PATER'S DIONYSUS

AND WORDSWORTH'S ANTI-SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

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ABSTRACT

Pater's Dionysus and Wordsworth's Anti-self-consciousness

William Reid

The artistic selfhoods of William Wordsworth and Walter Pater may differ in precipitant and manifestation, but the two artists are linked, nonetheless, through their recognition that the common source of their condition lies in the solipsism inherent in the Apollonian principle in its fallen form.

My study will focus on the poet's unconscious allegiance to the spirit of Dionysus, and on parallelisms between his anti-self-consciousness program, as put forth in the "Prelude," and the more intricately articulated programs of certain German thinkers of the same period.

I have examined the dialectical thought of Nietzsche and Hegel, in particular, in order to reinforce the poet's solitary speculations upon the nature of self and other. Out of this conceptual alliance a patterned framework is constructed which facilitates my examination of the complexities of Pater's attempt to fix an objectified textual self out of the flux of "selves" involved in artistic creation, and thereby gain release from solipsism.

". . . the Apollonian preserves, the Dionysian destroys, self-consciousness."

– Norman O. Brown

Introduction

I am not certain whether the insomnia that so often plagues the modern artist continues after death. As one who holds the Romantic poets, particularly Wordsworth, in great esteem, I hope that their final rest has been untroubled. However, I would not be surprised if they had tossed about in their coffins considerably over the last two centuries as a result of the unjust criticism to which their work has so often been subjected.

Let us suppose that they have only heard exceptionally loud voices from where they sleep; that of Matthew Arnold, for example. Arnold called for a return to classical principles and reprimanded the Romantic poets for their rejection of traditional values in favor of naturalism, sentimentality and empty emotionalism. However, in accusing the Romantics of falling prey to "romantic melancholy," to "suffering that finds no vent in action,"[1] he failed to recognize their most significant contribution.

The major Romantic poets regarded self-consciousness, or obsessive subjectivity, as an artistic pitfall, and strove to re-unite themselves with the object world, to

close the gap of uncertainty that had opened between subject and object as a result of the disintegration of absolute values at the close of the eighteenth century. However, Wordsworth, instead of attempting to escape from subjectivity through dramatic or epic poetry, chose to write the "Prelude," a personal, narrative poem which examines the process through which self-consciousness is confronted and overcome. In refusing to suggest a transcendental or otherworldly escape from the morass of individuality, Wordsworth maintains an essential dynamism between subject and object, present and past selves.

In this respect, Wordsworth's program for regeneration resembles that of Walter Pater, who reacted against Arnold's Hellenism by maintaining that a dynamic, historical relationship between Classical and Romantic, or Apollo and Dionysus, was essential to the creation of the highest art. Wordsworth's decision to confront self-consciousness by writing a poem based on personal experience can be compared, therefore, to Pater's attempt to discover the Dionysian side of Plato and Classical Greece in Plato and Platonism, and to his appreciation of Rousseau's "strangeness or

1

Preface to Poems (1853), Irish Essays and Others, Works, XI, p. 92 (Quoted from Arnold and the Romantics, W. A. Jamison, Cophenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1958, p. 16.

distortion, his profound subjectivity, his passionateness" in his "Postscript" to Appreciations.[2] In the "Postscript," Pater remarks on the Romantic "habit of noting and distinguishing one's most intimate passages of sentiment, which "makes one sympathetic, begetting, as it must, the power of entering, by all sorts of finer ways, into the recesses of other minds" (Appreciations, p. 254).

Pater recognised, as many others, (including Keats, Arnold and Ruskin) did not, that Wordsworth's subjective, emotional response to the object world is justified in that it makes way for a new social bond between "sympathetic" imaginations. This thesis will demonstrate that, from Pater's point of view, the "return" of Dionysus is essential to the program of regeneration, or anti-self-consciousness, undertaken by his Romantic predecessors, for Dionysus is emblematic of a subjective, emotional response to nature, of strange, personal visions that are reflected and reconciled in the common pool of the subconscious. This introductory chapter will define the nature of Wordsworth and Pater's self-consciousness, and will demonstrate that for both, artistic and spiritual regeneration requires a renunciation of certain Apollonian principles,

[2] Walter Pater, Appreciations (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1910), p. 252. Hereafter cited in the text as Appreciations.

and an adoption of a Dionysian outlook toward art and life. Let us begin by examining the crucial distinctions between Apollonian and Dionysian attitudes concerning the life and death of the spirit.

In his essay on Wordsworth in Appreciations, Pater remarks on the way in which the poet apprehends religious spirit amongst "those secluded valleys where one generation after another maintains the same abiding place":

> Consisting, as it did so much, in the recognition of local sanctities, in the habit of connecting the stones and trees of a particular spot of earth with the great events of life, till the low walls, the green mounds, the half-obliterated epitaphs seemed full of voices, and a sort of natural oracles, the very religion of these people of the dales appeared but as another link between them and the earth, and was literally a religion of nature. (Appreciations, p. 50)

Wordsworth is sensitive to the "pitiful awe and care for the perishing human clay" (Appreciations, pp. 49-50) of the people of the valley. According to Pater, their sorrow and passion enters into the monuments which they construct to commemorate their dead, and their devotion, he feels, attains, a kind of eternal expression.

Through his appreciation of this religious spirit, Wordsworth's sensibility is aligned, with what Marius, as he lies on his deathbed, calls

> a permanent protest established in the world, a plea, a perpetual afterthought, which humanity would ever possess in reserve, against any wholly mechanical and disheartening theory of itself and its conditions. (Marius, II, p. 221)

The thought that "through the survival of their children, happy parents are able to think calmly, and with a very practical affection, of the world in which they are to have no direct share" confirms, for Marius, his "subjective immortality," or "certain considerations by which he seemed to link himself to the generations to come in the world he was leaving."[3]

Marius' childhood religion is "distinguished by an intense awareness of man's organic nature and by a sense of

[3] Walter Pater, Marius the Epicurean (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1910), pp. 221-22. Hereafter cited in the text as Marius. The term "subjective immortality" is used in Marius, I, p.20, where Pater writes that Marius' mother provided "the deceased Marius the elder with that secondary sort of life which we can give to the dead, in our intensely realized memory of them." The term was first used by Pater in an essay read before "The Old Mortality Society," February 20, 1864.

the continuing presence of the dead."[4] He experiences this religious sensibility directly upon the death of his father;

> On the part of his mother . . . entertaining the husband's memory, there was a sustained freshness of regret, together with the recognition, as Marius fancied, of some costly self-sacrifice to be credited to the dead. The life of the widow, languid and shadowy enough but for the poignancy of that regret, was like one long service to the departed soul. (Marius, I, p.7.)

Marius leaves home for Pisa, upon the death of his mother, with a suspicion that the "early, much cherished religion of the villa might come to count with him as but one form of poetic beauty, or of the ideal in things" (Marius, I, pp. 43-44).

