

WALTER PATER, *THE RENAISSANCE*, AND LEGACIES OF AESTHETICISM



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26-27 June 2023

Programme

Walter Pater, *The Renaissance*, and Legacies of Aestheticism

Trinity College, Oxford, 26-27 June 2023

Day One, 26 June

13:30 Welcome (Garden Room)		
14:00-15:30 Parallel Sessions	Pater and Nineteenth-Century Art Criticism (Chair: Jonah Siegel) Daniel Orrells, 'Studies in 1873' Francesca Orestano, 'Pater's place in, response to and significance in the nineteenth-century art world: Jakob Burckhardt, John Addington Symonds, and Walter Pater' Caroline Arscott, 'Pater, Moore and Anamnesia'	Pater's Philosophies (Chair: Thomas Albrecht) Giovanni Bassi, 'Inter-subjectivity in Pater's Aesthetics: Universality, Shareability, and (once again) Kant' Atti Viragh, 'Aestheticism's Sociology: C.H. Cooley, Symbolic Interactionism, and the Social Construction of the Self' Fergus McChee, 'Pater and Invention'
15:30-16:00 Coffee break		
16:00-17:30 Parallel Sessions	<i>The Renaissance and Pater's Circle</i> (Chair: Dennis Denisoff) Anne-Florence Gillard-Estrada, 'Sharp as a Paterean art critic' Melissa Sarikaya, 'Pater-nal Influence? The Transgression of Walter Pater in A. Mary F. Robinson's poetry' Catherine Maxwell, 'Walter Pater's "strange flowers" and their aftermath'	Pater and Queer Histories (Chair: Stefano Evangelista) Lucinda Janson, 'Walters Paternal: The Influence of Walter Pater's Queer Aestheticism on Ronald Firbank's Œuvre' Frankie Dytor, 'He may tell his story in the guise of fiction': Fiction, Art Writing, and the Renaissance' Alex Gunn, "'A Strange Inverted Home-Sickness": Pater's Queer World-Building'
17:30-18:30 Keynote (Auditorium) Hilary Fraser, 'Imaginary Postcards: Pater's Renaissance on Location'		
18:30-19:30 Reception (Trinity College)		
20:00 Conference Dinner (Al Shami Restaurant)		

Day Two, 27 June

<p>9:30-11:00 Parallel Sessions</p>	<p>Expanding <i>The Renaissance</i>: Early and Late Pater (Chair: Giles Whiteley)</p> <p>James Harrison, 'The Uses of William Morris'</p> <p>Kenneth Daley, 'Pater's Renaissance—After <i>The Renaissance</i>: Raphael the Scholar'</p> <p>Laurel Brake, 'Pater Speaks Up: "The English School of Painting"'</p>	<p>France and/in <i>The Renaissance</i> (Chair: Elisa Bizzotto)</p> <p>Clément Dessy, 'Joachim Du Bellay and the French Renaissance'</p> <p>Lene Østermark-Johansen, 'Love and learning: Pater's continued flirt with the twelfth-century renaissance'</p> <p>Bénédict Coste, 'Georges Duthuit's <i>Le Rose et le noir</i> : Disseminating Walter Pater's <i>Renaissance</i> in the 1920s'</p>
<p>11:00-11:30 Coffee break</p>		
<p>11:30-12:30 Parallel Sessions</p>	<p>The Dionysian and Pater's Renaissance (Chair: Daniel Orrells)</p> <p>Samuel Love, 'Fauns and Satyrs in Pater'</p> <p>Julianna K. Will, 'The God of Pater's Renaissance: Aestheticism and Dionysus'</p>	<p>Global Reception I: Europé (Chair: James Douthwaite)</p> <p>Katharina Herold-Zanker, "'Das Lebensbuch": Eugen Diederichs's publication of Walter Pater's <i>Die Renaissance</i> (1902-10)'</p> <p>Ulrike Stamm, 'The Reception of Walter Pater's <i>The Renaissance</i> in Austria and Germany—between aestheticism and "Lebensphilosophie"'</p>
<p>12.30-13.30 Lunch break (Trinity College)</p>		
<p>13:30-14:30 IWPS Meeting (Garden Room)</p>		

<p>14:30 -16:00 Parallel Sessions</p>	<p>Pater, Organicism and the Natural World (Chair: Hilary Fraser)</p> <p>Thomas Hughes, 'Vitality of form in Pater's Michelangelo'</p> <p>Dennis Denisoff, 'Eco-aestheticism: Paterian Love for the Local'</p> <p>James Brophy, "'The growing revelation of the mind to itself": Context and Implications of Aesthetic Criticism's Determinism'</p>	<p>Global Reception II: America and Korea (Chair: Rebecca Mitchell)</p> <p>Anna Girling, 'Reading <i>The Renaissance</i> in Edith Wharton's "republic of the spirit"'</p> <p>James Dowthwaite, 'Pater's Spirit and Pound's Renaissance'</p> <p>Joori Lee, 'A Master and a Disciple Who Studied Walter Pater in Korea'</p>
<p>16:00-16:30 Coffee break</p>		
<p>16:30-17:30 Parallel Sessions</p>	<p>Pater and Style (Chair: Ken Daley)</p> <p>Thomas Albrecht, 'Walter Pater and the Matter of Style'</p> <p>Jonah Siegel, "'and human life": The Aesthetic Critic and What is Real in <i>The Renaissance</i>'</p>	<p>Pater and Modernism (Chair: Kristin Mahoney)</p> <p>Paolo Bugliani, 'Eliot and Pater's <i>Renaissance</i>'</p> <p>Sarah Potts, "'The Writer Who From Words Made Blue and Gold and Green": Pater's Queer Fantastic Aesthetic Lineage in Virginia Woolf'</p>

Programme Points

Keynote

‘Imaginary Postcards: Pater’s Renaissance on Location’

Hilary Fraser (Birkbeck, University of London)

The lecture will imagine (with pictures) Pater’s travels to Italy with Shadwell in the summer of 1865, and later the Devon seaside where he began to write. It will think about how not only Oxford’s libraries and lectures but also these live experiences ‘on location’ shaped his first book.

Parallel Session A: Pater and Nineteenth-Century Art Criticism

‘Studies in 1873’

Daniel Orrells (King’s College London)

1873 was the year of the publication not only of Walter Pater’s ‘Studies in the History of the Renaissance’ but also of John Addington Symonds’s ‘Studies of the Greek Poets’. This paper examines the coincidence of the publication of two major works of English aestheticism: what does it mean for the two Studies to have been published ‘at the same time’? How do these two publications conceptualize the ‘aesthetic moment’? The paper will explore the impact on Symonds’s ‘Studies’ of Pater’s ‘Renaissance’, essays from which had appeared from 1867. As we shall see, the opening and concluding chapters in Symonds’s book invoke the Italian Renaissance as a time which attempted but ultimately failed to revivify the radical aesthetic spirit of the ancient Greeks. ‘The accents of the modern Renaissance were an echo of the last utterances of dying Greece’, writes Symonds at the end of his first chapter. In his final chapter, Symond observes, ‘The old health of the Greeks was gone: to recover that was impossible’, and then quotes verses by Michelangelo about the vanity of revivifying Hellenic beauty. These opening and closing chapters, which emphasise the historical distance between ancient Greece and the nineteenth century, reflect the influence of the Hegelian historiography that Symonds consumed at Oxford. But these opening and closing chapters also mention Goethe, who provided an example of the ability to transcend historical periods. As Symonds puts it in the opening essay, ‘The analogy between the history of a race so undisturbed in its development as the Greek, and the life of a man, is not altogether fanciful. A man like Goethe, beautiful in soul and body’ managed to encapsulate in one lifetime the ages of man. In the closing chapter, Symonds heralds Goethe as a ‘mediator’ between ancient Greece and the modern age. Even if Symonds was committed to highlighting the historical chasm between ancient and modern, he also wondered about the blurring of temporalities, which resonated with Pater’s radical vision. Pater’s Renaissance stretched from medieval France down to the nineteenth century and yet all of time seemed encapsulated in Leonardo’s Mona Lisa. Pater’s Michelangelo had painted the Creation of Man, a symbol of the birth of humanism, and yet he was also a ‘revenant’, a ghost who lived beyond his own time mourning for dead young men. As we shall see, despite Symonds’s attempts at Hegelian historiography, his ‘Studies’ of ancient Greece reflected the impact of Pater’s ‘Renaissance’: Symonds’s Classical Greece was a complex mix of the healthy and the decadent, the manly and the effeminate, the conservative and the modern. Symonds’s Classical Greece was an arena of temporal transition, simultaneously archaic and belated. If Symonds’s Studies would become the principal introduction to ancient Greek literature well into the twentieth century, his account was a product of Pater’s complex aesthetic historicism. What does it mean to say the ancient Greece and the Italian Renaissance were of the same aesthetic/historical moment?

