of his treasure-house, ‘joyous imagery’ crafted by paints ‘moistened [...] with tears’:

And here, a stranded lily on the beach,  
My Hylas, coronalled with curly gold,  
He lies beyond the water’s longing reach  
Him once again essaying to enfold; —  
Here, face uplifted to the twinkling sky  
He walks, like Agathôn the vastly-loved.  
[...]  
And here, like Hyacinthus, as he moved  
Among the flowers, ere flower-like he sank  
Too soon to fade on green Eurotas’ bank. (lines 64-75)

That Dolben has decorated his own cedarn chest with images invoking Hylas and Hyacinth — the first the *erômenos* (or ‘hearer’) of Heracles, the second the *erômenos* of Apollo — would have been fully appreciated by the Doric goatherd Comatas, since among the ancient Dorians these images bespoke

the clean, youthful friendship, ‘passing even the love of women’, which [...] elaborated into a kind of art, became an elementary part of [Doric] education. [...] The beloved and the lover, side by side through their long days of eager labour, and above all on the battlefield, became respectively, [*erômenos*], the hearer, and [*erastês*], the inspirer; the elder inspiring the younger with his own strength and noble taste in things. (Pater, *Platonism*, pp.231-32)

However, Dolben’s poem is more an act of (inter)textual insinuation than exhibitionism, and he redirects the thrust of the poem towards his own ‘hearer’, his contemporary not Grecian reader; hence, the poem ‘passes from its poetic form into an epistolary address’ (*Dolben* 1915, p.134, note):

But it is profanation now to speak  
Of thoughtless Hellene boys, or to compare  
The majesty and spiritual grace  
Of that design which consummates the whole.  
It is himself, as I have watched him, where  
The mighty organ’s great Teutonic soul  
Passed into him and lightened in his face,  
And throbbled in every nerve and fired his cheek. (‘Poem without a Name II’, lines 76-83)

Dolben recognises that his possible ‘hearer’, a boy to whom he has been playing voyeur (‘I have watched him’), has already been ravished — at least aesthetically or through a pedagogy like Johnson’s at Eton — and Dolben’s erotic description of this penetration is lent utterly ejaculatory connotations, disguised as music. Dolben recalls watching ‘the mighty organ’ (rather Priapic phrasing to be certain) ravish the boy: ‘The mighty organ’s great Teutonic soul / Passed into him’. Although ‘great Teutonic soul’ suggests a German composition played upon an organ, the phrasing also seems to allude to the pro-Teutonic stance of Charles Kingsley (1819-75), who had acquired his Cambridge professorship in competition with Johnson while Dolben was still a student at Eton.<sup>41</sup> Although the result of this boy’s ‘Teutonic’ ravishment appears almost transcendental, it also proves palpably tactile, for it ‘lightened in [the boy’s] face, / And throbbled in every nerve and fired his cheek’, a shiver and a blush which Dolben recognises because he has hitherto assumed the same passive role himself:

I will not sing my little puny songs.  
[...]  
Therefore in passiveness I will lie still,  
And let the multitudinous music of the Greek  
Pass into me, till I am musical. (‘After Reading Aeschylus’)

The next lines of ‘A Poem without a Name II’ mark a transition, an extension beyond the liminal box, Dolben fulfilling Johnson’s request to ‘lift the lid a moment’, to take up his pen, his lute, his sword, to become his Uranian successor:

See, Love, I sing not of thee now alone,  
But am become a painter all thine own. (lines 84-85)

This shift from passive to active, from the role of *erômenos* to that of prospective *erastês*, from the confines of an ‘In-Vocation’ to a more externalised ‘Vocation’ is demarcated in the last section of the poem by a volta — ‘enough’ — a volta which is less a renunciation of physical contact than a turn away from ‘thoughtless Hellene boys’ like Hylas and Hyacinth and towards the boy whom Dolben asks to have faith in him as prospective

*erastês*: ‘Enough, the yearning is unsatisfied, / Resolved again into a plea for faith’ (lines 122-23). Through this appeal to ‘faith’, Dolben seeks to assure his prospective beloved that his love for him is ‘elevated’, a necessary assurance since, at public schools like Eton, ‘romantic, sacrificial friendships and rabid sensual lusts all went on in the same community together’.<sup>42</sup> That Dolben’s ‘yearning is unsatisfied’ (as of yet) alters neither his desire nor its potency, which arouses an immediate return to the former ejaculatory imagery, imagery which recalls the ‘limpid liquid within the young man, / The vex’d corrosion’ that Walt Whitman describes as ‘so pensive and so painful, / The torment, the irritable tide that will not be at rest’ (‘Spontaneous Me’, lines 27-29). This is the desire of the *erastês* to assume the role of Doric ravisher:

Believe the true elixir is within,  
 Although I sought to draw from that full tide  
 Some crystal drops of evidence, to win  
 A little vapour only — yet believe,  
 Believe the essence of a perfect love  
 Is there, and worthy. Not a tinge of shame  
 My words can colour. Of *thine own* receive,  
 Yes, of thy very being. It shall prove  
 Indeed a poem, though without a name. (lines 124-32)

As with the title, by replacing ‘poem’ with ‘love’, the final lines become, more daringly, ‘It shall prove / Indeed a love, though without a name’, a statement which would have predated Lord Alfred’s (in)famous formulation by three decades.

Johnson’s pleasure over such lines by his rightful successor must have proven bittersweet; for, although Dolben had indeed been able ‘to string [Johnson’s] lute with silver wires’, his death by drowning at nineteen (on 28 June 1867) had seemingly set aside that newly strung lute. Johnson must have lamented Dolben’s drowning as a partial submerging of his own hopes, ‘because beneath the lake a treasure sank’ (‘Epoch in a Sweet Life’, line 40). He must have felt that Dolben, like Adonais, was one of those ‘inheritors of unfulfilled renown’ — a Chatterton, a Sidney, or a Lucan.<sup>43</sup> Ironically, fate may have bestowed more through Dolben’s death than it could ever have bestowed

through longer life (and certainly more than Johnson had envisioned): many of Hopkins's best poems — impregnated with an elegiac longing for Dolben, his lost beloved and his muse — were the result. Inspired by an unsatisfied yearning for Dolben, his 'dearest him that lives alas! away' ('[I Wake and Feel the Fell]', line 8), Hopkins took up that hollow lute and restrung it with gold, continuing that intertextual relationship as the 'thrice ennobled heir' of Johnson's legacy. Through Dolben, Johnson had unwittingly passed his legacy to Hopkins, a poet who was oblivious to his own impending fame, who felt assured that the grandeur he was painting on the walls of his own cedarn chest would forever remain unappreciated, would follow him into the grave. Hopkins had no conception that, less than half a century after his death, his own cedarn chest would become canonical, would move the Uranian positionality into the pantheon of English literary discourse. While I. A. Richards could definitively assert in 1926 that 'Gerard Hopkins [...] may be described, without opposition, as the most obscure of English verse writers',<sup>44</sup> the publication of the second edition of Hopkins's *Poems* in 1930 changed that forever, as the following comments from the 1930s attest:

[Hopkins] feared that he was 'Time's eunuch', contriving nothing that could survive; but his poetry was essentially enlightened, honest and rebellious, and made to last. (Hildegard Flanner)<sup>45</sup>

In fact the reviewer [of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Hopkins's poems] ought to indulge not in criticism but in town crying. He ought, if he has it, to expound his conviction that Gerard Hopkins was a great poet. I have that conviction; and let me start to expound it. (Geoffrey Grigson)<sup>46</sup>

The *patent* influence of Hopkins has therefore hardly had time to work itself into the body of English poetry. But the *latent* influence — that is a different question. It is a question of an impregnating breath, breathed into the ear of every poet open to the rhythms of contemporary life, the music of our existence, and the tragedy of our fate. Hopkins is amongst the living poets of our time, and no influence whatsoever is so potent for the future of English poetry. (Herbert Read)<sup>47</sup>

He is likely to prove, for our time and the future, the only influential poet of the Victorian age, and he seems to me the greatest. (F. R. Leavis)<sup>48</sup>

The heroism that affects the English language, English poetry and us is Hopkins's. (F. R. Leavis)<sup>49</sup>

Through the last poem he ever wrote, a sonnet addressed 'To R.B.', Hopkins elicited, perhaps unintentionally, a Marius-like devotion in his closest friend Robert

Bridges (who would, three decades later, edit Hopkins's manuscripts as he had Dolben's). While reading this sonnet-letter in early May 1889, Bridges would not have failed to notice that Hopkins, although still bemoaning the solitude of his cedarn chest, has jettisoned his usual spiritual concerns and imagery, has 'thrown off the mask' of religiosity that Bridges always believed him to be wearing, revealing, in the eleventh hour, a visage far more Johnsonian than Jesuitical:

The fine delight that fathers thought; the strong  
 Spur, live and lancing like the blowpipe flame,  
 Breathes once and, quenched faster than it came,  
 Leaves yet the mind a mother of immortal song.  
 Nine months she then, nay years, nine years she long  
 Within her wears, bears, cares and combs the same:  
 The widow of an insight lost she lives, with aim  
 Now known and hand at work now never wrong.  
 Sweet fire the sire of muse, my soul needs this;  
 I want the one rapture of an inspiration.  
 O then if in my lagging lines you miss  
 The roll, the rise, the carol, the creation,  
 My winter world, that scarcely breathes that bliss  
 Now, yields you, with some sighs, our explanation.

After invoking the 'sweet fire', the 'sire of muse' — an encapsulation of the savour of the proffered honey, the continual torch-race, the Hippocrene, and the flowing rill of pederastic desire — Hopkins begs for 'one rapture of an inspiration', for a rapture from his 'winter world that scarcely breathes that bliss', his own frigid and asphyxiating version of Comatas' cedarn chest and Dolben's treasure-house. Attended not by a Dolbenian Erôs but by a Paterian fear that 'from the drops of his blood there would spring no miraculous, poetic flowers' (*Marius*, II, p.209), Hopkins never anticipated that those songs bemoaning his perpetual solitude would become the grandest Uranian expressions, the ultimate Uranian intertextual *tour de force*. By weaving into his own orchestrations the lesser songs of Johnson, Dolben, and a score of others, by merging 'the English with the Greek', by blending the Roman Catholic sacred with the homoerotic and pederastic profane, Hopkins had, unbeknownst to himself, extended the Uranian positionality, most profoundly, into the future.



‘Lizard, the Greeks Called It’:  
Guy Davenport and the Uranian Present

Those deserts of immeasurable sand,  
[...]  
Where the shrill chirp of the green lizard’s love  
Broke on the sultry silentness alone,  
Now teem with countless rills and shady woods,  
Corn-fields and pastures and white cottages.  
(P. B. Shelley, *Queen Mab*, VIII, lines 70-76)

Timothy d’Arch Smith demarcates the closure of the Uranian Movement as 1930, the year of Hopkins’s second edition — although he does include, as an appendix to *Love in Earnest*, a consideration of Ralph Nicholas Chubb (1892-1960), who continued illuminating Uranian, mytho-poetic texts until his death (examples of Chubb’s lithographs for *The Child of Dawn* are included as ‘Appendix Forty-Three’). Despite d’Arch Smith’s scholarly demarcation, the Uranian continuum which began with Johnson’s *Ionica* in 1858 is still recognisable today in the works of a number of contemporary British and American authors such as Guy Mattison Davenport, Jr (1927-2005), whom I will consider after providing a post-Victorian context through E. M. Forster’s short story ‘The Classical Annex’ and the recent novels of Alan Hollinghurst.

In Forster’s posthumously published ‘The Classical Annex’, a museum Curator, after being informed of several breakages in the annex, visits the hall and discovers, among other things, that one of the statues has doffed its prudish fig-leaf: ‘The nude, now wholly so for the first time [since placed on exhibit], was a worthless late Roman work, and represented an athlete or gladiator of the non-intellectual type’.<sup>50</sup> After freshly stringing the fig-leaf, the Curator ‘embraced the stone buttocks [of the sculpture] and fastened the string above them’, an embrace which proves rather arousing for the marble nude, and the Curator soon ‘heard a string snap, and the fig-leaf whizzed across the room’.<sup>51</sup> Since a number of the archaeological artefacts in the Classical Annex seem

increasingly animated by an ominous ‘spirit’, the Curator, a religiously-minded Oxford graduate, takes refuge in an Early Christian sarcophagus and dispels the ‘spirit’ by crossing himself. He is willingly to dismiss this experience as only ‘a dream but for an obscene change in the statue’s physique. [...] He glanced at the fig-leaf, now all too small. He backed away from [the statue], crossing himself constantly’<sup>52</sup> as he flees the museum.

Upon arriving home, the Curator inquires as to the whereabouts of his son Denis, only to discover that Denis, on his way to the museum, must have passed him: ‘They’ve won that [football] match and he wanted to tell you’. His wife then adds a salacious detail: ‘He’s practically nothing on but his football shorts’.<sup>53</sup> No longer mindful of his afternoon tea, the Curator rushes frantically to the museum, arriving to find that

none of the lights were on, which gave him hope. Then far away he heard a familiar, an adorable sound: a giggle. Denis was laughing at something. He dared not call out or give any sign, and crept forward cautiously, guiding himself by well-known objects [...] until he heard his son say, ‘Aren’t you awful?’ and there was the sound of a kiss. Gladiatorial feints, post-classical suction, a brute planning its revenge. There was not a moment to lose, and as the giggling started again and soared up into hysterics against a ground-bass of grunts the Curator stepped into the Christian sarcophagus and made the sign of the Cross. Again it worked. Once more the Classical Annex and all its contents became still.

Then he switched on the light.<sup>54</sup>

The remainder of Forster’s story is a vignette from the future, a playful consideration of the public reception of the permanent, pederastic coupling of the boy and the Classical nude:

And in after years a Hellenistic group called The Wrestling Lesson became quite a feature at Bigglesmouth, though it was not exhibited until the Curator and the circumstances of his retirement were forgotten. ‘Very nice piece, very decent’ was Councillor Bodkin’s opinion. ‘Look ’ow the elder brother’s got the little chappie down. Look ’ow well the little chappie’s taking it’.<sup>55</sup>

As a piece of pederastic erotica, this story exhibits the humour and Edwardian tact which characterises most ‘literary’ Uranian writing from the turn of the century until 1967, the year in which the Sexual Offences Act decriminalised — at least in England and Wales — ‘buggery’ and ‘acts of gross indecency’ committed in private between consenting males aged twenty-one or over (legislation which accepted the key recommendations made in 1955 by the Committee on Homosexuality and Prostitution chaired by Sir John

Wolfenden).<sup>56</sup> From that moment onwards, ‘homosexuality’ had gained both legal protection and literary freedom, neither of which necessarily extended to those whose desires were pederastic.

Although merely titillating, ‘literary’ Uranian writing from the late-1890s till the late-1960s (such as Forster’s ‘Classical Annex’) was only intended for private circulation among intimates or was to be found in fringe journals or volumes published on the Continent: such is no longer the case. An example of the drastic changes in publishing venue and readership since 1967 can be seen in the critical acclaim given to Alan Hollinghurst (1954 – ), whose ‘literary’ novels encapsulate and expand the ‘Pandemonic’ vices of Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred rather than the prurient playfulness of E. M. Forster, novels which characterise the tone of post-1967 homoerotic and pederastic fiction on both sides of the Atlantic. A graduate of Wilde’s Magdalen College, Oxford, who taught English at various Oxford colleges before assuming a deputy editorship at the *Times Literary Supplement* (1981-95), Hollinghurst made his literary debut with *The Swimming-Pool Library* (1988), a novel which won the Somerset Maugham Prize. Its protagonist William Beckwith is a young aristocrat whose pleasures and promiscuity bespeak the utter Decadence of his namesake William Beckford — or, as Colm Toibin explains, ‘William moves around London like a predator turned philosopher’.<sup>57</sup> In accord with the worst Uranian excesses actualised by Wilde and his coterie, Hollinghurst establishes the novel’s predatory overtone in episodes like the following, a randy William returning to his lavish apartment where seventeen-year-old Arthur awaits him:

The sky was uniformly grey, though a glare on the white frippery of the pavilion suggested a sun that might break through.

I was turning to leave when I spotted a lone Arab boy wandering along, hands in the pockets of his anorak, fairly unremarkable, yet with something about him which made me feel I must have him. I was convinced that he had noticed me, and I felt a delicious surplus of lust and satisfaction at the idea of fucking him while another boy waited for me at home.

To test him out I dawdled off behind the pavilion to where some public lavatories, over-frequented by lonely middle-aged men, are tucked into the ivy-covered, pine-darkened bank of the main road.<sup>58</sup>

Such passages constitute the core ‘events’ of a Hollinghurst novel, events that, according to Sebastian Beaumont, exhibit the same banality that Wilde hypocritically preaches against in *De Profundis* — ‘the supreme vice is shallowness’<sup>59</sup> —

It’s not Hollinghurst’s habit of constantly writing about sex that makes *The Spell* [1998] so dull (some of his sequences in *The Swimming-Pool Library* are anything but boring), but the fact that he writes about such *selfish* sex. The sad thing is that Hollinghurst writes beautifully and there is no reason why, if he wrote about something else, this talented novelist couldn’t write a masterpiece.<sup>60</sup>

This seemingly endless sequence of ‘*selfish* sex’ continues in Hollinghurst’s second novel, *The Folding Star* (1994), which was short-listed for the Booker Prize and won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, a novel in which Hollinghurst attempts to explore the pangs of unrequited love by constructing ‘a more elaborate and explicit version of Henry James’s story “The Pupil”’<sup>61</sup> and by merging language reminiscent of Hopkins’s with a raunchiness worthy of pulp erotica:

At one point in the book, Hollinghurst shows terrific poetic ability by having [Edward] Manners (the protagonist) combine the style of Gerard Manley Hopkins with homoerotic sex-chat. It is entertaining and, quite honestly, ingenious.<sup>62</sup>

However, despite his finesse in combining ‘the style of Gerard Manley Hopkins with homoerotic sex-chat’, Hollinghurst’s protagonist nonetheless retains the stock features of ‘a predator turned philosopher’, as the reviewer subsequently complains:

Much of the book deals with the 33-year-old Manners’ desire to sleep with his 17-year-old student, Luc. When Manners seeks to quench his hunger the result is inane: he fantasizes about Luc urinating on him or defecating on him (the list is absurdly long), and when these fantasies are not satisfied, he steals pictures of Luc as well as his soiled underwear and socks (which he proceeds to wear). All this is presented as a sign of Manners’ love. But the fact is, this obsession is for a boy that Manners’ hardly knows. He wishes to tell Luc he loves him before they had even exchanged a few words.<sup>63</sup>

It is against the predatory banality of Hollinghurst’s novels — novels representative of ‘acclaimed’ homoerotic and pederastic writing since 1967, writing which usually extends the poisoned chalice of Wilde’s Priapic pedagogy — that I wish to examine the fiction of Guy Davenport, a Distinguished Alumni Professor of English at the University of Kentucky College of Arts and Sciences, whose death on 4 January 2005 (while I was polishing this ‘Conclusion’) has occasioned a flurry of retrospective evaluations, none

more insightful, for my present considerations, than Philip Christman's claim that '[Davenport] also brought his Classicist's acceptance of pedagogical pederasty to the art of fiction — an aspect of his writing that occasions understandable controversy'.<sup>64</sup> Although Davenport had, by 2004, written forty-seven books of commentary, poetry, translations, and fiction, as well as won a MacArthur 'Genius' Fellowship,<sup>65</sup> I wish to consider only one representative volume of his, *The Jules Verne Steam Balloon: Nine Stories* (1987),<sup>66</sup> a collection of stories that Hopkins, Pater, Johnson, and Dolben would have recognised as a 'Classical Annex' attached to their own Uranian positionality, a 'Classical Annex' which would have left them to 'wonder at the daring of poets later born', poets who have taken the same 'elevated' pederastic path, but taken it further.