Wordworth's people of the dales, Marius' mother, and the Christians whom he will encounter later in life, are linked, therefore, through their careful observance of rituals which are intended to preserve the spirit of their

[4] W. Shuter, "History as Palingenesis in Pater and Hegel" (PMLA, 86 1971), p. 418.

dead, and in particular, through their practice of inhumation. According to Ludwig Preller, an important source for Pater of information concerning the religion of ancient Greece,

> Inhumation assumes that the earth is the mother of man, out of which he originally sprang, and to which, when he dies, he must be given back. By being in the earth the dead are hallowed, not merely hallowed but elevated to a higher existence.[5]

In Greek Studies, Pater emphasizes the transcendental nature of the pre-Homeric worship of Demeter and Dionysus. Demeter's daughter is called Kore during her spring and summer's stay in the land of the living, and Persephone during fall and winter when she dwells in the kingdom of the dead as the bride of Aidoneus. The Phrygians, the

[5] Ludwig Preller, "Demeter und Persephone," Hamburg, 1837. Quoted by W. Shuter in "History as Palin- genesis in Pater and Hegel," p. 417. Shuter remarks that "when Pater published the first of two essays in the Fortnightly Review, he included a reference to Ludwig Preller's 'Demeter und Persephone'. From Preller, Pater took not only his interpretation of the Demeter myth, but the general view of primitive religion on which he was to base his richest imagery of historical death and rebirth" (p. 416).

earliest worshippers of Dionysus, believed that the god "slept in winter and awoke in summer, and celebrated his waking and sleeping; or that he was bound and imprisoned in winter and unbound each spring."[6]

Pater elaborates on a variety of early conceptions concerning these gods, but the basic idea that emerges from a study of Persephone-Kore and Dionysus is that both are seasonal gods who comprise the spiritual form of their worshipper's thoughts concerning life and death, regeneration and decay. Through inhumation, the worshippers of these chthonic deities hoped to guarantee their dead the same cycle.

Pater remarks that "Homer, in the Odyssey, knows Persephone . . . but not as Kore; only as the queen of the dead . . . dreadful Persephone, the goddess of destruction and death" (Greek Studies, p. 94). This is consistent with the fact that the Homeric Greeks abandoned the practice of inhumation in favor of cremation, and held no hope of a "higher existence" for their dead.

In Marius, Pater describes the emergence of Christianity from the older forms of worship of the Romans and Greeks. Marius discovers that the Christians had abandoned

[6] Walter Pater, Greek Studies (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1910), p.43. Hereafter cited in the text as Greek Studies.

cremation and "had adopted the practice of burial from some peculiar feeling of hope they entertained concerning the body" (Marius, II, p.100). The "hope" that they entertain is not for Orthodox Christianity's redemption of sin. Rather, Pater assigns to the Christians a hope that he himself has attained through his study of Hegelian philosophy, and the doctrine of "aufheben" or "mediation", which teaches that

> the life of the mind is not one that shuns death and keeps clear of destruction, it endures death and in death maintains its being. It only wins to truth when it finds itself utterly torn asunder.[7]

In Pater's "imaginary portrait," "Denys L'Auxerrois," Denys, or Dionysus, builds an organ for the people of Auxerre, and "on the painted shutters of the organ case, Apollo, with his lyre in hand, as lord of the strings, seemed to look askance on the music of the reed, in all the jealousy with which he had put Marsyas to death so

[7] The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. J. B. Baille, 2nd ed (1931, rpt. N. Y.: Harper, 1958), II, 81 ff. (quoted from W. Shuter, p. 412).

cruelly."[8] Although there is no evidence that Pater had read Nietszche before the writing of "Denys,"[9] his "imaginary portrait" expresses a view of the nature of Dionysus similar to that of Nietzsche in The Birth of Tragedy, and both writers recapitulate, through Dionysian theory, Hegel's aufheben doctrine. Nietzsche imagines that Apollo and

> The muses of the arts of "appearance" paled before an art which, in its intoxication, spoke the truth, the wisdom of Silenus cried "woe! woe!" against the cheerful Olympians. The individual, with all his boundaries and due proportions, went under in the self-oblivion of the Dionysian states and forgot the Apollonian precepts. The "Undueness" revealed itself as truth, contradiction, the bliss born of pain, declared

[8] Imaginary Portraits (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1910), p. 72. Hereafter cited in the text as Imaginary Portraits.

[9] Although several critics (Ruth Child in The Aesthetic of Walter Pater, and Michael Hamburger in From Prophecy to Exorcism London, 1965) attempt to establish a case for Nietzsche's influence upon Pater, David S. Thatcher, in Nietzsche in England (Toronto, 1970), is probably closest to the truth in remarking that "Nietzsche and Pater never knew of each other" (p. 132).

> itself out of the heart of nature. And thus, wherever the Dionysian prevailed, the Apollonian was routed and annihilated.[10]

This thesis will examine the distinctive processes through which "bliss" is "born of pain" for both Wordsworth and Pater. "Pain" will be seen to refer primarily to the imprisoning, solipsistic nature of "fallen"[11] Apollonianism. "Bliss," for Wordsworth, means a reunion of past and present selves, and of mind and nature, both divided by Apollonian "boundaries and due proportions." For both Pater and Wordsworth, a sense of continuity between past, present and future can not be derived from traditional Christianity. For Pater, a homosexual in Victorian England, and therefore 'sterile', a sense of immortality through procreation is also impossible to attain. For both therefore, spiritual rebirth must be seen as part of the physical regeneration of the earth, a process that is represented by the dual god of summer and winter, Dionysus.

[10] F. W. Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, ed. Dr. Oscar Levy, trans. W. A. Hausmann (N. Y.: Russell & Russell Inc., 1964), pp. 41-42.

[11] I use this term to refer to a mode of thought rooted in associationism, and the artistic, scientific, and religious world view of the 18th century in general. As a young man, Wordsworth adopted certain neo-classical, or Apollonian ideas, but the mature poet eventually recognized some of these to be "fallen" ideas, that is, based upon false premises, and contradictory to his own experience of things.

Keeping in mind the distinctions that have been drawn, in the preceding pages, between pre-Homeric (Dionysian) and Homeric (Apollonian) attitudes toward spiritual death and rebirth, let us now turn our attention to Wordsworth, in order to uncover similar distinctions between Dionysian and Apollonian attitudes toward the poetic imagination.

In a letter to John Reynolds, February 3, 1818, Keats intimates that Wordsworth's poetry had a "palpable design" upon the reader, that he was lacking in "Negative Capability" because of his tendency toward the "Egotistical Sublime."[12] In a later letter to Reynolds, May 3, 1818,[13] Keats praises Wordsworth for thinking "into the human heart" more than Milton had, but, in light of the earlier letter, whether this qualified Wordsworth to "usurp" the "height" of poethood (accessible, says the shade in "The Fall of Hyperion," only to "those to whom the miseries of the world / Are misery . . .") (II. 147-149), is debatable.

In the February 3 correspondence, Keats suggests that Wordsworth's sympathetic imagination is occasionally thwarted by obtrusions of the poet's identity, which raise

[12] The Letters of John Keats. Ed. M. B. Buxton (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 93.