‘Pater’s place in, response to and significance in the nineteenth-century art world: Jakob Burckhardt, John Addington Symonds, and Walter Pater’

Francesca Orestano (University of Milan)

There is no doubt that Walter Pater’s *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873) marked a different way of contemplating art as part of the cultural horizon of the Italian Renaissance: the essays in Pater’s *Renaissance* focussed on the response of the modern individual to aspects of Italian culture that were not just consecrated by chronology, history and authority. My proposal dwells on a triangulation of ideas and intent that has in the main three protagonists: Jakob Burckhardt, John Addington Symonds, and Walter Pater.

Jakob Burckhardt’s *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien: ein Versuch* (Basel 1860), was translated into English by Samuel S. G. C. Middlemore as *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, in 1878. Then again published in 1890, 1898, 1929, 1937, 1944, 1950, and 1989. Symonds’s *Renaissance in Italy: The Age of Despots* (1875), *The Revival of Learning and The Fine Arts* (1877), the two volumes on *Italian Literature* (1881) and those on *The Catholic Reaction* (1886) did manifest in explicit albeit moderate ways his intellectual debt to Burckhardt: Symonds declared to be “specially indebted” to the Swiss critic. My contention is that more than Symonds, Walter Pater would imbibe Burckhardt’s lesson, and especially the concept of “Kultur,” as a shaping force that would transform art, character, destiny and have a direct impact on the modern individual. The connexion between Pater and Burckhardt was first pointed out by Hugo von Hofmannstahl, and later on by Rainer Maria Rilke, who after reading Pater in 1902, and reviewing the German edition of the *Renaissance*, had remarked that Pater had retrieved Renaissance art and artists “from the darkness of their own time.” It seems that the light Burckhardt threw on the art of the Renaissance was complemented and made more forceful and persuasive by Walter Pater’s masterpiece; the response of the two critics would mould modern art appreciation, lending strength to the visual formalism of Aby Warburg, Heinrich Wölfflin, Bernard Berenson, and Roger Fry.

‘Pater, Moore and Anamnesia’

Caroline Arscott (The Courtauld Institute of Art)

This paper considers Pater’s interest in anamnesia, the impossibility of forgetting, or, as he puts it in the ‘Leonardo’ essay (1869, included in *Studies In the History of the Renaissance*, 1873), ‘the summing up in one mind of all modes of thought’. He signals its articulation in Plato’s dialogues and its very ancient origins in western philosophy. This was twinned in Pater’s work with its apparent opposite: the dispersal of entities. We can see that the concepts paired in this way, were crucial to the temporality of culture for Pater. Historical individuals and cultural forms are potentially both ancient (marked by enduring sameness) and novel (constantly changing, scattering into myriad forms). The bridging between these two was deemed essential to personal realisation and artistic insight and, arguably, in Leonardo’s case involved attention both to the eternal of beauty and to the grotesque miscellany of nature. In this paper I propose that, given Pater’s references to anatomy and biological science, the idea of anamnesia be considered in relation to evolutionary science’s recapitulation theory which was coming to the fore in the 1860s and 1870s. Forms of evolutionary memory were observable in one developmental timespan, it seemed, in individual instances of animal life, as the embryo developed from the cell. On the other hand, over millennia, differentiation of species was seen to spread out in tree form with ever increasing diversity. I consider the work of the painter Albert Moore, in particular a pair of paintings by him, *Seagulls* (1870) and *Shells* (1874), made for the collector Frederick Leyland, as signalling many of the same concerns, in some ways in a more obvious way than in the writings of Pater. Philosophical and aesthetic issues of importance to the whole Aesthetic Movement circle were explored by Moore in the context of a pictured seashore where the pensive modern female figure does and does not offer access to a prototype in Aphrodite or, as Pater puts it when considering the strange timelessness of the Mona Lisa, presents us with her difference from ‘one of those white Greek goddesses ... of antiquity’. The fauna, rocks, shells and sand in Moore’s two pictures offer clues about the processes underlying morphology, consciousness and movement. This parallel investigation undertaken by Moore should be understood, in part, as a response to the subtle provocations of Pater’s publications.

Parallel Session B: Pater's Philosophies

'Inter-subjectivity in Pater's Aesthetics: Universality, Shareability, and (once again) Kant' **Giovanni Bassi (Libera Università Mediterranea, Bari)**

The keystone of Walter Pater's thought – which he first expounded, at least in book form, in his *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873) – is an innovative conception of aesthetic appreciation. As is well known, Pater postulates that the process through which we experience (and ultimately judge) something beautiful, and to an even greater extent a work of art, is pleasure-based, impressionistic, sensual, worldly, anti-metaphysical, and subjective. This view of art had a number of predecessors, whose influence Pater himself, at times, seems close to acknowledging. Although not especially celebrated or openly embraced in Pater's writings, the philosophy of Immanuel Kant has been identified by much scholarship as a formative source for his aesthetics. While many critical studies have convincingly investigated the similarities as well as the differences between these two authors, one aspect of Pater's relationship with Kant's theory has been relatively neglected, especially in recent years: in my opinion, the degree of congeniality between Pater's aesthetics and Kant's seemingly paradoxical, much-debated assertion of the 'subjective universality' inherent to the act of appreciating beauty needs to be restated. My paper aims to reassess how, and to what extent, a form of subjective universality (or inter-subjectivity) is presupposed by Pater's aesthetic system. In particular, I will discuss how in Pater, as in Kant, the potential universality of aesthetic judgement originates from a primary, universally shared cognitive and perceptual process. This process is implied in the tenets of Pater's aesthetics, and fleetingly yet significantly called into play in texts such as 'The School of Giorgione', where the concept of the imaginative reason and the (post-)Kantian idea of the symbol are evoked. Moreover, the stylistic and rhetorical finesse of Pater's writings, his pernicky struggle with language in order to adequately convey aesthetic perception and artistic matters, seems to entail a belief in some form of communicability of the aesthetic experience. In this sense, I will elaborate on previous remarks on the Kantian dimension of Pater's artistic appreciation by drawing a comparison between the possibility of aesthetic communicability suggested in his works and the idea of the shareability of aesthetic emotions theorized by Alexander Bain and James Sully, two figures whose links with Pater have been often discussed, yet, to my knowledge, not in these terms. Finally, I will explore the specificities and contradictions of Pater's inter-subjectivity, which are mainly related to his emphasis on sexual embodiment – something which has been pointed out, although from a slightly different angle, by several scholars – but also to the innateness of aesthetic sensitivity, and therefore to the problematic equivalence between the status of the artist and that of the 'aesthetic critic'. The ultimate goal of my paper is to offer a more nuanced view of Pater's conception of art, and, especially, to temper overly relativist readings of his aesthetic thought.

'Aestheticism's Sociology: C.H. Cooley, Symbolic Interactionism, and the Social Construction of the Self'

Atti Viragh (Bilkent University)

It may seem counterintuitive to speak of Walter Pater helping to shape modern sociology. I hope to secure this claim, however, by examining his influence on the American sociologist Charles Horton Cooley. Cooley, who has been called an "introspective sociologist," developed a new kind of sociology—symbolic interactionism—which focuses not on the macro-level structures of social institutions but on the micro-level analysis of gestures, symbols, and language. Glenn Jacobs has explored Cooley's literary influences, including Montaigne, Goethe, Emerson, and Pater, whom Cooley often discusses in his journals and in print.

Cooley developed the concept of the social mirror (or "looking-glass self"), and Jacobs argues that Pater served as a "literary looking-glass" for Cooley to develop his own authorial style. I argue, however, that Pater's influence was much broader: he provided the germ of Cooley's conception of the social construction of the self.

Both Pater and Cooley argue that the self is not fixed, but constantly shaped by its material and social contexts. This there is no individual existing alone: the self is always woven into a broader fabric, "inward and outward being woven through and through each other into one inextricable texture," as Pater says in "Child in the House." Both develop an account of the formation of the self through social interaction as mediated by sense experience. Like Pater, Cooley argues that our thinking comes from the absorption of external stimuli and influences, which later become organized in higher-level thinking. He argues that artistic

expressions ultimately drive from the child-like need “to define and vivify thought by imparting it to an imaginary companion.” Pater’s aesthetics involve becoming that imaginary companion, hearing the thought that the artwork is imparting through the “impress” of the individual artist. Cooley absorbs the Paterian focus on personality and expression in art, connecting “our impression of a writer” to the experience of seeing a face, a point Pater also makes in his effort to define aesthetic experience. But Cooley extends Pater’s ideas by showing how the same dynamics of expression, impression, and imaginary dialogue constitute the social fabric as a whole.

