

Secreted Desires

*The Major Uranians:
Hopkins, Pater and Wilde*



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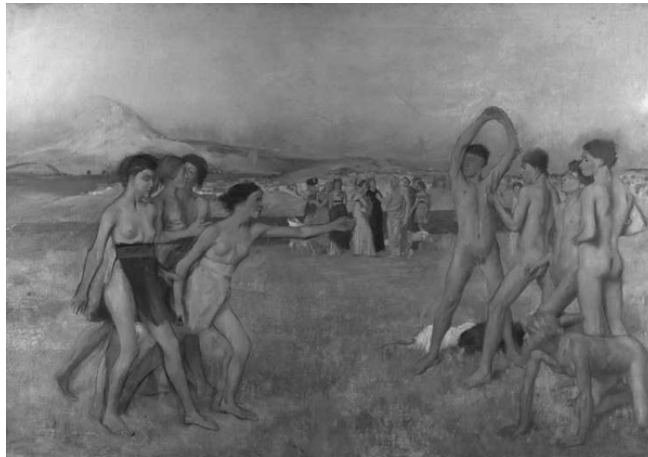
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Die Knabenliebe sei so alt wie die Menschheit, und man könne daher sagen, sie liege in der Natur, ob sie gleich gegen die Natur sei. Was die Kultur der Natur abgewonnen habe, werde man nicht wieder fahren lassen; es um keinen Preis aufgeben.

Paederasty is as old as humanity itself, and one can therefore say that it is natural, that it resides in nature, even if it proceeds against nature. What culture has won from nature will not be surrendered or given up at any price.

— A comment by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 7 April 1830



Young Spartans Exercising
Hilaire-Germain-Edgar Degas (1834-1917)
Oil on canvas, ca. 1860
National Gallery, London, UK

— 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.

(J. A. Symonds, *A Problem in Greek Ethics*)¹

The title I have chosen — *Secreted Desires: The Major Uranians: Hopkins, Pater and Wilde* — is intentionally provocative, prompted by my belief that literary criticism has shied away from or distorted any direct engagement of the paederastic elements within the lives and works of these Victorians, even in those instances where 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 paederastic elements often hidden beneath the complex surfaces of their texts, 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 in *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English ‘Uranian’ Poets from 1889 to 1930*.

To forestall criticism in this regard, let me stress from the outset that this volume is unapologetically monothematic: its singular aim is to demarcate the distinctly paederastic elements in the lives and works of a few writers whom I have chosen to dub the ‘Major Uranians’. In *no* regard is it an attempt to suggest that Gerard Manley Hopkins, Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde, or the aesthetic creations they produced can be reduced to a single motive or motif, however laudatory or anathematical that motive or motif. Since writers of this calibre may rightly be said to ‘contain multitudes’, an encompassing perspective on their lives and works requires a legion of considerations and approaches distinct from, as well as complementary to the monothematic engagement to follow. I fully recognise that, in order to accentuate the paederastic elements within the lives and works of these individuals, I have been forced to diminish other aspects that are equally or perhaps more vital, and I hope that my readers will pardon those occasions when, in what amounts to a veritable tug-of-war against almost all previous scholarship, I have pulled too forcefully in my own argumentative direction. Whether what follows is ultimately deemed an overdue corrective to previous scholarship or merely an exploration of a minor element within the lives

The ‘Inspiration’ — a comment by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 7 April 1830 — is quoted in the ‘Third Dialogue’ of André Gide’s defence of paederasty, *Corydon*, trans. by Richard Howard (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001 [1924]), p.91.

¹ John Addington Symonds, *A Problem in Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion* (London: Privately printed, [1901]), p.54.

and writings of those being considered, I feel that the project is a novel one and worthy of my own investment as well as that of my readers, for the Uranians and the culture they strove to actualise offers insights into a rarely considered aspect of the human condition.

However, I readily concede that to demarcate the distinctly paederastic elements in the lives and works of the ‘Major Uranians’ is to open myself to attack as a mere apologist, especially given the change of environment since Timothy d’Arch Smith’s *Love in Earnest* appeared, as Donald H. Mader explains:

Thirty years have passed [...] [and now] all erotic relationships between adults and minors are ‘abuse’; relations which cross class or racial lines are regarded as deeply suspect or rejected, socially if not by law, not because of the inequalities of the individuals involved, but because they are prisoners of social structures. A new paradigm, essentially political and not psychological, is in place, an ideal standard of equality, mutuality and reciprocity, which looks not to the dynamics of the relationship, but to the circumstances surrounding it. [...] Once this idea that sexual and social relations must be between equals was widely enough accepted, it became a tool for the acceptance of socially ‘reciprocal’ homosexual relationships too, and at the same time for the reclassification of age-structured sexual or erotic relations from merely being ‘immorality’ to being exploitation and ‘abuse’.¹

Nevertheless, let me assert from the outset that I am neither mounting an apologia nor aspiring to suggest that such paederastic 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 century ago: ‘The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name’.² I hope that this

¹ Donald H. Mader, ‘The Greek Mirror: The Uranians and Their Use of Greece’, *Journal of Homosexuality*, 49.3-4 (2005), pp.377-420 (p.411). On a number of points, Mader’s article serves as a corrective to Timothy d’Arch Smith’s *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English ‘Uranian’ Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970).

² His phrasing adjusts William Blackstone’s expression of abhorrence for ‘the infamous crime against nature’, which is ‘a crime not fit to be named; “*peccatum illud horribile, inter christianos non nominandum*” [that horrible crime not to be named among Christians]’ — *Commentaries on the Laws of England: A Facsimile of the First Edition of 1765-1769*, 4 vols (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), IV, pp.215-16. That such a phrase was a cultural as well as a legal and religious bludgeon, consider the concluding paragraph of one of the first reviews of Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* — [Rufus W. Griswold], *Criterion*, 1 (10 November 1855), p.24:

In our allusions to this book, we have found it impossible to convey any, even the most faint idea of its style and contents, and of our disgust and detestation of them, without employing language that cannot be pleasing to ears polite; but it

disclaimer will not be interpreted as merely a flourish, rhetorical diversion, self-protection, or disingenuousness when weighed against what follows. I have attempted throughout to retain that ‘strict indifference’ that Pater considered the first principle of scholarly engagement: hence, what follows contains *no* value judgments about paederasty, whether as practice or as desire. Readers are certainly free to speculate about my personal views, but they will find *no* specific instances where I express them.

From a sociological or anthropological perspective, the Uranians can be said to have constituted a distinctly subversive ‘subculture’ within Victorian society. ‘Subcultures exist’, explains Mike Brake, ‘where there is some form of organised and recognised constellation of values, behaviour and actions which is responded to as differing from the prevailing sets of norms’.¹ From a distanced, less-Uranian, less-histrionic perspective, this group can be seen in this light, as ‘a marginal group of writers, publishing in fringe journals’,² as 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’.³ However, I have deliberately eschewed the label ‘subculture’, for reasons.

The Victorian society in which the Uranians navigated never even countenanced the existence of ‘the paederastic’, except in vague religious, judicial, and (later) medical terms, which means that gauging the ways Victorian society interacted with, reacted to, facilitated, or thwarted ‘the paederastic’ is difficult, perhaps impossible.⁴ One can provide such analyses for topics as wide-

does seem that some one should, under circumstances like these, undertake a most disagreeable, yet stern duty. The records of crime show that many monsters have gone on in impunity, because the exposure of their vileness was attended with too great delicacy. ‘Peccatum illud horribile, inter Christianos non nominandum’.

¹ 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.

² 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).

³ James Eli Adams, ‘Gentleman, Dandy, Priest: Manliness and Social Authority in Pater’s Aestheticism’, *ELH*, 59.2 (1992), pp.441-66 (p.454). In *Modernism, Male Friendship, and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), Sarah Cole similarly asserts: ‘This group, often dubbed “the Uranians”, worked in painting and photography, as well as literature, [and] developed a recognized artistic subculture with a coded language of its own’ (p.28).

⁴ Since ‘paederasty’ derives from *paederastia*, a Latin word arising from the Greek word *paiderastês* (παιδραστής) — *pais* (παῖς) ‘boy’ + *erastês* (εραστής) ‘lover’ — ‘boy-love’ is merely a literal, modernized translation of the word I have chosen to employ. Since

ranging as female suffrage, the attitudes of soldiers during the Boer Wars, the frequenting of Kew Park, or views on suicide and masturbation. However, with ‘the paederastic’ and ‘the homoerotic’ — sins ‘not even to be named’ — there was simply no topicality for/within Victorian society at large. This is what legitimately allows Michel Foucault and his followers to establish 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. However, the rhetorical space that Foucault demarcates does not become in any way tangible until Wilde’s trials, accounting for the cardinal role Wilde plays in the drama of ‘homosexuality’. As for the paederastic (*not* homosexual) Uranians, the rhetorical space is quite different.

It would be at least as difficult to consider how external/internal power dynamics influenced the Uranians as it would for a secret society like the Freemasons, to which they are compared by Trevor Fisher: ‘[The Uranians had] a culture in which the inhabitants maintained a more than masonic secrecy to survive in a hostile environment’.¹ Fisher’s phrasing — *more than masonic secrecy* — is crucial, for at least the Freemasons have a range of established customs (such as handshakes), group meetings (even if only in secret), and a range of canonical texts (however esoteric). The Uranians had none of those features common to even a secret society, which is why, at best, they can be vaguely labelled a ‘fellowship of paederasts’, a ‘fellowship’ that was, in most cases, entirely textual, traceable only through bookplates, inscriptions, dedications, and acceptance letters, evidence that they had *some* interaction. Only in rare cases are there details validating that these individuals were more than textual acquaintances. As Nicholas Edsall explains, although the Uranians constituted ‘something approaching an identifiable group’, they were far too ‘ephemeral’ actually to be labelled as such:

The heyday of what have come to be called the Uranian poets was brief, lasting only from the late 1880s until the persecution of Oscar Wilde sent them scurrying for cover. They did not resurface until more than a decade later, and then more cautiously [...] Their existence as something approaching an identifiable group would likely have been ephemeral in any case. Their audience was, to say the least, a highly specialized one, and they were entirely dependent on a handful of publications for encouragement and support.²

most of the prominent Uranians were Oxford graduates in Classics, they tended to use the term ‘paederasty’, though they employ both terms indiscriminately and synonymously, often in the same sentence, as Symonds does in the following: ‘What the Greeks called paiderastia, or boy-love, was a phenomenon of one of the most brilliant periods of human culture’ — *Greek Ethics* [1901], p.1. Because of their emotive nature, as well as clinical and legal ring, I have avoided the terms ‘paedophilia’ and ‘ephebophilia’ throughout.

¹ Trevor Fisher, ‘Oscar Wilde: The Myth of Martyrdom’, *Historian*, 77.2 (2003), pp.30-38 (p.32).