[13] The Letters of John Keats, p. 138.

a barrier of self-conscious intent between himself and his reader. The reason for his condemnation of Wordsworth lies in the empirical nature of Keats' philosophy:

> It is necessary that the quality of "Negative Capability" confine itself, at least in its manifestations, to the particular, if it extends overmuch to the ideal realm, the poet will tend to become an abstract reasoner and obtrude his own views, he will become reflective rather than creative, to use Ruskin's distinction and he will lose the strong grasp of actualities, the firm sense of the solid world, which is the most noteworthy manifestation of the objective poet.[14]

Keats (and Shelley) turned away from the lyric to dramatic poetry and myth in order to avoid this obtrusion of identity. Though Wordsworth, in the "Prelude," admits to flirting with the idea of writing an epic poem, he lacked a mythical scheme, a sense of definite continuity between natural and supernatural, and without such a scheme epic is impossible. The burden of poetic leadership prompted tantalizing designs of epic magnitude, but as a mature poet, Wordsworth was able to focus his Miltonic aspira-

[14] W. J. Bate, Negative Capability (Massachusetts, 1939; rpt. Folcraft Press, 1970), p. 41.

tions out of the heavens and onto continuities between man and nature, present and past, conscious and subconscious. Keats appreciates this development in Wordsworth, claiming that he is "deeper than Milton," that he has profited from the "general and gregarious advance of intellect"[15] from Christian supernaturalism to agnostic humanism. However, he accuses Wordsworth of responding inappropriately to nature in his poetry, maintaining that there is a disequilibrium between object described and emotion derived from object.

However, this disequilibrium is justified if one considers that the purpose behind the writing of the "Prelude" was to depict the growth of a man's consciousness not of the divine, or of nature, or of the divine in nature, but of himself. He does not urge his reader to discover hints of self-renewal in nature, but his sense of poetic mission does inspire him to listen to nature, and to tell his reader <u>that</u> he has heard, not <u>what</u> he has heard, because self-renewal lies in one's capacity to hear and respond to nature.

The "Prelude" is the product of a mature poetic mind, and depicts its growth retrospectively from the undifferentiated consciousness of childhood, to an alienated or

[15] <u>The Letters of John Keats</u>, p. 138.

divided consciousness caused by an "emergent awareness of a separation of the subject that knows from that object or nature, that is known,"[16] to the desired state which is a mode of consciousness in which the "knower" is no longer alienated from nature but instead receives confirmation of his own identity and power through communion with the object world. Wordsworth substitutes this final state of self-recognition for the Christian process of conversion and redemption and demonstrates that the resultant strength of imagination is its own reward; by writing the "Prelude."

In book VI of the "Prelude," the poet sets out with a friend "along the Simplon's steep and rugged road" (l. 563) with the intention "to ascend / A lofty mountain" (ll. 572-73). They "clomb with eagerness" (l. 575), only to be informed, at a certain point, ". . . that our future course, all plain to sight / Was downwards, with the current of that stream" (ll. 584-85).

This passage provides an illustration of the mechanics of self-consciousness, of what Abrams calls the process that separates the knower from the known. The Wordsworthian traveller is "lost," "halted" (ll. 596-97); nature

[16] Meyer Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism (N. Y.: W. W. Norton, 1971), p. 182.

responds with an "unfathered vapour" (l. 595) that obscures his self-conscious ascent while simultaneously suggesting a new route. The obscured path corresponds to apocalyptical hopes of Wordsworth and other major Romantic poets, which had been revived by the

> promise of the American Revolution and, much more, of the early years of the French Revolution. . . . at the formative period of their lives, major Romantic poets -- including Wordsworth, Blake, Southey and later, after his own fashion, Shelley, shared their hope in the French Revolution as the portent of universal felicity.[17]

The obscured path also corresponds to Wordsworth's desire to write epic poetry, but such Miltonic aspirations demand the adoption, and imposition upon the audience, of an absolute mythic structure. The mature Wordsworth of the "Prelude" has developed that quality of poetic genius that Keats calls "Negative Capability". Coleridge, said Keats, "would let go by a fine, isolated verisimilitude caught from the penultralium of mystery, from being incapable of

[17] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 64.

remaining content with half-knowledge."[18] As book VI of the Prelude demonstrates, Wordsworth no longer reaches irritably after the absolute.

The road to absolute knowledge is obscured by the "unfather'd vapour" of the imagination, and this testifies to the poet's development, for an accessible summit obliterates imagination, as does an accessible God. The looming mountain lulls the traveller into the "vortex of self-consciousness,"[19] the sleep of death, the "ladder vision" of the eighteenth century ("by steps we shall ascend to God"). The traveller is lost, the poet is mute, but the moment of intense self-consciousness passes as the overpowering external stimulus of the mountain, which corresponds to Wordsworth's private "mountains" (apocalyptic hopes and Miltonic aspirations), passes into "unfather'd vapour."

The poet has overcome, therefore, the Romantic "selfhood" that Keats calls "Identity"[20] in that he does not obtrude a "palpable design" upon the reader. The Alpine episode also demonstrates that he has overcome another form of selfhood: Blake objected to Wordsworth's predilection

18 The Letters of John Keats, p. 69.

19 G. Hartman, "Romanticism and Anti-Self-consciousness." The Centennial Review, 7 (1962), p. 563.

20 The Letters of John Keats, p. 226.

for depiction of nature, maintaining that "Natural objects always did and now do weaken, deaden and obliterate imagination in me."[21] As I have shown, it is not the mind but the mountain that is obliterated in the Alpine episode. Wordsworth makes it quite clear, at the end of book VI,

> . . . that not
> In hollow exultation, dealing out
> Hyperboles of praise comparative;
> Not rich one moment, to be poor forever;
> Not prostrate, overborne, as if the mind
> Herself were nothing, a mere pensioner
> On outward forms -- did we in presence stand
> Of that magnificent region.
>
> (bk. VI, ll. 732-39)

The visual stimulus that leads to dissecting analysis of nature is defeated; nature's purpose cannot be seen or judged, or exalted by hyperbole; but a hope of a purpose can be felt -- as joy.

[21] Marginalia to Volume I of Wordsworth's Poems of 1815.

The Alpine episode is illustrative of the polarities inherent in self-consciousness, particularly of Wordsworth's desire to, on one hand, remain in the divided but comforting world of sense, and, on the other, to return to the unity that he experienced as a child. This polarity is a development upon the initial polarity in Wordsworth's life. He was "foster'd alike by beauty and by fear" (bk. 1, p. 302); however, for the self-conscious poet in the divided world, beauty can become mere picturesque, and fear can lead to primitivism, through an acute desire to escape from division and the "death" of nature back to the unity experienced as a child. These polarities must be synthesized, so that the self-conscious dross might be shed.