Understanding how Cooley brings out the latent sociology of Pater’s thought makes visible a broader fact about aestheticism’s legacy. Pater contributes to a new exploration of the internalization of social reality that is central to aestheticism. This theoretical innovation, which finds the social at the micro-levels of phenomenological analysis, reconnects Pater’s thought to that of his contemporaries, including the early work of such figures as Georg Simmel, Wilhelm Dilthey, Friedrich Tönnies, C.H. Cooley, G.H. Mead, and John Dewey in the 1870s and 1880s.

‘Pater and Invention’ **Fergus McGhee (St Catharine’s College, Cambridge)**

‘The critical faculty’, declared Matthew Arnold, ‘is lower than the inventive’. Yet defenders of Pater’s criticism, from Oscar Wilde to Harold Bloom, have questioned the validity of that distinction. While many critics have worried that Pater’s model of ‘aesthetic criticism’ is dangerously speculative or irresponsible, others have pointed to Pater’s own emphasis, in *The Renaissance*, on ‘discrimination and analysis’ as the essential tools of critical perceptiveness and sensitivity – ‘to know one’s own impression... to realise it distinctly’, as Pater says, is the first step towards seeing the object ‘as in itself it really is’. This is just remonstrance, but like Wilde and Bloom I still want to ask, to what extent does seeing the object clearly also involve responding inventively to it? Such inventiveness is the undisputed hallmark of the most famous passages of *The Renaissance*, and it remains to be reckoned with, not least in the context of contemporary ‘method wars’.

A good place to begin is to ask what place ‘invention’ holds in Pater’s own critical vocabulary. Having told the writer William Sharp that he approved of Keats’s remark that ‘invention’ was ‘the Polar Star of Poetry’, Pater added, ‘only one must be sure one knows exactly what one means by invention’. His own use of the term is extensive and revealing, whether praising the ‘inventive force’ of Botticelli, the felicity of Shakespeare’s ‘poetic invention’, or Leonardo’s ‘prolonged ecstasy of rapture and invention’. It is the ‘inventive turns of diction or thought’ that Pater admires in Wordsworth, for ‘the literary fancy ... finds its pleasure in inventive word or phrase’ (‘Sir Thomas Browne’) and it is the ‘inventive handling’ which marks the ‘true poetical quality’ in a poem (‘The School of Giorgione’). Indeed, invention is at the heart of Pater’s very conception of the Renaissance, ‘that inventive and innovating genius ... to which the art, the literature, the religious movements of the thirteenth century in France, as in Italy, where it ends with Dante, bear witness’. How does invention, for Pater, relate to creation, imagination, and expression? And how might specifically critical inventiveness advance the understanding and appreciation of art? Taking Pater’s own criticism as a test case, I will ask how the critic’s inventiveness affects not only what we respond to in artworks, but how and why we respond to art.

Parallel Session C: *The Renaissance and Pater's Circle*

'Sharp as a Paterean art critic'

Anne-Florence Gillard-Estrada (University of Rouen Normandy)

Shortly after Walter Pater's death, in December 1894, the poet and art critic William Sharp offered a highly personal psychological and physical portrait of his friend in his "Personal Reminiscences", published in the *Atlantic Monthly*. He distinguishes Pater as "the most significant man among us" and proclaims, using terms that are resonant with Pater's *Conclusion*, that "more torches will be lit from his flame". In this obituary, Sharp appears as "Pater earliest hagiographer [...] with a keen sense of taking up the aesthetic torch after Pater" (Lene Østermark-Johansen's terms, "'The primary colour of delight': Walter Pater and Gold", *Polysèmes* 15, 2016: <http://journals.openedition.org/polysemes/889>). Indeed, Sharp's highly poetical vocabulary owes much to Pater in its choice of images, its emphasis on synaesthetic effects and its Aestheticist poetics. Sharp appears fascinated by the complexity of Pater's interiority and he dwells on his interest for dialectical poles: "There were two strangeness [...] which always appealed to him strongly: the strangeness that lies in familiarity, and the strangeness of the unusual, the remote, the mysterious, the wild". The latter pole – remoteness, mystery, strangeness – looms large in the essay he devoted four years later to Edward Burne-Jones, two months after the painter had died ("Edward Burne-Jones", 70, *Fortnightly Review*, 64 ns, Aug. 1898, 289-306). Sharp aligns with Pater in defending Burne-Jones's much-criticized aesthetics and in acknowledging the strangeness that was then considered by some critics as unhealthy or morbid. This element of strangeness, to Sharp, is what makes the beauty of Burne-Jones's paintings. Besides, Sharp ascribes a central role to onerism and shows deep sensitivity to the painter's association of desire and anguish in his paintings. Dwelling on Burne-Jones's *Mirror of Venus*, Sharp takes up Pater's idea that strangeness and sadness are a central element not only of romantic art but also of Greek sculpture. He also quotes Burne-Jones's laudatory comments on Pater, thereby underlining the painter's admiration for Pater's vision of beauty. By extolling the painter's aesthetics of ambivalence, Sharp thus appears as a true bearer of Pater's torch, and his essay, written in a poetical language that reflects a style of its own, emerges as a paradigm of Aesthetic criticism. This paper intends to dwell on a number of essays which Sharp published in periodicals in order to show his indebtedness to Pater and to give him a full place in the late-Victorian network of Aesthetic art critics.

'Pater-nal Influence? The Transgression of Walter Pater in A. Mary F. Robinson's poetry'

Melissa Sarikaya (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen/Nürnberg)

The Paterian influence on A. Mary F. Robinson's poetry is evident judging by biographical and academic accounts: Walter Pater and his sisters had been the Robinsons' neighbours since childhood. Various scholars (such as Ana Vadillo and Patricia Rigg) have found decadent and aesthete styles in Robinson's poetry. Certainly, Walter Pater's embracing of atheism and hedonism is also palpable in Robinson's works as she drives on the pleasure-high of ecstatic love glorifying love as the one and only god. Pater's images of flood and fire (most notably in his *Conclusion to Studies of the History of the Renaissance* (1873)) leave their traces in Robinson's early writing as she uses the imagery of fluidity and motion while embracing the image of a passionate, burning fire that drives the soul. Numerous poems cherish the fire of love, for instance "Love's Epiphany", while the fascination with the opposition of fire and flood is used in poems such as "Lethe" and "Swan Song" (*A Handful of Honeysuckle*, 1878).

However, I argue that Robinson's poetry is a departure from decadence, moving towards a modernist style that transgresses Walter Pater. Instead of sensory experiences, Robinson's work shows the belief in the individual's happiness through transgressing the futile pleasures of earth. Robinson's poetry is an ode to death but not in a Renaissance *memento mori* or *vanitas* fashion. Instead, Robinson removes love as god and cherishes death as the ultimate victor resulting in a religious admiration of death as an elevated god. In her works, Robinson criticises societal and patriarchal structures, which necessarily results in letting go of paternal and earthly influences, such as one of the biggest icons of decadence: Walter Pater himself.

‘Walter Pater’s “strange flowers” and their aftermath’ Catherine Maxwell (Queen Mary University of London)

In the wake of the controversy that attended the reception of *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873), Pater famously deleted the phrase ‘strange flowers’ from the ‘Conclusion’, most likely to remove any association with Charles Baudelaire’s scandalous poetic collection *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857). However, other references in the volume to strange flowers remained, including the figurative ‘strange blossoms’ brought forth by Leonardo, the symbolic anemone that emerges from the sacred soil of the Campo Santo in ‘Pico della Mirandola’, and the rarely blossoming ‘aloe’ in ‘The Poetry of Michelangelo’. Having reviewed these instances, I look at what Pater might have called their ‘aftermath’, a word originally meaning ‘a second crop of grass grown on the same land after the first had been harvested’, which in his ‘Preface’ he represents as ‘a wonderful late growth the products of which have that subtle and delicate sweetness which belongs to a refined and comely decadence’. (The related image of ‘a strange second flowering after date’ had previously occurred in ‘Poems by William Morris’ (October 1868), to be recycled later in ‘Aesthetic Poetry’ (1889).) Exploring the aftermath of Pater’s strange flowers, I will discuss poems by two of Pater’s younger friends – Mary Robinson and Oscar Wilde. I shall focus in the first instance on Robinson’s ‘A Jonquil in the Pisan Campo Santo’ from *The Crowned Hippolytus and New Poems* (1881) and, in the second, on Wilde’s ‘Athanasia’ (1879), later collected in *Poems* (1881), considering the contribution of both poems to ‘a refined and comely decadence’.