As Wyatt Mason relates, 'the Scandinavian Everyland of Davenport's imagination' is a space 'in which certain received ideas about human interaction and psychological development are revoked, [and] the stories [set there] read as if the Fall never happened and Freud was never there to assemble the pieces of our shame'.<sup>67</sup> Two of the inhabitants of this Everyland are Kim Eglund and Anders Hammel, twelve and fifteen years old, respectively, boys who resemble 'pals in a Greek goatherd-and-shepherd poem, *idyllisk*' (*Balloon*, p.50) — recalling the Alexandrian debate between Comatas and Lacon. For their consummation embrace, Davenport constructs a scene reminiscent of Marius the Epicurean reading Apuleius' *Golden Ass* with Flavian, though Davenport's barnloft dalliance is far more daring and tactile than Pater's:

[Kim] had seen me throwing my javelin and jogging and reading under a tree and had come over and said he was Kim, eleven, soon to be twelve. I think he thought I was generous to notice him at all[, said Anders]. Fifteen is pretty scary, Kim said. So after all the things you do to make friends, we found a sunny old barnloft across a field of sunflowers, where we proposed to do some serious jacking off. (*Balloon*, p.93)

I didn't think, Kim said, you'd even notice that I exist, much less make friends. The barn had a grand smell of oats cows chickenfeed old wood and [...] the silence was sweet and the barn snug and private. *O jo!* Anders said, cozy secret bright, stepping from window to window. Our place, all our own. [...] [Kim] scrunched his eyes, feeling naughty and in love. Anders, mouth dry, swallowing hard, shoved down his bathing slip, snapped it inside out, and hung it on a peg. (pp.51-52)

[Kim said,] I sweetened my gaze at you and wriggled my toes, you said, you little rascal, Keep looking at me like that and my peter will stand bolt upright and whimper, and I kept looking at you like that, and here's your peter, *herre Jemini!* rose-petal pink, standing bolt upright. So why are you blushing? Robin eggs in gelatin, Kim's balls to Anders's feel. [...] Why do you like me? Because, Anders said, there's a poem by Rimbaud that begins *Aussitôt que l'idée du Déluge se fut rassise, un lièvre s'arrêta dans les sainfoins et les clochettes mouvantes, et dit sa prière à l'arc-en-ciel à travers la toile de l'araignée* [As soon as the Flood had dissipated, a hare stopped amid the clover and swaying clochettes and said his prayer to the rainbow through the spider's web.] And the dove came back with an olive branch in its foot. (p.53)

In the recurring Danish Arcadia of Davenport's fictions — the school NFS Grundtvig<sup>68</sup> — boys do woo each other with lines from Arthur Rimbaud, for the 'Grundtviggers' have a precocity nurtured by Hugo Tvemunding, who, like William Johnson more than a century before, is an assistant Classics master and a staunch apologist for those 'ancient Greek sentimental loyalties' that began with the Dorians, 'loyalties' that flourished in the Renaissance and in Victorian Oxford, 'loyalties' that continue in the aesthetic works of Davenport and others. More daringly than Johnson as Classicist, Hugo imparts a pederastic 'knowledge' that is concise, accurate, and uncompromising, 'knowledge' adapted to his students' competence. Hence, his lessons construct a *Plato and Platonism for Boys*:

Herds of boys, agemates, in Sparta, ate together on the floor of the mess, with their fingers, from the bare boards. They wore as their only clothing winter and summer an old shirt that left their legs bare from crotch to toe, handed down from elder brothers, the nastier snagged daubed patched and too small, the better. They learned together grammar, law, manners, and singing. Each herd had a Boymaster, who taught them to march in time to the flute and lyre. Each boy sooner or later was caught by an older lover, and carried away to the country. The boy's friends came along, too, for the fun of it. This outing lasted through three full moons, and thereafter the two were friends for life. The lover gave the beloved, as was required by Spartan law, a wine cup, shield, sword, soldier's cape, and an ox. With the ox he threw a banquet, and invited all of his herd, together with their lovers, and gave an account, in intimate detail, of how he had been loved for two months. After this, the beloved wore respectable clothes given him by his lover. They went hunting and dancing together, and ran together in races. (*Balloon*, p.90)

Through such blatant disclosures — 'openness, brashness, spirit [...] [the] boundaries of freedom moving outwards' (p.91) — Hugo manages to transfer much of his own pederastic openness and brashness to his students, who continue to circulate this 'knowledge' among themselves as a furtherance of his pedagogical process. Not surprisingly, both inside and outside of lessons, Hugo is a constant curiosity to his students

and scouts, who ever discuss his views, posit his bisexuality, and seek to discover his consistency, a consistency difficult to ascertain in a person who embodies those Whitmanesque ‘multitudes’ that Hopkins and Pater made integral:

What if Tvemunding likes boys? He’s always talking about ancient Greek sentimental loyalties, as he calls them, and then there’re his Scouts, but next he’s off on Jesus and Sankt Paul, and he has that dark-haired girl [Mariana Landarbejder] he’s most certainly fucking. So? said Anders, why can’t he like both, love both? (p.84)

Or, as Hugo expresses himself:

I have only my Mariana, that delightful girl, and my classical scholarship, and my Boy Scouts, and my sober round of reading, gymnastics, my thesis for the Theological Faculty at the university, my painting, teaching, learning. I can share what I feel. Not always well, but the possibility is there. I believe what the Boy Scout Manual says: Forget Yourself. The important thing to me is to know, so that I can respond, how others experience being, love, lust, food, a film, a summer afternoon. I try to paint because I want to show others what I think is beautiful. (p.88)

Exactly what Hugo considers ‘beautiful’ is revealed by his choice of artistic models:

Nose like a buck hare, said Hugo. Square toes. Eyes slyly sweet and sweetly sly. Hugo, liking the world, was an accurate draughtsman. Franklin sat on a chair, elf naked. (p.81)

Magnus, one of my Scouts, said Hugo of a boy whose hair, blond as a lamb, curled in swashes and scrolls over his forehead. Pectorals in robust definition, he was otherwise as lean as a whippet. Hi, Mariana said, you’re pretty. Don’t dress on my account. Micro undies are more than I usually see on Grundtviggers. Look, Magnus, Hugo said, [...] you’re blushing already [...] (p.83)

The last passage — Hugo’s rather spurious explanation to his girlfriend Mariana about the presence of Magnus — is made all the more suggestive by their playful, verbal fencing the next day:

So Magnus and I talked for hours. I called his folks and said it was too late for him to walk home and that I’d put him up for the night. Heard that one, Mariana said. Please, Hugo said. [...] Magnus is a Spartan, and a little confused. (p.84)

In Davenport’s fictions, placement is vital, and this verbal fencing is wedged between two paragraphs, the first containing Hugo’s statement ‘Puberty [...] good old puberty. And, as more than likely, our balls charged with manly juices and our unruly cock made our heart tick *allegro* and hanker to hug somebody and be hugged’ (p.83); the second, that discussion ‘What if [Hugo] Tvemunding likes boys? [...] Why can’t he like both [sexes], love both?’ Such placements constitute a suggestive colour-element in Davenport’s

fictional palette, and serve to delineate the pederastic nuances, as if by a form of Cubism or collage.

Although Hugo's artistry, friendships, allusions, and pedagogy literally trumpet his pederastic desires, Davenport never allows Hugo to be relegated to the margins of society, the Vestibule of Hell, or a Comatas coffer. Instead, he depicts Hugo as forever fulfilling Johnson's request to 'lift the lid a moment', to exercise a 'Vocation' not an 'In-Vocation', as Mason relates:

Hugo is a paragon of balance: body and mind, teaching and learning, religion and science, art and philosophy, community service and individual betterment. Naturally, conspicuously, his physical perfection is Ideal. So too his pack of boys: they are, in Fourierist form, all bright, open, curious, and creative. And, without question, interested in exploring their sexuality, from which Davenport certainly does not shy away.<sup>69</sup>

This refusal to 'shy away' is continually on exhibit in Davenport's fictions, as in a conversation about foreplay in which Kim recounts the experience of 'juice beading out' of Anders's penis, to which Hugo immediately responds with a touch of enlightenment: 'Bulbourethral secretion, Hugo said, to be coolly pedantic' (*Balloon*, p.94). By refusing to 'shy away', Davenport's descriptions are always bountifully tactile, which accords with the Keatsian detail that 'scoutmaster Tvemunding, who taught Latin, Greek, and gym at NFS Grundtvig and Sunday School at Treenigheden, [was always] talking about everything being touch' (p.113). An example of Hugo's blending of pedagogy and touch is manifest in the following:

Lizard, the Greeks called it, Hugo said, flipping Kim's penis with a nonchalant finger. We didn't think, Anders said, you'd come up [to the clubhouse] when we weren't having a formal meeting. But Tom asked me, Hugo said. I've seen everything [that boys 'fooling around' do] anyhow. I wanted, said Tom, to see if you'd come. I don't see anything but some bare boys such as I see thrice weekly with my Scouts, Hugo said. Officially I'm not here. (p.93)

Hugo's statement that 'officially I'm not here' covers a multitude of insinuations and transgressions, and recognises that misconstructions would certainly be placed upon his being found alone with these naked (pre)pubescent boys in a clubhouse at NFS Grundtvig after hours, not to mention his comment that the Greek word for *penis* translates into



‘lizard’, a comment given emphasis by his salacious flipping of the ‘lizard’ on twelve-year-old Kim. This scene in the clubhouse — a Uranian positionality which is no longer a Comatas coffer — would certainly be interpreted by most adults on the outside as maladjusted, psychotic, immoral, sinful, unlawful, fringe, objectionable, and/or intrusive. It would also warrant the idealised Hugo, were he in America or Britain, a stint in a prison or psychiatric hospital; or, at the very least, the forfeiture of his teaching position, as Johnson had. However, fortunately for Hugo, this is Davenport’s imaginary Denmark, a place where one posits for oneself how ‘to be or not to be’.

While the other ‘Grundtviggers’ ponder and measure Hugo at length, his favourites Kim, Anders, and Franklin ‘know’ him all too well (perhaps in the fullest biblical sense), with his body and its history more familiar to them than modern Western society would expect or hope:

Hugo’s twice as old as me plus a year, Franklin said, and has been fucking since fifteen. His dick’s 23 cm. He and my sister Mariana do it every day, because they love each other. (*Balloon*, p.135)

Hugo’s [penis] has big veins all over it, and bumpy ridges. Long as my forearm, and the head’s as big as my fist. See, he said he got it that big by whacking off when he was a boy. (p.141)

Nevertheless, in the Arcadia that is Davenport’s *Jules Verne Steam Balloon*, all charges of ‘corrupting the innocent’ are rendered mute or moot; and all erotic touches and their accompanying ‘knowingness’, whether bestowed by the boys themselves or by the adult Hugo (‘twice as old as me plus a year’), bespeak only the playfulness about which James Kincaid concludes: ‘Play, feasting on its own inventiveness, does not lead to anything but its own perpetuation. [...] Play eroticizes the whole world — and keeps it that way’.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, as an exemplar of this ‘herd of boys’, these ‘agemates’, Kim literally basks in this form of love, a love that infuses his world with an aesthetic, erotic playfulness like that which Kincaid defines above:

Then [Kim] stared at the engraving of Holberg to the left of the map and reset the nudge of his penis in his pants. The view through the French windows was a Bonnard. He read all the dull mail on the desk while fitching his crotch with meditative fingerings. At the harpsichord he played a gavotte by Bach, to keep from thinking of Anders just then. Midnote a repeat he froze, swivelled

around, and turned a cartwheel. The view through the French windows was Bonnard because of the greens and mauves, the rusty pink of the brick wall. Anders, talking or strolling, liked to roll the ball of his thumb against his dick through his pants, and laugh like a dog about it, no sound, only a happy look and slitty eyes. Kim slid his pants down and off. Whether anybody was home he didn't know. His briefs caught on his shoe and had to be hopped free. He yawned grandly, and stretched. He finished the gavotte at the harpsichord, did another cartwheel, and sauntered upstairs, britchesless. On the bed he allowed himself to think about Anders, happily, wondering if he were wicked, silly, or simply lucky. (*Balloon*, p.55)

Beyond its prurient suggestiveness (complete with the Hopkinsian detail of doffing one's clothes before remembering one's still-tied shoes), the above reveals an Everyland untainted by Christian shame, with prepubescent Kim cast in a Uranian fantasy role and Davenport's reader cast as a pederastic Porphyro provided a voyeuristic proximity to this naked boy without that distance being defeated, at least artistically. Beyond its dynamic of voyeurism/exhibitionism, this image of Kim, an uninhibited prepubescent flaunting about in a gilded setting, also bespeaks a degree of depth and a score of Paterian virtues — 'impressions, [...] pleasant memories, and subsequent hopes [...] a really Epicurean economy' (Pater, Review of *Dorian Gray*, p.60) — or, as Mason relates:

Davenport's [Edenic] Garden, abandoned but pristine, is a world of potential waiting to be seized. Unaware of what befell the prior tenants, innocents fill the house, and each other, with endless stores of goodness. [...] That Davenport's [...] boys might forge joyful bonds in nature should be an acceptable alternative to [William] Golding's version, in which children left to their own devices hack one another apart. Alas, few critics have seen it that way. When a seventy-five-year-old man writes about little boys falling in love [in *The Death of Picasso* (2003)], describes them admiring each other's dicks, rubbing noses, blowing kisses to each other, it seems his work can't escape the most literal interpretations.<sup>71</sup>

Sometimes whole chapters are nothing more than these boys flaunting about *en plein air*, as with chapter eighty-four, which merely reads: 'Forest light on bare butts. Kim smelled of mint between the toes' (*Balloon*, p.90). Although a miniature, this chapter is Uranian prose at its most palpable, a Keatsian 'this living hand, now warm and capable / Of earnest grasping',<sup>72</sup> a hand that — despite Mason's scholarly desire to distance Davenport's textual touch from his living one — seems extended, by way of eulogistic 'dedication', to the Muse behind *The Jules Verne Steam Balloon*, a palpable sixteen-year-old boy:

For my friend  
HUMPHRY 1971-1986.

Almost universally unappreciated, the depth and corresponding Paterian virtues that Davenport delineates in his own characters is absent in Hollinghurst's 'predator turned philosopher', despite that predator's linguistic finesse in combining 'the style of Gerard Manley Hopkins with homoerotic sex-chat'. By analogy, Hollinghurst's protagonists resemble the Porphyro that Jack Stillinger unmasks in John Keats's 'The Eve of St Agnes'; and Davenport's, the Porphyro that Earl Wasserman finds: the first are vampiric seducers; the second, Provençal courtiers.<sup>73</sup> Notice that the Paterian virtues of Davenport's puerile protagonists and their 'Boymaster' Hugo include servitude and possessiveness, courtly qualities that Wilde, with his lust for beautiful 'objects' that he could handle and later discard — 'I used to be utterly reckless of young lives: I used to take up a boy, love him "passionately", and then grow bored with him, and often take no notice of him'<sup>74</sup> — could neither conceive nor compass:

Anders squatted to undo Kim's shoes and pants. You undress him? Lemuel said. Neat. *Hejsa!* the kid has no more pubic hair than an infant. I do too, Kim said, some. He comes, Anders said, and I love him. (*Balloon*, p.93)

Timidly [Kim] hugged back, and then hugged warmly, with a kiss for her nose. [Meg] returned the kiss on his navel, and gave him up to Anders's claiming arms. (p.72)

These images become even courtlier when brought into proximity with the confession of Hollinghurst's protagonist that 'I felt a delicious surplus of lust and satisfaction at the idea of fucking [this Arab boy] while another boy waited for me at home'. In Hollinghurst's hands, Kim, Anders, and Franklin would be worthy of a predatory 'fuck': in Davenport's, they would be worthy of the renunciation that T. H. White embraced — 'the practical facts of life are an impenetrable barrier [...] [which] offers the fox to my bosom, and I must let it gnaw'<sup>75</sup> — or, given the removal of that barrier in an Arcadian Denmark, all the Hopkinsian 'froliclavish' that love and freedom can bestow on the path to self-actualisation.