His predicament, therefore, can be appreciated in the light of the Apollonian-Dionysian duality for, as Meyer Abrams says,

> . . . Apollo represents the "Principium individuationis" of the phenomenal world of sense and mere appearance, while Dionysius represents the "mysterious Primordial unity" which is the "mysterious substratum," the "thing-in-itself of every phenomenon." The opposition between these two principles, accordingly, is correlative with the conflict within man between the desire to sustain his divided individuality and the impulse

> to return to the one life which is its substrate.[22]

Wordsworth's desire for "individuation in unity,"[23] therefore, can be seen as an attempt to reconcile these polarities.

It is not an abstract absolute from which the Wordsworthian traveller separates; if it was, his disappointment at not experiencing his ascent of the Alps as an ascent could not be assuaged.

Instead, disorientation leads to regeneration, for

> No outcast he, bewilder'd and depress'd;
> Along his infant veins are interfused
> The Gravitation and Filial bond
> Of Nature, that connect him with the world.
>
> (bk. II, ll. 241-45)

Unlike the German Idealists' concept of division, which, derived from Plotinus, posits an initial absolute that "overflows" into a fallen world of separate things, or Christian Neo-platonism, which posits a division from the

[22] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 317.

[23] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 280.

one "which is reflected in a division within the nature of man,"[24] Wordsworth's division involves a separation between the desire for and the fulfillment of the sense of "filial bondage" to the object world.

This is a crucial distinction. A philosophical system that posits an initial transcendental unity requires a sublimation of love or energy in order to regain this unity.

To Wordsworth, the transcendence of the "terrors and contradictions of life" renders nature dead. The traveller in the "Prelude" does fall prey to this form of selfhood; books VIII to XI depict his attempt to escape from the harsh realities of life into a world of picturesque categories and abstract reasoning. His imagination, prompted by "some rash muse's earnest call," ventures

> To try her strength among harmonious words,
> And to book-notions and the rules of art
> Did knowingly conform itself. . . .
>
> (bk. VIII, ll. 368-71)

However, he realizes, finally, that in applying categorical thought to art one becomes a slave to

> . . . that false secondary power
> By which we multiply distinctions, then

[24] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 281.

> Deem that our puny boundaries are things
> that we perceive, and not that we have made.
>
> (bk. II, ll. 216-19).

Wordsworth, like Jarno in Goethe's Wilhelm Meister, learns that one can only learn about mountains in the middle of mountains.[25] As opposed to Neo-classical aesthetics, which repudiate the role of the imagination (a Platonic view prevalent in the eighteenth century) and demand that one apply formal categories to the object perceived, a "Dionysian"[26] aesthetic requires that one imbue the object perceived with one's own life, making it expressive of itself and oneself simultaneously. This distinction is related to the central distinction between Romantic and Neo-platonic thought:

> In the central tradition of Neo-platonic thought the absolute, undifferentiated One had been the absolute good, perfection itself . . . and the end toward which all existence aspires.

[25] J. W. Goethe, Wilhelm Meister. Trans. W. Carlyle (Boston: Dana Estes & Company, 1839) V. II, p. 213.

[26] See Robert Langbaum, The Poetry of Experience, pp. 232-33 (Quoted on page 45 of this thesis).

> In this distinctive Romantic innovation, on the contrary, the norm of truth, goodness and beauty is not the simple unity of the origin, but the complex unity of the process of cumulative division and reintegration.[27]

This process can be observed in the "Prelude" whereby the mental integrity of the poet is broken by a crisis of identity, from which he recovers, rising from despair to a level higher than the unity experienced as a child, because his recovery has confirmed his imaginative powers and his crisis has steeped these powers in a humanizing awareness of suffering. Wordsworth extracts the substance from dogma; in recognition of the fact that dogmas testify to the suffering of individuals from past ages, he disengages suffering from dogma in order to discover subjective truth. However, in freeing the aesthetic image from dogma, and releasing it into an account of his personal development, Wordsworth encourages the reader to suspend relational, analytic categories as well, thereby paving the way for a new dramatic relationship between image and reader. Whereas for Milton spirituality is impalpable, invisible, Wordsworth recognizes that only through nature can the spiritual

[27] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 184.

be expressed. However, before it focuses on the object world, the imagination must measure its strength.

In book IV, as the travellers descend, they lose their way, enter a narrow chasm, and are confronted by

> . . . The immeasurable height
> Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
> The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
> And in the narrow rent at every turn
> Winds thwarting winds, bewilder'd and forlorn,
> The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
> The rocks that muttered close upon our ears,
> Black, drizzling crags that spake by the wayside
> As if a voice were with them, the sick sight
> And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
> The unfettered clouds and region of the heavens,
> Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light --
> Were all like workings of one mind, the features
> Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree;
> Characters of the great Apocalypse,
> The types and symbols of eternity,
> Of first and last and midst, and without end.
>
> (bk. VI, ll. 624-40)

These lines, in concordance with Blake's admonishment of Wordsworth's 'nature', demonstrate that dependence upon natural objects for spiritual revelation can lead to a "tyranny of the senses."[28] Wordsworth's early career was steeped in Lockian and Hartleyan empiricist-associanist thought; the above passage was written by the mature poet in revolt against this influence.

Sight is overcome by sound as the travellers proceed along the "gloomy strait." The overpowering visual stimulus of mountain and ravine becomes a "sick sight," a "giddy prospect," and, as sight loses focus, the waterfalls become Blakeian "stationary blasts," a non-associational, non-relational image of eternity. Having sublimated his selfhood, the traveller is liberated from the "narrow chasm" of self-consciousness as his internal polarity of beauty and fear finds an objective correlative in the "region of the heavens" and the "raving stream".

I have undertaken, so far, to demonstrate that instead of attempting to escape from subjectivity into myth, Wordsworth accepts subjectivity as a necessary condition, and, in the "Prelude," attempts to work toward an objectified image (and, by extension, an objectified self) through subjective presentation. I have also demonstrated that the

[28] G. Hartman, Wordsworth's Poetry: 1787 - 1814 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 240.

ideal in Wordsworth's poetry is expressed through the actual, that Wordsworth was aware, as was Keats, that an imposition of an ideal onto the actual is detrimental to artistic objectivity. Wordsworth's mature vision is approached in three stages, through an empirically derived sense of maternal love that connects the child to the object world, through a period of division and despair, to a higher stage in which the experiences of the first and second stages are internalized and united.

In the crucial second stage, the artist's self-consciousness affects him cognitively and morally: the knower is separated from the known and his natural instincts are separated from his reason. For Wordsworth, this fissure betwen subject and object, impulse and action, present and past consciousness, is healed through "spots of time." For Pater, the return of Dionysus is the solution, for he represents an erotic response to life, an antagonist of self-conscious dualities, for whom desire and fulfillment are united.[29] Pater's "privileged moments" are closely related to Wordsworth's "spots of time." However, for Pater, their value lies in themselves, not in

[29] I have drawn from Herbert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 162. Marcuse does not discuss Pater or Dionysus; however, his argument concerns the nature of Orphic and Narcissistic figures such as Dionysus.

what they might lead to: "not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end."[30] Therefore, Pater's moments of vision cannot be seen to constitute, in themselves, a program toward regeneration, as do Wordsworth's. Wordsworth is able to derive a sense of continuity between present and past through "spots of time," Marius, on the other hand, believes that "what is secure in our existence is but the sharp apex of the present moment between two hypothetical eternities" (Marius, I, p. 146). Therefore, in order to appreciate Pater's attempt to attain a sense of temporal continuity within the flux, we must look beyond his "moments" and into other aspects of his thought.