² Nicholas C. Edsall, *Toward Stonewall: Homosexuality and Society in the Modern Western World* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), p.158. In *Strangers*:

Edsall's claim that the Uranians were 'entirely dependent on a handful of publications for encouragement and support' is, in many ways, hyperbolic, especially given that the history of their publication in periodicals can be summarised in a single paragraph.

For a seven-year period, the Victorian Uranians attempted to promulgate their ideas through a few periodicals — *The Artist*, *The Spirit Lamp*, and *The Chameleon*. From 1888-94, *The Artist and Journal of Home Culture*, then under the editorship of Charles Philip Castle Kains Jackson (1857-1933), 'printed Uranian material in profusion'.¹ In fact, Kains Jackson literally 'employed the magazine as a front for purveying Uranian material',² though he did so tactfully, more often than not only printing Uranian verse when it was occasioned by a review of an artist such as Henry Scott Tuke (1858-1929). Discreetly hidden within *The Artist's* closely printed columns, this Uranian material remained relatively unnoticed, except by those anticipating its presence. Such was not the case at Oxford University, where several undergraduates were attempting to trumpet the virtues of paederasty in a way that was anything but discreet.³ Under the editorship of Lord Alfred Douglas (1870-1945), a friend of Kains Jackson, *The Spirit Lamp: An Aesthetic, Literary and Critical Magazine* published Uranian material in 1893, the most infamous of its fare being the 'Hyacinth' letter sent to Douglas by Oscar Wilde, a love-letter that was recast as a sonnet by the French writer Pierre Louis Louÿs in an attempt to forestall its use as blackmail, the original having been lifted from Douglas's possession during an assignation with a male prostitute.⁴ However, Douglas soon passed the paederastic lamp to a far-

Homosexual Love in the Nineteenth Century (New York: Norton, 2004), Graham Robb writes:

The sheer variety of these groups and coteries makes it hard to identify anything like a coherent 'gay community'. Some groups were exclusively working class; many were open to homosexual and bisexual men and women, others were tightly closed. Some of the most influential groups, like the Cambridge 'Apostles' or the coterie at Exeter College, Oxford, that published *The Chameleon*, were groups of friends rather than spontaneous expressions of gay culture. [...] The only real homosexual 'subcultures' in which established customs survived from one generation to the next were institutional — prisons, brothels, navies, or the American hobo subculture. (Pp.167-68)

In the earliest assessment of the Uranians (or 'the Calamites'), Walter Breen, under the pseudonym of J. Z. Eglinton, labels them 'a Victorian Paidophilic Poetaster Clique', a label that, at least for the minor Uranians, would be difficult to challenge. See J. Z. Eglinton, *Greek Love* (New York: Oliver Layton, 1964 [London: Neville Spearman, 1971]), pp.375-405: 'The Calamites: A Victorian Paidophilic Poetaster Clique'.

¹ D'Arch Smith, p.17. *The Artist and Journal of Home Culture* was published in London by William Reeves.

² D'Arch Smith, p.60.

³ *The Spirit Lamp* was published in Oxford by James Thornton; *The Chameleon*, in London by Gay & Bird.

⁴ See Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde*, rev. edn (New York: Knopf, 1988), p.393.

more-daring undergraduate, John Francis Bloxam (1873-1928), under whose editorship *The Chameleon: A Bazaar of Dangerous and Smiling Chances* appeared in December 1894, containing such infamous fare as his own story 'The Priest and the Acolyte' and Douglas's poem 'Two Loves', both of which would later serve as evidence for the prosecution during Wilde's trials. Not surprisingly, *The Chameleon* did not survive into a second issue: once its contents became known, the authorities of Oxford University stepped in to suppress the magazine. A quarter of a century would pass before the appearance of another Uranian periodical, one rivalling *The Chameleon* in longevity. Under an anonymous editor, a single issue of *The Quorum: A Magazine of Friendship* was circulated in January 1920, about which d'Arch Smith writes: 'A sample number was printed and circulated to members of the British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology and to the copyright libraries, but for some reason, financial or other, no other number appeared'.¹ A single paragraph is indeed sufficient to encapsulate the entire history of Uranian periodical publication.

The history of Uranian organizations can be summarised in half that space, for only one organization ever existed, the one mentioned above in connection with that solitary issue of *The Quorum* — The British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology (or the BSSSP). Founded in London in 1913 by figures such as Edward Carpenter (1844-1929), George Cecil Ives (1867-1950), and Laurence Housman (1865-1959), the BSSSP held its inaugural meeting on 8 July 1914. For the next three decades, the BSSSP attempted, through its meetings and publications, 'to enquire into all forms of sexual pathology and psychology but, on the evidence of several ex-members, it was in truth little more than a cabal of homosexuals'.² 'The importance of the Society', according to d'Arch Smith, 'is that it was the only official organization that the Uranians ever formed'.³ However, Lesley A. Hall is unconvinced that the evidence supports such a claim:

It has been suggested that 'the concerns of male homosexuals' dominated the Society, and among contemporaries there was a persistent impression [...] that it 'concerned itself almost exclusively with the homosexual question'. The actual interests and activities of the Society do not really bear this out.

The Society seldom seems to have engaged in activism, consistent with its agenda of combining 'insistent investigation' with 'suspension of judgement': it promoted an attitude of debate and enquiry rather than any 'cut and dried method' for dealing with problems.⁴

¹ D'Arch Smith, p.140. *The Quorum: A Magazine of Friendship* has been reproduced in a facsimile edition, with intro. by d'Arch Smith (North Pomfret, VT: Elysium Press, 2001).

² D'Arch Smith, p.137.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Lesley A. Hall, "'Disinterested Enthusiasm for Sexual Misconduct": The British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology, 1913-47', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 30 (1995), pp.665-86 (pp.671; 676). I would like to thank Dr Hall for providing me with a copy of this article.

Whether truly ‘Uranian’ or not, since the BSSSP was not founded until two decades after Wilde’s trials, it has no particular bearing on the considerations of this volume, save to display that the Uranians had *no* formal organisation to speak of during the Victorian period — and, if Hall is correct, *no* formal organisation afterwards either.

Given the near-impossibility of establishing a public venue for expressing their ideas and desires — a venue such as a sustained publication or an official organisation — the Uranians might appear prime candidates for Harris Mirkin’s analysis of the general pattern of sexual politics, according to which ‘battles about sexual ideologies occur in two phases’, the first of which is a period of ‘pre-debate’ in which the struggle exists ‘before the issues become politically visible’. Such was the phase in which the Uranians lived. Mirkin asserts that, in this ‘pre-debate’ phase, material evidence and formulated arguments are ‘harder to detect’, because ‘dominant groups deny that there is anything to discuss, asserting that existing arrangements are self-evident and intuitively good’. The second phase, on the other hand, involves ‘a visible political fight’. ‘The battle to prevent the battle’, according to Mirkin, ‘is probably the most significant and hard fought of the ideological battles. At issue is the question of the legitimacy of the subordinate groups, since illegitimate groups are not recognized as putting forth valid claims’. The mechanisms employed to ‘prevent the battle’ require that ‘sexual dissidents (deviants) are not heard by the dominant society’, a refusal to hear that is tied to the fact that, during the first phase, ‘sexual issues are not viewed as legal conflicts. Sex is viewed as separate from politics, and the deviant group is not seen as being entitled to legal or political rights’. Because of this, the legal system ‘rarely challenges the dominant ideology [...] and does not protect deviant sexual speech and action’. Such a legal stance allows for ‘sharp limits [to be] placed on [the deviant group’s] speech and art on the grounds that they are disgusting, pornographic, dangerous to the social order and seductive of the innocent’. In essence, such ‘deviants’ are refused the very mechanisms of speech — whether those involve words or images — for the only *legitimate* form that such speech can take is that which affirms ‘the correctness of the dominant paradigm, demonizing and ridiculing those who question it and trivializing their arguments’.¹ Although the Uranians

¹ These passages are quoted from a manuscript copy — sent to me by Dr Harris Mirkin, Associate Professor and Chair of Political Science at the University of Missouri, Kansas City — of what became his controversial ‘The Pattern of Sexual Politics: Feminism, Homosexuality and Pedophilia’, *Journal of Homosexuality*, 37.2 (1999), pp.1-24. Given the public, political, and academic outcry against his article, to Dr Mirkin’s playful comment that ‘It should be fun teaching in the Czech Republic. Do they have the same sexual panics as we have here?’ (E-mail from 27 Nov 2005) — I can only hope the answer is ‘No’.

It must be admitted that Mirkin’s claims presuppose that the ‘sexual dissidents (deviants) [...] not heard by the dominant society’ feel safe enough ‘to speak’. This is probably not the case, especially since the ‘dominant society’ expects these ‘sexual

clearly fall within this period of ‘pre-debate’ — since paederasty, according to Mirkin, has yet to reach the second phase in modern Western society — I have deliberately eschewed his phasal analysis, for the same reason I have eschewed the label ‘subculture’.

The problem with labelling the Uranians a ‘subculture’ or with employing Mirkin’s aptly delineated ‘phases of sexual politics’ is that Pater and his fellow Uranians would have argued vehemently against such a label or such a pattern, histrionically believing instead 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 absorbed element in our intellectual life; it is a conscious tradition in it. (Pater, *Renaissance* 1893, p.158)¹

In essence, the ‘Uranians’ — whose Hellenic appellation derives from both the ‘heavenly’ love described in Plato and the birth of Aphrodite as described in Hesiod² — were marginal only in the sense of Anaxagoras’s audacious statement

dissidents (deviants)’ to identify themselves and to advance their claims within the discourses and other structures commanded and policed by the ‘dominant society’. This point is at the core of the following comment made recently by philosopher Daniel Dennett: ‘If people insist on taking themselves out of the arena of reasonable political discourse and mutual examination, they forfeit their right to be heard’ — Gordy Slack, ‘Dissecting God’ [an interview with Daniel Dennett], *Salon* (8 February 2006) <<http://www.salon.com/books/int/2006/02/08/dennett>> [accessed 8 February 2006]. Self-preservation necessitated that the Uranians *not* put themselves into ‘the arena of reasonable political discourse and mutual examination’: theirs was a sanguine choice to forfeit ‘their right to be heard’ by the ‘dominant society’ rather than to forfeit ‘their right to be’.

¹ About ‘Greek love’ and ‘Hellenism’ commonly implying some form of homoeroticism during the Victorian period, Eldrid Herrington notes: ‘It is odd that this sense remains unrecorded in the *OED*’ — ‘Hopkins and Whitman’, *Essays in Criticism*, 55.1 (2005), pp.39-57 (p.47).

² In *Classical Mythology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), Mark P. O. Morford and Robert J. Lenardon write:

Plato’s *Symposium* [...] claims that Aphrodite Urania, the older of the two, is stronger, more intelligent, and spiritual, whereas Aphrodite Pandemos, born from both sexes, is more base, and devoted primarily to physical satisfaction. It is imperative to understand that the Aphrodite who sprang from Uranus [...] becomes, for philosophy and religion, the celestial goddess of pure and spiritual love and the antithesis of Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus and Dione, the goddess of physical attraction and procreation. This distinction between sacred and profane love is one of the most profound archetypes in the history of civilization.