Unlike Hollinghurst's protagonists, Davenport's are enveloped by an atmosphere of love and devotion that literary critics, almost without exception, have found, at best, disconcerting, far more disconcerting than the blatant banality which nearly won Hollinghurst the Booker Prize:

That so many of Davenport's readers and critics have seen naked boys and thought smut, have seen love and decided it 'unsettling', is an expression of the problem Davenport wants to get past, not sexually but intellectually. For what these stories do — if we can escape what Davenport has called 'our end-of-the-century comstockery and liberal puritanism' — is encourage us to question what kind of world we have built for ourselves. [...] Davenport's Fourierist fictions are figurative expressions of a desire for release from the narrowly defined jails — verbal, philosophical, practical — that our beliefs can erect.<sup>76</sup>

This imaginary Denmark is merely a 'backdrop for Davenport's reimagining of Western civilization along Fourierist lines. [Charles] Fourier [1772-1837] found the bourgeois family unit suffocating and murderous; Davenport seeks to reinvent it'.<sup>77</sup> One of the ways that Davenport depicts this 'reinvention' is through the liberal values of Kim's father, the Headmaster of NFS Grundtvig, a Latinist who facilitates an intergenerational discourse with his son based on a mutual understanding of the flesh and its attendant desires, as when Kim is discovered caressing himself sensually in his presence: 'And Papa looked funny over the top of his glasses and then up to heaven, and then paid me a wink. O boy' (*Balloon*, p.60). It is in the context of that wink that Davenport's readers are prompted to consider the following exchange between father and son, an exchange which blends his father's Latinist values with the more Grecian values of his younger colleague Hugo, a blend of 'the Danish and the Greek':

Kim in stubby blue pants all but occulted by a jersey with the collar flicked up cockily in back, fists at thighs, head down. [His father said,] You're as brown as an Etruscan and as fetching as Ganymedes. Who's that? Charming chap your age in Greek legend filched by Zeus to do God knows what with. (p.56)

As with Forster's 'Classical Annex', Davenport's fictions (although written decades later), exhibit the humour and Edwardian tact that characterise most 'literary' Uranian writing from the turn of the century until 1967; for, according to Mason,

‘nowhere in any of Davenport’s stories are his children [actually] witnessed having sex’.<sup>78</sup>

Despite its attempt to assuage critical disapproval, Mason’s generalisation is inaccurate.

Even in the darkness of Forster’s Edwardian tale, the boy and the animated Roman statue are ‘witnessed having sex’ — visually by the resulting sculpture ‘The Wrestling Lesson’, audibly by

a familiar, an adorable sound: a giggle. Denis was laughing at something. [...] ‘Aren’t you awful?’ and there was the sound of a kiss. Gladiatorial feints, post-classical suction [...] [and] the giggling started again and soared up into hysterics against a ground-bass of grunts.

Similarly, Davenport’s characters are also ‘witnessed having sex’, though in prose handled with the same deftness as Forster’s. I feign to ask how Mason’s generalisation would account for the following scene (which constitutes all of chapter thirty-three of *The Jules Verne Steam Balloon*), a scene in which Hugo, Mariana, and her young brother Franklin (‘half as old as Hugo, after subtracting a year’) are indeed ‘witnessed having sex’, *in medias res*, in a mixture curious to untangle:

I like my sandbar, Franklin said, like my river. Also Hugo’s house all one room and a big window in the roof. Sand on your dick and balls, Mariana said, brushing. And, said Franklin, you and Hugo have come three times and I’ve only come once. *Hejsa!* That feels yummy. This isn’t icky? Hope not, Hugo answered for her. But, said Franklin, his eyes squeezing closed, acute pleasure making his fingers spread and his mouth a muzzle, when she lollies your dick you’re kissing her between the legs, and then you fuck. *Oh jo*, Hugo said, sweet and slow. Hunch in, and you’ll get a flutter of tongue-tip on the backdrag. Warm and wet, Franklin said, and good. Me next, Hugo said. Mariana shooed him away, smoothing hands up Franklin’s thighs to his collarbones. Faunulus on the mossbank, Pastorella on her knees. The blithering phone. *Hallo, jo*. Not really: an afternoon with friends. Love to, but can’t. Later, then, or another time. Bore’s delight, the telephone. Going to come, Franklin said. Coming! he sang. Figmilk, said Mariana, a nice skeet and a fribble. What a blush! Hugo hefted him out of the chair and crushed him in a hug. Bet you, he said, you can’t come again, two handrunning, and then we’ll all be even, and start over. (p.65)<sup>79</sup>

Even when the eroticism is less ejaculatory than the above, Davenport’s reader is brought tantalisingly close to that inevitable ‘figmilk’, though the sexual act which produces it usually takes place offstage or is handled symbolically, often with a botanist’s touch. Notice the brilliant transition between the two sections of chapter twenty, a description of a pubescent *menage a trios*, two boys and a girl, which blends into a florid ‘longspur lupine’ (see ‘Appendix Forty-Four’ for this flower and for a thirteenth-century alchemical illustration of a phallic tree):

I liked kissing all day yesterday. Poor Nello's left out. Don't anybody kiss me, Nello said. As [Nello and Gerrit] stood kissing, Petra pushed down Gerrit's briefs, and, squatting, took them off, batting Gerrit's hands away from trying to pull them up again. No clothes we agreed, she said. I'm mortified, said Gerrit.

*Lupinus Calcaratus*

Erect, high, silky pubescent throughout, leafy. Leaflets 7 to 10, linear lanceolate, acute, mucronate: stipules ovate, acuminate, persistent: flowers in rather close and short raceme, bracts subulate, deciduous, calyx deeply spurred at base, minutely bracteolate, the upper lip short, double-toothed, white, the lower larger, entire, acute: banner and wings somewhat pubescent externally, the keel ciliate: pods hairy, with four seeds. Flowers white, the spur exceeding the pedicels. (*Balloon*, p.12)

Through a score of such Modernist and Post-Modernist techniques, Davenport's prose manages to fulfil what-cannot-be-fulfilled amid denials, scrupulosities, and beliefs; amid ethical, legal, and religious restrictions; amid the concern of Western culture (in general) and Anglo-American culture (in particular) to limit physical intimation and actualisation of homoerotic and pederastic desires. The result is a textual, pederastic Utopia.

'In his own fiction', Mason writes, 'Davenport has succeeded in [...] finding new ways to dramatize one, suggestive question: "What if we were free?"'<sup>80</sup> This is the principal question which the Uranian positionality has attempted to answer since 1858 — whether the confining, honey-nurtured space was Johnson's Comatas chest, Dolben's treasure-house, Pater's vestibule, Hopkins's epithalamic coffer, Forster's Classical Annex, or Davenport's NFS Grundtvig clubhouse. Like the Victorian and Edwardian Uranians, the late Guy Davenport was primarily concerned with 'how the sensitive individual who creates art survives in a society that is frequently inhospitable to such sensitivity',<sup>81</sup> especially that pederastic sensitivity which, since the ascendancy of Christianity, has constituted a unique positionality, a little tended aspect of the human condition, an unploughed-yet-fertile field of scholarly investigation. This is the continuum I endeavoured, in the preceding chapters of this dissertation, to engage through a 'Uranian approach' — a continuum which, after considering Davenport's fictions, I must conclude shows neither signs of discontinuing nor of answering its most puzzling of questions,

‘What if we were free?’ However, the twenty-first century may indeed see the birth of another poet who, honey-fed on Davenport’s Utopian fantasies, will restring Johnson’s lute with gold, will further the Uranian continuum, will answer that question of ‘freedom’ so central to Uranian thought — a poet who will warrant, for good or ill, the title *Sanctus Paederasta*.<sup>82</sup>

## Notes for the Conclusion

Publication declaration: A version of the section on 'Johnson's "An Invocation"' is forthcoming as "In Thy Cedarn Prison Thou Waitest": Johnson's *Ionica* and Uranian Intertextuality', in *Theory and Practice in English Studies* (Proceedings from the Eighth Conference of English, American and Canadian Studies [held on 2-4 February 2005]) (Brno: Masarykova Univerzita, c. 2005).



Thomas Kyd (attributed), *The Spanish Tragedy*, III.4.58-70.

<sup>2</sup> At King's College, Cambridge, Johnson was a celebrated student, gaining the Chancellor's English Medal for a poem titled *Plato* in 1843, and the Craven Scholarship in 1844. He was appointed to an Assistant Mastership at Eton upon graduating from Cambridge. See William Johnson (*later Cory*), *Ionica* [Parts I and II], by William Cory, with biographical intro. and notes by Arthur C. Benson (London: Allen & Unwin, 1905), p.xii. All of Johnson's poems are taken from this volume; abbreviated as *Ionica* 1905.

<sup>3</sup> Timothy d'Arch Smith, *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p.6.

<sup>4</sup> D'Arch Smith, p.4.

<sup>5</sup> See d'Arch Smith, p.92. 'Lord Esher we have noted to have been educated at Eton under Cory, to have been singled out by that unerring eye as a budding Uranian, and to become the author of a charming and grateful biography of his old teacher, *Ionicus* (1923). Esher embarked on a career in court circles and was responsible for the funeral arrangements of Queen Victoria' (d'Arch Smith, pp.90-91).

<sup>6</sup> 'Oscar Browning was dismissed from Eton — for insubordination, according to the official explanation, for pederastic excess, according to the unofficial one' — Linda Dowling, 'Ruskin's Pied Beauty and the Construction of a "Homosexual" Code', *Victorian Newsletter*, 75 (1989), pp.1-8 (p.7).

<sup>7</sup> D'Arch Smith, p.188. D'Arch Smith also observes, 'The list of Cory's pupils demonstrates his unswerving eye for a budding author' (p.9).

<sup>8</sup> D'Arch Smith, pp.6-7. See Rupert Hart-Davis, ed. with intro., *The Lyttelton Hart-Davis Letters: Correspondence of George Lyttelton and Rupert Hart-Davis, 1955-1962* (London: John Murray, 1978-79), pp.19-20, for Johnson's views on education, views strikingly parallel to Pater's:

You go to a great school not so much for knowledge as for arts and habits, for the habit of attention, for the art of expression, for the art of assuming at a moment's notice a new intellectual position, for the art of entering quickly into another person's thoughts, for the habit of submitting to censure and refutation, for the art of indicating assent or dissent in graduated terms, for the habit of regarding minute points of accuracy, for the art of working out what is possible in a given time, for taste, for discrimination, for mental courage, and for mental soberness.

Johnson's influence was not limited to boys. Mary Coleridge, great-granddaughter of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's elder brother, James, was educated in Classics and encouraged to write her own poetry by Johnson, who was her father's friend. In one of those recurring ironies of fate, many of those poems that Johnson helped to foster appeared anonymously in *Fancy's Following*, published by the Daniel Press in 1896 — at the instigation of Robert Bridges.

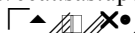
<sup>9</sup> D'Arch Smith, p.11.

<sup>10</sup> Linda Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), p.114.

<sup>11</sup> 'Thanks to Lord Esher's Appendix to his biography, *Ionicus*, which prints Cory's [handwritten] notes in his personal copy of *Ionica*, we know [...] that some of the poems were addressed to one of his favourite pupils, Charles Wood (later Viscount Halifax), although, as Cory noted, the subject was unaware of them' (d'Arch Smith, p.9).

<sup>12</sup> See Donald L. Hill's explanatory notes for this passage, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); abbreviated as *Renaissance* 1893 — pp.336-38.

<sup>13</sup> John Addington Symonds, *A Problem in Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion* (London: Privately printed, [1901]), p.1.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Schmiel, Review of Mark Andreas Seiler, *POI/HSIS POIH/SEWS: Alexandrinische Dichtung KATA\LEPTO/N in strukturaler und humanethologischer Deutung. Beiträge zur Altertumskunde, Band 102* (1997), *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (20 June 1998) <<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/bmcr/1998/98.6.20.html>> [accessed 12 September 2004]. In Greek, the phrase *etos hōrion* appears  implying 'limits of the year'.

<sup>15</sup> As quoted in *ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> Callimachus was also the name of the Greek sculptor (fifth century BCE) who reputedly designed the Corinthian column, about which Hopkins planned to write an essay (see the ‘Inversnaid’ section of ‘Chapter Two’).

<sup>17</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.86.

<sup>18</sup> D’Arch Smith, p.9.

<sup>19</sup> Dowling, *Hellenism*, pp.86-87.

<sup>20</sup> Denis Donoghue, *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (New York: Knopf, 1995), pp.39-40.

<sup>21</sup> In ‘Insisting on Orthodoxy: Robert Bridges’ Edition of Digby Dolben’s Poetry’, *Hopkins Quarterly*, 26.3-4 (1999), pp.82-101, Margaret Johnson describes a quasi-religious order that Dolben joined:

Yet such autocephalous churches as the Benedictine order founded and headed by Father Ignatius ‘seemed to attract ... eroticism’; and in the very year that Dolben joined it, 1864, it was the subject of a scandal. One of the brothers wrote a love letter to a choirboy. It was sent to a local newspaper which printed it under the heading, ‘Ignatius and his Singing Boys’, and added a homily on the dangers of monastic life which ‘cannot fail to produce abominations’ [...] Dolben cannot have been unaware of such homoerotic undercurrents in the order; they were matched by similar undercurrents at Eton. (p.92)

<sup>22</sup> Lionel Pigot Johnson, ‘A Sad Morality’, in *The Poetical Works of Lionel Johnson* (London: E. Mathews, 1915) — line 44.

<sup>23</sup> In the ‘Memoir’ which prefaces Dolben’s published poems, Bridges provides his own perception of this ‘elevated’ positionality in terms of his cousin: ‘His affection [for his Eton schoolmate Martin le Marchant Hadsley Gosselin] was of the kind that recognises its imaginative quality, and in spite of attraction instinctively shuns the disillusionment of actual intercourse. In absence it could flourish unhindered, and under that condition it flowered profusely’ (p.xxix).

In quoting from Bridges’s ‘Memoir’, I have opted for the revised and corrected version in *The Poems of Digby Mackworth Dolben*, ed. with ‘Memoir’ by Robert Bridges, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1915); abbreviated as *Dolben* 1915. In quoting from Dolben’s poetry, I have limited myself to the poems found in *The Poems of Digby Mackworth Dolben*, ed. with ‘Memoir’ by Robert Bridges, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1911) rather than the more accurate *The Poems and Letters of Digby Mackworth Dolben, 1848-1867*, ed. by Martin Cohen ([Amersham,] England: Avebury, 1981). My reason for doing so is that the late Uranians only had access to Bridges’s edition (except for the occasional poem circulating in manuscript), and I am foremost concerned here with Dolben as a Uranian, rather than the ultimate textual accuracy of the texts involved.

<sup>24</sup> D’Arch Smith, p.188.

<sup>25</sup> Dolben did not feel the same love for Eton that Johnson did. In a letter to his friend V. S. S. Coles, Dolben writes: ‘I positively hate the place. It is full of mental temptations that you know nothing of’ (as quoted in the ‘Memoir’, *Dolben* 1915, p.1). This was written before Dolben had fully developed, according to Bridges, ‘his own subsequent affinity with Greek thought’ (p.lvi).

<sup>26</sup> D’Arch Smith, p.191.

<sup>27</sup> The term ‘prefect’ might be too formal, though Bridges does note: ‘I happened to be captain of the house [...] [and] enrolled Dolben among my fags, and looked after him’ (*Dolben* 1915, pp.xi-ii).

<sup>28</sup> For Bridges’s comment that ‘my correspondence has unexpectedly recovered five of these burnt poems, preserved by a friend whom [Dolben] had allowed to copy them’, see *Dolben* 1915, xxii, footnote.

<sup>29</sup> M. Johnson, ‘Dolben’, p.83.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p.90.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.93-94. The portion of the ‘Memoir’ discussed by Margaret Johnson appears in *Dolben* 1915, pp.xxv-ix. For comment on Bridges’s alteration of ‘Marchie’ Gosselin into ‘Archie Manning’ in the ‘Memoir’ and the poetry, see Cohen, p.4.

<sup>32</sup> M. Johnson, 'Dolben', p.93.

<sup>33</sup> D'Arch Smith, p.188. In an endnote, d'Arch Smith details that "'A Song" was first printed in Symonds's privately circulated *Lyra Viginti Chordarum* (c. 1878), p.33, under the title "Tema con Variazioni with a Prelude and a Finale", without the mention of Dolben. [...] It was one of the poems revised by Cory' (p.200, note) — making it likely that Johnson, one of Symonds's correspondents, had provided the occasion by which Symonds acquired a copy of the poem.

<sup>34</sup> For Dolben's appreciation of Faber, see *Dolben* 1915, p.xx. See Dolben's harsh comment regarding Clough's poetry in a letter to Bridges, p.lxxxviii, as well as Bridges's note 22, p.132. Since Dolben seems to have committed whole passages of Clough's poetry to memory, his comment in this letter seems less an expression of his own views than a stolen march on Bridges's expected retort.

<sup>35</sup> *Ionica* (in the sense of 'breastplate') is a term for Irish prayers such as 'St Patrick's Breastplate', which begins, 'I arise today, / Through the strength of heaven'.

<sup>36</sup> Johnson's influence extended far beyond the Classics; and, of this, Bridges writes: 'I remember how I submissively concluded that it must be my own dullness which prevented my admiring Tennyson as much as William Johnson did' (*Dolben* 1915, p.xxi).

<sup>37</sup> D'Arch Smith, p.9.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40, note.

<sup>39</sup> Critics have continually commented that Dolben 'failed' his entrance examination at Balliol College, Oxford, and that this is an indication of his lack of proficiency in Greek and Latin. Even Bridges lapses into this dubious claim while praising his cousin's translation of a passage from Catullus: 'It is interesting that this translation [...] should have been written by a boy who was unable to pass his entrance examination at Balliol college' (*Dolben* 1915, p.134). Although 'failed' is *technically* accurate, it skirts the context of that failure: Dolben, in doubtful health, fainted before or during the examination (pp.cvi-vii), and either did not take or complete it. Besides, the Balliol entrance examination emphasised Latin as well as Greek, and Dolben's relationship to Latin is explained by his private tutor, Constantine Prichard: 'His Latin writing was rather drudgery to him ... he took much pains with it ... his appreciation of classical poetry was very deep' (as quoted on p.cx). Dolben approached the Classics (particularly in Greek) not as a scholar, but as a poet.

<sup>40</sup> This poem was written after Dolben had left Eton (see *ibid.*, p.131, note).

<sup>41</sup> Charles Kingsley seems a likely source for this allusion to the 'great Teutonic soul', either through his *Saint's Tragedy* (a drama) or *The Roman and the Teuton* (a series of university lectures). *The Saint's Tragedy, or, The True Story of Elizabeth of Hungary, Landgravine of Thuringia, Saint of the Romish Calendar*, with a preface by F. D. Maurice (London: J. W. Parker, 1848), has a passage where Epimetheus beckons:

Wake again, Teutonic Father-ages,  
Speak again, beloved primeval creeds;  
Flash ancestral spirit from your pages,  
Wake the greedy age to noble deeds.