In the following chapters, I shall first examine Wordsworth's "Prelude," and his program for regeneration, or anti-self-consciousness, in order to define a dilemma that still confronts the modern artist. Next I shall study Pater's response to this dilemma. Pater was a critic of Romanticism, and an examination of his criticism of Wordsworth in Appreciations will uncover an important connection in Pater's thought between pagan religion and de-repressive art.

30 "Conclusion" to The Renaissance (London: Macmillan and Co. 1910; rpt. N. Y.: Johnson Reprint Co., 1967), Hereafter cited in the text as The Renaissance. Quoted by Morris Beja, in Epiphany in the Modern Novel (London: Peter Owen Ltd. 1971), p. 38.

Wordsworth's "Prelude," and Pater's Marius the Epicurean are both examples of bildungromans - creative biographies about the development of the artist. Though one wrote poetry and the other prose, their common use of this genre will facilitate my examination of the extent to which Pater's Dionysian theory is related to Wordsworth's thought, and will help to define Pater's modernity in terms of his position halfway between Wordsworth and modern literature of artistic development and the subconscious mind.

Through the writing of a bildungsroman, the artist attempts to capture a ground of reality, to create a set object of consciousness out of fleeting impressions and remembrances, to fix a self that he can be conscious of, and thereby overcome the divided consciousness of solipsism. Wordsworth and Pater share this same concern, and both encounter solipsistic impediments to the attainment of this healthy form of self-consciousness at either end of the empiricism-idealism spectrum. We have examined this problem from Wordsworth's perspective, and his solution will receive more attention in the second chapter of this thesis.

Pater's dilemma resembles that of Wordsworth; inherent in his philosophical system is a difficulty in connecting present self to past selves since he

> suggests a paradigm of process in which there is no enduring circle of self (only an asterisk, a star bright centre) since at every moment the self is being defined anew as the elemental threads (physical properties or mental impressions) are added and subtracted. Within the flux there is simply a succession of selves, each of which only contains a relic (Ren, 326) of the self that preceded it.[31]

The individual is left, therefore, with no fixed self to be conscious of, and is in a divided state, similar to that of Wordsworth described in book IV of the "Prelude," in which various counterfeit selves block the recollective passage of consciousness; " a swarm / Of heady schemes jostling each other" (bk. IV, ll. 281-82) impedes the recollective, conservative process. The public masks of the poet,

> The very garments that he wore
> Preyed on his strength, and stopped
> The quiet stream of self-forgetfulness
>
> (bk. IV, ll. 295-97)

[31] Gerald Monsman, Walter Pater (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1977), p. 59.

that would lead him back to a ground of reality, a "spot of time" in the past.

In order to counteract the centrifugal, Dionysian randomness inherent in the flux, Pater transports his hero to certain places and times in history when a centripetal or Apollonian tendency is in the air, which will serve to gather together the diverse forces within individual and cultural history, and refine them to a burning point within his hero's consciousness, so that, in a moment of vision, a principle of rest will be seen to underly a principle of motion.

In Plato and Platonism, Pater examines the process whereby a principle of kronos, or order was gradually imposed upon Greek thought, a principle of which

> Apollo, the Dorian god, was but its visible consecration. It was what, under his blessing, art superinduced upon the rough stone, the yielding clay, the jarring metallic strings, the common speech of the day. Philosophy, in its turn, with enlarging purpose, would project a similar light of intelligence upon the at first sight somewhat unmeaning world we find actually around us . . . To certain fortunate minds, the efficacious moment of insight would come when, with delightful adaptation of means to ends, of the parts to

> the whole, the entire scene about one, bewildering, unsympathetic, unreasonable, on a superficial view, would put on, for them at least, that so welcome expression of fitness, which it is the business of the fine arts to convey into material things, of the art of discipline to enforce upon the lives of men. The primitive Ionian philosophers had found, or thought they found, such a principle in the force of some omnipresent physical element; air, water, fire; or in some common law; motion, attraction, repulsion, as Plato would find it in an eternally appointed hierarchy of genus and species.[32]

These Dorian and Ionian perspectives, as they are expressed above, are mutually exclusive, yet both are attractive to Pater. The Heraclitian doctrine of motion (as Pater calls it) becomes an important element in The Renaissance, and a phase of thought which Marius never completely abandons. However, the Platonic world of "eternal and immutable ideas" (Plato and Platonism, p. 27)

[32] Walter Pater, Plato and Platonism (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1910, rpt. N. Y.: Johnson Reprint Co., 1967), p. 36. Hereafter cited in the text as Plato and Platonism.

answers to Pater's desire to find an intelligible system governing the flux.

In Marius, Pater rejects the Platonic notion, put forth by Apuleius, of the existence of "divine powers of a middle nature" (Marius, II, p. 89) which operate as mediators between sense and spirit. However he finds what is lacking in this notion, a concrete focal point for visionary insight, in Hegel's aufheben doctrine, which depicts a process through which

> Spirit leaves its external existence behind and gives its embodiment over to Recollection. In thus concentrating itself on itself, spirit is engulfed in the night of its own self-consciousness; its vanished existence -- The previous state -- but born again from the womb of knowledge.[33]

As W. Shuter explains,

> mediation aufheben annuls or dissolves, but only through this act of dissolution can the implicit character of spiritual life become explicit.[34]

[33] Phenomenology of Mind, pp. 807-08.

[34] Shuter, p. 412.

The truth of the unity of Kore and Persephone, of life and death, of the embodiment of spirit, cannot be comprehended through direct revelation, through Psyche's stolen glance. Keats must confront the spectre of memory in "The Fall of Hyperion"; Psyche must descend into the underworld and confront the goddess of darkness; Wordsworth's ascent of the Alps, or the pinnacle of poethood, must prove to be a descent; only through an act of "self-forgetfulness" can one attain an understanding of the interactivities of generation and decay.

As a spiritual self emerges out of Dionysian sacrifice, a textual self[35] emerges from Pater's lending of himself to cultural history through his writing, a composite of the relation of myth, and the "antinomous" forces of which it is composed, to the character of Marius and to Pater's, and the reader's, private selves. Pater's fiction attempts to depict the development of a generative force which, 'goes under' in order to understand the extreme of alterity -- death, and thereby "maintain its being."[36] In this common pool of the subconscious, the subjective fears concerning alterity of Pater, reader, and

[35] I have drawn from Monsman, Pater's Art of Autobiography, p. 35, for my discussion of a textual self.

[36] Phenomenology of Mind, II, 81pp. (quoted from W. Shuter, p. 412).

the mythic figures of his fiction intermingle, are resolved, and father forth an immortal textual self.