(P.171)

In *Theogony*, lines 154-210, Hesiod describes the dethronement of Uranus — who is castrated by his son Cronus — and how, from the semen of his severed phallus,

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’:

Writers like the Uranians invoke the textual authority of classical precedent, supplemented by a select tradition of post-classical works (the Bible, Shakespeare, Montaigne) and in that sense point to a trans-historical phenomenon, a continuous history of male love from Homer to Hopkins. This combination — historicity in tandem with an ideal of historically extensive male community — takes us straight to the organizations which in many ways governed normative ideas of masculinity during the nineteenth century: the public schools and the universities.¹

The Uranians’ histrionic perspective on themselves and their role in Western culture is also diametrically opposed to Mirkin’s insistence that ‘during a Phase I sexual debate the overwhelming majority of the deviant group accepts the dominant group’s negative judgment [of them and their practices]’.²

The Uranians’ pride and defiance was assisted by the fact that the ‘Hellenic element’ — at least in its tamer manifestations — had indeed ‘started to the surface’ during the Victorian period, its flow partly facilitated by far more famous advocates of the Grecian. Amidst their attacks on bourgeois society and their attempts to institute university reform, Matthew Arnold (1822-88), John

Aphrodite Urania is born, a coupling of the deity of the sky with the sea. In ‘Aestheticism’s True Colors: The Politics of Pigment in Victorian Art, Criticism, and Fashion’, in *Women and British Aestheticism*, ed. by Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis Psomiades (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1999), pp.172-91, Alison Victoria Matthews points to a semantic play in J. A. Symonds’s *In the Key of Blue*: ‘Blue would also seem a natural color for a Uranian poet, since the appellation is derived from the Greek *Ouranos*, or sky’ (p.185). Given that the prominent Uranians were trained Classicists, I consider ludicrous the view, widely held, that ‘Uranian’ derives from the German apologetics and legal appeals written by Karl-Heinrich Ulrichs (1825-95) in the 1860s, though his coinage *Urning* — employed to denote ‘a female psyche in a male body’ — does indeed derive from the same Classical sources, particularly the *Symposium*. Further, the Uranians did not consider themselves the possessors of a ‘female psyche’; the Uranians are not known, as a group, to have read works such as *Forschungen über das Räthsel der mannmännlichen Liebe* (*Research on the Riddle of Male-Male Love*); the Uranians were opposed to Ulrichs’s claims for androphilic, homoerotic liberation at the expense of the paederastic; and, even when a connection was drawn to such Germanic ideas and terminology, it appeared long after the term ‘Uranian’ had become commonplace within Uranian circles, hence was not a ‘borrowing from’ but a ‘bridge to’ the like-minded across the Channel by apologists such as Symonds.

¹ Cole, p.31.

² From Mirkin manuscript copy.

Stuart Mill (1806-73), and Benjamin Jowett (1817-93) 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 [that has] affected the very machinery of our education, and is in itself a kind of homage to it. (Arnold)¹

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)²

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)³

Through such statements, the Victorian ‘Greek chorus’ — Arnold, Mill, and Jowett — *unwittingly* facilitated a ‘suspect’ aspect of the ‘Hellenic element’ that assisted in the emergence of the Uranians as a group, a ‘suspect’ aspect that linked the ‘essential character’ and ‘wonderful significance’ of the ancient Greeks to their celebration of paederastic love and its attendant pedagogical practices. Arnold, Mill, and, to a lesser extent, Jowett seem never to have foreseen the Uranian claim that paederastic love came enmeshed with their own neo-Grecian values — if they had, they would probably have hoped, alongside Constantin Ackermann, that Socrates would be recognised as ‘endeavour[ing] by his pretended paederasty to supplant the common and shameful vice, and to kindle in its stead, in their youthful souls, an enthusiastic love for all the beautiful and good’.⁴ Put simply, the Uranians found the Grecian values of Arnold, Mill, and

¹ Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), in ‘*Culture and Anarchy*’ and *Other Writings*, ed. by Stefan Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.66-67.

² John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859), ed. by Kathy Casey (New York: Dover, 2002), p.52.

³ Benjamin Jowett, *The Dialogues of Plato Translated into English with Analyses and Introductions by B. Jowett, M.A. in Five Volumes*, 3rd edn rev. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892), III: *The Republic, Timaeus, Critias*, p.iii.

⁴ C. Ackermann, *The Christian Element in Plato and the Platonic Philosophy*, trans. by Samuel Ralph Asbury (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1861 [1835]), p.174.

Jowett advantageous and malleable for paederastic purposes that were not 'pretended'. In fact, according to Mader, those Grecian values, encapsulated in words and images, became a 'culture' of sorts through the Uranians' constant allusions to them:

Although in 1970 d'Arch Smith was at pains to dismiss any consideration of the Uranians as a movement — and I would agree that one must not overstate their degree of organization — thirty years on I propose that we must re-evaluate the Uranians' use of these [Greek] allusions, not as a means of evasion [as d'Arch Smith argues] but precisely as a very conscious and deliberate strategy for a sexual cultural politics through art. [...] Far from a means of evasion, allusions to the Greeks were a tool for valorization in a strategy for social acceptance.

Surveying the allusions, one sees that they are largely to asymmetrical relationships, either clearly age-structured, or between a god and a mortal, or a warrior/hero and his protégé [...], or various combinations of these. [...] Such relationships today are regarded as inherently morally culpable, paternalistic and patronizing at best, exploitative or even 'abuse' at the worst; to hold up such relationships as an ideal is accordingly viewed either as self-justification on the part of the 'superordinate' party, or hypocrisy. Yet this inequality is part of the objective outline that Uranians saw in their Greek mirror; the Greek relationships were asymmetrical, and the Uranians saw themselves in this outline and filled in their own features.¹

When the Victorian Uranians looked in the 'Greek mirror', they saw not only gods and their beloveds (Zeus and Ganymede, Hercules and Hylas, Apollo and Hyacinth, Pan and Daphnis) and heroes and theirs (Achilles and Patroclus, Orestes and Pylades), but also a plethora of concrete paederastic figures and images. Had not Alexander the Great (the lover of Hephaestion) been the student of Aristotle, the student of Plato (the lover of Aster), the student of the Socrates (the 'idealised' lover of Alcibiades)? Had not Alexander, at Chaeronea, defeated the Theban Sacred Band, that 'invincible' army of paederastic lovers, a battalion of one hundred and fifty warriors, each aided by his beloved charioteer? Had not Alexander returned to the Agora the statue group of the paederastic lovers Harmodius and Aristogeiton, a statue group sculpted by Antenor in commemoration of their overthrow of the tyrant Hippias and their establishment of Athenian democracy, a statue group that had been stolen by the Persian occupiers of Athens? Had not Alexander become 'God of the meridian' as he 'mingled Grecian grandeur' with the Eastern body of his beloved Persian eunuch Bagoas? These were the sorts of questions a Uranian would have asked himself, though confident that, however histrionic and self-justifying his views, Grecian paederasty had been sanctioned by the gods, had seeded Western philosophy, had spurred military bravery, had inspired the highest arts, had cradled democracy. In aesthetic terms, he would have questioned, Had not Apollo himself taught Orpheus, the first paederast, to play the lyre? These questions and their attendant

¹ Mader, pp.388-90.

answers — both of which arose from pondering the depths of the ‘Greek mirror’ — served also to emphasise for the Uranians the disparity between the values of the Victorian culture in which they were forced to navigate and those of the ancient Greeks.

Despite the generalised, laudatory praises of Grecian values emanating from the likes of Arnold, Mill, and Jowett, it is a statement by Arthur Christopher Benson (1862-1925), one of Pater’s first biographers, that 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 practice of paederastic 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 paederastic], which was a perfectly normal part of Greek life, and to say that it is abominable etc. etc.¹



Harmodius and Aristogeiton Slaying the Tyrant

Greek (attributed to the Copenhagen Painter)

Red-Figure terracotta stamnos (vase for wine), ca. 470 BCE

Martin von Wagner Museum

Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg, Würzburg, Germany

The freshmen of Oxford — especially those Etonians who had just left the ‘Hellenic’ tutelage of William Johnson (*later* Cory) and Oscar Browning — often arrived to university with Grecian desires that, despite being labelled ‘abominable’ by the society at large, would find further expression within their

¹ David Newsome, *On the Edge of Paradise: A. C. Benson: The Diarist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p.192.

college walls or in the surrounding fields.¹ In 1880, Charles Edward Hutchinson anonymously published and circulated at Oxford *Boy-Worship*, a pamphlet acknowledging 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.²

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 to social orthodoxies’, the other ‘pervasively dissident’.³ The three individuals allocated chapters in this volume represent different responses to this ‘boy-worship’: Gerard Manley Hopkins sublimated most, if not all of his paederastic desires; Walter Pater seems to have actualised his paederastic desires only once, threatening his academic position so thoroughly that he sublimated thereafter, a choice that later matured into an appreciation for such sublimation; Oscar Wilde actualised most of his paederastic desires, a ‘madness for pleasure’ that ruined many lives, and not just his own.

Since Pater had engaged in both sublimation and actualisation, it is understandable that his writings should most cogently demarcate these two forms of erotic positioning, though he himself increasingly advocated the former. After the publication in 1873 of his *Renaissance* — for the Uranians, a quasi-sacred text — the Uranians diverged in opinion about its import, but not its importance, diverged into those who imbibed from it ‘a sort of chivalrous conscience’ and those who imbibed from it ‘a madness for pleasure’. According to Denis Donoghue, Pater’s own position advocating conciliation with social orthodoxies was ‘consistent with his antinomianism’, for ‘the artist is neither for nor against the law, he stands aside from it’,⁴ maintaining a conciliatory form of ‘discretion’ that often involves a conscious split into a private self and a constructed, public

¹ A fascinating account of those ‘suspect’ pedagogical practices and their impact is provided in ‘Paideia and Power: William Johnson (Cory), Oscar Browning and Their Sackings from Eton’, an unpublished paper delivered by William C. Lubenow to the North American Conference on British Studies Meeting, held in Colorado Springs, Colorado, on 17 October 1998.

² 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 (p.14).

³ Peter Swaab, ‘Hopkins and the Pushed Peach’, *Critical Quarterly*, 37.3 (1995), pp.43-60 (p.50).

⁴ Denis Donoghue, *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (New York: Knopf, 1995), p.132.

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 in law and government. Or one can divide one's life into two parts, public and private, and live differently in each'.¹ This seeming duplicity was necessary for Pater and his 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 could follow their inclinations with few consequences'.² 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 that, 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'.³ These two Uranian paths — the conciliatory and the dissident — are the concern of the present volume, though I will focus primarily on the more 'elevated', conciliatory path taken by Pater and Hopkins.