*The Roman and the Teuton: A Series of Lectures Delivered before the University of Cambridge*, with a preface by Professor F. Max Müller (Cambridge and London: Macmillan, 1864), was the published version of a series of lectures delivered in 1860, directly after Kingsley had been appointed Regius Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge. Dolben and the other Etonians may have been particularly intrigued by Kingsley's appointment, since Johnson was one of those nominated:

In 1860 [Johnson] was passed over in favour of Kingsley, when the Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, submitted his name to the Queen for the Professorship of Modern History at Cambridge. Four men were suggested, of whom Blakesley and Venables refused the post. Sir Arthur Helps was set aside, and it would have been offered to Johnson, if the Prince Consort had not suggested Kingsley. (Benson, 'Introduction', *Ionica* 1905, p.xx).

<sup>42</sup> John Chandos, *Boys Together: English Public Schools, 1800-1864* (London: Hutchinson, 1984), p.301.

<sup>43</sup> Percy Bysshe Shelley, 'Adonais' (line 397), in Donald H. Reiman and Sharon B. Powers, eds, *Shelley's Poetry and Prose* (New York: Norton, 1977). There is a degree of truth to Bridges's hyperbolic claim that 'the poems which [Dolben] now began to produce will compare with, if they do not as I believe excel, anything that was ever written by any English poet at his age [eighteen]' (*Dolben* 1915, p.xcviii).

<sup>44</sup> I. A. Richards, 'Gerard Hopkins', *Dial* (September 1926), pp.195-203; extracted in Gerald Roberts, ed., *Gerard Manley Hopkins: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), p.141.

<sup>45</sup> Hildegard Flanner, Review, *The New Republic* (4 February 1931), pp.331-32; extracted in *ibid.*, p.206.

<sup>46</sup> Geoffrey Grigson, 'A Poet of Surprise', *The Saturday Review* (14 February 1931), pp.237-38; extracted in *ibid.*, p.207.

<sup>47</sup> Herbert Read, 'The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins', in *English Critical Essays of the Twentieth Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pp.351-74; extracted in *ibid.*, p.261.

<sup>48</sup> F. R. Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry: A Study of the Contemporary Situation* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1932); extracted in *ibid.*, p.237.

<sup>49</sup> F. R. Leavis, 'Doughty and Hopkins', *Scrutiny* (December 1935), pp.316-17; extracted in *ibid.*, p.325.

<sup>50</sup> E. M. Forster, 'The Classical Annex', in '*The Life to Come*' and *Other Stories* (London: E. Arnold, 1972), pp.146-50 (p.147).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p.148.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p.148.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p.149.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p.150.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p.150.

<sup>56</sup> In 1981, the Policy Advisory Committee on Sexual Offences, established by the British Home Office, recommended a minimum age of eighteen for homosexual acts, with a minority of the five members of the committee favouring a reduction to sixteen. In 1996, the European Commission of Human Rights ruled that Euan Sutherland (then seventeen) could legally challenge Britain's standing age-of-consent legislation, a challenge which led, in 2000, to the British Parliament reducing the age of consent to sixteen — however, the age of consent remains eighteen for sexual acts in cases where there is a relationship of trust between the parties (for example, between a teacher and a pupil). It is impractical, given the space required, to venture any comment on the multitudinous changes to state 'sodomy laws' in United States of America. In June 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 6-3 in *Lawrence et al. v. Texas* that all such 'sodomy laws' are unconstitutional. For a transcript of this ruling, see <<http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/02pdf/02-102.pdf>> [accessed 20 January 2005]. The standard age of consent in the U.S.A. is eighteen.

<sup>57</sup> Colm Toibin, 'The Comedy of Being English' [Review of Alan Hollinghurst, *The Line of Beauty* (2004)], *The New York Review of Books*, 52.1 (13 January 2005) <<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/17671>> [assessed 15 January 2005].

<sup>58</sup> Alan Hollinghurst, *The Swimming-Pool Library* (London: Vintage, 1998), p.6. In Hollinghurst's novels, the protagonists have an uncanny ability to acquire boys of seventeen, which suggests that Hollinghurst (at the time that he was writing them) was allowing his protagonists to transgress Britain's then-current age-of-consent laws (see the note above), though without allowing those transgressions to raise too many eyebrows. It is my hunch that Hollinghurst's future protagonists will fetishize and acquire boys of fifteen.

<sup>59</sup> Oscar Wilde, *De Profundis*, in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994), pp.981, 1002, 1005, 1020, 1021, and 1056.

<sup>60</sup> Sebastian Beaumont, 'Falling Star' [Review of Alan Hollinghurst, *The Spell* (1998)], in *Gay Times*, 240 (September 1998), p.80.

<sup>61</sup> Toibin, 'Comedy'.

<sup>62</sup> Anonymous, Review of Alan Hollinghurst, *The Folding Star* (1994), *The Michigan Daily Online* (5 February 1996) <<http://www.pub.umich.edu/daily/1996/feb/02-05-96/arts/hollinghurst.html>> [accessed 2 May 2004].

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Philip Christman, *A Virtual Cantina: A One-Man Aldaily* (9 January 2005) <<http://philipchristman.blogspot.com/>> [accessed 15 January 2005]. See also Andre Furlani, 'Guy Davenport's Pastorals of Childhood Sexuality', in *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children*, ed. by Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), pp.225-44.

<sup>65</sup> These details are taken from Wyatt Mason, 'There Must I Begin to Be: Guy Davenport's Heretical Fictions', *Harper's Magazine*, 308.1847 (April 2004), pp.87-92 (p.87). In this portion of my 'Conclusion', I have relied heavily on Mason's article: it is a rare example of Davenport being treated on his own terms, especially in regard to the erotic elements within his fiction, elements usually considered anathema and attacked as representative of Davenport's 'polymathic pederasty' (p.92).

<sup>66</sup> Guy Davenport, *The Jules Verne Steam Balloon: Nine Stories* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1987); abbreviated as *Balloon*. For equally apt displays of pederastic pedagogy and its finer nuances, see Guy Davenport, *A Table of Green Fields: Ten Stories* (New York: New Directions, 1993) and *The Death of Picasso: New & Selected Writing* (Washington, D.C.: Shoemaker & Hoard, 2003).

<sup>67</sup> Mason, p.91.

<sup>68</sup> Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872), the most prominent Danish intellectual of the nineteenth century, is labelled 'The Father of Danish Folk Schools' (*folkelig højskole*), a humanist educational system designed to foster the self-actualisation of the students. See Steven M. Borish, *The Land of the Living: The Danish Folk High Schools and Denmark's Non-Violent Path to Modernization* (Nevada City, California: Blue Dolphin, 1991).

<sup>69</sup> Mason, p.91.

<sup>70</sup> James R. Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p.197.

<sup>71</sup> Mason, p.92.

<sup>72</sup> John Keats, '[This Living Hand, Now Warm and Capable]', lines 1-2, in Elizabeth Cook, ed., *John Keats* (Oxford Authors series) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.331.

<sup>73</sup> This is a reference to the still-potent, antipodal perspectives on John Keats's poem. See Earl R. Wasserman, 'The Eve of St. Agnes', in *The Finer Tone: Keats's Major Poems* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1957), pp.84-138; Jack Stillinger, 'The Hoodwinking of Madeline: Skepticism in "The Eve of St. Agnes"', in *The Hoodwinking of Madeline' and Other Essays on Keats's Poems* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), pp.67-94; Jack Stillinger, *Reading 'The Eve of St. Agnes': The Multiples of Complex Literary Transaction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>74</sup> Letter to Reggie Turner, 21 June 1897, in Rupert Hart-Davis, ed., *The Letters of Oscar Wilde* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1962), p.616.

<sup>75</sup> Sylvia Townsend Warner, *T. H. White: A Biography* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), pp.277-82, reprinted in Kincaid, *Child-Loving*, pp.205-06.

<sup>76</sup> Mason, p.92.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p.91. Charles Fourier, the French social philosopher, hoped to reorganise society into a Utopia where individuals could follow their natural inclinations, believing that, by allowing people to properly channel their natural passions rather than to strain within the 'jesses' and 'mind-forg'd manacles' promoted by existing 'civilisation', mankind would achieve social harmony and enlightenment.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p.92.

<sup>79</sup> For several incestuous moments between Mariana and her younger brother Franklin, see *Balloon*, pp.72; 77-78. For erotic insinuation involving Franklin spending the night alone with Hugo — 'Moreover, he and Hugo were going to sleep together, like buddies, no pyjamas' — see pp.95-96. (This last detail echoes the criminal charges in the current Michael Jackson trial, suggesting how this 'sleep-over' would be perceived by the American legal system and current American public opinion.)

<sup>80</sup> Mason, p.92.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p.88.

<sup>82</sup> The Uranian positionality presently flourishes in the works of modern Japanese cartoonists, particularly in *Shonen-ai* (or 'Boy-Love') *Manga* (see 'Appendix Forty-Five' for several examples). These cartoons often draw on the historic tradition of samurai warriors and their pederastic relationships with their pageboys. This flourishing in contemporary Japan — mostly through 'popular' Uranian writing like comic books — extends to an interest in the Victorian and Edwardian Uranians. In the letter that appears as 'Appendix Four', d'Arch Smith relates: 'I shall also mention your work to a Japanese Uranian collector who teaches at university'.

— Appendix One —



*Allegory with Venus and Cupid*  
Agnolo Bronzino  
Oil on wood, c. 1540-50  
(Bought in 1860)  
National Gallery of Art, London

— Appendix Two —



*The Musicians*

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio

Oil on canvas, 1595-96

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York





*Bacchus*

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio

Oil on canvas, c. 1596

Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence



*Amor Victorious*

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio

Oil on canvas, 1602

Gemäldegalerie, Berlin



*St John the Baptist*  
Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio  
Oil on canvas, 1601-02  
Pinacoteca Capitolina, Rome

— Appendix Three —

**‘Memoranda from Mr. P—’**

From *The Pearl: A Journal of Facetiae and Voluptuous Reading*,  
number 17 (November 1880), pages 598-601

Mr. Reddie used to call me Petro, as a short familiar name; but whilst he lodged with me at my house, Brecknock Crescent, Camden Town (N.B. — This is where I first was introduced to Mr. Reddie), I was continually afraid he would bring himself or both of us into serious trouble.

Once, I remember, we went to Margate for a few weeks at the seaside, and the landlady of the house where we stopped had a very good-looking son, a youth not over fifteen, if quite so old. Mr. Reddie was in love at once, but how to win the boy over was the difficulty.

‘Petro’, he would say, ‘I must fuck that boy or go out of my mind from frigging myself as I lie in bed and think of him. How can we manage it, old boy?’

I recommended patience, and an opportunity would be sure to turn up.

‘Treat him well, and let’s take him out for a bathe or a walk with us whenever he will go’, I said.

My advice was taken. Young Frank was soon quite at home in our rooms and evidently pleased at being made such a favourite by the lodgers, who were always treating him to cakes, wine or fruit.

We took several promenades with him as companion, and in a few days he also regularly accompanied us and shared the same machine with us when we bathed.

How we joked him about his little doodle, asked him if it would stand stiff and about boys playing with each other’s cocks at school. This was of course done very carefully and gradually, and we began to think him discreet enough as he had often assured us that he told no tales out of school, when we gave him shillings or half-crowns.

[At this point in the story, after playing voyeur through a peephole whilst the landlady, Mrs. Glover, masturbates, the narrator ‘Petro’ enters her room and her vagina unannounced. After initially protesting, the landlady gives in to this near-rape scenario. They then begin to sleep with each other every night, the narrator noting that this ‘liaison quite blinded her to our intentions regarding Master Frank’.]

We soon proceeded to all sorts of indecencies with the youth. Mr. Reddie and myself would compare the immense difference in size of our pricks before him in the bathing-machine (Reddie’s was a very small one, not five inches). We asked him to feel and judge for himself. The very touch of his delicate soft youthful hand made the seed shoot from me, which you may be sure immensely surprise [*sic*] the lad, and made him blush scarlet, so that we were afraid of having gone too far.

Another morning Mr. Reddie gamahuched him till he spent in his mouth and seemed to enjoy the sucking, after which we handled each other’s pricks and he amused himself with them, until we emitted our juice, mine spurting all over his belly as he stood in front of me. Then we went into the sea to refresh ourselves and afterwards made him a

present of half a sovereign, which his innocent mother, I believe, thought was only a delicate way of pleasing herself.

A day or two after this, Mr. Reddie pretended to be obliged to return to town for two or three days and we easily persuaded Mrs. Glover to allow Frank to go with us, and I promised to show him all the sights, while Mr. Reddie was attending to his business; this she also took as another kindness to herself and we started on our journey.

We took apartments in town at the house of a Mrs. Anderson (an old friend of Mr. Reddie's where he was always safe to do as he pleased). They consisted of a sitting-room and bedroom adjoining, the latter with two beds in it so that Frank had to sleep with either one of us.

Then we showed him a fine collection of coloured [photographic] plates of boys and girls, boys with boys or men, etc., some of the latter plainly showing they had got their cocks in their partners' bottoms.

'You'll let him do it to you, Petro, won't you?' appealed Mr. Reddie as he whispered in ecstasy: 'I shall soon be landed now!'

There was no object[ion, *sic*] on my part; his little cock couldn't hurt me. Besides, I had a great fancy for it at the moment, and told him he must put his arms around my waist and handle my cock and make it come.

Frank was quite pleased to try. His youthful affair was quite stiff and hard at the idea of having a man.

We threw off everything and I knelt down on all fours on the hearth-rug. Then, Mr. Reddie guided Frank's prick to my arse-hole and he soon wriggled it in whilst his hand clasped and friggged my big cock in front. It was so extraordinarily exciting to my ideas that I spent at once, and clasped one of my hands round each of his wrists to make him frig quicker; also to secure him in case he flinched from Reddie's assault.

My friend had already got a finger well greased with cold cream up Frank's fundament which the boy seemed to enjoy rather than not, as I might judge by the increasing activity of his little prick in my arse.

'Now, Frank', said Mr. Reddie, 'you will let me try to have you, won't you, you dear boy? It won't hurt'.

I had previously taken a looking-glass from the dressing-table and placed it on the floor, so I could see every motion of both of my companions. With one hand Reggie was caressing the cock and balls of the boy, as he fucked my bottom, whilst his right hand presents his prick to the tight little pink arse-hole which kept bobbling towards him.

Frank whined a little at the attack; but Reddie being small, as I have said, had no difficulty in effectually getting into him. How his face flushed and his eyes sparkled with delight as he almost screamed out: 'I'm in, oh, delicious! I'm landed at last, Petro, my dear fellow! I'm coming — I can't stop!'

This made me come again and I also felt Frank spend at the same moment. We kept our places and had another splendid bottom-fuck before separating.

My prick was too big to get into either of my companions; but I loved to have the boy fuck me, and frig me whilst Reddie had him.

The very thought of that adventure makes my old pego stand at any moment.

— Appendix Four —

61a St. John's Wood High Street  
London NW8 7SH

14 October 2001

Dear Mr Kaylor:

Thank you very much for your letter and for your fascinating article on Hopkins. I think you have treated the Uranian motif most carefully and I am in thorough agreement with your footnote 18. The gay scholars have completely ignored the facts and turned the writings to their advantage.

'Uranian' is now synonymous with 'gay' which, to avoid just such a conflation, is the reason I (historically incorrectly) labelled them 'Uranian.' Never mind. The other myth that has got about is that 'earnest' was a code-word for 'gay' when all I said was that Wilde and Nicholson used the same pun on a name. Ah, these academics (yourself excluded and Jim Kincaid who talks admirable sense).

Now then: alas, I sold my Uranian collection years ago (funny Bertha should have turned up in L.A.). I know of two or three private collections but I don't know whether they would allow - or would have the facility - for copying. I'm going to talk to a friend in America about the university libraries over there although I know that when I was writing Earnest I was amazed at how pitiful the U.S. holdings were. Surely Bodley will allow you to copy books as opposed to MSS? I know B.L. is getting very difficult about book-copying. Anyhow I shall write again when I've found out more and I shall also mention your work to a Japanese Uranian collector who teaches at university and might be able to arrange copying facilities there. I wanted, though, to write and acknowledge your letter and to let you know I am giving it some thought.

There are of course a few reprinted texts: Stenbock is just about to appear (collected poems) and there was a silly series put out by Gay Men's Press

of Nicholson, Bradford and such; and a bookseller, Noel Lloyd, did a selection of poems from The Spirit Lamp and a couple of other pamphlets. But nobody's done a big fat decent anthology or, so far as I know, caught up with any authors I might have missed. But you must not be discouraged because I'm sure that you will make an excellent job of whatever Uranian angle you end up by tackling.

It's fair to say, of course, that at the time they were writing (I think I made the point in Earnest) there was no distinction made between the homo. and the uranian (except of course, like Rolfe to Fox in the Venice Letters to express surprise that such a stimulus could be found gratifying) and in psychological medicine all inverts were lumped together (unless the age group fell drastically). Today as you say there ~~is~~ <sup>are</sup> only expressions of horror. Almost as bad as smoking, another American-born hysteria.

I'm just back from Hereford, very very near St Winefride's well. My lady-friend who was driving (I can't drive) didn't have the time to take me over. I'd love to have seen Corvo's banners which are still extant. He must have been a bit of a pest. I often think how lucky I am neither he nor William Beckford (we need a decent life of him as well) are still alive and on the telephone, Rolfe on the scrounge and Beckford grumbling about the condition of the books I've just sold him.

I'll be in touch again.