Hegel's aufheben doctrine, therefore, provides Pater with a possibility of escape from the solipsistic prison of personality which, in Pater's view, incarcerates the Dionysian/Heraclitean, with his flux of successive selves, and the Apollonian with his monastic ascesis. At the end of Marius, Pater's hero visits the tomb of his ancestors, and sees the partially exposed body of a child lying beside his mother's grave. He buries the child, who, he imagines "had taken filial place beside her there, in his stead." He buries 'himself', therefore, with the Christian sympathy and devotion that he feels undeserving of when his turn comes to die. Marius' sense that his martyrdom is ironic is, itself, ironic, for in burying the child, whose "protruding baby hand seemed to stir up in him feelings vivid enough, bringing him intimately within the scope of dead people's grievances" (Marius, II, p. 206), Marius "maintains his being" in alterity, and prepares his spirit, thereby, for self-sacrifice, and "the tablet of the mind white and smooth, for whatsoever divine fingers might choose to write there" (Marius, II, p. 220).

Various critics, such as Anthony Ward and James Heffernan, have commented on the ironical nature of Marius' death, locating the irony primarily in the fact that

Marius, a non-Christian, pagan ritualist, should be accorded the "plenary grace" (Marius II, p. 224) of a Christian martyr upon his deathbed. However, this level of irony dissolves, in the reader's mind, when a deeper level of irony is construed; an ironical distance between Marius' own appreciation of his death as ironic, and the textual self's awareness of the appropriateness of his martyrdom, derived from an appreciation of the hero's development, and shared by author and reader, to which Marius himself is not sensitive. There is, therefore, no irony inherent in the rites administered by the Christians to this textual self, the "Christian by nature," whose birth is guaranteed through Marius' sacrificial death. The "rush of kindness" (Marius, II, p. 207) that Marius feels toward his father has, unbeknownst to Pater's hero, enabled him to realize that "ideal in things" that had been represented by his mother's "long service to the departed soul" of her husband. The "eloquent utterance.. on the irony of men's fates" (Marius, II, pp. 214-15) which Marius, after delivering "his brother" (Marius, II, p. 213) from the Romans, fancies he might hear had "there been one to listen just then" (Marius, II, p. 214), does indeed find expression, through the voices of certain critics who seem as insensitive to Marius' development as is Marius himself. The opinions of these critics shall be given due

consideration in chapter three of this thesis, in which Marius' development, in terms of his relationship to Cornelius, shall be examined in greater depth. For the moment it will suffice to say that Marius' feeling that his martyr's death is ironic is appropriate, for it is the nature of "Natural Christians" to be unconscious of their Christianity, unlike the "Apollonian" Christian's conscious adherence to prescribed "boundaries and due

My desire to study Wordsworth and Pater together stems from an appreciation of their mutual effort to discover an image for a unifying principle that represents imaginative power without the sublimation of erotic energy that an "Apollonian" Christianity would demand. Pater, as I shall establish in my final chapter, finds this image in Dionysus; Wordsworth in nature itself. Pater makes use of the mythical figure of Dionysus as a physical embodiment of homosexuality and fertility, two features that can be associated with the god, but which are mutually exclusive in nature.[38] Wordsworth does not require such a figure; he discovers, at the summit of Mt. Snowdon in bk. XIV of the "Prelude,"

[37] Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, pp. 41-42.

[38] The nature of this association will be discussed in the third chapter.

> . . . the emblem of a mind
> That feeds upon infinity, that broods
> Over the dark abyss, intent to hear
> Its voices issuing forth to silent light
> In one continuous stream.
>
> (bk. XIV, ll. 70-74).

Written in the landscape is an emblem of a mind that listens to and learns from the darkness of life and of the subconscious mind. Wordsworth shares with Pater an aspiration to renovate art and religion so that they might accommodate such an image.

My examination of the emergence of Dionysian erotic energy in Marius will facilitate a rehabilitation of Paterian criticism which, heretofore, has concentrated its attention on the Apollonian nature of Pater's vision, and has neglected to examine the means through which Pater attempts to overcome his private selfhood -- repressed homosexuality.

The link between Wordsworth and Pater is appreciable if one compares their programs for overcoming their respective selfhoods. For Pater, the alienation of the Victorian homosexual artist, combined with the burden of doubt imposed upon him by the previous century's proclamation of

the "death" of God, engenders a tendency toward acute solipsism. Pater attempts to ameliorate his condition through self-objectification. The emergence of a textual self out of the semi-autobiographical Marius, more than the solace that religion provides for the character of Marius (and, by extension, for Pater) at the end of the novel, constitutes the cure for his solipsistically incarcerated imagination. In this respect, Pater's program is aligned with an important movement within Romanticism -- anti-self-consciousness -- and particularly with those Romantic artists who sought to escape from their morass of inwardness through the writing of bildungsromans. Geoffrey Hartman, in "Romanticism and Anti-self-consciousness," maintains that

> To explore the transition from self-consciousness to imagination, and to achieve that transition while exploring it and so to prove that it is still possible is the Romantic purpose he finds most crucial.[39]

The essential purpose behind the writing of any bildungsroman is to achieve such a "transition while

[39] Hartman, "Romanticism and Anti-Self-Consciousness," p. 53.

exploring it," and as Hartman reveals, this process represents the only avenue toward renovation available to the "Godless" artist:

> Romantic art has a function analogous to that of religion. The traditional scheme of Eden, fall and redemption merges with the new triad of nature, self-consciousness, imagination, while the last term in both involves a kind of return to the first.[40]

Pater's version of this triad involves a movement from winter Dionysus, a state in which Marius' subjective dreams lack an objective counterpart for release, to a summer Dionysus state in which his desires are released, to a synthesis of summer Dionysus and Apollo, so that his desire might find sensual expression. This movement is enacted against an allegorical background of "fallen" Apollonianism (Victorian England) that will be redeemed through the reflection thrown upon it by the actual background of the novel, the healthy Apollonianism of second century Rome. The microcosmic or ontogenetic progression of Marius from the first to the third term of Pater's version of Hartman's triad is carried on as a subjective mirror image of the macrocosmic or philogenetic dialectic

[40] Hartman, "Romanticism and Anti-Self-Consciousness," p. 43.

between Dionysus and Apollo, an "ouroboros" of the subjective spirit in the process of synthesizing with the prevailing Zeitgeist.

In the preceding pages I have shown that both Wordsworth and Pater find impediments to the attainment of a healthy form of self-consciousness in both the empirical and the idealistic schools of thought. My brief examinations of book VI of Wordsworth's "Prelude" and of the ending of Pater's Marius are intended to introduce and compare specific problems faced by the two artists. The next chapter will focus exclusively on Wordsworth's dilemma and resolution; out of this disucssion, however, will emerge a critical framework which will facilitate my examination, in the final chapter, of Pater's Dionysian theory as it appears in Marius and the Imaginary Portraits.