If what follows is, in some ways, a 'cultural study', it is only so in regard to 'Uranian culture', for I have refrained from elaborating on larger implications, particularly concerning the Victorian culture that enveloped the Uranians. The various ways that Victorian culture (re)formulated and erotically engaged 'the problem of the boy' has already been explored with acumen by scholars such as James R. Kincaid, whose *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* could be read in conjunction with this volume. The present volume has purposes other than Kincaid's, the first of which is explicit, the second implicit. Explicitly, I am attempting throughout to verify and elucidate the presence of paederastic elements within the lives and writings of several major Victorian writers — Hopkins, Pater, and Wilde — and, by doing so, to expand exponentially the minor literary canon of the Uranians, allowing it and its issues to enter the pantheon of English literature with the full pomp they deserve.⁴ This endeavour may, at times, leave my readers wondering whether I am engaged in literary criticism, social history, or sexual psychology, though I must admit to focusing on all three, believing all three necessary for verifying and elucidating the presence of paederastic elements in the lives and writings of the Major Uranians. Implicitly, I am attempting to defy a dare — a cultural dare that I refrain from discussing the Uranians and their paederastic love, that I 'dare not speak its name'. In what follows, I will, as is my nature, 'dare to speak', for scholarship should ever attempt to grasp 'the truth', irrespective of its social, medical, ethical,

¹ Donoghue, p.317.

² Fisher, p.32.

³ William F. Shuter, 'The "Outing" of Walter Pater', *Nineteenth Century Literature*, 48.4 (1994), pp.480-506 (p.506).

⁴ My endeavour will, especially in regard to Hopkins, counter Mader's claim that 'Even at its best, on neither side of the ocean did the group contain any figures of signal importance to the development of modern poetry' (p.382).

religious, legal, political, scholarly, and familial implications. Those implications are certainly important to consider ... but elsewhere. In regard to this very issue, Percy Bysshe Shelley observes, in his *Discourse on the Manners of the Antient Greeks Relative to the Subject of Love*, that 'there is no book which shows the Greeks precisely as they were; they seem all written for children, with the caution that no practice or sentiment highly inconsistent with our present manners should be mentioned, lest those manners should receive outrage and violation'.¹ Replace 'Greeks' with 'Uranians', and Shelley's comment would be my own. Hence, what follows will attempt to be that book, to show the Uranians 'precisely as they were' — nothing more, but certainly nothing less.

For obvious reasons fully appreciated by Shelley, 'the paederastic' (whether actualised, textualised, or merely conceptualised) poses an inherent threat to modern Western society, for it posits a form of love, intimacy, and/or erotic expression that society's '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 paederastic' remains ever an eccentric positionality that 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*.² However, unlike 'the homoerotic' and 'the queer' — positionalities that have often, especially since Wilde's trials in 1895, confronted marginality with forms of overt dissidence, posing a radical critique of normative values — 'the paederastic' has usually opted, simply and discreetly and categorically, to refuse to engage normative values and their attendant dynamics of power. If one's 'positionality' is — as Alison M. Jaggar

¹ John Shawcross, ed., *Shelley's Literary and Philosophical Criticism* (London: Henry Frowde, 1909), p.37. Tellingly, the most controversial work of recent Classical scholarship — William Armstrong Percy III's *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1996) — became controversial because of embracing this Shelleyan approach: 'We must be prepared to approach Greek pederasty on its own terms, that is, both free from confusion with androphilia and replete with the values that fostered it and that it in turn fostered' (p.10).

² 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.

asserts for ‘standpoint’ — ‘a position in society from which certain features of reality come into prominence and from which others are obscured’,¹ 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] that middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals’ (p.43).² 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 that disrupts his bland dichotomy between good and evil, white and black. The positionality of ‘that caitiff choir of the angels who were not rebels, nor faithful to God, but were for themselves’ is a conundrum in Dante’s *Inferno*, for ‘the heavens drove them forth, not to be less fair, and the depth of Hell does not receive them lest the wicked have some glory over them’ (*Inferno*, III, lines 37-42).³ As Pater fully recognised, the unique positionality of the Uranians would similarly remain that of the ultimate outsiders (barring some monumental cultural shift, a shift greater than Foucault’s ‘ruptures’ between ‘epistemes’): the Uranians would likely remain, partly of their own accord, banished to the vestibule of Western society, if not of Hell.

In fact, this resonates with another passage, one in which Pater considers those who must needs be banished from Plato’s ideal state because of their dangerous ‘aesthetic’ proclivities, proclivities like his own:

What price would not the musical connoisseur pay to handle the instruments we may see in fancy passing out through the gates of the City of the Perfect, banished, not because there is no one within its walls who knows the use of, or would receive pleasure from, them [...] but precisely because they are so seductive, must be conveyed therefore to some other essentially less favoured neighbourhood, like poison, say! moral poison, for one’s enemies’ water-

¹ Alison M. Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), p.382. In ‘Feminist Politics and Epistemology: The Standpoint of Women’, in *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies*, ed. by Sandra Harding (London: Routledge, 2004), pp.55-66, Jaggar provides verbatim the same definition for ‘standpoint’ (p.60). I am employing the term ‘positionality’ in a similar sense.

² See Donald L. Hill’s explanatory notes for this passage, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, 4th edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp.336-38.

³ Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*, trans. by John D. Sinclair (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), p.49.

springs. A whole class of painters, sculptors, skilled workmen of various kinds go into like banishment — they and their very tools; not [...] because they are bad artists, but very good ones. (*Platonism*, p.275)



Walter Pater

Elliott & Fry

Half-plate copy glass negative, 1890s

National Portrait Gallery, London, UK

Seen in retrospect, this decision to accept banishment was shrewd. Despite subsequent efforts to legitimise homosexual desires in Britain and elsewhere, paederastic desires have, in many ways, been further de-legitimised since the Victorian period. Seen in its own contemporary context, this decision's shrewdness can be gauged by comparing the apolitical approach of Walter Pater with the more political approach of John Henry Mackay (1864-1933), a Scottish-German who, in the early stages of the German homosexual movement, wrote a series of pseudonymous works collectively titled *Die Bücher der namenlosen Liebe* (*The Books of Nameless Love*; ca. 1906-26). Mackay, known to his contemporaries only as 'Sagitta', began as naively idealistic, 'envisag[ing] a much more mediated relation in which the retreat [of paederasts and homosexuals] from the public sphere is merely tactical, intended only "so long as it is possible for one group of people to control through force not only the actions but also the thoughts of another and so to influence arbitrarily the course of culture"'.¹ Nevertheless, Mackay's initial optimism increasingly shaded towards disillusionment: he began to realise that, even if the homosexual movement ultimately achieved its political and social goals, paederasts like himself would, by necessity, be forced to 'retreat from the public sphere'. Hampered by

¹ Andrew Hewitt, *Political Inversions: Homosexuality, Fascism, & the Modernist Imaginary* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), p.149. See Hubert Kennedy, *Anarchist of Love: The Secret Life of John Henry Mackay*, 2nd edn (San Francisco, CA: Peremptory Publications, 2002); E-text at <<http://home.pacbell.net/dendy/AoLove.pdf>>.

‘prejudices against the paederasts within the homosexual movement’¹ and by the pseudonymity required for his own subversive writings, Mackay could only decry, in print, as ‘Sagitta’, the repeated attempts by the German homosexual movement ‘to eradicate the paederastic form of love that interests him’.² The ultimate impact of Mackay’s clandestine efforts was marginal at best: the leaders of the German homosexual movement, such as Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935), remained unfazed by Mackay’s assertions that homosexual apologists were increasing ‘guilty — in their desire to decriminalize homosexuality in its more acceptable forms — of a sacrifice of the paederast to criminal legislation’.³ Besides, this attempt to sever the link between homosexuality and paederasty was not distinctly a Germanic impulse residing with Hirschfeld and his *Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee* (Scientific-Humanitarian Committee). Even in France, where sodomy had been decriminalised since the Napoleonic *Code civil des français* almost a century before, there were burgeoning attacks on all things paederastic, with French apologists such as Julian Viaud (1850-1923), who wrote under the pseudonym of ‘Pierre Loti’, ‘careful to distinguish between adult homosexual desire and pederasty [...] and to condemn the latter’.⁴

Meanwhile, in Britain — which lacked even a concerted political call for the decriminalisation of homosexuality — the paederastic Uranians remained apolitical, accepting their position as ‘twice-removed from the political process’. While Mackay and others propagandised to the masses, the apolitical Uranians became insular, vacillating between self-loathing and ironic acquiescence, between ironic acquiescence and aesthetic defiance, between aesthetic defiance and criminality. On this continuum, the ‘elevated’ Uranians usually hovered somewhere between ironic acquiescence and aesthetic defiance, as is displayed in a poem by Pater’s friend Lionel Pigot Johnson (1867-1902), a poem that impishly constructs a scenario in which the fringe positionality advocated by Pater has moved to 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.

¹ Hewitt, p.145.

² Ibid., p.141.

³ Ibid., p.143.

⁴ Richard M. Berrong, *In Love with a Handsome Sailor* (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 2003), p.25. ‘Despite the legal tolerance of homosexuality, France was more dangerous for homosexuals than England’ (Robb, p.28).

'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.¹

However mischievous such a paederastic, Ptolemaic fantasy, neither Lionel Johnson nor Walter Pater were ever deluded into countenancing its possibility, or even the possibility that paederastic sentiment 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 'de-legitimise' the normative values of standing powers — social, medical, ethical, religious, legal, political, scholarly, or familial. Few, if any, have made this point better than Walt Whitman:

I hear it was charged against me that I sought to destroy institutions,
 But really I am neither for nor against institutions,
 (What indeed have I in common with them? or what with the destruction
 of them?)
 Only I will establish [...]
 Without edifices or rules or trustees or any argument,
 The institution of the dear love of comrades.²

Nevertheless, the unique positionality of the Uranians 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' continue to fulfil Foucault's defiant exclamation: 'No! Let's escape as much as possible from the type of relations that society proposes for us and try to create in the empty space where we are new relational possibilities'³ — though these 'new relational possibilities' that the Uranians establish(ed) are, as

¹ Lionel Pigot Johnson, 'A Sad Morality', in *Poetical Works of Lionel Johnson* (New York: Macmillan, 1915), lines 33-46.

² 'I Hear It Was Charged Against Me', from *Calamus*, in *Leaves of Grass: Comprehensive Reader's Edition*, ed. by Harold W. Blodgett and Sculley Bradley (New York: New York University Press, 1965), p.128.

³ Michel Foucault, 'The Social Triumph of the Sexual Will' (1981), in *The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, vol. 1, *Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. by Paul Rabinow, trans. by Robert Hurley, et al. (New York: New Press, 1998), pp.157-62 (p.160).

Dante recognised about the neutral angels, ‘for themselves’ alone. Donoghue aptly elucidates this Paterian ‘No!’:

Pater interpreted the 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 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 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.¹

While considering an eccentric, Uranian positionality like Pater’s, I recognise fully that the ‘legitimate’ powers of contemporary Western society prefer a paederastic subject upon a psychiatric couch or behind prison bars (or, dare I say, upon a morgue table) — Vestibules of Hell that are easily controlled — and that labelling Gerard Manley Hopkins, Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde, William Johnson (*later* Cory), and Digby Dolben as paederasts, even if only on the level of desire, is to heap condemnations 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 sin.