Sincerely

Tinsley J.A. — u

— Appendix Five —



**Digby Dolben**



**Edmund Gosse**



**G. M. Hopkins, SJ**



**Henry James**



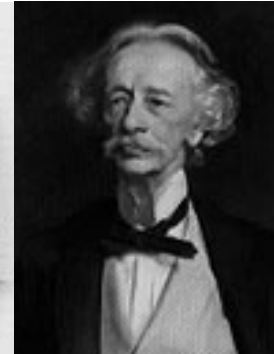
**William Johnson  
(later Cory)**



**Benjamin Jowett**



**Walter Pater**



**Coventry Patmore**



**Frederick Rolfe  
(Baron Corvo)**



**Simeon Solomon**



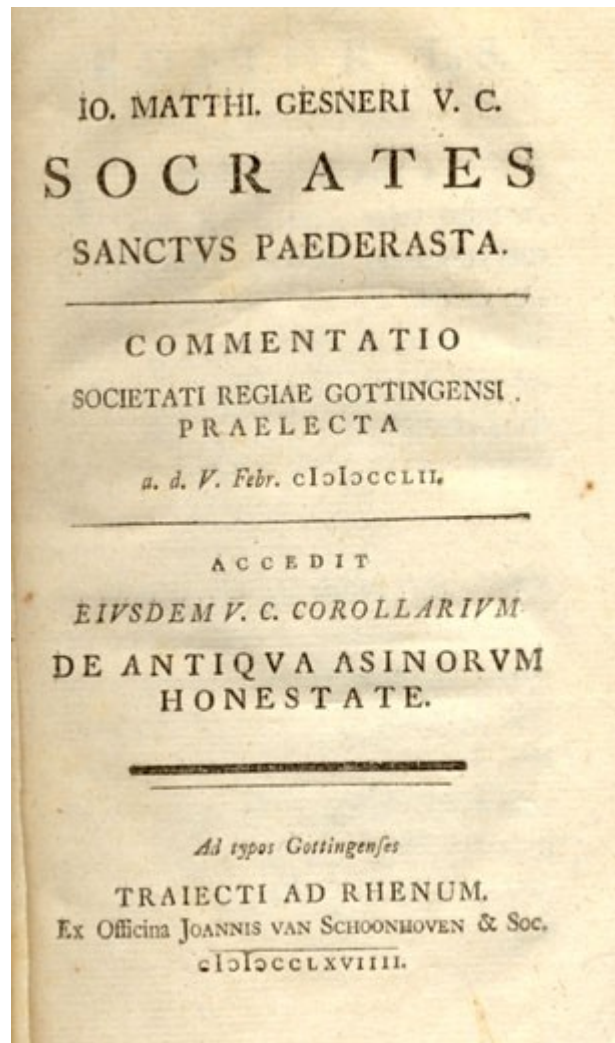
**J. A. Symonds**



**Oscar Wilde**



— Appendix Six —



***Socrates Sanctus Paederasta***  
***(Socrates: The Holy Pederast)***  
by Johann Matthias Gesner, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn  
(Utrecht: Joannis van Schoonhoven, 1769)

Voltaire, feigning shock, repeatedly quoted its title in the 'Amour Socratique' section of his *Philosophical Dictionary*. 'A rare and curious dissertation on whether or not Socrates was a homosexual' (entry for Item 42 in the catalogue of Timothy d'Arch Smith's Michael deHartington Sale)



Gesner's volume includes this 1602 engraving of Socrates attending a banquet, drawn after an ancient relief excavated in Rome

— Appendix Seven —



**The Warren Cup**

Side A: Man and Youth Coupling While Boy Peeks

Silver, 30 BCE – 20 CE

Found in Asia Minor

(Originally in the collection of Edward Perry Warren)

British Museum, London



**The Warren Cup**

Side B: Man and Youth Coupling



**The Warren Cup**

Side A: Detail of Boy Peeking

— Appendix Eight —



**A Man and Boy Preparing for Inter-crural Coupling**

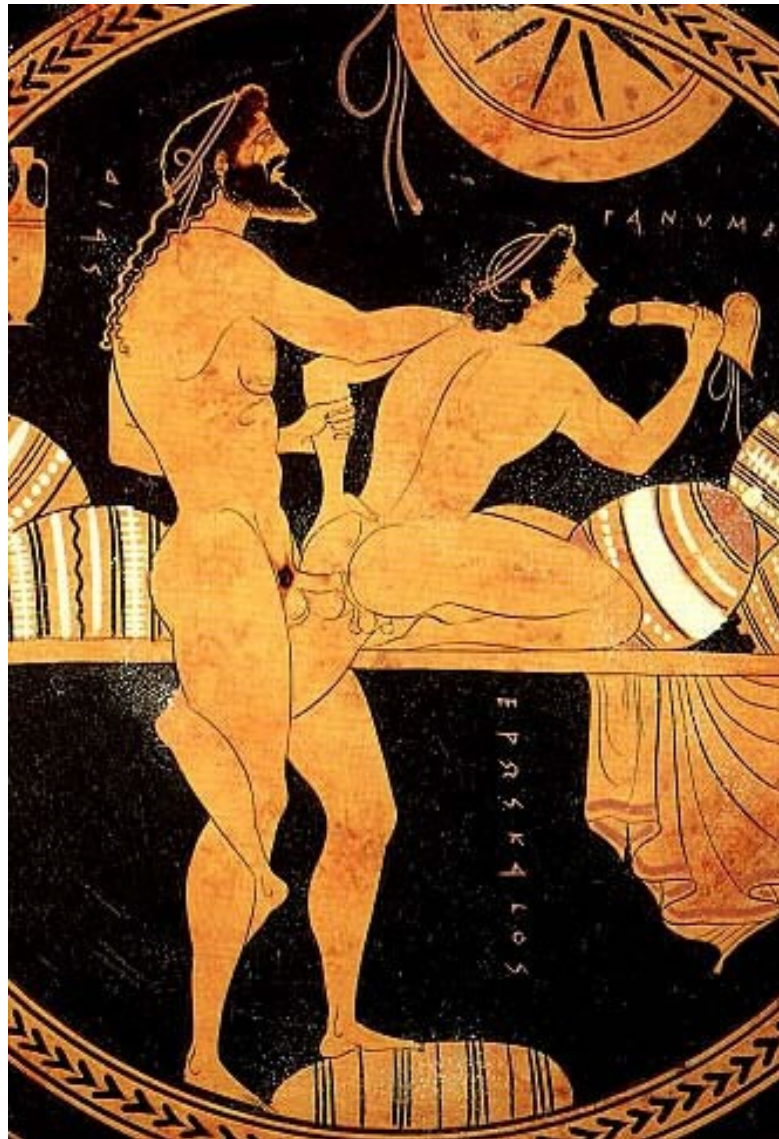
Attic red-figure plate, 530-430 BCE

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Curiously, inter-crural intercourse is dubbed colloquially, 'Oxford style'



**Zeus Courting Ganymede**  
Red-figure kylix (drinking cup), c. 450 BCE  
Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Ferrara



**A Scene of Anal Intercourse**  
Red-figure kylix (drinking cup), c. 450 BCE  
[Location unknown]



— Appendix Nine —



*The Death of Orpheus*  
Albrecht Dürer  
Engraving, 1494  
Kunsthalle, Hamburg

The inscription on the small banner translates into ‘Orpheus, the First Pederast’

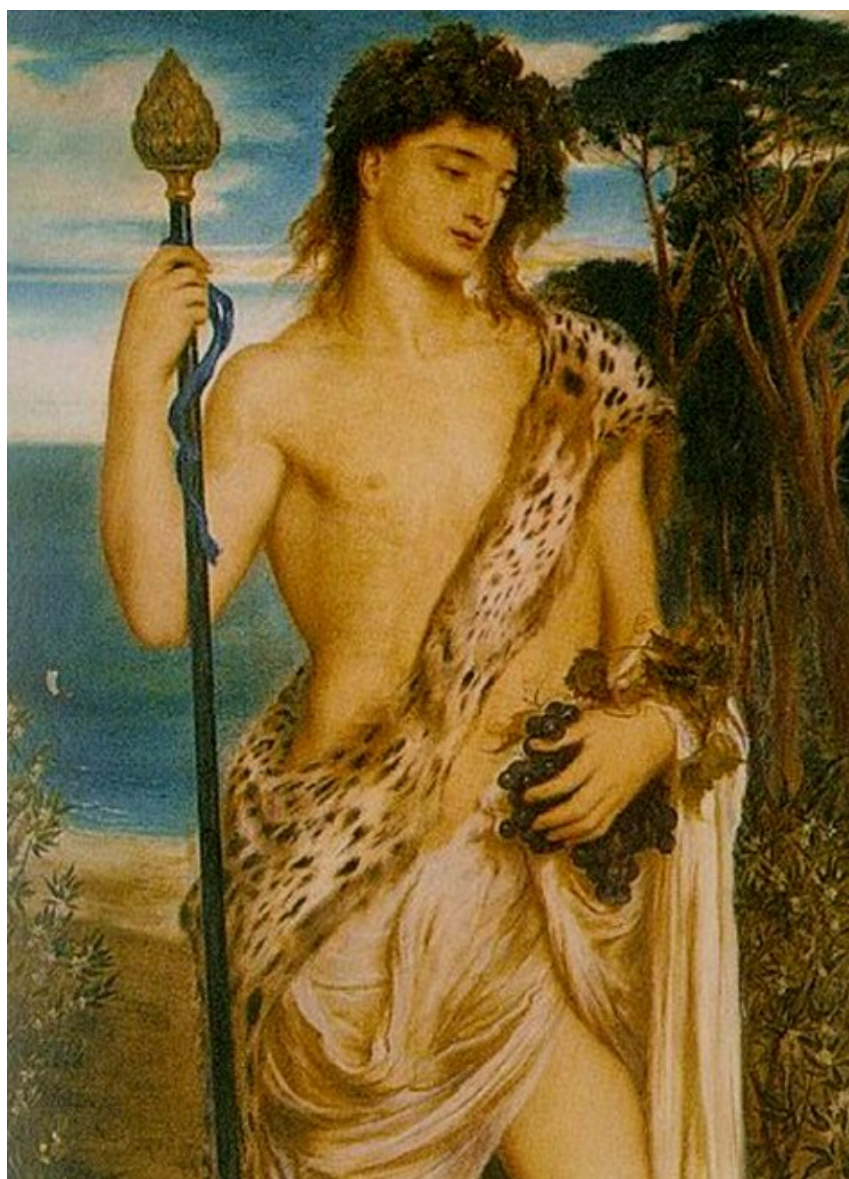
— Appendix Ten —

List of Uranian Poets

(derived from Timothy d'Arch Smith's *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930*)

Philip Gillespie Bainbrigge	Sydney Frederick McIllree Lomer (1880-1926)
John Leslie Barford (1886-1934?)	Edmund St Gascoigne Mackie (b. 1867)
Edwin Emmanuel Bradford (1860-1944)	Francis Edwin Murray (1854-1932)
Reginald Baliol Brett, Viscount Esher (1852-1930)	John Gambriel Francis Nicholson (1866-1931)
Horatio Robert Forbes Brown (1854-1926)	Percy Lancelot Osborn
Edward Carpenter (1844-1929)	Fernando Antonio Nogueira Pessoa (1888-1935)
Ralph Nicholas Chubb (1892-1960)	Marc-André Raffalovich (1864-1934)
George Douglas Howard Cole (1889-1959)	Charles Edward Sayle (1864-1924)
Samuel Elsworth Cottam (1863-1945?)	Arnold W. Smith
Lord Alfred Bruce Douglas (1870-1945)	Lord Henry Richard Charles Somerset
'Edmund Edwinson' (perhaps Reginald Bancroft Cook, b. 1887)	Alan Stanley
George Gabriel Scott Gillett (b. 1873)	Stanislaus Eric, Count Stenbock (1860-95)
George Cecil Ives (1867-1950)	John Moray Stuart-Young (1881-1939)
Charles Philip Castle Kains Jackson (1857-1933)	Alphonsus Joseph-Mary Augustus Montague Summers (1880-1948)
Edward Frank Willis James	John Addington Symonds (1840-93)
Edmund John (1883-1917)	Richard Thoma
William Johnson ( <i>later</i> Cory, 1823-92)	Edward Perry Warren (1860-1928)
Edward Cracroft Lefroy (1855-91)	Fabian Strachan Woodley (1888-1957)
Arthur Linton	Cuthbert Wright
E. Knox	

— Appendix Eleven —



*Bacchus*

Simeon Solomon

Watercolour and bodycolour, 1866

Private collection

— Appendix Twelve —

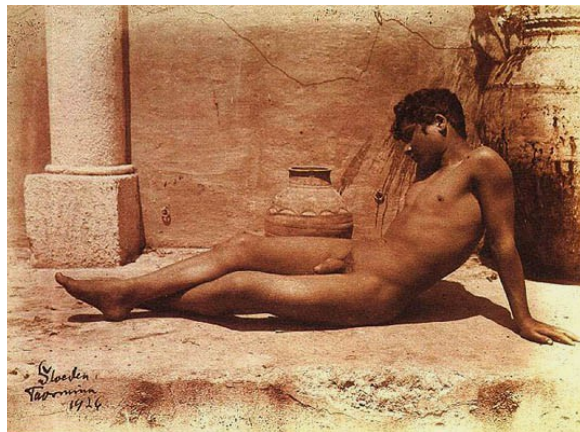
(a)



(b)



(c)

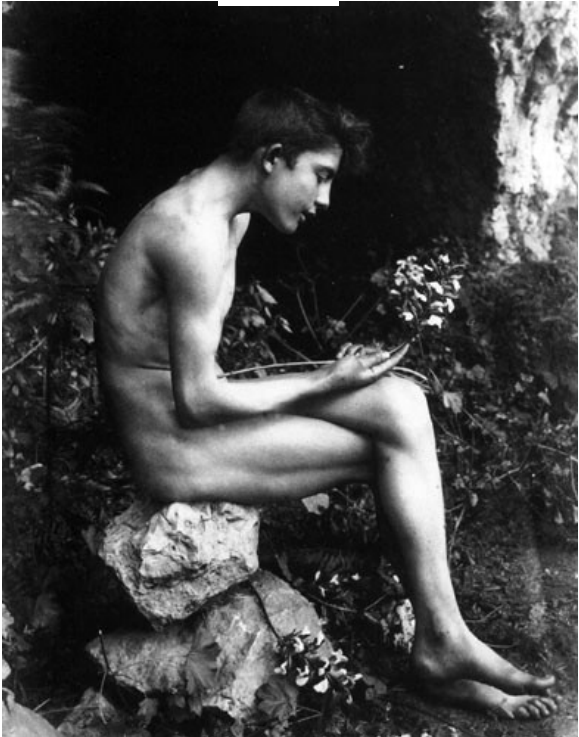


**Various photographs made in Taormina, Sicily  
by Wilhelm von Gloeden**  
[Photographic details are provided at the end of this appendix]\*

(d)



(e)



(f)



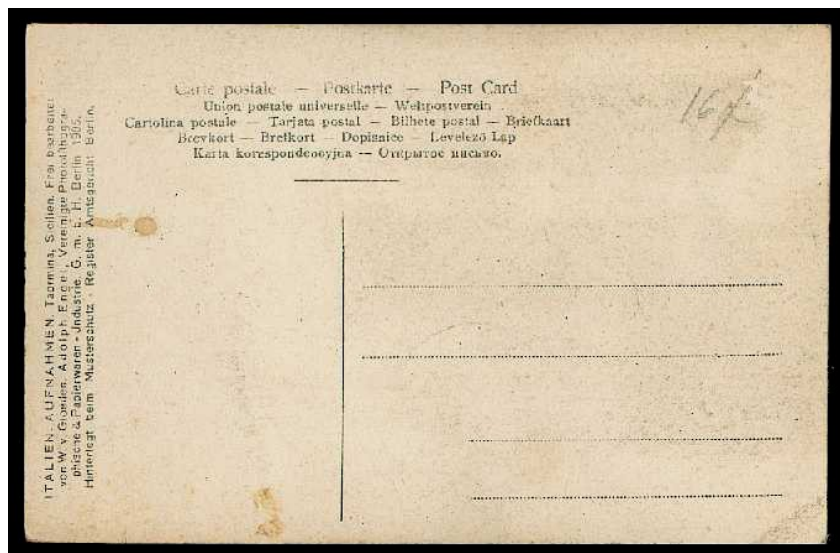
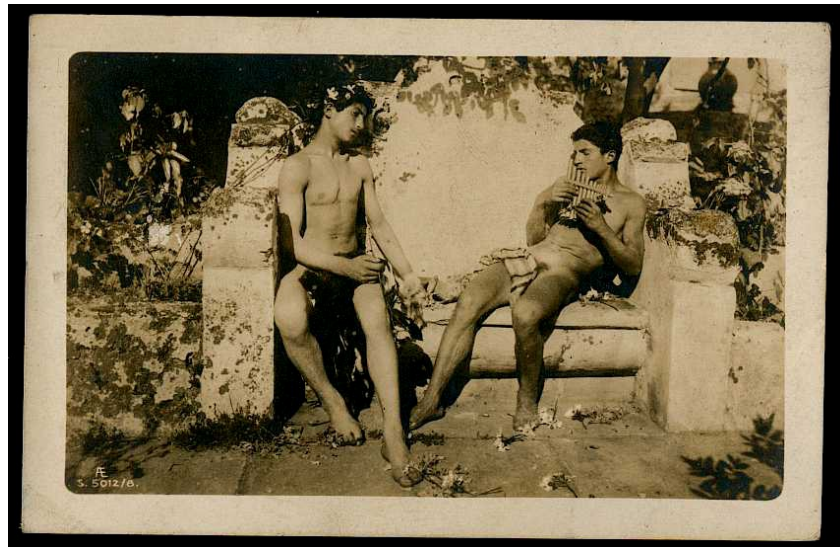
(g)



(h)



(i)



(j)