Parallel Session D: Pater and Queer Histories

‘Walters Paternal: The Influence of Walter Pater’s Queer Aestheticism on Ronald Firbank’s Œuvre’ Lucinda Janson (Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford)

The modernist novelist Ronald Firbank’s only piece of prose non-fiction published in his lifetime is a brief article entitled ‘An Early Flemish Painter’ (1907). Appearing in the *Academy*, then edited by Lord Alfred Douglas, the piece is a Paterian rhapsody on a painting of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, which Firbank attributes to the Flemish artist Jean Gossart (otherwise known as Jan Gossaert). In a passage reminiscent of the ‘Winckelmann’ essay in Pater’s *Renaissance*, Firbank writes that during Gossart’s journey to Renaissance Italy, he ‘seems to have been overwhelmed by this new beauty that so suddenly came upon him. The spirit of a new ideal awoke in Jean’s soul.’ Firbank goes on to describe the influence on Gossart of those heroes of Pater’s *Renaissance*, Botticelli and Leonardo.

Brigid Brophy’s glancing gesture to Firbank’s ‘Walter-Paternal’ style (*Prancing Novelist*, 1973) and Ellis Hanson’s fleeting remarks upon Firbank’s Paterian invocation of ‘vast closed cloisters’ (*Decadence and Catholicism*, 1997) remain the only scholarly treatments of Firbank’s debt to Pater. Firbank’s cult of Wilde has, of course, been extensively catalogued, but I will argue that Firbank’s belated decadence owes a great deal to the Father himself.

Firbank’s novels are suffused with references to Pater’s art historical concerns – particularly those treated in the *Renaissance* – filtered through Firbank’s satiric, slant-wise gaze, and elliptical modernist style. In *Vainglory* (1915), for example, a society personality admits to having ‘tidied [her]self before the Virgin of the Rocks’ in the National Gallery, while in *Valmouth* (1919) a lavender marriage opens with a song rhyming ‘altars’ with ‘WALTERS PALER.’ Transmuting ‘Pater’ to ‘Paler’ removes the name’s patriarchal undertones, and recalls Marius’s childhood home, ‘White-Nights’. Firbank’s method of compiling notes and phrases on ‘long strips of paper’ before writing even recalls the ‘little squares of paper’ which aided Pater’s own composition process.

In 2019, Ellis Hanson expressed a hope that ‘the centenary of Firbank’s novels brings a long overdue reappraisal of his significance.’ As we are, in fact, fast approaching the centenary of Firbank’s untimely death in 1926, this project is more urgent than ever. My paper would seek to contribute to this reassessment, arguing that Firbank’s allusive, backwards-looking mode, and his preoccupation with the queer styles and temporalities of past cultures, including the Italian Renaissance, are important, and too often overlooked, legacies of Pater and his *Renaissance*.

““He may tell his story in the guise of fiction””: Fiction, Art Writing, and the Renaissance’ Frankie Dytor (Pembroke College, Cambridge)

This paper would follow a group of figures who, after Pater, asked what it might look like to come face to face with the renaissance. It does this by focussing on a crisis in art criticism by the beginning of the twentieth century between the belief that it was possible to know the past through encounters with objects and the growing demand to create a ‘scientific’ analysis of art. Edith Wharton reflected on these tensions in her memoir *A Backward Glance*. The publication of Bernard Berenson’s works on Italian painting, she explains, had shown that ‘aesthetic sensibility’ could be combined ‘with the sternest scientific accuracy’, leading her to feel almost guilty for her enthusiasm towards those ‘gifted amateurs’, Pater and J. A. Symonds. However, as she continues to explore, this new criticism nevertheless failed to grasp the ‘imponderable something’ of art. This paper looks at how fiction provided one way in which writers after Pater tried to integrate the scientific method of the ‘experts’ with the imaginative work of ‘amateurs’. Following Jonah Siegel, it traces the movements between fiction and art writing, and explores fiction’s status as a legitimate, if contested, genre of art criticism. Focussing on three texts, Edith Wharton’s ‘House of the Dead Hand’, A. J. Anderson’s ‘The Romance of Sandro Botticelli’ and Maud Cruttwell’s ‘Fire and Frost’, it explores how these works gave voice to an amalgam of aesthetic ideas in formation after Pater’s aestheticism, which understood art to contain a vital force capable of actively affecting its observer.

““A Strange Inverted Home-Sickness””: Pater’s Queer World-Building’ Alex Gunn (Trinity College, Oxford)

In her 2007 *Queer Phenomenology*, Sara Ahmed argues that orientation—in its geographical and sexual senses—is about ‘how we come to “feel at home”’. After the ‘disorientation’ she experienced while ‘becoming reoriented’ as a lesbian, having previously identified as a heterosexual woman, she began to ‘wonder [...] how much “feeling at home” is about the making of worlds.’ Walter Pater proves that the answer is very.

‘Philosophy is properly Home-sickness; the wish to be everywhere at home.’ So said Novalis, whom Pater quotes in the ‘Conclusion’ to *The Renaissance*. It is a striking fact that Pater’s first three published essays—‘Coleridge’s Works’ (1866), ‘Winckelmann’ (1867), and ‘Poems by William Morris’ (1868)—all contain the phrase ‘home-sickness’. It is first used to describe the ‘inexhaustible discontent’ of Romanticism, typified by Coleridge. Here, as in Novalis, it represents an Idealist longing for the Absolute: in M. H. Abrams’ words (1965), the desire ‘to join together the “subject” and “object” that modern philosophy had put asunder, and thus to revivify a dead nature [and] re-domiciliate man in a world which had become alien to him.’ Coleridge’s own response to the problem, as Pater well knew, was to theorise the imagination as the esemplastic power, which ‘dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate: [...] struggl[ing always] to idealise and to unify’ (*Biographia Literaria*, 1817).

In ‘Winckelmann’ and ‘William Morris’, the phrase evolves into ‘a strange inverted home-sickness’ or ‘that inversion of home-sickness known to some’. In ‘William Morris’, it is equated to ‘that incurable thirst for the sense of escape’ and, crucially, ‘the key to the enjoyment of this [Aesthetic] poetry’. ‘Inversion’ anticipates the sexological term, and suggests that the home-sickness is queerly oriented towards a ‘home’ one has never actually known. For Winckelmann, this is Ancient Greece or Rome. Pater’s works are populated with queer characters homesick for such an ‘earthly paradise’. Building especially on Heather Love (2007) and Dustin Friedman (2019), I will argue that Pater adapts the Coleridgean esemplastic power as a model for ‘the making of worlds’, eclectically recombining pieces of the past to produce imaginary spaces into which one could escape oppressive modernity.

Parallel Session E: Expanding *The Renaissance*: Early and Late Pater

‘The Uses of William Morris’

James Harrison (University of Bristol)

Walter Pater, in his essay ‘Poems by William Morris’ (1868), wrote that the ‘change in manner’ that occurred in William Morris’s poetry between 1858 and 1867 arose from the same ‘law’ that produced the Renaissance. This paper seeks to situate Pater among the other critics and historians who took William Morris’s poetry as an opportunity to illustrate a dearly held teleology. Charles Eliot Norton, for example, took the publication of *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867) as an opportunity to discuss the manners of narration that belong to a civilisation in its infancy and then in its maturity. Swinburne began his review of *The Life and Death of Jason* with a meditation on the primacy of chance in the survival of texts, and he pondered the possibility of an organic (as opposed to an artificial) literary revival. Like Pater, some twentieth-century readers of Morris also identified in the poetry points of ‘revolt’ or ‘awakening’, passages from illusion to reality, and the operation, in microcosm, of the laws that govern historical development. For example, to E. P. Thompson, Morris’s early literary career exemplified the inevitability with which Romantic despair gives way to revolutionary consciousness. (Later, Thompson regretted that certain ‘Stalinist pieties’ had marred his 1955 biography of Morris.)

Pater’s essay on Morris has sometimes been thought to indulge in an unusual latitude from its stated subject. It has been suggested that numerous other works of Victorian poetry might have been just as amenable to Pater’s objectives. However, among Victorian poets, only Morris dramatised how the values of one period are transfigured by the literary forms of another, and how the forms of diverse periods interweave in contemporary thought. This is why so many historically oriented thinkers have come to his poetry with an axe to grind. I will argue, with reference to the poetry itself and to the commonalities between Pater’s readings and those of other critics, that the essay is attentive to its subject, even in the passages that follow Pater’s rumination on the ‘tendency of modern thought’. Finally, I will suggest how textual artefacts of Morris’s poetry are still discernible in the essay’s successor text, the ‘Conclusion’ of *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873).