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 John Addington Symonds (1840-93) observes in his *A Problem in Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion*: in contrast to the current Western view, for the ancient Greeks ‘it was reckoned a disgrace if a youth found no man to be his lover’.² Symonds’s observation is indeed problematic — an observation deemed best banished to a discreet 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 contemporary Western society finds most problematic and irreconcilable is that, as Symonds dares to remind us, ‘what the Greeks called paiderastia, or boy-love, was a phenomenon of one of the most brilliant periods of human culture, in one of the

¹ Donoghue, pp.316-17.

² Symonds, *Greek Ethics* [1901], p.14.

most highly organised and nobly active nations'.¹ Especially at a time such as 2004 CE, as the world's media heralded that 'all eyes are turned to Athens' for the Olympic Games, we hoped not to be reminded that 'paiderastia 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'.² We 'Moderns' tend to 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 paiderasty 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. Those appreciative gazes, a garland of laurel, and the immortality of sculptured marble — the Greek form of paiderastic 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.



The Bowlers

William Blake Richmond (1842-1921)

Oil on canvas, 1870

Downing College, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

¹ Symonds, *Greek Ethics* [1901], p.1.

² Ibid., p.44. For this link between paiderasty and sport, see Thomas F. Scanlon, *Eros and Greek Athletics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), chapter 3: 'Athletics, Initiation, and Pederasty'; Thomas Hubbard, 'Himeros Pindar's Tenth Olympian and Athlete-Trainer Pederasty', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 49.3-4 (2005), pp.137-71. This link, present throughout the Greco-Roman period, is depicted in the painting *The Bowlers* by William Blake Richmond (1842-1921), a friend of the artist Simeon Solomon. I would like to thank Karen Sherry, Assistant Curator of the American Art Department, Brooklyn Museum, for her kind assistance with the details of *The Bowlers*.

Nevertheless, the Victorian Uranians did think of such things, did celebrate them and 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 that 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 Timothy d’Arch Smith over thirty years ago, a sustained ‘Uranian approach’ has never been attempted, and certainly not with writers of the calibre of Hopkins, Pater, and Wilde.¹ Secondly, current scholarship employs four strategies that blatantly attempt to quell any meaningful consideration of ‘the paederastic’, strategies that 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 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 that 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) serves to draw into question many of the established tenets of Victorian culture (and those of today).² 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

¹ It should be noted that, in the introduction to his anthology of paederastic 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.

² 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).

poetry and prose (which, in the case of Hopkins, is often acute)¹ 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 society (in general) and Victorian society (in particular) to limit physical intimation and actualisation of homoerotic and paederastic desires.² These Uranian strategies — involving 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 on 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 writers were Classically allusive enough to have been understood by their Oxford-educated coterie, a coterie to which they were often responsive, a coterie that can rightly be said to have constituted a ‘fellowship of paederasts’. The importance of this ‘fellowship’ to what follows is that, by elucidating the paederastic 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 were 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’ seems a rather apt method for engaging this unploughed-yet-fertile field, a field that — despite its weeds and stones, inherent or planted there by others — can yield unique insights into a little tended aspect of the human condition.

For their kind assistance with various points of scholarship, I wish to acknowledge Timothy d’Arch Smith, Claire Allan Dinsmore, Roberto C. Ferrari, Steve Gertz, Dr Lesley A. Hall, Liz Hamilton, Philip Healy, Fr John Humphries, Oliver Hunt, Prof. Stanton J. Linden, Laurel McPhee, Dr Harris Mirkin, Prof. Gerald C. Monsman, Julie Ann Noecker, Dr Rictor Norton, Barbara Obrist, Fred Roden, Prof. James M. Saslow, Karen Sherry, Prof. Robert Shoemaker, Isobel Siddons, Reena Suleman, Don Swanson, and Suzanne Tatian. I wish especially to thank Prof. Eric Birdsall of the Department of English, Buchtel College of Arts

¹ 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).

² 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).

and Sciences, University of Akron, Ohio, for his scholarly assistance, friendly encouragement, and sense of humour (to Prof. Birdsall I owe more intellectually than I can ever express). I wish to thank Petr Kurečka, a Czech photographer now living in London, whose photograph *Pain* he kindly allowed me to use for the cover. I wish to thank my friend and colleague Dr Libora Oates-Indruchová, my intellectual chess-partner, for enriching this in many ways. I wish to thank my colleagues, particularly Jeffrey Vanderziel, at the Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno, and my former colleagues at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Pardubice, for their encouragement. I wish to thank my doctoral advisor Dr Sarolta Marinovich-Resch, as well as Prof. József Pál, Dr Bálint Rozsnyai, Dr Attila Kiss, and the other members of the Faculty of Arts, University of Szeged, Hungary, for warmly welcoming me into their doctoral program. This volume, which arose from my doctoral dissertation, owes much to their support and criticism. I wish to thank my parents for their constant support (though handled with Baptist prudence) and for acquiring, as a gift to me, a portion of the personal library of Prof. Norman White, Hopkins's foremost biographer, whose marginalia has served as a biographer's education.

Above all, I wish to thank my beloved, Miroslav Tobiášek, who tolerated my scattered books, late nights, and constant babble about long-dead Victorians. Combining tender attention with rolled eyes, he serves ever to remind me that 'reality' is not always contained within books. To Mirek, my *Divo Amico* (no longer *Ignoto* and only *Desideratissimo*), all of this is lovingly dedicated.



Jeune Zéphire se balançant au-dessus de l'eau

Pierre-Paul Prud'hon (1758-1823)

Oil on canvas, 1814

Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

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Love Locked Out

Anna Lea Merritt (1844-1930)

Oil on canvas, 1889

Tate Collection, London, UK

— List of Abbreviations —

<i>Appreciations</i>	Walter Pater, <i>Appreciations: With an Essay on Style</i> , 2 nd edn (London: Macmillan, 1890)
<i>Balloon</i>	Guy Davenport, <i>The Jules Verne Steam Balloon: Nine Stories</i> (San Francisco, CA: North Point Press, 1987)
<i>Desire</i>	Frederick Rolfe (Baron Corvo), <i>The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole</i> , ed. with intro. by Andrew Eburne (New York: Braziller, 1994 [1934])
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , online version (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004-06) < http://www.oxforddnb.com >
<i>Dolben 1915</i>	<i>The Poems of Digby Mackworth Dolben</i> , ed. with 'Memoir' by Robert Bridges, 2 nd edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1915)
<i>Dorian 1890</i>	Oscar Wilde, <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> , in <i>Lippincott's Monthly Magazine: A Popular Journal of General Literature, Science, and Politics</i> , 46 (July 1890) [Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott], pp.3-100
<i>Dorian 1891</i>	<i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> , in <i>The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde</i> , 3 rd edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994 [1891]), pp.17-159
<i>Facsimiles I</i>	<i>The Early Poetic Manuscripts and Note-books of Gerard Manley Hopkins in Facsimile</i> , ed. with annotations, transcriptions of unpublished passages, and intro. by Norman H. MacKenzie (New York: Garland, 1989)
<i>Facsimiles II</i>	<i>The Later Poetic Manuscripts of Gerard Manley Hopkins in Facsimile</i> , ed. with annotations, transcriptions of obscure words, and intro. by Norman H. MacKenzie (New York: Garland, 1991)
<i>Greek</i>	Walter Pater, <i>Greek Studies: A Series of Essays</i> (London: Macmillan, 1908)

- Ionica* 1905** William Johnson (*later* Cory), *Ionica* [Parts I and II], by William Cory, with biographical intro. and notes by Arthur C. Benson (London: George Allen, 1905)
- Journals*** *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Humphry House, completed by Graham Storey (London: Oxford University Press, 1959)
- ‘King’** ‘The Young King’, in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, 3rd edn (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1994 [1891]), pp.213-22
- Letters* I** *The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, ed. by Claude Colleer Abbott, 2nd imp. rev. (London: Oxford University Press, 1955)
- Letters* II** *The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon*, ed. by Claude Colleer Abbott, 2nd imp. rev. (London: Oxford University Press, 1955)
- Letters* III** *Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Including His Correspondence with Coventry Patmore*, ed. by Claude Colleer Abbott, 2nd edn, rev. and enlarged (London: Oxford University Press, 1956)
- Maisie*** Henry James, *What Maisie Knew* [New York edn], in *Novels 1896-1899* (New York: Library of America, 2003), pp.395-649
- Marius*** Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas*, Library edn, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1921)
- Marius* 1885** Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas*, 1st edn, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1885)
- Miscellaneous*** Walter Pater, *Miscellaneous Studies: A Series of Essays*, 1st edn (London: Macmillan, 1895)

<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> , 12 vols, and <i>Supplement</i> with 4 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927-86)
<i>OET</i>	<i>The Poetical Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins</i> , ed. by Norman H. MacKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990)
<i>Platonism</i>	Walter Pater, <i>Plato and Platonism: A Series of Lectures</i> , Library edn (London: Macmillan, 1920)
<i>Renaissance 1873</i>	Walter Pater, <i>Studies in the History of the Renaissance</i> , 1 st edn (London: Macmillan, 1873)
<i>Renaissance 1893</i>	Walter Pater, <i>The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry</i> , 4 th edn, ed. by Donald L. Hill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980 [1893])
<i>Sermons</i>	<i>The Sermons and Devotional Writings of Gerard Manley Hopkins</i> , ed. by Christopher Devlin, S.J. (London: Oxford University Press, 1959)
<i>SM</i>	Walt Whitman, <i>Song of Myself</i> , in <i>Leaves of Grass: Comprehensive Reader's Edition</i> , 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.

For a full list of works cited, see 'Bibliography'.

Regarding the illustrations, see 'Use of Images'.



Jeune garçon avec un chat
Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919)
Oil on canvas, 1868-69
Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

— 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*)¹

In his ‘Postscript’ to *Appreciations*, Walter Pater asserts 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.266). One of the individuals whose ‘recesses’ Pater enters most fully is Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-68), a German archaeologist and art historian whose analysis of ancient Greco-Roman culture derived its impassioned quality partly from his strong affinity with Grecian paederastic (or boy-love) traditions, an affinity Pater considers intrinsic to both Winckelmann’s nature and approach to life.

Pater observes that ‘this key to the understanding of the Greek spirit, Winckelmann possessed in his own nature’ (*Renaissance* 1893, p.175), later suggesting that any nature, including a nature like Winckelmann’s, has laws that 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. [...] He 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 that others could easily recognise in

¹ 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.

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 he 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).¹ Pater explains that this enthusiasm, ‘in the broad Platonic sense of the *Phaedrus*, was [...] 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).² 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). Later still, 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

¹ Laurel Brake claims that Pater’s essay ‘unmistakably portray[s] Winckelmann’s advocacy of the Hellenic and the homoerotic’ (‘Walter Horatio Pater’, *DNB*).