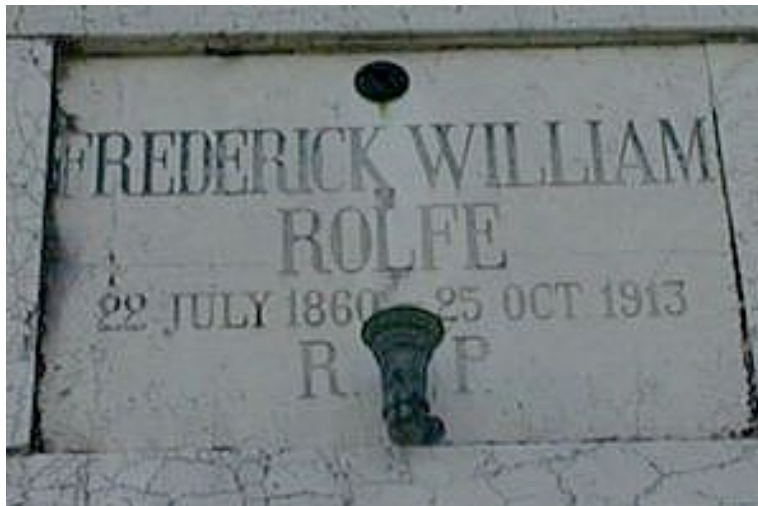


## Photographic Details

- ( a ) *Zwei Jungen auf einer Bank*  
c. 1900; [Albumen print]; Private collection
- ( b ) *Akt*  
c. 1900; Colodion print; Author's collection
- ( c ) *Junge vor einer Vase*  
c. 1900; [Albumen print?]; Sammlung Dr Hans Schickedanz, Frankfurt
- ( d ) *Jugendlicher mit Blumenkranz*  
c. 1900; Albumen print; Private collection
- ( e ) *Junge auf zwei Steinen sitzend*  
c. 1900; Albumen print; Sammlung Robert Lebeck, Hamburg
- ( f ) *Sich umarmende Jungen*  
c. 1900; Albumen print; Private collection
- ( g ) *Knabe mit Lilien*  
c. 1895; Albumen print; Jack Woody, Twelvetreets Press, Santa Fe, California
- ( h ) *Akt*  
c. 1900; [Albumen print]; Author's collection
- ( i ) *Seite des Archiv und Bestellbuches um 1900*  
[Details unknown]
- ( j ) *Zwei Jungen auf einer Steinbank*  
Typical von Gloeden postcard, based on an original photograph — c. 1900;  
Albumen print; Officina Musae, Montréal

\* These details, accounting for at least one print of each photograph, were taken from Peter Weiermair, ed. with intro., *Wilhelm von Gloeden: Erotische Photographien* (Cologne: Taschen, 1993)

— Appendix Thirteen —



**Frederick Rolfe's Grave**  
Cimitero di San Michele, Venice

— Appendix Fourteen —



*A Venetian Bather*

Paul Peel

Oil on canvas, 1889

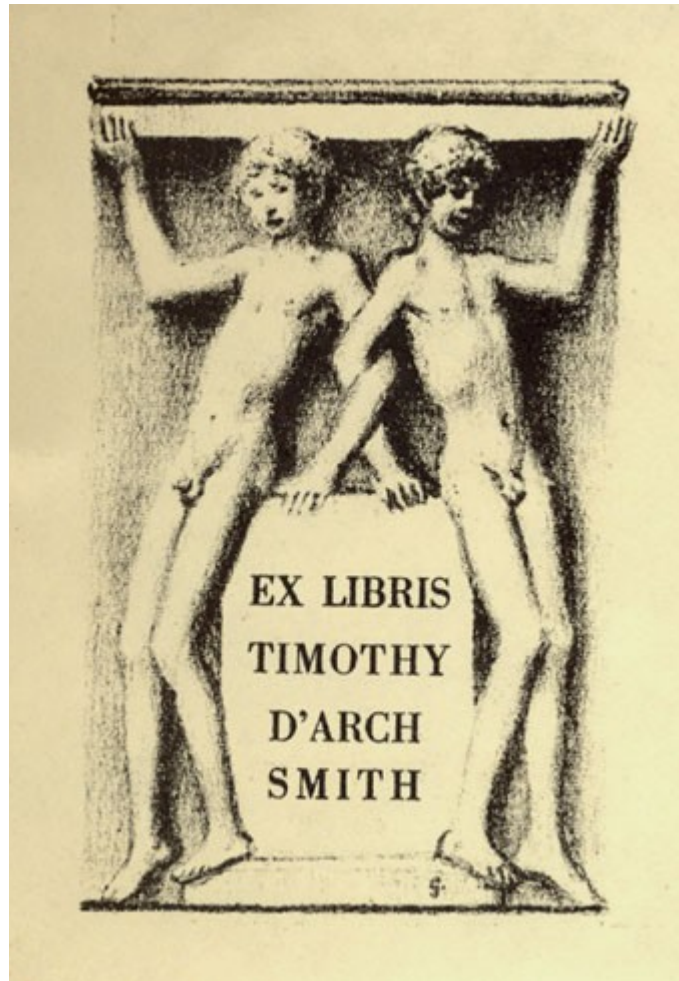
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

This was the first nude to be exhibited publicly in Canada.  
'Flesh is never flesh until you feel you can pinch it with your fingers' (Paul Peel)



**[A Boy]**  
Frederick Rolfe  
Photograph, [Date unknown]  
[Location unknown]

— Appendix Fifteen —

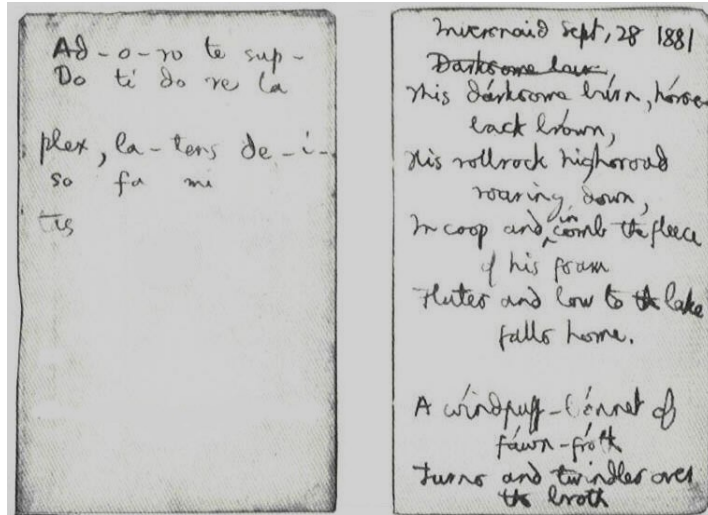


**Symbol used by Marc-André Raffalovich  
as a bookplate for his Uranian volumes**

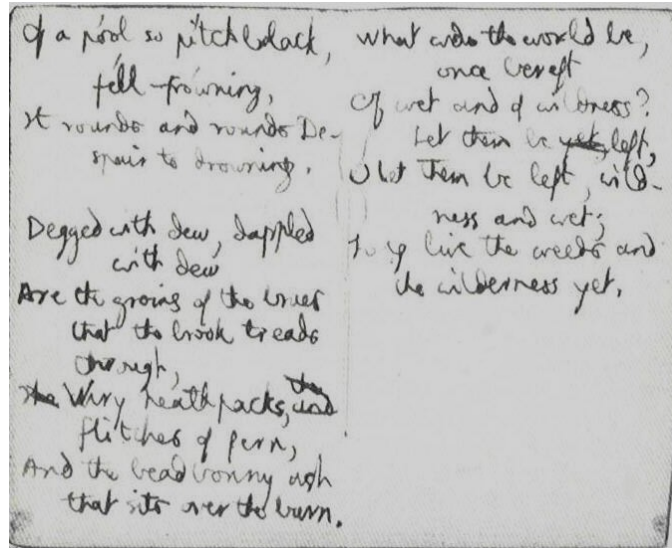
— Appendix Sixteen —

Manuscript for 'Inversnaid' (*Facsimiles II*, plate 397)

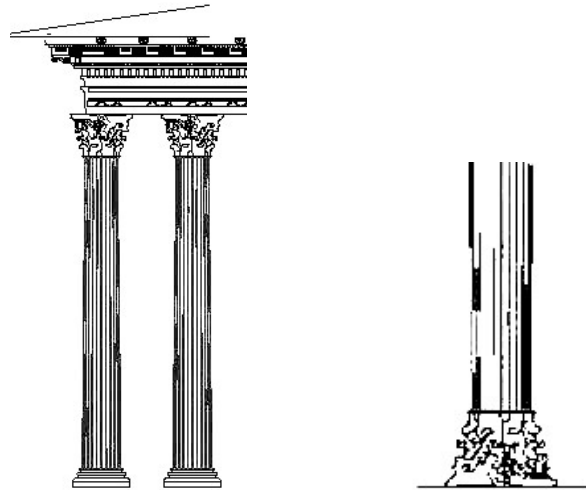
H.ii.16<sup>v</sup>, 17<sup>r</sup>



H.ii.17<sup>v</sup>, 18<sup>r</sup>



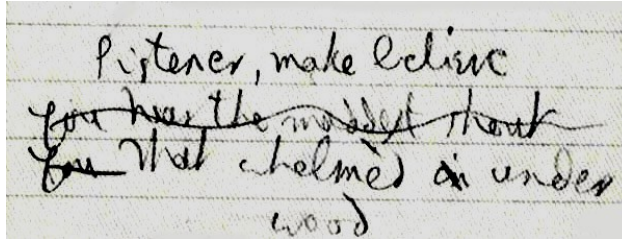
— b —



— c —

Manuscripts for 'Epithalamion' (*Facsimiles II*, plates 494-502)

MS 1, H.ii.14<sup>r</sup>

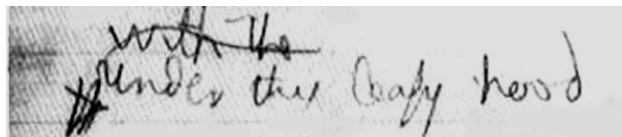


Listener, make believe

~~You~~ hear the maddest shout

~~You~~ That whelmèd in under wood

MS 1, H.ii.14<sup>v</sup>

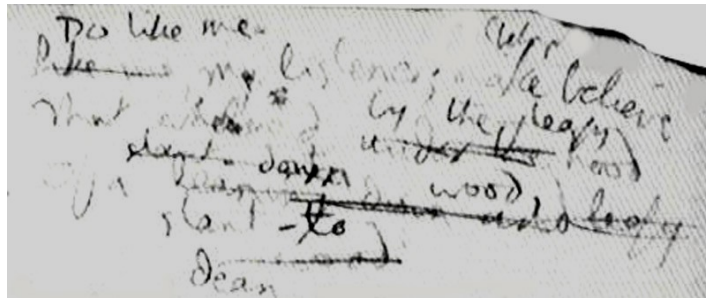


~~With the~~

Under this leafy hood

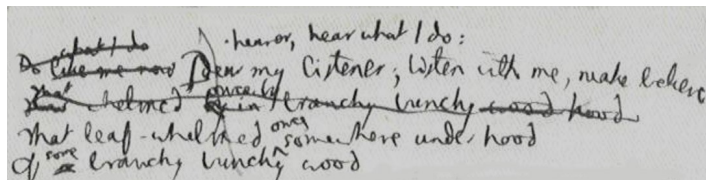


MS 2, H.i.50<sup>r</sup>



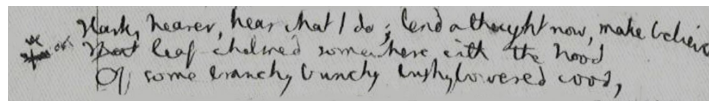
Do like me,  
~~Like me,~~ my listener; make believe  
 That whelmed <sup>by the leafy</sup> ~~under the~~ hood  
<sup>slant-to</sup>  
~~slant-down~~ wood  
<sup>lean-to</sup>  
~~Of a~~ leaning down and leafy wood

MS 3, H.ii.11<sup>r</sup>



what I do                      hearer, hear what I do:  
 Do ~~like me now~~, dear my listener; listen with me, make believe  
 That                      once by  
                                  <sup>in</sup>                      hood  
 How whelmed            by            branchy bunchy wood  
                                  <sup>once</sup>  
 That leaf-whelmed            somewhere under hood  
                                  <sup>some</sup>  
 Of a branchy bunchy wood,

MS 3, H.ii.11<sup>r</sup> (continued)

A photograph of a handwritten manuscript snippet on aged paper. The text is written in a cursive hand and reads: "Hark, hearer, hear what I do; lend a thought now, make believe  
That leaf-whelmed somewhere with the hood  
Of some branchy bunchy bushy-bowered wood,". There are some small annotations in the left margin, including "we" and "of".

Hark, hearer, hear what I do; lend a thought now, make believe

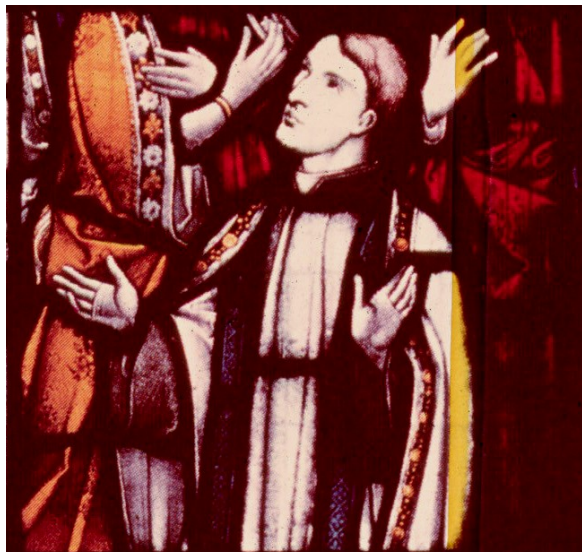
We are

~~You~~

~~That~~ leaf-whelmed somewhere with the hood

Of some branchy bunchy bushy-bowered wood,

— Appendix Seventeen —



**Hopkins Memorial Window**  
St Bartholomew's Church,  
Haslemere, Surrey

(This the only window in the Church  
of England depicting a Jesuit priest)



**Hopkins Memorial**  
 Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey  
 London

— Appendix Eighteen —

**Epithalamion**

Hark, hearer, hear what I do; lend a thought now, make believe  
We are leaf-whelmed somewhere with the hood  
Of some branchy bunchy bushybowered wood,  
Southern dean or Lancashire clough or Devon cleave,  
That leans along the loins of hills, where a candycoloured, where a gluegold-brown  
Marbled river, boisterously beautiful, between  
Roots and rocks is danced and dandled, all in froth and waterblowballs, down.  
We are there, when we hear a shout  
That the hanging honeysuck, the dogeared hazels in the cover  
Makes dither, makes hover  
And the riot of a rout  
Of, it must be, boys from the town  
Bathing: it is summer's sovereign good.

By there comes a listless stranger: beckoned by the noise  
He drops towards the river: unseen  
Sees the bevy of them, how the boys  
With dare and with downdolfinry and bellbright bodies huddling out,  
Are earthworld, airworld, waterworld thorough hurled, all by turn and turn about.

This garland of their gambol flashes in his breast  
Into such a sudden zest  
Of summertime joys  
That he hies to a pool neighbouring; sees it is the best  
There; sweetest, freshest, shadowiest;  
Fairyland; silk-beech, scrolled ash, packed sycamore, wild wychelm, hornbeam  
fretty overstood  
By. Rafts and rafts of flake-leaves light, dealt so, painted on the air,  
Hang as still as hawk or hawkmoth, as the stars or as the angels there,  
Like the thing that never knew the earth, never off roots  
Rose. Here he feasts: lovely all is! Nó more: off with — down he dings  
His bleachèd both and woolwoven wear:  
Careless these in coloured wisp  
All lie tumbled-to; then with loop-locks  
Forward falling, forehead frowning, lips crisp  
Over fingerteasing task, his twiny boots  
Fast he opens, last he off wrings  
Till walk the world he can with bare his feet



— Appendix Nineteen —



*The Bathers*

Frederick Walker

Oil on canvas, 1865-67

Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight, near Liverpool

— Appendix Twenty —



*August Blue*  
Henry Scott Tuke  
Oil on canvas, 1893  
Tate Gallery, London





*The Bathers*  
Henry Scott Tuke  
Oil on canvas, 1885  
City Art Gallery, Leeds



**Study for *A Summer Morning***  
Henry Scott Tuke  
Oil on canvas, c. 1886-88  
Tuke Collection, Falmouth



*Ruby, Gold and Malachite*  
Henry Scott Tuke  
Oil on canvas, 1901  
Guildhall Art Gallery, London



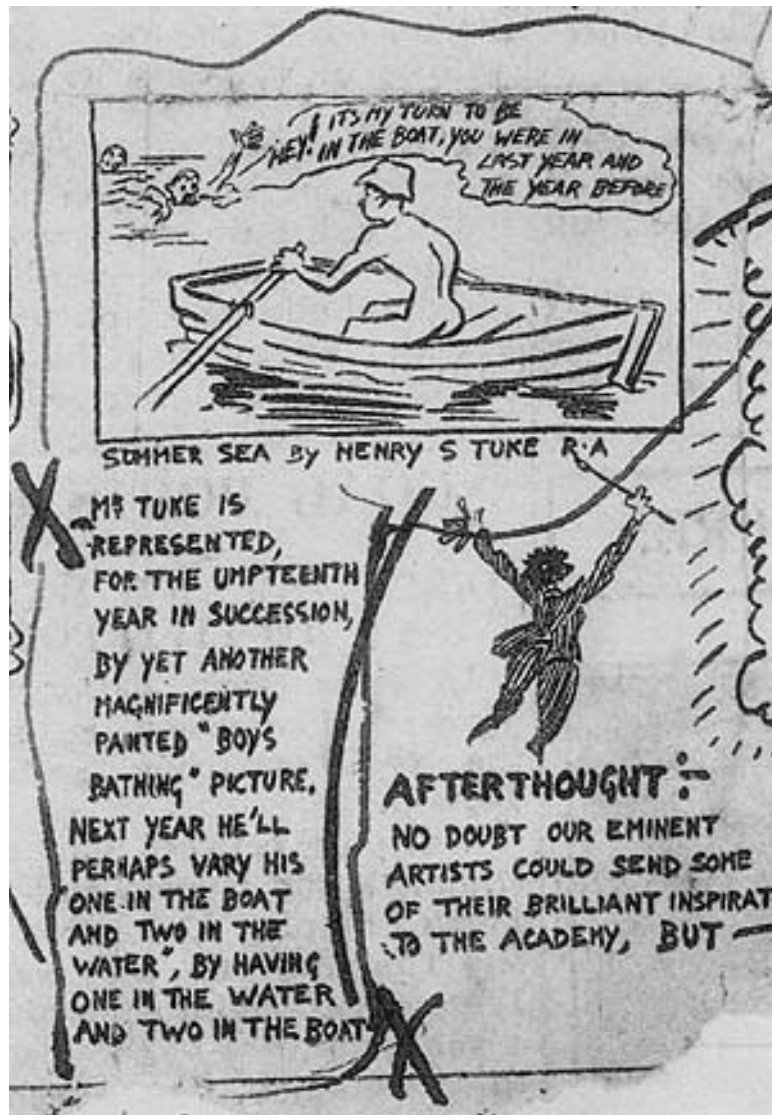
*Noonday Heat*  
Henry Scott Tuke  
Oil on canvas, 1902  
Tuke Collection, Falmouth