‘Pater’s Renaissance—After *The Renaissance*: Raphael the Scholar’

Kenneth Daley (Columbia College, Chicago)

I begin with the assumption that, had Pater lived, he would have included his 1892 essay, ‘Raphael’, in a subsequent edition of *The Renaissance*. The little critical commentary the essay has received is largely dismissive, and ‘Raphael’ does not offer the celebrated prose passages and hypnotic intensity of the essays on Leonardo and Michelangelo. Nevertheless, in its portrait of Raphael as the ideal scholar-artist and ‘scholarly conscience’ (‘Style’), the essay neatly complements the portrait of Da Vinci as ‘minister et interpres naturae’, giving vital substance to one of the book’s central claims regarding the ‘two-fold’ movement of the fifteenth century: ‘Raphael represents the return to antiquity, and Leonardo the return to nature’ (“Leonardo Da Vinci”). In detailing Raphael’s return to antiquity, the essay extends and reworks the book’s preoccupation with the nature of the scholar, from Abelard to Pico to Du Bellay to Winckelmann. In ‘Pico della Mirandola’, Pater asserts that the scholars of the fifteenth century, unlike their ‘modern’ counterparts, ‘lacked the very rudiments of the historic sense’. I argue that Raphael’s scholarship, a generation after Pico, represents for Pater the turn to modernity and to the historic sense. Throughout the essay, Pater is obsessed with Raphael’s use of sources, his conscious imitation/emulation in his art of antique sources and of his contemporaries and near-contemporaries—Perugino, Pinturicchio, Da Vinci, Bartolommeo. Pater describes Raphael in Rome as ‘an enthusiastic archaeologist’, Leo X’s ‘papal bull’ authorizing him ‘to inspect all ancient marbles, inscriptions, and the like’ culminating in the Galatea fresco of the Farnese palace (not a historically accurate timeline).

Though Pater does not use the term, I suggest that he conceives of Raphael’s critical/creative practice as enacting the Renaissance doctrine of *imitatio*, derived from Aristotle and more typically applied to poetry and the literary arts. With Raphael, *imitatio* is applied to the visual arts, a practice sanctioned by Vasari who gives testimony that the Renaissance painters understood the

doctrine as licensing the copying of both nature and older masters. Pater would certainly have in mind Winckelmann's *On the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks* (1755), to which he refers in the 1867 essay. Schlegel's 'Description of Paintings in Paris and the Netherlands in the Years, 1802–1804', may constitute another important source for Pater's portrait of Raphael.

'Pater Speaks Up: "The English School of Painting"' **Laurel Brake (Birkbeck, University of London)**

This is a paper about an apparently unremarkable review in a local weekly in Feb 1885 of a French critic's estimate of 'The English School of Painting'. I will show that its topic, timing, and location situate the review in current debate about visual art and aestheticism, and the identity of the English school of painting in relation to foreign art, involving Ruskin, Whistler, and English and French painting and art criticism. Pater is reviewing an English translation of a recent French original by an estimable French critic Ernest Chesneau (1833-1890, a week before Marius was published. It is Pater's first publication since late 1883. Returning to print in this signed review, it is notably to art criticism, reminding readers of his reputation as an art critic and author of *The Renaissance*. Fortuitously, the printing and circulation of Pater's review five days after Whistler delivered his 'manifesto for Aestheticism,' in his 'Ten O'Clock Lecture' broadened the significance of Pater's review. In Whistler's lecture Ruskin, whom Whistler had sued in 1877-8, figured ironically as 'the gentle priest of the Philistines'.

In choosing to review this book, to sign the review, and to locate it in the *Oxford Magazine*, Pater set the scene for an extended commentary on John Ruskin, Slade Professor of Fine Art in the University, their shared environment. This edition of Chesneau includes a Preface by Ruskin, his towering contemporary whose art criticism in *Modern Painters* and all that followed was a profound influence on younger critics like Pater. Unlike most reviewers, Pater mentions neither the Preface nor Ruskin. His review is an oblique commentary on Ruskin, similar in its deftness to his critique in *The Renaissance* of Ruskin's distaste for Renaissance art. At a moment when Ruskin's ill health had reduced his credibility in the University, from which he resigned a month later, Pater registers his differences with Ruskin tactfully, without naming him, in a model of non-confrontational criticism that Pater would eventually term 'appreciation'. That *The English School of Painting* is written by a distinguished art critic endorsed by Ruskin, and reviewed and signed by an Oxford aesthete, both of whom are aware of the aesthetic issues at stake between Ruskin and Whistler, suggest that this brief, apparently amiable review is other than it first appears, and implicated in larger debates.

Parallel Session F: France and/in *The Renaissance*

'Joachim Du Bellay and the French Renaissance' **Clément Dessy (FNRS – Université libre de Bruxelles)**

Walter Pater's essay on Joachim Du Bellay in "The Renaissance" is an intriguing example of his critical approach towards the concept of style and the evolution of modern languages. Du Bellay played an important role in the development of French as a literary language by drawing inspiration from ancient Greek and Latin sources. This paper seeks to analyze Pater's exploration of Du Bellay's contribution to the French language and literature and its implications for the plasticity of modern languages. Du Bellay's conception of the French language was rooted in the idea that it could be transformed into a literary language by enriching it with images and words drawn from ancient Greek and Latin. He believed that this process would elevate French from a vernacular language to a noble language fit for literary creation. His approach to translation is also innovating though somewhat ambiguous. While he valued the taste of the original, he also saw translation as a means of enriching his own language. Despite its title, Pater's essay goes beyond the case of Du Bellay by exploring the wider impact of *La Pléiade*, including the role of Pierre de Ronsard, in the renovation of the French language. It explores definitions of style and translation, and the plasticity of modern languages. It shows how the French language was transformed by Du Bellay, and how this transformation reflected a certain malleability of language to individual visions. Through his exploration of Du Bellay's contribution to French literature, Pater raises important questions about the role of individual creativity in shaping language and literature. In addition to analyzing Pater's exploration of Joachim Du

Bellay's contribution to the French language and literature, this paper will also compare Pater's perception of Du Bellay with that of the French critics of his time.

'Love and learning: Pater's continued flirt with the twelfth-century renaissance'

Lene Østermark-Johansen (University of Copenhagen)

The reception of Pater's first book has often been characterized by a fascination with the great individuals of the High Renaissance portrayed there: Leonardo, Botticelli, Michelangelo. Pater's ambition to become the new Vasari, to create a new literary genre which merged life writing with art criticism and historiography, has long been given much academic interest. His notion that the Renaissance began and ended in France has, however, not generated much interest, and the opening essay 'Aucassin and Nicolette' / 'Two Early French Stories' (1877 onwards) is one of the least discussed essays in the book. Unlike the 'High Renaissance' essays, it did not have its origin in a periodical essay but was written specifically for *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*. It was one of the essays to which he made the most significant changes in the second edition. Pater's interest in what has subsequently been called 'the twelfth-century Renaissance' as a significant precursor of the Italian Renaissance remained with him throughout his life, and his return to it in his fiction ('Denys l'Auxerrois', 'Apollo in Picardy', 'Tibalt the Albigense', the Chartres chapter in *Gaston*) and in his essays on the French cathedrals ('Notre Dame d'Amiens', 'Vézelay', 'Troyes') testify very clearly to his profound love of medieval France and Gothic architecture. My paper partly examines the seminal way in which Pater interweaves love and learning with a love of learning in the opening chapter as an entry point into a book which is full of controversial intellectual pursuits and amorous adventures. Although clothed in a layer of French romance, Aucassin, Abelard, Amis and Amile are controversial outsiders in their religious, intellectual, and romantic views, early revolutionaries paving the way for Leonardo, Michelangelo and Winckelmann, and Pater intended his readers to draw a long line from twelfth-century France to eighteenth-century Germany. Furthermore, I wish to discuss the continued presence of twelfth-century France in Pater's fiction and essays as evidence of the seminal role played by the opening essay in his first book.

'Georges Duthuit's *Le Rose et le noir* : Disseminating Walter Pater's Renaissance in the 1920s'

Bénédicte Coste (Université de Bourgogne)

My proposal presents a lesser-known study of Walter Pater published in 1923 (?) by a young undergraduate named Georges Duthuit (1891-1973). Hovering between different subjects, arguments, portraits, and disciplines, *Le Rose et le noir* was the first book-length publication of Duthuit, at the time having just obtained his Licence d'anglais (BA) in 1921, and about to embark on a career as a distinguished art historian specialized in Byzantine studies.

Duthuit soon stood as a distinguished Franco-British mediator in art matters, a committed scholar and administrator and, later in the 1940s, an editor of *Transition*. He remains arguably an outstanding art historian but I would like to focus on his first study devoted to the vexed personal and professional relationships of Walter Pater (the titular pink) and Oscar Wilde (the black). Relying on (sometimes plagiarizing) the extant available biographies of Pater, trying to vindicate Wilde without disparaging his intellectual mentor, Duthuit attempts to chart the importance of Pater on Wilde's deployment of Aestheticism before exploring the legacy of the movement in the 1920s in a time when it could have been described as a thing of the past.

The Renaissance appears as Pater's lasting imprint on Wilde with Duthuit recirculating ideas pertaining to aesthetics that, for the most part, had remained almost undiscussed in fin de siècle France. Pithy, ironical, subversive, sometimes awkward and not overly interested in accuracy, *Le Rose et le noir* also stands as one of the most original readings of Pater available in France in the early 1920s when translations of his writings started to appear after the first translation of *The Renaissance* by Roger-Cornaz was published in 1917.