² In Uranian texts, the word ‘purer’ is often a play on *puer* (Latin and French for ‘boy’).

very penetrative way, for apparently ‘nothing was to enter into his life unpenetrated’, including these youths.

Whether Pater had only surmised this actualised paederasty, or boy-love, from Winckelmann’s art criticism¹ or had had access to the anecdote from the memoirs of Giacomo Casanova (1725-98) 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)’² will probably never be known.³ One thing is certain though: Pater was right. After Casanova had burst

¹ 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 that 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)

² Thomas Paul Bonfiglio, ‘Winckelmann and the Aesthetics of Eros’, *The Germanic Review*, 73.2 (1998), pp.132-44 (p.141). For the primary source, see Giacomo Casanova, *History of My Life*, vols 7-8, trans. by Willard R. Trask (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), pp.194-95. See also Jeffrey Morrison, *Winckelmann and the Notion of Aesthetic Education* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp.34-68. In ‘Winckelmann and the Anti-Essentialist Thrust in *Dorian Gray*’, in *Oscar Wilde: The Man, His Writings, and His World*, ed. by Robert N. Keane (New York: AMS Press, 2003), pp.149-62, Ann Herndon Marshall writes: ‘Winckelmann’s homoeroticism was no secret in Wilde’s time. Casanova’s memoirs include it. [...] In the spring of 1900, the letter to Robert Ross from Rome refers to the figure of Winckelmann in an erotic context which Wilde knew his old friend Ross would understand’ (pp.151-52).

³ It seems *unlikely* that Pater knew this anecdote. Although published three decades after his anonymous ‘Winckelmann’, even *The Memoirs of Jacques Casanova de Seingalt*, a widely circulated English translation by Arthur Machen, does not contain such passages. Arthur William Symons (1865-1945), that friend of Pater whom Donoghue dubs ‘Pater’s ephebe’ (p.73) — a friend who was an infant at the time ‘Winckelmann’ appeared — later lamented that

The Memoirs of Casanova, though they have enjoyed the popularity of a bad reputation, have never had justice done to them by serious students of literature, of life, and of history. One English writer, indeed, Mr. Havelock Ellis, has realised that ‘there are few more delightful books in the world’, and he has analysed them in an essay on Casanova, published in *Affirmations*, with extreme care and remarkable subtlety. But this essay stands alone, at all events in English, as an attempt to take Casanova seriously, to show him in his relation to his time, and in his relation to human problems. [...] [*The Memoirs*] manuscript, in its original state, has never been printed. Herr Brockhaus, on obtaining possession of the manuscript, had it translated into German by Wilhelm Schutz, but with many omissions and alterations, and published this translation, volume

unwittingly into the room and Winckelmann 'had straightened his trousers and the young man he had been surprised with had beat a hasty retreat',¹ 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 immortalize 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.²

'The cutest Smerdiases of Rome' is an allusion to an exquisite Thracian boy given by his ancient Greek captors to Polycrates,³ and J. A. Symonds's description of the poet Anacreon's fascination with that particular boy, among others, is equally befitting of Winckelmann and the tone of his writings: '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

by volume, from 1822 to 1828, under the title, 'Aus den Memoiren des Venetianers Jacob Casanova de Seingalt'. [...] In turning over the manuscript at Leipzig, I read some of the suppressed passages, and regretted their suppression.

The above is from Arthur Symons, 'Casanova at Dux: An Unpublished Chapter of History' (1902), added as introductory material to Giacomo Casanova, *The Memoirs of Jacques Casanova de Seingalt: The Rare Unabridged London Edition of 1894 Translated by Arthur Machen to Which Has Been Added the Chapters Discovered by Arthur Symons* (London: [n.p.], 1894) <<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/c/casanova/c33m/introduction1.html>> [last accessed 20 May 2006]. This essay also appears in Arthur Symons, *Figures of Several Centuries* (London: Constable, 1916). Even in French, the only non-pirated edition, Jean Laforgue's *Histoire de ma vie* (1826-38) — the edition upon which Machen's translation was based — suppresses such erotic details. The first time the *Histoire de ma vie* was published fully unabridged was the Edition intégrale, 12 vols in 6 (Paris: F. A. Brockhaus and Librairie Plon, 1960-61).

¹ Denis M. Sweet, 'The Personal, the Political, and the Aesthetic: Johann Joachim Winckelmann's German Enlightenment Life', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 16.1-2 (1988), pp.147-62 (p.149).

² As quoted in translation in *ibid.*, pp.149-50.

³ See Maximus Tyrius, *Dissertationes*, ed. by Michael B. Trapp (Stuttgart, Germany: B. G. Teubner, 1994), diss. xxvi. See also William Armstrong Percy III, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1996), pp.157-160.

in phrases indicative of sensuality'.¹ Whether or not Casanova, frequenter of a legion of bedrooms, accepted Winckelmann's explanation for 'buggering' his own 'Smerdias' is irrelevant here: what *is* relevant is that Walter Pater has equally demonstrated, through his essay on Winckelmann, an ability to burst into the room, to penetrate 'the intimate recesses of other minds', in this case the mind of a paederast who frequently penetrated *un jeune garçon*.² Pater was not required to know this anecdote, for Winckelmann, as Jeff Morrison explains, had left behind a residue of similar materials, a blend of art and life that would have allowed for such a Paterian penetration:

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].³

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 that infused those techniques and that 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'.⁴

¹ 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 and Classicist given to paederastic 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'.

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ David Hilliard, 'Unenglish and Unmanly: Anglo-Catholicism and Homosexuality', *Victorian Studies*, 25.2 (1982), pp.181-210 (p.186).

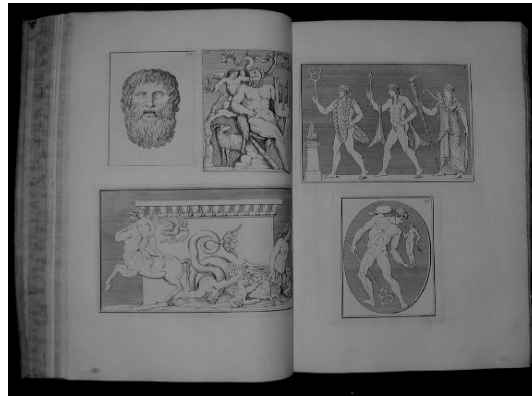


Johann Joachim Winckelmann

Artist unknown

Engraving

The History of Ancient Art, vol. 1
(London: Low, Marston, Searle,
& Rivington, 1881)



Copperplate Engravings

Artist(s) unknown

Monumenti antichi inediti, spiegati ed illustrati
by Johann Joachim Winckelmann
(Rome: Privately printed, 1767)

To penetrate Pater's own opaque passages, to enter into the recesses of Pater's own mind in order to discover the paederastic and homoerotic elements concealed there, to burst into the room, one must tease from his texts 'the subtler threads of temperament [...] inwoven in [them]', the hidden lines of argument and 'underthought' that lead through the labyrinth of his own desires (as was partially done, in the preceding paragraphs, with the labyrinth of most of 'Winckelmann').¹ This task is not a straightforward one, nor did Pater intend it to be, as Kenneth Burke suggests in *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.²

¹ 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 paiderastic dimension of Western culture thus becomes "Winckelmann"' (p.95). 'It was this vitality and immediacy, something which had been present at the beginning of our culture, which the Uranians, looking through the lenses of Pater, Winckelmann and the Renaissance, saw reflected in the Greek mirror' — Donald H. Mader, 'The Greek Mirror: The Uranians and Their Use of Greece', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 49.3-4 (2005), pp.377-420 (p.391).

² Kenneth Burke, *Counter-Statement*, 2nd edn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p.12. In *A Commentary on the Complete Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1970), Paul Mariani describes Hopkins's poetry with the same term, labelling it 'labyrinthine coils of gold' (p.xxvii). This textual

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’.¹ It is through those labyrinths of material that this volume will proceed, Theseus-like, hoping not to lose ‘the subtler thread of temperament’, the thread that others, such as David M. Halperin, have attempted to sever: ‘The aim of my book [*One Hundred Years of Homosexuality*] [...] was to snip the thread that connected ancient Greek pederasty with modern homosexuality in the minds of modern historians’.² The present volume, on the other hand, attempts to grasp tightly, rather than to sever that thread.

This is not an easy task, since, 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’.³ In *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*, Linda Dowling elucidates the challenge that this Paterian obliqueness provides:

To uncover the full homoerotic implicativeness of Pater’s writing 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 paiderastic 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.⁴

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).

¹ ‘It remained for biographers, critics, historians, and novelists in the twentieth century to piece together the elusive traces of [Pater’s] life, much of which had been withheld or destroyed by his family and friends, and to claim him variously as an important early modernist, and writer of gay discourse’ (Laurel Brake, ‘Walter Horatio Pater’, *DNB*).

² David M. Halperin, *How to Do the History of Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p.4.

³ Denis Donoghue, *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (New York: Knopf, 1995), p.42.

⁴ Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.95. It was not uncommon for Victorian Classicists to treat ‘Athenian pederasty as a “figure of speech” for the educational process (as Benjamin Jowett called it in a letter cited by J. A. Symonds in his letter to E. Gosse, dated 25 January 1890, and now in the Duke University Library, Special Collections)’ — John G. Younger, ‘Gender in the Parthenon Frieze’, in *Naked Truths: Women, Sexuality and*

Taking Dowling's comments as a spur, the pages that follow will '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 that of today is particularly congenial to the homoerotic, let alone the paiderastic, even as a 'mere figure of speech'. About some things, we prefer silences.



Allegory with Venus and Cupid

Agnolo Bronzino (1503-72)

Oil on wood, ca. 1540-50

National Gallery of Art, London, UK

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 paiderastic', a tendency

Gender in Classical Art and Archaeology, ed. by Ann Olga Kolowski-Ostrow and Claire L. Lyons (London: Routledge, 1997), pp.120-53 (p.147). In 'Pater, Wilde, Douglas and the Impact of "Greats"', *English Literature in Transition (1880-1920)*, 46.3 (2003), pp.250-78, William F. Shuter stresses: '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).

that 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’,¹ Donoghue ends that 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.²

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 that 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 that blends Roman Catholicism with paederasty, the sacred with the profane. However, engaging Caravaggio was unfeasible: Caravaggio would have entered Pater’s published pantheon far too soiled from having trod the paths of scandal, as John Ruskin (1819-1900) liked to emphasise at every available opportunity. As the foremost Victorian art historian and critic — hence, the principal formulator of Victorian aesthetic perceptions — Ruskin was a formidable cultural 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 that 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.³

¹ Donoghue, p.31.

² 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).