Wordsworth's Anti-self-consciousness

In placing his hero's aspirations on a summer Dionysus state corrected by Apollonianism, and not on strictly an Apollonian Golden Age, Pater joins Wordsworth in the circle of Romantic artists for whom

> the history of the race and of the individual, which had in Neoplatonism been a passing absence from felicity, a regrettable deviation into this-worldly existence -- became the sole realm in which, in the end, we either find our happiness or not at all: the aim of our life in this world can be nothing else than to enhance the quality of that life itself.[41]

Pater also inherits from Wordsworth the task of having to sift through the debris of another of the Enlightenment's upset applecarts -- British empiricism's mechanistic world view. Early in their careers, both Wordsworth and Coleridge embraced David Hartley's Lockian psycho- philosophical

[41] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 183. This is not to suggest that Wordsworth discards the notion of permanence or eternity associated with Neoplatonism. David Perkins, in The Quest for Permanence, says that "Even the

theory of association, propounded in his Observations on Man. They found his thesis irresistible because it detailed a seemingly logical progression from the sensory experiences of childhood to the achievement of a sense of self-awareness, to a moral sense, and hence to a proof of the existence of God, a progression which appealed to Coleridge and Wordsworth's Godwinian inspired belief in the perfectability of mankind.

However Hume, with whose philosophy Coleridge was familiar, dispelled this theory in 'medias res' by maintaining that

> Pain and pleasure, grief and joy, passions and sensations succeed each other, and never all exist at the same time. It cannot, therefore, be from any of these impressions, or from any other, that the idea of self is deriv"d; and consequently there is no such idea.[42]

Hume goes on to maintain that we justify our misconceived sense of self by feigning "the continue'd existence

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images by which another poet might especially have depicted flux are often used by Wordsworth to express the opposite" (p. 33). Pater too, though known to be an advocate of Heraclitian "flux" philosophy, has a penchant for the permanent, and a comparison of the views of Pater and Wordsworth on this subject will be carried on in the concluding chapter.

[42] David Hume, "Of Personal Identity," quoted by Robert Langbaum, The Mysteries of Identity (N.Y.: Oxford

of the perception of our senses, to remove the interruption," or that we imagine "something unknown and mysterious connecting the parts."

Hume justifiably discards the empirical notion of a unity built up from associated parts, but in doing so he makes way for a regression in philosophical thought toward solipsism. Wordsworth, though probably not schooled in Humian thought except through conversation with Coleridge, nonetheless inherits the post-Humian condition of uncertainty, and attempts to ward off the possibility of a personal slide into solipsism by introducing, in his poetry, the concept of an unconscious memory[43] that is capable of not only connecting present and past self, but of bridging the gap between ontogeny and phylogeny by tracing continuities between the unity of childhood and the primordial unity of mankind.

University Press, 1977), p. 26. Langbaum, in explanation of Hume's argument, says that we "arrive at the sense of self through error; through the process of association we pass insensibly from the idea of succession to the idea of identity, because the imagination feels the same in conceiving these opposite ideas" (p. 27).

[43] As E. L. Stelzig maintains in All Shades of Consciousness (Paris, 1975), "A Wordsworth poem of the great decade is frequently a subtly wrought, lyrical, meditative construct which re-objectifies and re-externalizes memorable impressions that have become mentally assimilated as part of the poet's identity" (p. 59). Locke, too, placed great emphasis on memory, but as Blake argued in "There is no Natural Religion," his thought did not allow for new ideas, but merely combined a set number of sensations. However, as M. H. Abrams points out,

However, in order to liberate his unconcious memory for the stern task of establishing continuities between mind and nature, present and past selves, Wordsworth attempts, through writing the "Prelude," to achieve a propitious balance between ideal and actual.

The danger of poetic palsy lies at either end of this spectrum; certain episodes of the "Prelude" (the ascent of the Alps in bk. VI, for example) reveal a mind that is conscious of imposing too much of itself on nature, and at these times Wordsworth almost seems to be aware of the impending appropriateness of Keats' "egotistical sublime." Nature must be established as sufficient for the imagination, and Wordsworth does not succeed in establishing this unequivocally until the Snowdon episode in bk. XIV

In other episodes, such as bk. VIII, ll. 365-90, and bk. XI, 306-33, external stimulus numbs an imagination that has been subverted by analytic science, inherited Christian dogma and picturesque categories; the mind becomes subservient to the spectres of associationalism, and imagination becomes mere fancy.[44]

Locke's notion of secondary qualities "Implicitly gave the mind a partnership in sense perception." The Mirror and the Lamp 2nd ed. (N. Y.: Norton, 1958), p. 63. It remained for Wordsworth to explicate this partnership in his poetry.

[44] Coleridge was undoubtedly the first to trace poetic fancy to its roots in associationalism: "Fancy . . . has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The fancy is indeed no other than a mode of memory

At these moments, when the dampened poetic spirit receives external stimuli passively, and is satisfied with the meaning attached to them by Christian allegory or picturesque categorization, it is the spirit of Dionysus that saves Wordsworth from poetic death, for

> Nietzsche's Apollonian - Dionysian dichotomy corresponds to our distinction between the poetry of meaning, which the reader understands through judgement, through contemplating the images or events as objects complete with their own meaning -- and the poetry of experience, which the reader understands through a combination of sympathy and judgement, through finding by an effort of creative insight his own life in the otherwize incomplete image or events. . . . For Wordsworth and Coleridge, then, as for Nietzsche, the poem exists not to imitate or describe life, but to make it manifest.[45]

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emancipated from the order of time and space; while it is blended with, and modified by, that empirical phenomenonof the will, which we express by the word choice. But equally with the ordinary memory the fancy must recieve all its materials ready made from the law of association." S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria (N. Y.: E. P. Dutton & Co. Ltd., 1906), p. 158.

[45] Langbaum, The Poetry of Experience, pp. 232-33. Pater's Apollo-Dionysus duality differs greatly in application, but not in theory, from that of Nietzsche.

Thus, for Wordsworth, "wise passiveness" does not mean that the mind must become a "tabula rasa" in the perceptive process, but instead refers to a state in which judgement waits upon imaginative projection of self into the object perceived, in order to divine essential continuities between subject and object. He seeks to expose the essential "self" beneath the external layer of subject and object, and because this process requires a projection of imaginative sympathy in order to dissolve the veil of self-consciousness that "separates the knower from the known," it can be characterized as 'Dionysian'. In this chapter I shall attempt to isolate the propitious presence of Dionysus (as defined by Langbaum in the passage quoted above) in Wordsworth's development as an artist. The importance of this theme can be appreciated if one considers that the two lowest points of Wordsworth's life, as depicted in the "Prelude," are found in bk. XI, ll. 307-33, and bk. XII, ll. 75-139, in which Wordsworth succumbs to the tyranny of analytic science and picturesque categories respectively, two pillars of the foundation upon which the "poetry of meaning" is constructed. Analytic science, in bk. XI, renders Wordsworth "bedimmed and

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See Gerald Monsman, Pater's Portraits: Mythic Pattern in the Fiction of Walter Pater (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), pp. 17-21

changed," and the reason for this can be traced to the dualistic nature of Newtonian physics, Lockian empiricism and Cartesian philosophy. In 1797-98 Coleridge and Wordsworth reacted violently against the elementarism that underlies dualistic science and philosophy; as Coleridge wrote in The Friend,

> The groundwork, therefore, of all true philosophy is the full apprehension of the difference between . . . that intuition of things which arises when we possess ourselves as one with the whole . . . and that which presents itself when . . . we think of ourselves as separated beings, and place nature in antithesis to the mind, as object to subject, thing to thought, death to life.[46]

In his "Religious Musings," Coleridge maintains that man will be reintegrated, united by a "sacred sympathy" which will make "The whole one self! Self that no alien knows! . . . all of all possessing."[47] Wordsworth is saved, in bk. XI of the "Prelude," by the "sweet sympathy"

[46] The Friend (3 Vols.; London, 1818), III, 261-2.