Parallel Session G: The Dionysian and Pater's *Renaissance*

'Fauns and Satyrs in Pater'

Samuel Love (York)

The late nineteenth century saw the emergence of what Margot Louis termed the 'anti-Olympian topos', a renewed interest in the ancient mystery cults of deities such as Dionysus. The major text of this movement is often considered to be Friedrich Nietzsche's landmark *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), in which Nietzsche popularised the dichotomous relationship between the orderly, harmonious 'Apollonian' civilisation and its disorderly, licentious 'Dionysian' counterpart. However, as extant scholarship has shown, Nietzsche's logic was independently echoed in Britain in the work of Walter Pater, whose writings on Dionysus and his retinue of fauns and satyrs not only mirrored Nietzsche's but arguably articulated a more transgressive vision of classical myth. This paper will explore Pater's considerations of the interwoven figures of faun and satyr from *The Renaissance* through to his *Study of Dionysus* to argue that Pater's understanding of these creatures amounted to a radical act of queer reconceptualization. It will then demonstrate how Pater's queered models influenced transformative moments in British visual culture, tracing the figure of the faun through the decadent art of the 1890s to what Richard Warren defines as '[the] transition from nineteenth-century to modernist classical traditions', the Ballets Russes' *L'Après-midi D'un Faune* (1912).

The homoeroticism of Pater's engagements with classicism has been examined, as has its increasingly pronounced nature in his essays on the Dionysian retinue. What has not been studied, however, is that fauns and satyrs serve an illuminating double role in Pater's ekphrastic passages that would be echoed in British visual culture. Firstly, they function as submissive figures that invite queer desire, from Pater's identification of 'satyr-like' qualities in Michelangelo's Adam, whose 'whole form is gathered into an expression of mere expectancy and reception', to Praxiteles's satyrs who evince 'some puzzled trouble of youth, [that] you might wish for a moment to smoothe away, puckering the forehead a little'. Secondly, they function as models through which to articulate anxieties surrounding the vilification of this desire, described by Pater as 'dubious creatures, half-way between the animal and human kinds, speculating wistfully on their being, because not wholly understanding themselves and their place in nature'. Examining these figures through this lens, this paper explores fresh perspectives on the transgressive nature of Pater's classicism, its marked radicalism within the 'anti-Olympian topos' of late Victorian culture, and Pater's unelucidated importance in establishing a lineage of queer iconography in Decadent and modernist visual art.

'The God of Pater's *Renaissance*: Aestheticism and Dionysus'

Julianna K. Will (Acadia University, Canada)

In this paper, I suggest a transference—an imaginative translation—of some of the more radical aesthetic notions Pater articulates in *The Renaissance* into his delineation of Dionysian religion in "A Study of Dionysus." Pater begins the "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance* with the workings of the physical world. He describes a world of perpetual flux and of fathomless connectivity, in which bodily forms and elements meld into one another, constantly dissolving and reassembling, all a small thread in the web of the whole. But when "reflection begins to act upon those objects," to which all are connected, "the whole scope of observation is dwarfed to a narrow chamber of the individual mind." There is, then, a contradiction in all of this existence, a severing in the mind from what remains linked in the "perpetual motion" of the body.

In his 1876 essay "A Study of Dionysus," Pater implies this same sort of connectivity and severance in his descriptions of the god Dionysus. Pater places the deity at the pinnacle of the "hierarchy of the creatures of water and sunlight"—a fertile god of creation, who dissolves boundaries, both literal and figurative. Tapping into the divinity of the god creates moments of extreme ecstasy that are shared physically, yet are extraordinarily separate within the mind of each worshipper. To the early Greeks, Pater suggests, Dionysus "is the soul of the individual vine, first ... afterwards, the soul of the whole species, the spirit of fire and dew, alive and leaping through a thousand vines." Echoing his description of the phenomenal in the "Conclusion," Pater emphasizes the connectivity of the god's animus, both in the singular and the plural, its constant motion, its "leaps" through the physical, "gush by little gush." "Think what the effect would be," Pater asks, "if you could associate, by some trick of memory, a certain group of

natural objects, in all their varied perspective... with the being and image of an actual person.” This “trick of memory” is the Bacchanals—and Dionysus, as representative of hedonism, joy, and pleasure, is the “actual” god of Pater’s Renaissance.

Parallel Session H: Global Reception I: Europe

“‘Das Lebensbuch’: Eugen Diederichs’s publication of Walter Pater’s *Die Renaissance* (1902–10)” Katharina Herold-Zanker (Durham)

To this day there remains a startling gap in investigations when it comes to proving Walter Pater’s influential thinking on German literature as well as art history. However, from 1902 visionary publisher and author Eugen Diederichs (1867–1930) started to introduce Pater to wider German audiences. This talk will aim to gather the little evidence of Pater’s impact on leading figures of turn-of-the-century aestheticism such as poet Stefan George, whose friend Hugo von Hofmannsthal had read and admired Pater. Alongside works by members of the George Kreis such as Alfred Schuler, in 1904 Diederichs published Pater’s *Griechische Studien: Gesammelte Aufsätze* (trans. by Wilhelm Nobbe), *Plato und der Platonismus* (trans. by Hans Hecht), and in three editions *Die Renaissance: Studien in Kunst und Poesie* (trans. by Wilhelm Schölermann; pub. in three editions in 1902, 1906, 1910). Pater was in good society: Diederichs, who founded his own publishing house in Florence in 1896, devoted his attention to publicise eminent authors of antiquity (Plato, Aristotle), German Romanticism (Hölderlin, Novalis) as well as work by Pater’s contemporaries such as John Ruskin, Maurice Maeterlinck, and Friedrich Nietzsche. In his own words Diederichs was seeking to create a ‘meeting point for modern spirits’ (‘einen Versammlungsort moderner Geister’) – his declared goal was to establish a Kulturverlag. Pater was among his preferred English authors and as Diederichs repeatedly emphasised, he wanted to publish not just ‘books for reading’ [Lesebücher], but ‘books for living’ [Lebensbücher] that inspired the readers to translate theoretical ideas into action. Pater’s *Die Renaissance* certainly lived up to that expectation. *Die Renaissance* was exactly ‘not a textbook, but a life book and as such an unalloyed source of beauty’ – this is how the publisher’s catalogue of 1906 announced the second edition. My paper will highlight how the perception of Pater changed in a transnational context: Once perceived as the notorious pamphlet of the British aesthetic movement, through Diederichs’s promotion, Pater’s book came to be read as a text preparing a Germanic cultural revival, which gathered pace from the 1910s onwards.

‘The Reception of Walter Pater’s *The Renaissance* in Austria and Germany—between aestheticism and “Lebensphilosophie”’

Ulrike Stamm (Pädagogische Hochschule Oberösterreich, Linz)

In my paper I want to outline two phases of the reception of Pater’s *The Renaissance* in Austrian and German literature, namely around 1900 and around 1940.

The first part of my paper will deal with Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s enthusiastic response to *The Renaissance* in his essay on Walter Pater in 1894. I will show how Hofmannsthal first situated Pater’s ideas in the context of the ongoing debates on “decadence” – understood as an aesthetic program and also as a psychological diagnosis – and “dilettantism”. Pater’s aestheticism seemed for Hofmannsthal to offer an alternative to these art theories which dominated the 1890s as he finds in Pater’s ideas a fusion of a theory of autonomous aesthetic form with an emphatic notion of life which he could connect with Nietzsche’s writings. I will then analyze Hofmannsthal’s lyrical drama *Die Frau am Fenster* which is situated in the period of the Renaissance. Here Hofmannsthal translates these ideas into a fictional world and takes up Pater’s “aesthetic historicism” as this play deals with the question what role the historical past can play in the present. In addition I will focus on the fact that Hofmannsthal in this drama genders these debates on art and life as he introduces a female protagonist.

In the second part of my paper I will outline the response to *The Renaissance* by Rudolf Borchardt, a lesser known German author and friend of Hofmannsthal whose literary works, essays and translations have only been re-discovered and republished during the last twenty years. Borchardt’s essay on Walter Pater appeared in 1939 in the Swiss journal *Basler Nachrichten*. This essay is

especially interesting because Borchardt here translated parts of “The Conclusion” into German providing through his free version an original interpretation of Pater’s main ideas. I will end my paper with the question which role the historical situation of the late 1930s played in this transformation of Pater, especially with regard to then dominant notions of vitality and strength.