³ 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) — this quote is from vol. 4, p.213. The ‘General Index’ of Ruskin’s *Works*, vol. 39, p.101, reveals this antipathy very cogently:

[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.¹

Vulgarity, dullness, or impiety, will indeed always express themselves through art in brown and grey, as in Rembrandt, Caravaggio, and Salvator.²

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.³

[In a review of Lord Lindsay's *Christian Art* published in the *Quarterly Review* in June 1847, Ruskin quips:] Does [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?⁴

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.⁵

Ruskin would never have envisioned that, in the twentieth century, prior to architectural Euros, Caravaggio's portrait and artworks 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 'filthy' figure like Caravaggio — the practitioner of a 'crime which no words, however laboured, would succeed in

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.

¹ Ruskin, *Works*, vol. 5, p.56.

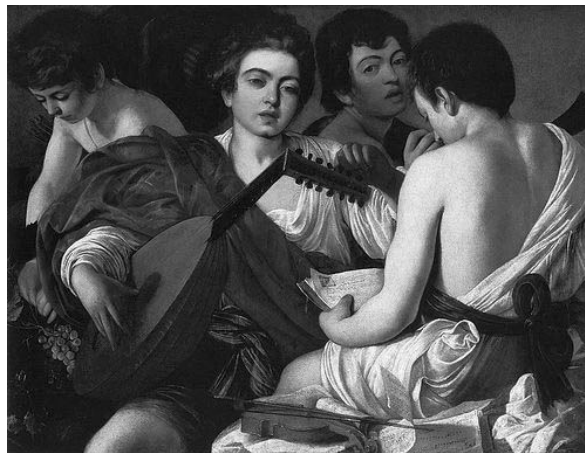
² *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p.328.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p.324, note.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 12, p.202.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 12, p.458.

suggesting' (a clear allusion to Caravaggio's paederasty) — such an avoidance was an act of necessary discretion, and hence understandable, for Pater. Such an act of avoidance was very 'Victorian'. As Pater phrases this himself: 'In literature, too, the true artist may be best recognised by his tact of omission' (*Appreciations*, p.15). On the other hand, Donoghue's avoidance of lingering with Pater while he contemplates such 'beautiful boys' and their artist-admirers, artists with paederastic 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 paederastic 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.



The Musicians

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610)

Oil on canvas, ca. 1595-96

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, New York, USA

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 paederasty, she blurs the two as though they were interchangeable, apparently hoping to hide the more 'suspect' paederastic 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, Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, redirected the tradition of the Tractarian tutorial towards a Platonic Hellenism for which he himself provided the impetus and the example, *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 far more paederastic tutorial.¹



Victorious Amor
Michelangelo Merisi
da Caravaggio (1571-1610)
Oil on canvas, ca. 1601-02
Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen
Berlin-Dahlem, Germany



Youth with a Ram (St John the Baptist)
Michelangelo Merisi
da Caravaggio (1571-1610)
Oil on canvas, ca. 1602-03
Pinacoteca Capitolina
Rome, Italy

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.²

¹ For a consideration of how this 'Hellenism' provided various opportunities for 'homosexual' apologia, see Dowling, *Hellenism*, pp.28, 31, 35, 66, 73, 76, 78-80, 97, 115, 135-36, and 152-53. For the possibility of Oxford tutorials becoming tinged with paederastic nuances and implications, particularly for Symonds and Pater, see pp.28, 81, 83, 88, 102-03, 124-29, 134, 137, and 150.

² Ibid., p.94.

However, ‘veiled in their explicitness’ describes Dowling’s own prose style better than Pater’s, for hers 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 paederastic’ (boy-love) to those denoting ‘the homoerotic’ (man-love). Dowling’s methods of veiling are evident in the following oblique passage:

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 this 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.¹

A précis of this passage might appear thus:

By 1858, the Oxford cult of ‘boy-worship’ (‘boy-love’) had begun to express symbolically ‘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 paederastic desires through voyeurism, flirtation, letters, and Classically-inspired verse.

The above also serves as a core claim of this volume: By the 1860s, some at Oxford had begun to express paederastic desires through voyeurism, flirtation, letters, and Classically-inspired verse (though this volume recognises far more physicality than that). Nevertheless, Dowling adjusts this straightforward claim, attempting to minimise the paederastic content at its core. She achieves this minimising in a multitude of ways, seven of which are illustrated below.

Firstly, Dowling attempts to spiritualise the paederastic desires of these Oxonians 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

¹ Dowling, *Hellenism*, p.114.

after by ‘cult’, ‘worship’, and ‘heavenly’ — phrasing that minimises the inherent erotic potential. Secondly, these paederastic 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 acts to symbolic ones, a rebellion against Christian morality and its modern offshoots. Thirdly, by placing rhetorical emphasis upon the ‘cult’ of paederastic 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 venues in which she has chosen to allow them an outlet, ‘whether at Magdalen Chapel or the river bathing spot known as Parson’s Pleasure’. Hence, the paederastic Uranians are transformed into a group of voyeurs merely flirting with choristers and young bathers. Fourthly, these Oxonian ‘rites’ also included the writing of romantic letters (‘epistolary address’), letters held within the ‘conventions’ of a literary form that 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 giving it physical expression). Fifthly, these Oxonian ‘rites’ also included ‘literary expression’, Uranian poetry ‘celebrating’ a love that, because its name derives from the ‘heavenly’ love of Plato’s *Symposium*, must indeed have been a spiritual or ‘heavenly’ love, not a love bountiful in sexual stimulation or gratification. In *A Problem in Greek Ethics*, Symonds, one of those Uranians, notes the disparity between the elevated rhetoric of paederastic love and its actual practice, 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.¹

With the baser form of paidierastia 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.²

¹ Symonds, *Greek Ethics* [1901], p.6.

² Ibid., p.7.

(For an example of ‘Pandemotic’ erotica by an anonymous Late Victorian, see ‘Appendix One’.¹) Sixthly, Dowling further mitigates the paederastic 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 androphilic desire (the homoerotic) rather than man-boy desire (the paederastic). These six adjustments display Dowling’s techniques for blurring the homoerotic and the paederastic, for hiding the paederastic in the shadow of the larger homoerotic, 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 own arguments by referential proximity, though d’Arch Smith does not agree with her arguments, as he expresses in a letter to me:

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).²

¹ 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: ‘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 those ‘sodomitical’ stories from *The Pearl* appears as ‘Appendix One’.

² Letter from Timothy d’Arch Smith to me, 14 October 2001 (included as ‘Appendix Two’). 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 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 term ‘paederast’, though usually in the form of a more tentative ‘paederastic desire’ (as with ‘homoerotic desire’, where appropriate). Given the

Although much of the content of my ‘footnote 18’ — to which d’Arch Smith refers — has already appeared in the pages prior, it is presented 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 *erômenos* and *erastês* (‘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 —

cultural and scholarly changes of the thirty years since d’Arch Smith published the above volume, ‘paederasty’ now seems far more Classical, 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 and law) or ‘boy-love’ (part of the polemics of current fringe apologists such as the North American Man-Boy Love Association, or NAMBLA). Besides these, the other available choices are simply too unwieldy, as with ‘intimate intergenerational relationship’, phrasing advocated in Theo Sandfort, Edward Brongersma, and Alex van Naerssen, eds, *Male Intergenerational Intimacy: Historical, Socio-Psychological, and Legal Perspectives* (Binghamton, NY: Haworth, 1991). 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 ‘fellowship’ within the Uranian group or an accordance with that group’s themes. ‘Paederasty’, even if it does suggest erotic actualisation, nonetheless serves decently to capture the nature of the desires being considered here, a point that will be explored more fully in ‘Chapter One’.

otherwise than beside 'Ballade of Boys Bathing' by Fr. Rolfe (Frederick Baron Corvo), appearing in the [fourth] 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?¹

It has indeed been a prevailing custom among Gay Studies critics and Queer Theory practitioners (not that Donoghue or Dowling could be properly bracketed as such) to transform the paederastic Uranians and those like them into homosexual 'founders' or 'liberators' or 'martyrs', a transformation that 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'.²

It must be admitted that, for the Victorians themselves, there *was* a rather blurred overlap between 'the paederastic' (boy-love) and 'the homoerotic' (man-love); and that often, as in Hopkins's 'Epithalamion', their literary and other creations included elements of both, a feature acknowledged by both James Kincaid and d'Arch Smith.³ However, what John Pollini notes about Greco-Roman paederasts is equally true for 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'.⁴ As the Uranian writer Frederick William Rolfe (Baron Corvo; 1860-1913) relates about one boy:

¹ Michael M. Kaylor, "'Beautiful Dripping Fragments": A Whitmanesque Reading of Hopkins' "Epithalamion"', *Victorian Poetry*, 40.2 (2002), pp.157-87. This article, in an expanded form, constitutes 'Chapter Three'.

² D'Arch Smith, p.xxi.

³ See James R. Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p.176. In the letter to me in 'Appendix Two', 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).

⁴ John Pollini, 'The Warren Cup: Homoerotic Love and Symposial Rhetoric in Silver', *Art Bulletin*, 81.1 (1999), pp.21-52 (p.34). This argument is also made in M. Ashley Ames and David A. Houston, 'Legal, Social, and Biological Definitions of Pedophilia', *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 19 (1990), pp.333-42. Ames and Houston argue that 'true pedophilia' should not be defined as an attraction to a certain chronological age, but to a certain pre-pubescent body type. In *Pederasty and Pedagogy*, Percy notes: "'Greek love" therefore means men loving pubescent boys. Because almost all erastai preferred adolescents between the ages of twelve and eighteen, or until body hair sprouted and the beard became heavy, we would classify them as pederasts rather than pedophiles (those

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.¹

This attraction to the qualities of 'boyishness' rather than the qualities of 'manliness' was (and probably still is) the principal distinction between 'the paederastic' and 'the homoerotic', a distinction that is central to the arguments of this volume. 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. Although defining 'paederasty' (or boy-love) in this way may seem too imprecise, the Uranians' writings, artworks, and biographical details will bear this out, and the legal and psychological alternatives are fraught with greater problems, at least in terms of the Victorian Uranians.

As has been elaborately chronicled by psychiatrists from Sigmund Freud to Jacques Lacan, and by sexologists from Richard von Krafft-Ebing to Alfred Kinsey, desires and their manifestations rarely accord with legislation — hence, to differentiate 'the paederastic' from 'the homoerotic' by way of 'age of consent' legislation seems of little practical use, especially given the drastic alterations of the concept of 'consent' during the Victorian period. From 1861-1875, the 'age of consent' (at least for girls involved in heterosexual relationships) was twelve; from 1875-1885, thirteen; from 1885 onwards, sixteen. Brushing aside the illegality of same-sex eroticism for a moment and applying the same standard as for heterosexual activity: If one were to use 'age of consent' to demarcate 'the paederastic' from 'the non-paederastic', then sexual intimacy with a boy of thirteen would have been legal, hence non-paederastic, before 1875; would have been barely legal, yet not quite paederastic, in the decade between 1875 and 1885; would have been illegal, hence paederastic, after 1885. Given such an equation, most of Hopkins's erotic desires, despite their consistency, were not paederastic while he was an undergraduate at Oxford; were nearly paederastic while a Jesuit in training; were fully paederastic while a professor in Dublin. Consequently, the answer to whether or not Hopkins's desires were paederastic would be 'no', 'maybe', 'yes' — depending not on the nature of those desires but on the calendar. (The legal dimensions surrounding Victorian paederasty are explored more fully in 'Chapter One'.)