*Two Boys and a Dog*  
Henry Scott Tuke  
Watercolour, c. 1914  
Private collection



*Nude on the Rocks*  
Henry Scott Tuke  
Oil on board, c. 1917  
[Location unknown]



Detail from a cartoon, 'Burlington House Burlesqued' (concerning the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1924), from the *Liverpool Daily Courier*

— Appendix Twenty-One —



*Love Locked Out*  
Anna Lea Merritt  
Oil on canvas, 1889  
Tate Gallery, London

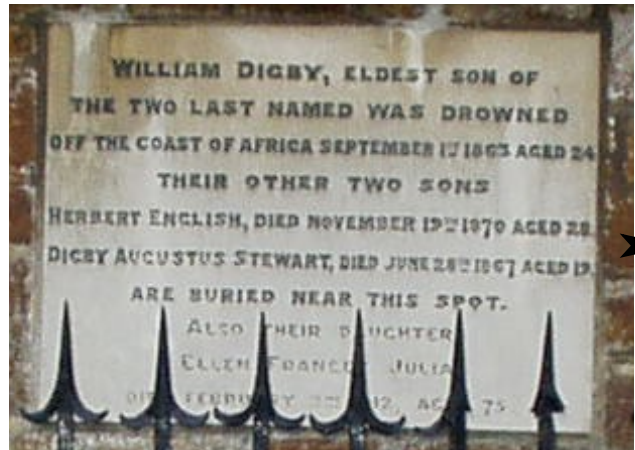


— Appendix Twenty-Two —



*Hylas and the Nymphs*  
John William Waterhouse  
Oil on canvas, 1896  
Manchester City Art Galleries, Manchester

— Appendix Twenty-Three —



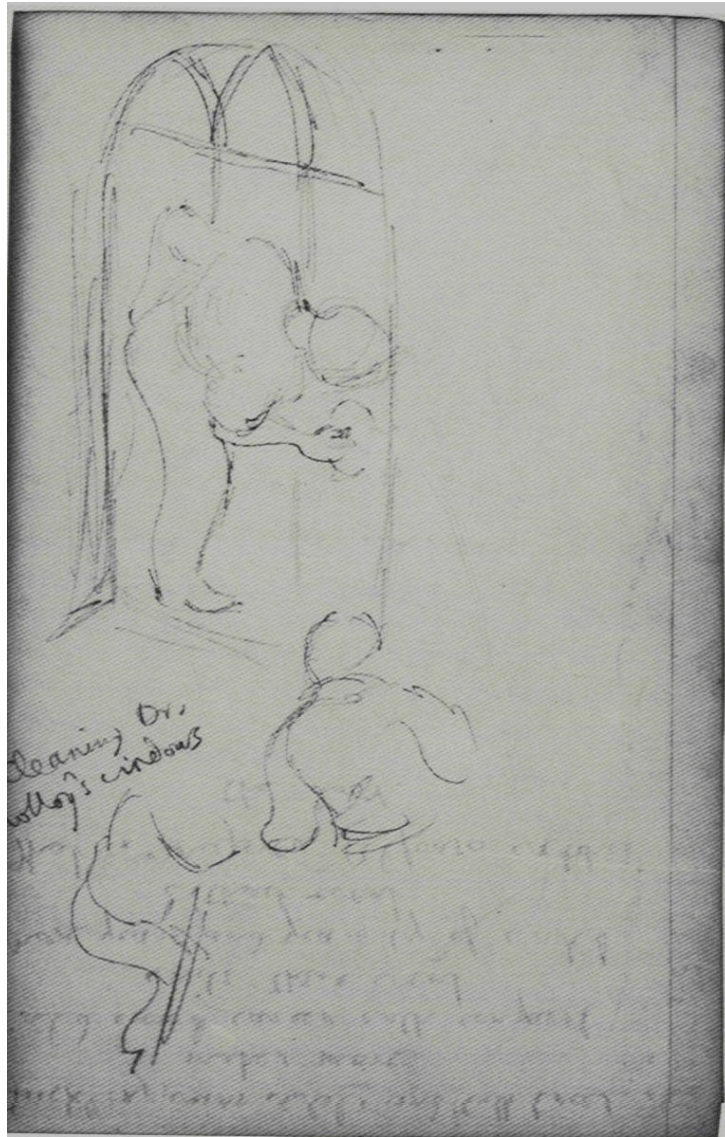
**Dolben Vault**  
St Mary the Virgin's Church  
Finedon, Northamptonshire

— Appendix Twenty-Four —



***[The Boys' Paradise]***  
Arthur Hopkins (1848-1930)  
[Oil on canvas], [Date unknown]  
[Location Unknown]

— Appendix Twenty-Five —



**'Cleaning Dr. Molloy's Windows'**  
Gerard Manley Hopkins  
Pencil sketch, undated [c. 1888]  
MS H.i.49<sup>v</sup> (*Facsimiles II*, plate 329)

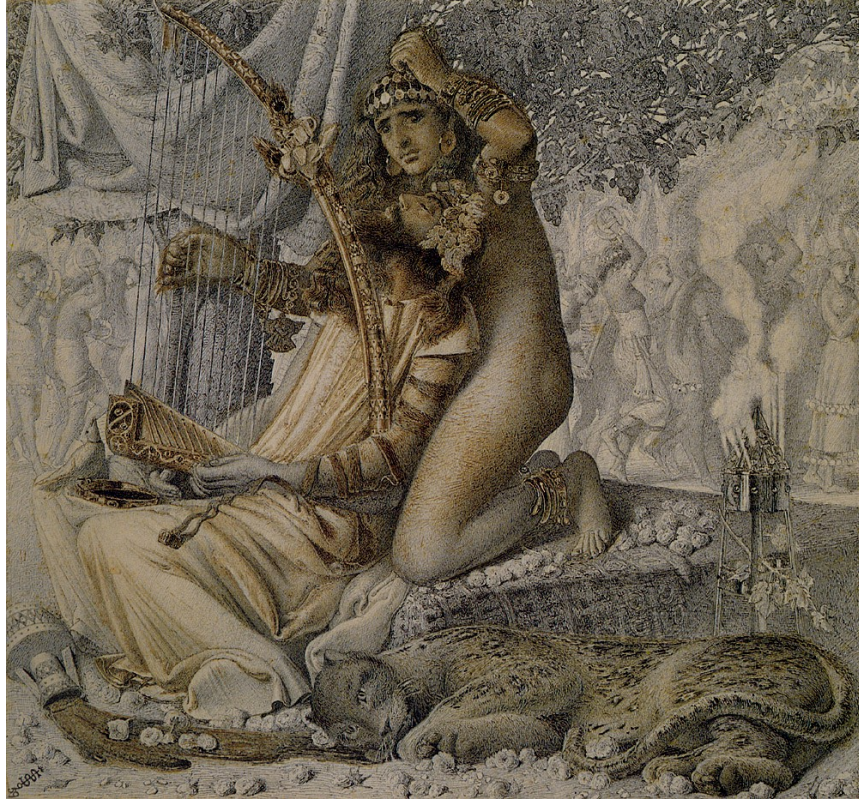
— Appendix Twenty-Six —

Leonard Green  
from  
W. Green  
56 Woodstock Road  
Oxford  
Christmas 1918.



Augusto:  
given to C.K-J.  
by J.A.S.  
& given to me  
by C.K-J.  
March 1919.

— Appendix Twenty-Seven —



*'Babylon Hath Been a Golden Cup'*

Simeon Solomon

Pen, with black and brown ink, over traces of pencil; 1859  
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham



*Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego Preserved  
from the Burning Fiery Furnace*

Simeon Solomon

Watercolour and bodycolour, 1863

Private collection



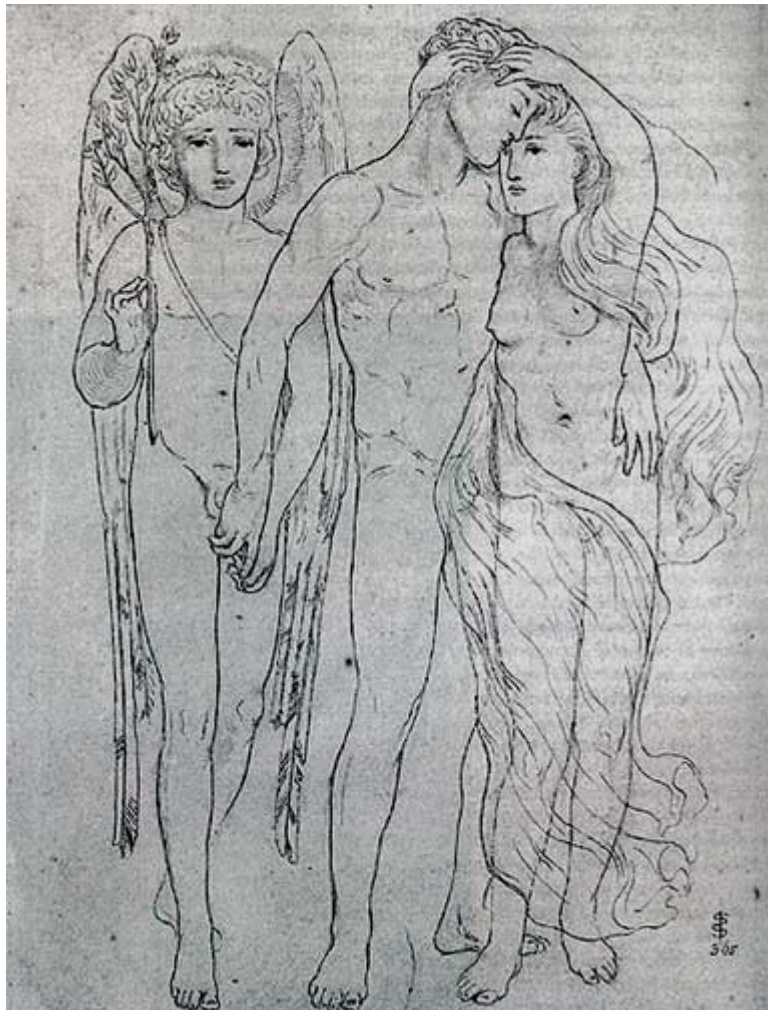
*Sappho and Erinna in a Garden at Mytilene*

Simeon Solomon  
Watercolour, 1864  
Tate Gallery, London





*Erinna Taken from Sappho*  
Simeon Solomon  
Pen and black ink on paper, 1865  
Private collection



*The Bride, Bridegroom, and Sad Love*  
Simeon Solomon  
Pencil on paper, 1865  
Victoria and Albert Museum, London



*Mors et Amor*

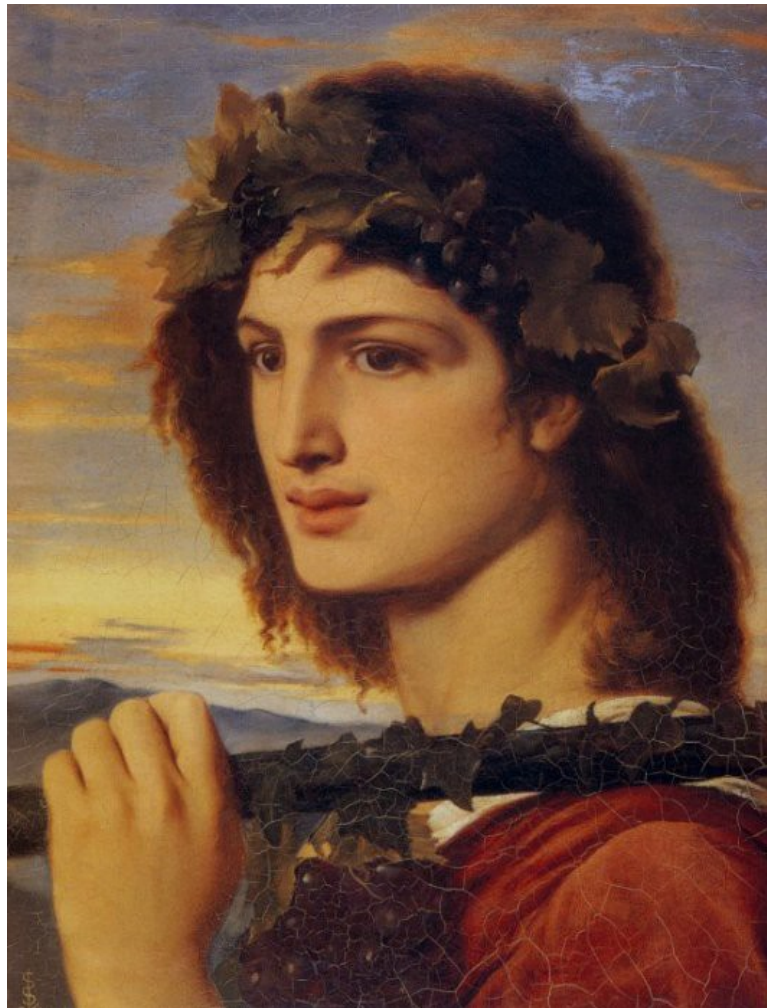
Simeon Solomon

Pen and black ink, red crayon, on paper; 1865

Private collection



*Love in Autumn*  
Simeon Solomon  
Oil on canvas, 1866  
Private collection



***Bacchus***

Simeon Solomon

Oil on wood panel, 1867

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham

— Appendix Twenty-Eight —



*Jonathan's Token to David*

Frederic, Lord Leighton

Oil on canvas, c. 1868

Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis

Joseph A. Kestner suggests that '*Daedalus and Icarus, Hit!* and even *Jonathan's Token to David* (despite its Hebraic subject) form a constellation of ideas of masculinity around the idea of the nude: Apollonian, ephebic, Aryan, phallogentric, heroizing, homoerotic' (p.255)



*Daedalus and Icarus*  
Frederic, Lord Leighton  
Oil on canvas, c. 1869  
Private collection



***The Daphnephoria, detail***

Frederic, Lord Leighton

Oil on canvas, 1874

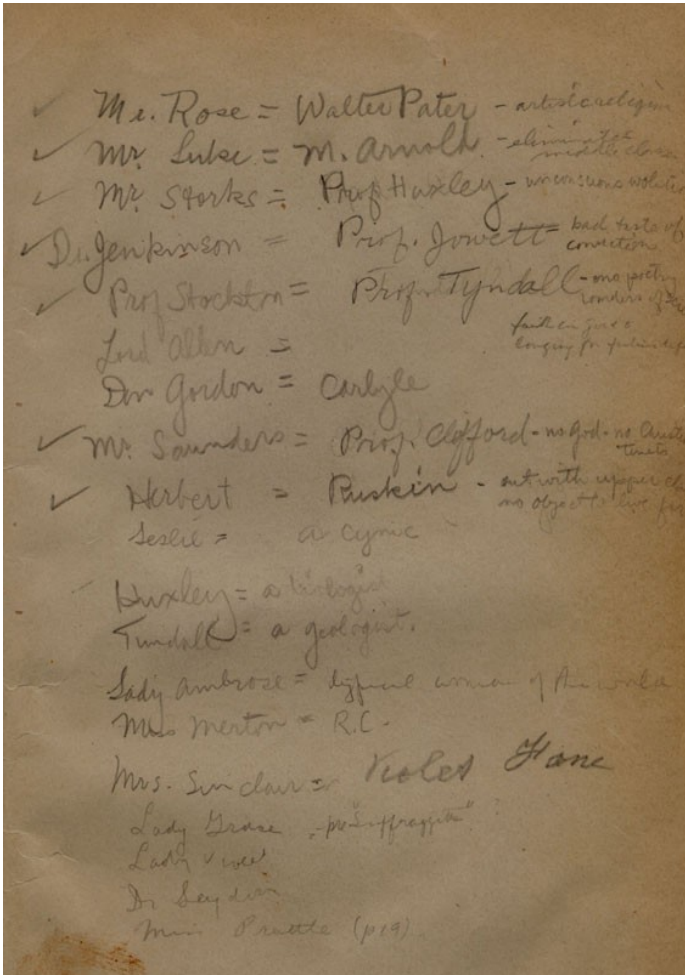
Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight, near Liverpool





*Hit!*  
Frederic, Lord Leighton  
Oil on canvas, 1893  
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

— Appendix Twenty-Nine —



Donald Gordon = Thomas Carlyle  
 Mr. Herbert = John Ruskin  
 Dr. Jenkinson = Benjamin Jowett  
 Otho Laurence = W. H. Mallock  
 Robert Leslie = [W. M. Hardinge]  
 Mr. Luke = Matthew Arnold  
 Mr. Rose = Walter Pater  
 Mr. Saunders = W. K. Clifford  
 Mrs. Sinclair = Violet Fane  
 Mr. Stockton = John Tyndall  
 Mr. Storks = Thomas Huxley

*La clef for*  
***The New Republic:***  
*or, Culture, Faith, and Philosophy in an English Country House*  
 by W. H. Mallock  
 (New York: Scribner and Welford, 1878)