Parallel Session I: Pater, Organicism and the Natural World

‘Vitality of form in Pater’s Michelangelo’

Thomas Hughes (The Courtauld Institute of Art)

For Pater, the sculpture, fresco and drawings of Michelangelo offer an opportunity to explore the vitality of form. In this way, Pater’s interpretation of the Renaissance artist is closely intertwined with John Ruskin’s. My paper proposes Pater’s dialogue with Ruskin crystallises issues including sexuality and death, body and spirit, matter and form, nature and representation, at play in the larger context of nineteenth-century Michelangelo reception. In ‘Modern Painters’ 2, 1846, republished 1869, Ruskin writes a homoerotically explicit analysis of Michelangelo’s ‘imagination penetrative’. With palpitating flesh and tongue imagery, Ruskin fantasises about Michelangelo’s imaginative faculty penetrating gorgeous substance, taking possession of fiery essence and recreating this vitality in sculpted and painted matter. Ruskin’s infamous Oxford lecture of June 1871, published 1872, reverses the terms of 1846 to argue Michelangelo sculpts and depicts deathly, swollen formlessness devoid of interior life. Pater’s ‘The Poetry of Michelangelo’, November 1871, republished in ‘Studies in the History of the Renaissance’ 1873, brilliantly condenses and transforms Ruskin’s two interpretations. Like early Ruskin, for Pater, Michelangelo’s art bursts with life: ‘a convulsive energy’ and ‘an energy of conception’ seem ‘to break through all the conditions of comely form’; the ‘brooding spirit of life itself is there; and the summer may burst out in a moment’. The nonhuman, or nature, play significant yet different roles in Pater and Ruskin’s analyses. For Pater, as for early Ruskin, Michelangelo’s figures enfold the essence of the nonhuman within them and as such, somewhat paradoxically, they are the very epitome of naturalism. Late Ruskin uses Michelangelo to pursue an argument about the draining of vitality from organic form under modernity, which he pursues across multiple Oxford lectures 1871–2. My paper will also argue that, in their different ways, Pater and Ruskin approach the limits of the search for vitality in form—in this way the paper will offer a moment or two of critique of the new materialism that has inspired some of its insights. At these limits, Ruskin gives vivid new flesh to his moral argument about nature. For Pater, rather beautifully, the strange, sweet fury of Michelangelo’s ‘half-emergent form’ dissolves into the hushed wisps of deathly ‘formlessness’. Pater and Ruskin agreed on this ultimate point, though: for Michelangelo, the body is the universe.

‘Eco-aestheticism: Paterian Love for the Local’

Dennis Denisoff (University of Tulsa)

As many scholars have demonstrated, Walter Pater’s writing influenced a number of later formulations of aestheticist and decadent personalities, lifestyles, and worldviews. To date, however, his contributions to an aesthetics of what has recently come to be understood as bio-network intimacy have been less richly explored. Arthur Symons, in his introduction to the 1919 Modern Library edition of *The Renaissance*, does note that Pater “asks for no ‘larger flowers’ than the best growth of the earth; but he would choose them flower by flower, and for himself” (xiv). Later in the introduction, Symons recalls Pater admiring a French peasant at one of “the little wild beast shows” who appreciated not the tiger but “the wolf, a creature he might have seen in his own woods” (xxi). This is not the decadent exoticism often associated with Pater’s influence. Symons observations gesture not toward Pater’s view of taste as a cultured refinement but, instead, to his intense appreciation for the local elements of a person’s own ecology.

In these instances, Pater recognizes beauty or attraction residing not in objects but in an attitude of attentiveness that suggests an unabashed intimacy or even a sort of self-recognition with the elements of one’s everyday ecology. In the “Preface” to *The Renaissance*, he asks of that which might give pleasure, “How is my nature modified by its presence, and under its influence?” This investment in the local and immediate accords with a common perspective of Victorian (and current) environmentalism, where

emphasis was placed neither on global issues of foreign resource extraction and colonial imperialism, nor on conceptions of closed ecologies operating on planetary or cosmic scales, but on seemingly more immediate concerns arising from the negative impact of industrialization and urbanization on British peoples' daily lives. Victorian notions of aesthetics in relation to local environmental politics are commonly associated with John Ruskin and William Morris, but in my talk I wish to address the unique eco-aestheticist intimacy in Pater's *Renaissance* and subsequent indebted works such as Vernon Lee's *Hortus Vitae* (1904) and William Sharp's *Where the Forest Murmurs* (1906).

“The growing revelation of the mind to itself”: Context and Implications of Aesthetic Criticism's Determinism

James Brophy (University of Maine)

This paper explores the context and implications of the determinism of Pater's thought and critical method. I begin with the context of the Westminster Review, in which Pater placed his earliest critical essays. Westminster had increasingly published reviews emphasizing philosophically radical, materialist deterministic conclusions in fields including electromagnetism, neurological physiology, and evolutionary biology. Scholars have noted as well the similarity of Pater's notion of the 'house of thought' by the time of his 'The Child in the House', to the psychological deterministic work of James Sully. I suggest that Aesthetic Criticism is Pater's attempt to do for aesthetic experience what so many were doing for their respective sciences, namely to explore the implications of material determinism, to reveal the 'magic web woven through and through us' that bears in it 'the central forces of the world'. Indeed, Pater uses a chemical metaphor in the 'Preface' to suggest that a critic's response to a painting (or book, or 'fair personality') is as beyond the control of either critic or artist as the observation of the behavior of a chemical compound is beyond the control either chemist or chemical.

I will then lay out some practical implications of Aesthetic Criticism's determinism, drawing especially on 'Winckelmann' and the late 'The Aesthetic Life' manuscript. Pater suggests that the deterministic conclusions of 'modern science' create a defining disillusionment in modern life. By emphasizing that one's aesthetic reactions and sensibilities are determined by a complex nexus of largely cultural determinants, art criticism becomes simultaneously a work of self-discovery ('the revelation of the mind to itself') and investigation in culture both present and past. But AC also emphasizes the role of the critic for helping art to restore a 'sense of freedom' to the disillusioned modern masses. How this might look for a practicing aesthetic critic today has not been considered, even as the last decade or so has seen a renaissance in Pater Studies. In treating art as the product of a culturally and historically situated personality subsisting in the matter of 'style', Aesthetic Criticism joins both historicist assumptions in criticism with the affective allegiance of critical methods gaining traction in today's literary critical communities. We have much to learn from Pater still.

Parallel Session J: Global Reception II: America and Korea

'Reading *The Renaissance* in Edith Wharton's "republic of the spirit"'

Anna Girling (Institute of English Studies, University of London)

In this paper I will explore one particular afterlife of Walter Pater's *Renaissance*: Lily Bart's struggle to enter the 'republic of the spirit' in Edith Wharton's 1905 novel *The House of Mirth*. Wharton was a deeply engaged reader of Pater's, and her copy of *The Renaissance* is marked up throughout. Wharton also owned a number of books published by the Boston-based 'literary pirate' Thomas Mosher. Mosher was a key figure in the posthumous publication of Pater in the US in the late 1890s and early 1900s – and Pater's works, especially *The Renaissance*, played a major part in Mosher's construction of a decadent 'Republic of the book-lover' in the fin-de-siècle US. Building on the work of Laurel Brake, David Weir, and Kirsten MacLeod on the circulation and reception of literary aestheticism and decadence in the US, I will first consider the significance of Pater's prominence in Mosher's 'Republic' for the way in which the former's work, including *The Renaissance*, was received in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century US. I will then discuss how Wharton's work can be read as a response to Pater, and to the way in which his work circulated in the

fin-de-siècle US. In particular I will consider how Wharton's novel celebrates the conclusion to The Renaissance, while at the same time inviting the reader to question the egalitarianism of the decadent or aesthetic 'republic of letters' constituted by readers of Pater's work.

'Pater's Spirit and Pound's Renaissance' **James Douthwaite (University of Jena)**

Ezra Pound expended a great deal of energy defining his career in opposition to the kind of criticism embodied by Walter Pater, whom he felt was responsible for what he termed the 'softness' of the nineties (see Letters 196). Pound went so far as to insist in his "Instigations" (1920), that he had not 'attempted the Paterine art of appreciation, e.g., as in taking the perhaps sole readable paragraph of Pico Mirandola and writing an empurpled descant' (156). It seems definitive, that for Pound, the author of the Renaissance was anathema.