Equally fraught with pitfalls would be an attempt to demarcate the paederastic from the homoerotic by employing Victorian 'psychology'. As one would expect from both their religious bent and pre-Freudian worldview, 'the

loving the prepubescent) or ephebophiles (those loving eighteen to twenty-two year olds)' (p.8).

¹ Frederick Rolfe (Baron Corvo), *The Venice Letters*, ed. with intro. by Cecil Woolf (London: Cecil & Amelia Woolf, 1974), p.37.

source of this corruption' was believed to originate in aberrations of the soul rather than the mind, resulting in a 'pseudo-psychological, Judeo-Christian approach' in which our contemporary, scientific arguments involving 'nature' *versus* 'nurture' were conceived of as 'human nature' and 'sinful nurture' *versus* 'Divine nature' and conformity to its dictates, as in the following passage from Constantin Ackermann's *Das Christliche im Plato und in der platonischen Philosophie* (1835):

The source of this corruption was threefold, founded in the threefold spiritual activity of men, and in this also ever finding the greatest susceptibility; from the desire for pleasure had sprung paederasty; from irascible strength of mind had been engendered intriguing and ambitious politics; and the intellectual delight of dismembering and refuting was the origin of fine-speaking and sophistry. Since now the lustful, ambitious, and contentious forces of the soul exist in every man, it is easily understood why the Paederasts, Politicians, and Sophists met with such easy success in attracting young men, and in exercising a powerful influence over them. This influence Socrates desired to counteract vigorously, to remove it even, and substitute his own wholesome influence in its place, by apparently joining himself to these destructive tendencies, in order to procure intercourse with the young men, and be able to operate on them the more unostensibly. He endeavoured by his pretended paederasty to supplant the common and shameful vice, and to kindle in its stead, in their youthful souls, an enthusiastic love for all the beautiful and good.¹

This is a passage in which Michel Foucault would have revelled, for it posits that *all* men are 'susceptible' to 'this corruption', since paederasty arises 'from the desire for pleasure'. Or, as Ackermann so cogently explains: '[Since] the lustful [...] forces of the soul exist in every man, it is easily understood why the Paederasts [...] met with such easy success in attracting young men, and in exercising a powerful influence over them'. Ackermann's phrase 'destructive tendencies' still has resonance today, since the current 'Judeo-Christian approach' to psychology continues to champion abstention from 'pleasure', a rhetoric that links the homoerotic and the paederastic to corruption and addiction:

Finding a genetic link to homosexual proclivity would still fail to prove the inclination any less immoral and unacceptable than did the genetic proclivity towards alcoholism. Certain human tendencies are inherently self-destructive and must be denied regardless of genetics.²

¹ C. Ackermann, *The Christian Element in Plato and the Platonic Philosophy*, trans. by Samuel Ralph Asbury (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1861 [German original, 1835]), pp.173-74. For an overview of the medical-psychological engagement of homoeroticism in the 19th century, see Graham Robb, *Strangers: Homosexual Love in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Norton, 2004), pp.40-83.

² Dr Keene F. Tiedemann (D.M.), *All Hail the Death of Truth! The Advent of the Postmodern Era* (Morrisville, NC: Lulu Press, 2005), p.43.

The same reasoning holds true for homosexuality. God created us male and female. Some people have, to be sure, homosexual behaviors, feelings, and tendencies, but that is not who they are. Establishing a true identity is the first step in overcoming homosexuality. The adage 'Once a sinner, always a sinner' is not true if you understand and believe the gospel, nor is 'Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic' or 'Once a homosexual, always a homosexual'.¹

After brushing aside the Victorian versions of such 'pseudo-psychology' — all those interpretations bastioned by Judeo-Christian polemics — one is left with little else in the nineteenth century, save for research published by various doctors, sexologists, and social reformers on the Continent. In Britain, on the other hand, there was either silence or sermons. In fact, the first 'medical' volume on the subject in English was co-authored by one of the Uranians, John Addington Symonds, and by a doctor, Havelock Ellis (1859-1939). This co-authored work, *Sexual Inversion*, 'followed in the style of Continental sexologists, describing homosexuality in both men and women, and demonstrating that it was but another manifestation of the sexual instinct: itself a natural process'.² Hence, it was not a disease, an immoral behaviour, or a crime 'against nature'. However, there are several reasons why that volume, the first of its kind in English, has minimal if any bearing on the considerations of this volume: firstly, since *Sexual Inversion* was not published until 1897, it postdates the period being considered here; secondly, since a bookseller was prosecuted in 1897 for stocking the volume, it is clear that it did not have wide circulation, hence had minimal, if any, impact until after the Victorian period³; thirdly, since one of the co-authors was himself a significant Uranian author, it serves less as a scientific study and more as an apologia, for, among other things, '*Sexual Inversion* sought to present the Renaissance as an atmosphere of intellectual and social freedom, a time when homosexuality burst into view'.⁴ The Renaissance had always been as much of an interest for Symonds as it had been for Pater,

¹ Dr Neil T. Anderson (D.Min.), Dr Terry E. Zuehlke (Ph.D.), and Julianne S. Zuehlke (M.S.), *Christ Centered Therapy: The Practical Integration of Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), pp.92-93.

² Ivan Crozier, 'Striking at Sodom and Gomorrah: The Medicalization of Male Homosexuality and Its Relation to the Law', in *Criminal Conversations: Victorian Crimes, Social Panic, and Moral Outrage*, ed. by Judith Rowbotham and Kim Stevenson (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2005), pp.126-39 (p.135). About the collaboration between Ellis and Symonds, see Wayne Koestenbaum, *Double Talk: The Erotics of Male Literary Collaboration* (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp.43-67.

³ About the legal problems surrounding the publication of *Sexual Inversion*, see Jeffrey Weeks, 'Havelock Ellis and the Politics of Sex Reform', in Sheila Rowbotham and Jeffrey Weeks, *Socialism and the New Life: The Personal and Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis* (London: Pluto Press, 1977), pp.141-85 (p.154).

⁴ Allen J. Frantzen, *Before the Closet: Same-Sex Love from 'Beowulf' to 'Angels in America'* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p.117.

leading to the seven volumes of his *Renaissance in Italy*.¹ Barring this single ‘medical’ volume, as well as those spurious ‘spiritual’ analyses, the Victorian period had nothing ‘psychological’ to suggest about either paederasty or homosexuality, which partially accounts for the absence of any distinction being made between the two.

Even if there was, for the Victorians, a blurred overlap between ‘the paederastic’ and ‘the homoerotic’, a distinction between them needs and must be (re)drawn — especially since present discourses (social, medical, ethical, legal, political, familial, and scholarly) stigmatise, criminalize, or ignore the paederastic side of that overlap.² This is true even with its earliest manifestations, except perhaps for cultures labelled historically as ‘ancient’ or dismissively as ‘primitive’.³ 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

¹ John Addington Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*, 7 vols (London: Smith, Elder, 1875-86).

² My goal is an inherently Uranian one, grandly formulated by the Uranian poet and apologist Edward Perry Warren (writing under the pseudonym of Arthur Lyon Raile) in *A Defence of Uranian Love* — vol. 1, *The Boy Lover*; vol. 2, *The Uranian Eros*; vol. 3, *The Heavenly Wisdom and Conclusion* (London: Privately printed, 1928-30). In *Pederasty and Pedagogy*, Percy encapsulates this:

Despite this quite firm distinction in attitude among the Greeks, homophile investigators, beginning with [Heinrich] Hoessli and [Karl-Heinrich] Ulrichs, have often conflated Greek pederasty with modern androphilia. Edward Perry Warren, using the pseudonym Arthur Lyon Raile, first among writers in English drew the line of demarcation clearly and accurately between the pederasty of Greco-Roman civilization and the androphile homosexuality that pervades modern Europe and North America. However, his three-volume *Defence of Uranian Love* (1928-30) apparently proved too shocking for his contemporaries. To this day, not one American public library counts Warren’s title among the books in its collection. (P.9)

³ 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 seems likely that Hopkins’s father had 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).

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'. With that in mind, what follows is a belated attempt to expand exponentially the relatively minor 'Uranian' canon that 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 own volume, 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.¹

In what follows, the goal is to do just that: to consider the works of 'others greater than they', others who also embraced, experienced, and expressed the 'Uranian theme'.

Since each of the texts that this volume will engage in detail — 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,² someone rarely analysed in the critical sphere, a consideration of how each has been dealt with in regard to various issues relating to homoerotic and paiderastic desires (or supposed homoerotic and paiderastic desires; or mistakenly supposed homoerotic and paiderastic desires) would be beyond the scope of this volume, especially since it needs to be bound in boards. Because of this, the initial section will be limited to criticism surrounding issues of homoeroticism and paiderasty in the life and writings of Hopkins, though it delineates connections to the others where appropriate. In skeletal form, this volume has five chapters divided in the following way: 'Chapter One' considers recent critical engagement of Hopkins in regard to homoeroticism and paiderasty; 'Chapter Two' considers Hopkins's unique, scholarly problematics; 'Chapter Three' is a close reading, in the

¹ D'Arch Smith, p.xxi. In *Toward Stonewall: Homosexuality and Society in the Modern Western World* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), Nicholas C. Edsall also notes the 'poverty of the verse': '[Most Uranian poetry consists of] mawkishly sentimental, effusive variations on an endlessly repeated theme' (p.159).

² 'Johnson remains [...] someone probably known to few general readers. His main influence has been exerted through a large number of distinguished pupils, and through a chain of gifted teachers who knew him and were inspired by his writing' (Tim Card, 'William Johnson Cory', *DNB*).

traditional literary sense, of Hopkins's 'Epithalamion'; 'Chapter Four' considers the details and the implications of the paederastic pedagogy advocated in Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*; 'Chapter Five' considers the breach between Pater and Wilde, partly facilitated by Pater's review of Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray*. To draw a general 'Conclusion', it ends with a consideration of the influence of Johnson, whose paederastic pedagogy and collection of verses *Ionica* inspired many an Etonian such as Dolben, providing lessons in paederastic pedagogy, elevated friendship, erotic dalliance, and thwarted love, lessons that serve to elucidate the paederastic continuum stretching, unbroken, from Greco-Roman times to the present, a continuum that is then contemporised through the fiction of Guy Davenport.



Zeus Courting Ganymede

Greek (attributed to the Penthesilea Painter)
 Red-Figure terracotta kylix (drinking cup), ca. 450 BCE
 Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Ferrara, Ferrara, Italy



Ganymede

Bertel Thorvaldsen (ca. 1770-1844)

Marble, after 1816

Hermitage, St Petersburg, Russia