— Appendix Thirty —



*Cupid Interceding with Zeus for Psyche*

Raphael Sanzio

Fresco, 1518-19

La Loggia di Amore e Psiche

Villa Farnesina alla Lungara, Rome



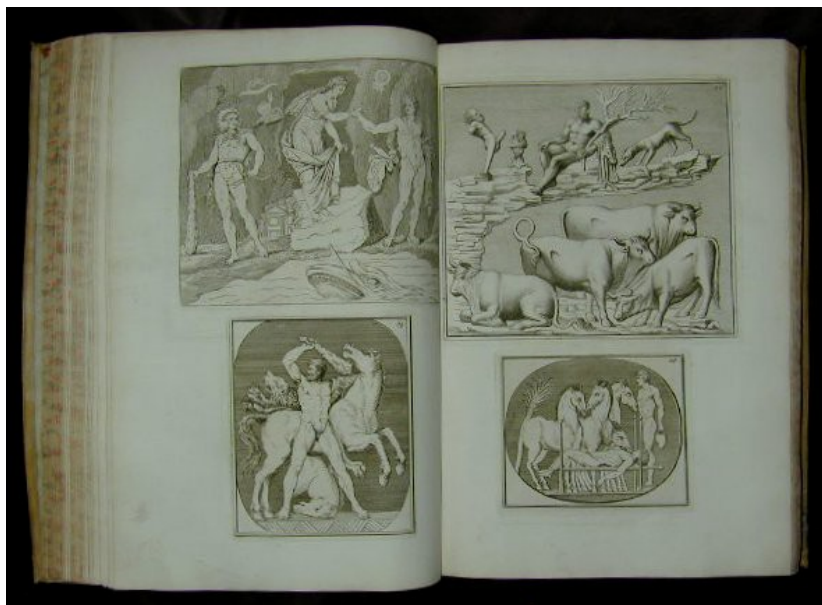
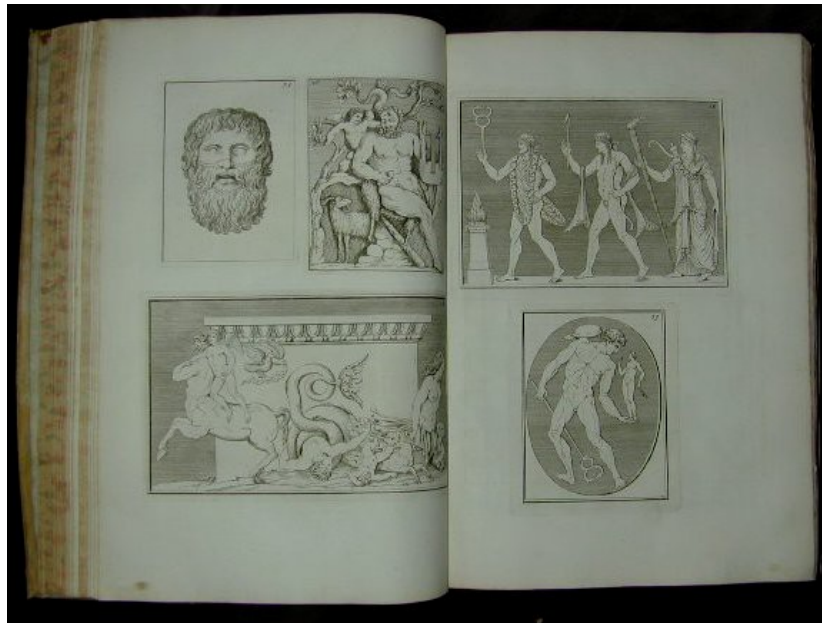
*Bow-Carving Cupid*  
Parmigianino (Francesco Mazzola)  
Oil on wood, c. 1533-34  
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

— Appendix Thirty-One —



*The Death of Chatterton*  
Henry Wallis  
Oil on canvas, 1856  
Tate Gallery, London

— Appendix Thirty-Two —



*Monumenti antichi inediti, spiegati ed illustrati*  
(*Unpublished Ancient Monuments, Explained and Illustrated*)

by Johann Joachim Winckelmann  
(Rome: Published by the author, 1767)

With 208 copper-plate engravings and numerous in-text illustrations and vignettes

— Appendix Thirty-Three —



*Socratic Love*

Artist unknown

Illustration for the essay *De Figuris Veneris* (1824)  
by Friedrich Karl Forberg (1770–1848)

The scroll in the lower right-hand corner reads,  
*Gnothi seauton*, Socrates' admonition to 'Know thyself'

— Appendix Thirty-Four —

THIS NUMBER CONTAINS

# The Picture of Dorian Gray.

By OSCAR WILDE.  
COMPLETE.

JULY, 1890

## LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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# THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY.

B. Y  
OSCAR WILDE

WARD LOCK & CO. AND  
LONDON & NEW YORK  
& MELBOURNE.

1891



— Appendix Thirty-Five —



**Roman sculptures of Antinoös (clockwise from top left):**  
Archaeological Museum of Olympia, Greece  
Ermitage, St Petersburg  
Sala Rotonda, Vatican  
Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome

— Appendix Thirty-Six —

**The name**

Francis Tumblety .....  
 (Bailed 16th November, 1888.)

**Date received into custody**

		Luke
Ditto ..	7th Nov.	committing
		deceit
		committing

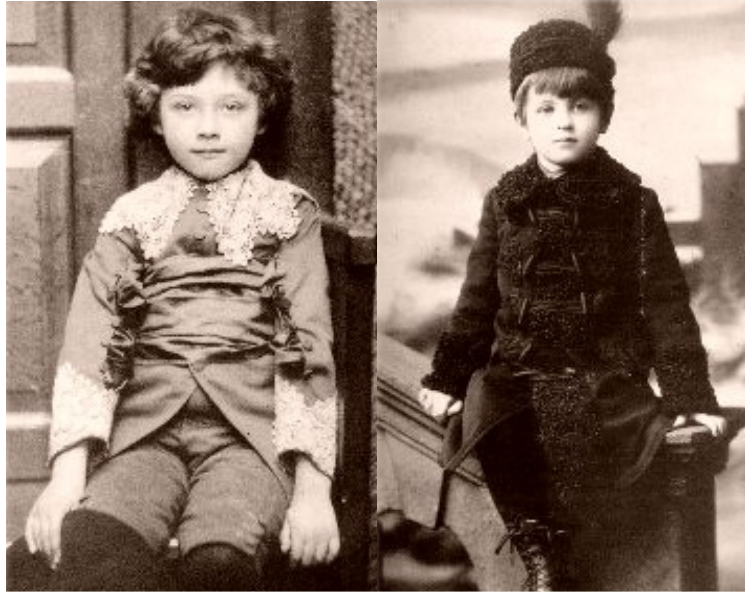
**Details of the charges**

committing an act of gross indecency with John Doughty.
committing an act of gross indecency with Arthur Brice.
committing an act of gross indecency with Albert Fisher.
committing an act of gross indecency with James Crowley.

**Marlborough Street Magistrates Court — Court record documents**

Francis Tumblety (1833-1903) was arrested on 7 November 1888 on charges of ‘gross indecency’ committed with four young men. Five days later, he was charged on suspicion of having committed the Whitechapel Murders. However, on 16 November, James L. Hannay, a magistrate of Marlborough Street Magistrates Court, released Tumblety on bail, and he almost immediately fled to the Continent

— Appendix Thirty-Seven —



**Cyril Wilde**

**Vyvyan Wilde**



— Appendix Thirty-Eight —

No. *84*.....

# *The Chameleon*

*'A Bazaar of Dangerous and Smiling Chances'*

(R. L. STEVENSON)

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LONDON: GAY AND BIRD  
5 CHANDOS STREET, STRAND

— Appendix Thirty-Nine —



*Bacchus*

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio

Oil on canvas, c. 1596

Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence



*Bacchus*, detail — Cup (*kylix*) being proffered



*Bacchus*, detail — Sash being undone



*Bacchus*, detail — Pomegranate bursting

— Appendix Forty —



*Alessandro Alberti with a Page*

Follower of Titian (Tiziano Vecellio)

Oil on canvas, mid 16<sup>th</sup> century

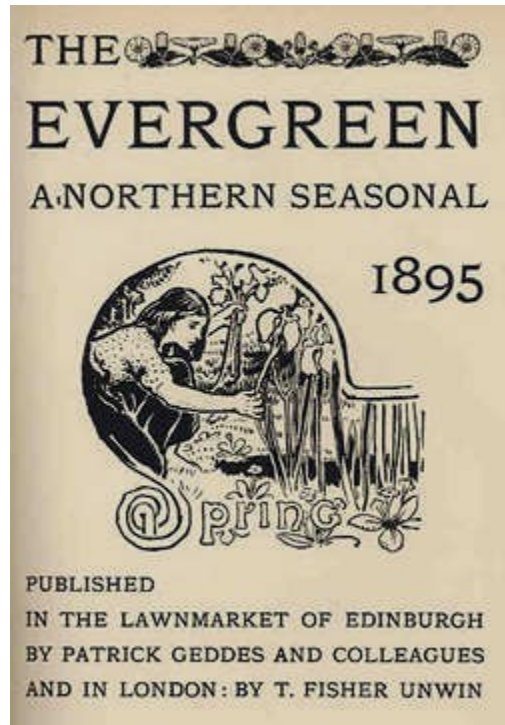
Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



*Alessandro Alberti with a Page, detail*



— Appendix Forty-One —



**'Bacchus and Silenus', an illustration in *The Evergreen***  
John Duncan  
Engraving, 1895



**Illustration in *The Evergreen***  
John Duncan  
Engraving, 1895

— Appendix Forty-Two —



*Apollo, Hyakinthos and Kypris Singing and Playing*

Alexander Ivanov

Oil on canvas, 1831-34

Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow



*Death of Hyakinthos*  
Jean Broc  
Oil on canvas, 1801  
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Poitiers

— Appendix Forty-Three —

Plate 20

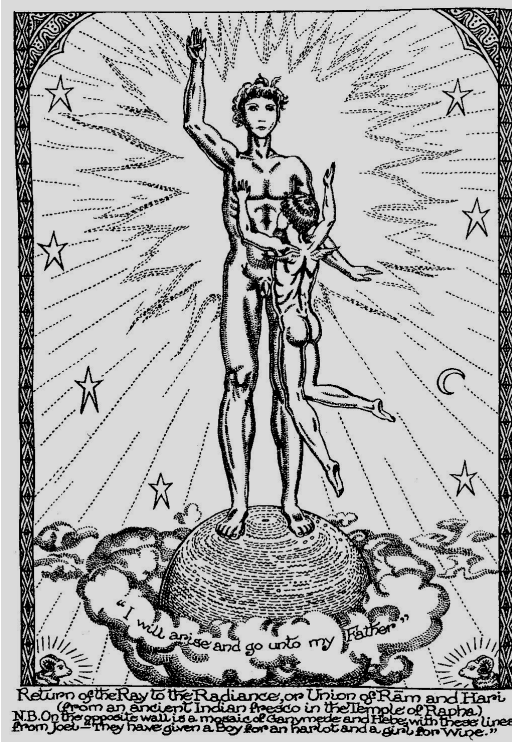


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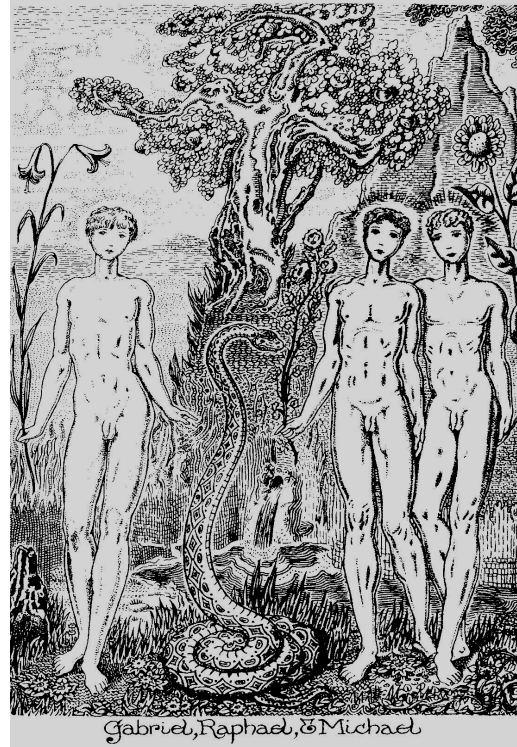


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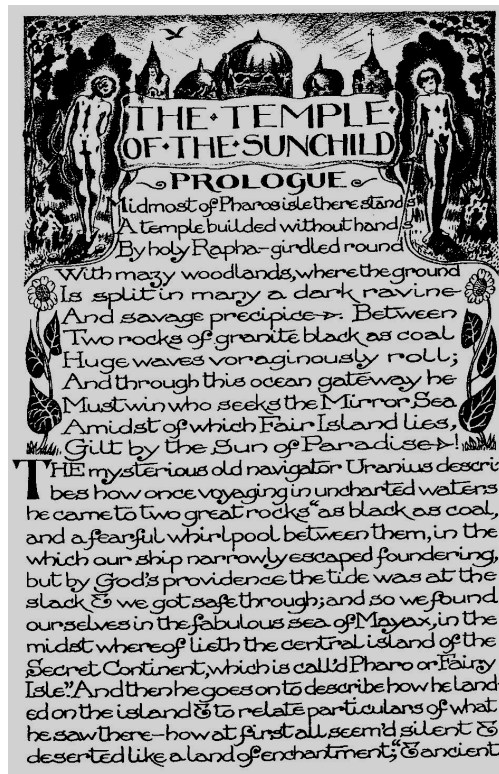


Plate 143



Ralph Nicholas Chubb, *The Child of Dawn: or, The Book of the Manchild*  
(Newbury, England: The author, 1948). Lithographs

Plate 146



The Little Ones of Repha, on Pharos Isle

Plate 149



The Redemption of Repha

Plate 152



Fire & Light; eternal strife!  
By kiss of love is changed to life!

The Temple of Repha

Plate 159

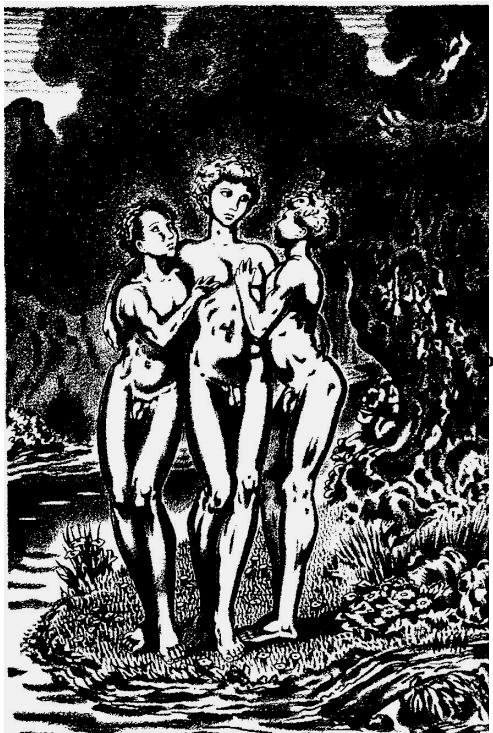
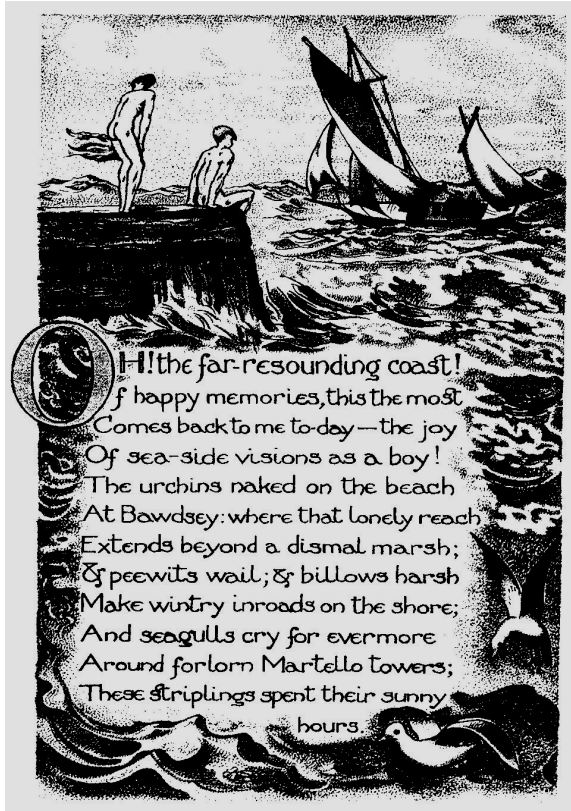
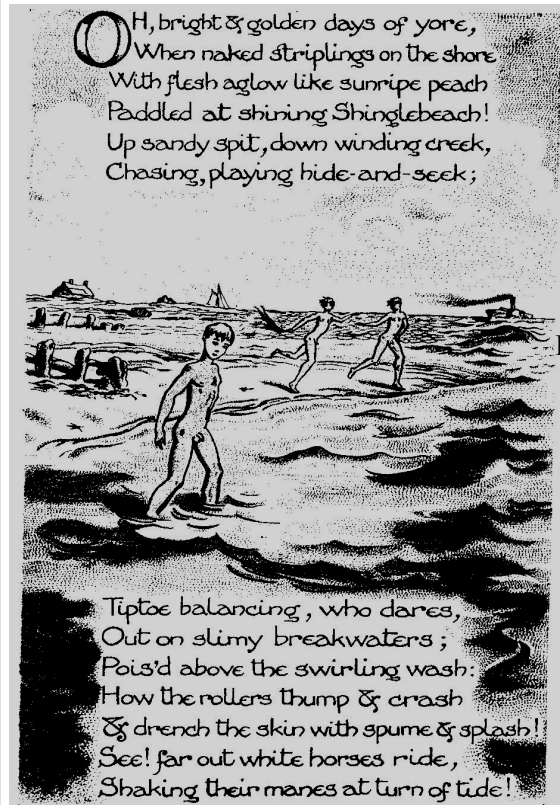


Plate 205



**O**h! the far-resounding coast!  
 Of happy memories, this the most  
 Comes back to me to-day — the joy  
 Of sea-side visions as a boy!  
 The urchins naked on the beach  
 At Bawdsey: where that lonely reach  
 Extends beyond a dismal marsh;  
 & peewits wail; & billows harsh  
 Make wintry inroads on the shore;  
 And seagulls cry for evermore  
 Around forlorn Martello towers;  
 These striplings spent their sunny  
 hours.

Plate 207



**O**H, bright & golden days of yore,  
 When naked striplings on the shore  
 With flesh aglow like sunripe peach  
 Paddled at shining Shinglebeach!  
 Up sandy spit, down winding creek,  
 Chasing, playing hide-and-seek;

Tiptoe balancing, who dares,  
 Out on slimy breakwaters;  
 Pois'd above the swirling wash:  
 How the rollers thump & crash  
 & drench the skin with spume & splash!  
 See! far out white horses ride,  
 Shaking their manes at turn of tide!

Plate 229





— Appendix Forty-Four —



*Lupinus Arbustus (Laxiflorus)*, subspecies *Calcaratus*  
(commonly called the 'Longspur Lupine')



**Alchemical Illustration**  
European  
Manuscript, 13<sup>th</sup> century  
[Details unknown]

— Appendix Forty-Five —



Various Images from *Shonen-ai* (or 'Boy-Love') Manga

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