This attitude obscures Pound's debt to Pater, however. Indeed, I contend that Pound's antipathy amounts to protesting too much, and that Pater was one of the central critical influences on Pound's work, with "The Renaissance" of particular significance. In my paper, I will argue that Pound's work demonstrates that the modernist grasp of the Renaissance was Paterian. I will do this by means of two examples: first, Pound's first book of criticism, "The Spirit of Romance" (1910), which focusses on the poetry of the middle ages, particularly the Provençal troubadours. Nowhere, however, do we have the 'spirit' to which Pound refers defined. In his introduction, Pound writes that 'there had been in the written Latin itself a foreboding of the spirit which was, in great part, to be characteristic of the literature of the Middle Ages' (2), but this spirit is not then outlined. Perhaps the closest we come is the following statement: 'the cult of Provence was...a cult of the emotions', while 'the cult of the Renaissance was a cult of culture' (235). We do, however, have extensive consideration of the 'spirit' of the poetry of Provence, of Italy, of France in Pater's "Renaissance". My contention is that Pound is relying heavily on his audience's acquaintance with Pater's use of the term, which I will demonstrate in the first part of my paper. In the second part, I will shift to the middle and end of Pound's career, and demonstrate the significance of the Italian Renaissance to Pound's "Cantos". My argument here is that the parts of the poem set in the Renaissance are set in one defined by Pater's famous book. From his treatment of the Malatesta family to his engagement with the art of Botticelli, Pound's "Cantos" move across a canvas painted by Pater. This is a cornerstone of his modernist legacy.

'A Master and a Disciple Who Studied Walter Pater in Korea' **Joori Lee (Chonnam National University, South Korea)**

The purpose of this paper is to explore the academic influence of two South Korean scholars, who studied and translated Walter Pater. The first scholar is Lee Yang-ha (1904-1963), a Korean English professor and essayist, who earned his degrees at Imperial University in Tokyo in the 1930s, and later studied at Harvard Graduate School for two years. He published Lee Yang-ha's Collection Essays, which includes "Pater's Prose" where he advocates Pater's aestheticism. The other scholar is Lee Deok-hyung, who learned from Lee Yang-ha at university and became an English professor in South Korea. After reading Lee Yang-ha's "Pater's Prose," he was motivated to read Pater's Marius the Epicurean (1885) and The Renaissance (1873). In 1982, he published a complete Korean version of The Renaissance. What seems interesting is that these scholars studied Pater when a majority of Korean intellectuals opposed the notion of aestheticism with the belief that it does not help sociopolitical progress in Korea. Specifically, Lee Yang-ha advocated Pater's aestheticism when most Korean people suffered from poverty shortly after being freed from Japanese colonial rule, and the communist camp and the democratic camp fought fiercely. His pupil, Lee Deok-hyung published the translation of Renaissance in 1982, the time when the former president, Chun Doo-hwan's dictatorship was more and more severe, and many college students fought against the government and lost their lives. This study will discuss what motivations led them to focus on Pater, and also examine how their works on Pater have been received among Korean scholars.

Parallel Session K: Pater and Style

‘Walter Pater and the Matter of Style’

Thomas Albrecht (Tulane University)

In the conclusion of his late essay “Style” (1888), Walter Pater abruptly introduces a distinction between good art and great art. He defines the former in stylistic terms, in terms of “colour” and “mystic perfume” and “reasonable structure.” And he defines the latter in ethical terms, as an “enlargement” of readers’ and viewers’ human sympathies. This distinction has repeatedly confounded the essay’s commentators, who find it inconsistent with what they take to be the essay’s purely formalist polemic. In his essay on Pater, Harold Bloom for instance dismisses the conclusion as disingenuous, contrary to the overall essay and to Pater’s writings more generally. He interprets it as a symptom of a societal anxiety that causes Pater here to falsify his critical vision. Contrary to assessments like Bloom’s, I demonstrate in my paper that Pater’s conclusion in “Style” is very much true to Pater’s larger critical vision, a vision in which style and ethics are not only closely interrelated but effectively inextricable. For Pater, I show, ethical insights can and do inhere within art, and within the form and style of a given artwork, and within the sensations that art and its stylistic elements may elicit in us. But even more to the point, ethical insights or truths are for Pater not conceptually distinct from form and style in the first place. Rather, Pater repeatedly points to a formal, stylistic materiality that necessarily characterizes our ethical insights and axioms. To support this argument, my paper examines relevant passages on style from *Appreciations* (1889); *The Renaissance* (1873); and “The School of Giorgione” (1877).

“‘and human life’”: The Aesthetic Critic and What is Real in *The Renaissance*’

Jonah Siegel (Rutgers University)

“The objects with which aesthetic criticism deals—music, poetry, artistic and accomplished forms of human life.”

“What is this song or picture, this engaging personality presented in life or in a book, to me?”

“All the objects with which he has to do, all works of art, and the fairer forms of nature and human life.”

It will be no surprise to any thoughtful reader to note that Pater’s lists of the categories that will interest the aesthetic critic include items that will never appear in any curriculum of formal study. Indeed, many of the reasons why the natural elements we identify by the term human life might be cited in relation to artificial cultural objects in *The Renaissance*, will be familiar to the student of later aesthetes: the idea that life may be led artistically, that its relationship to artifice is closer than generally thought, and so on. Criticism has also done important work demonstrating the ways in which life emerging out of, or in relation to, death is a crucial preoccupation of the critic, motivated by personal as well as cultural concerns.

My presentation, part of a project of thinking through the experience of reading the book, of what Pater does with his prose style, will consider not simply the conceptual elements of the topic of human life, but the way in which those elements shape the emergence of the concern in the writing. In short, my project will be to highlight the effects Pater achieves by placing the topic of the individual life into his prose, often in a sequence or list such as those in the instances from the Preface cited above. At the intersection of individual pleasure recognized, of deeply personal desire valorized, and of a humbling recognition of continuity with the natural world that seems just the opposite of the individual or personal, the topic of human life becomes at once a touchstone of significance for the reader and a challenging interpretative crux.

Parallel Session L: Pater and Modernism

‘Eliot and Pater’s Renaissance’

Paolo Bugliani (Tor Vergata University of Rome)

Walter Pater’s Renaissance, in addition and beyond its famous conclusion, was also the text where Pater first articulated a ‘grammar’ of the Gods in exile. Especially in the Winkelmann essay, such a theme will evolve into a proper ‘paradigm for the history of the reception of Greece’ (Evangelista 2009: 24), and one of the most unavoidable antecedents of the belligerent pronouncements in literary tradition by Modernists. Against the grain of the often claimed distance between Modernism and Aestheticism, my contention is that between their champions (Eliot and Pater) exists indeed a fil rouge justifying a reconfiguration of some of Modernism’s most universally recognizable tenets, as for instance that of literary tradition. With the goal of adding to the still infrequent body of criticism on the subject, I would argue that T.S. Eliot’s “mythical method” could be read against Pater’s own profound historiographical study of the heritage of Greece. This would not only reinforce the already strong claims which argue for Pater’s instrumental role in the shaping of Modernism (Love 2006, Saunders 2010, Walter 2014), but also reassess Eliot’s own anti-romanticism, since any the unearthing of any instance of Pater’s presence can and must be interpreted as a harbinger of neo-romantic instances, especially when the textual vehicle is the Renaissance (Daley 2001: 58-64).

“‘The Writer Who From Words Made Blue and Gold and Green’”: Pater’s Queer Fantastic Aesthetic Lineage in Virginia Woolf

Sarah Potts (Michigan State University)

Published in *The Athenaeum* in 1920, Virginia Woolf’s essay “English Prose” describes Walter Pater as “the writer who from words made blue and gold and green; marble, brick, the wax petals of flowers; warmth too and scent; all things that the hand delighted to touch and the nostrils to smell” (135). Though one of few instances in which she writes explicitly of Pater, Woolf acknowledges Pater’s writing as a transformative act, making color, texture, warmth, and scent out of mere words. In this paper, I will approach the connections between Woolf and the aesthetic movement through the lens of the fantastic, asserting the centrality of Pater to Woolf’s understanding of the act of writing as having the power to create a magical experience out of the mundane. Through a reading of Woolf’s 1927 essay “Street Haunting: A London Adventure,” I will demonstrate how Woolf’s mode of observing the world—and her choice to outline those observations through a stream-of-consciousness writing style—mobilizes Pater’s aesthetic sensibility even in a text not typically read as fantastic. In doing so, Woolf not only links herself to the aestheticist’s elevated way of experiencing the magic of the world through the senses, but also aligns herself with an aesthetic vision of queerness centered around resistance to a capitalist, heterosexual emphasis on straight reproductive time, and the refusal of the impulse toward progress and productivity. By utilizing stream-of-consciousness, Woolf invites the reader to develop a Paterian sensitivity to detail and practice of observation that lingers and dawdles long enough to take in every facet of the magic of the everyday. In this way, stream-of-consciousness—perhaps Woolf’s most identifiably modernist stylistic form—is reframed through the fantastic as a kind of aesthetic portal out of the world of the “real” and mundane, and into the world of the sensory—a world which has, for Woolf, been transformed into a magical realm through a Paterian refashioning of our relationship to sensory information. Reading Woolf’s writing as imbued with an aesthetic fantastic sensibility yields a more complex understanding of the particular brand of queer politics she espoused in her work—an understanding that has the potential to transform our view of the entanglements between Woolf, Pater, modernism, aestheticism, and the fantastic.