[47] "Religious Musings," ll. 154-57. The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912).

of his sister, and, through her example of a non-judgemental approach to nature he is led back

> . . . through opening day
> To those sweet counsels between head and heart
> Whence grew that genuine knowledge, fraught with peace.
>
> (bk. XI, ll. 352-54)

However, in bk XII, Wordsworth, disillusioned by the failure of the French Revolution to effect an amelioration of society, and by his beloved England's opposition to France, gives way

> To a comparison of scene with scene,
> Bent overmuch on superficial things,
> Pampering himself with meagre novelties
> Of colour and proportion; to the moods
> Of time and season, to the moral power,
> The affections and the spirit of the place
> Insensible.
>
> (bk. XII, ll. 115-21)

Martin Price, in "The Picturesque Moment,"[48] traces one of the roots of picturesque art to its origin in empirical philosophy, which

> had created a model of the mind constructing its universals out of sense experience, and the model lent itself to the kind of speculative physiological psychology one finds in David Hartley or in Edmund Burke. The exploration of associative processes moves from the model-building of Locke . . . to the recognition of the constructive force of emotions in the associative process, their fusion or coalescence of images, to build a structure of problematical epistemological value but great strength and appeal.

Wordsworth dismisses picturesque fancy in the "Prelude," as

> . . . that false secondary power
> By which we multiply distinctions, then
> Deem that our puny boundaries are things

[48] From Sensibility to Romanticism, ed. F. W. Hilles and H. Bloom (N. Y.: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 271.

> That we perceive, and not that we have made
>
> (bk. II, ll. 216-19)

and maintains that

> Each most obvious and particular thought,
> Not in a mystical or idle sense
> But in the words of reason deeply weighed,
> Hath no beginning . . .
>
> (bk II, ll. 225-32)

implicitly dismissing the empirical notion that ideas proceed from an influx of sensations that coalesce in the mind.

However, the picturesque plays an important role in the "Prelude" as an antagonist in an internal struggle for dominance between abstract, categorical knowledge and the power of the imagination. It manifests itself in a tyranny of the senses, of sight in particular, that separates the perceiver from the object of perception, and weakens an imagination that, subject to this tyranny, is unable to play a creative role in perception. As Robert Langbaum, in The Mysteries of Being, maintains,

> Wordsworth portrays the mind as itself part of the nature it perceives, and it is this connection,

> sensed through what Wordsworth calls "joy" . . . that gives us confidence in the reality of ourselves and the external world.[49]

Picturesque categories raise a barricade between mind and object, reason and emotion, present consciousness and "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings"[50] that springs from immersion in past consciousness; the "joy" in continuity becomes imprisoned in stasis.

The Dionysian artist perceives the relationship between subject and object as dynamic; each individual sensation alters the mind and the mind alters each sensation. Therefore, as Langbaum says,

> no two succeeding sensations from the same object can be the same, because the later sensation reaches a mind already modified by the earlier sensation.[51]

Picturesque poetry can not provide a "joy" in continuity for poet or reader, since no real continuity can

[49] The Mysteries of Identity, p. 31.

[50] Preface to 1800 edition of the Lyrical Ballads, ed. R. L. Brett and A. R. Jones (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1963), p. 246.

[51] Langbaum, The Mysteries of Identity, p. 31.

exist between associated sensations or ideas; it can only depict a play of forces between rough, variegated nature and the associationally derived ideal toward which it aspires.

In that it demands only that the image be aesthetically satisfying, and therefore has no need for political or moral didacticism, the picturesque, in this respect, can be seen as a positive element in Wordsworth's development toward a "Natural Supernaturalism." However, Wordsworth's poetry strives to depict an "emblem of a mind / That feeds upon infinity" (bk. XIV, ll. 70-71); the picturesque can only deal with the finite. Coleridge elaborates on this distinction in his Biographia Literaria:

> Where the parts by their harmony produce an effect of a whole, but where there is no seen form of a whole producing or explaining the parts of it, where the parts only are seen and distinguished, but the whole is felt -- the picturesque. Where neither whole nor parts, but unity as boundless or endless allness -- the sublime.[52]

Wordsworth, in "A Guide throught the District of the Lakes," defines sublimity as "the result of Nature's first,

[52] Quoted from M. Price's "Picturesque Moment," p. 280.

dealings with the superfies of the earth," and beauty is associated with "her subsequent operations."[53] "Spots of time" enable Wordsworth to feel once his "first born affinities;" (bk. I, l. 55) the sense of maternal love, the "filial bond / Of Nature, that connects him with the world" (bk. II, ll. 241-45), so that the sublime "first dealings" of nature, which otherwise would remain cloaked in the perceiver's fear, reveal themselves to one who conceives of a primal link between them and himself, both nurtured by maternal love. The finitude of the picturesque is transcended, therefore, through Wordsworth's innate sense of connectedness with natural processes, which throws his life back to the original act of creation, and enables him to perceive sublime power as benign, for

> . . . by love subsists
> All lasting grandeur, by pervading love;
> That gone, we are as dust.
>
> (bk. XIV, ll. 168-70)

"Dust" might refer to the coalescing "vibrations" of associational empiricism, which result in "dead" ideas

[53] Price, p. 280.

because love, or sympathy, has been sublimated in their conception. For Wordsworth, love is the unifying force that brings together the creation of art, self and universe; for this reason his poetry becomes the model for Coleridge's definition of "primary imagination," which he holds to be

> The living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM.[54]

The development of Wordsworth from a "poet of meaning" to a "poet of experience" involves, therefore, a renunciation of the goal of his early career, which was to redeem a fallen nature through application of Hartleyan or Godwinian notions of perfectability to his poetry.[55] He moves inward, to a state of deepened self-consciousness in which he realizes that his own imaginative powers are identical

[54] Biographia Literaria, p. 161.

[55] It would be a mistake, however, to associate the "speculative schemes" that Wordsworth admits to adopting, in bk. XI, l. 224, exclusively with Godwinism. As Geoffrey Hartman, in Wordsworth's Poetry, maintains, "Wordsworth's phrasing indicates something widerspread in the air, 'afloat', which Godwin shared or systematized. Their common factor is religious fervor expressing itself in several dogmas. One of these holds that the reformation of the individual must precede that of society, social

to those that first fashioned the universe, and therefore capable of transforming fallen nature into an object of love.

Wordsworth's anti-self-consciousness involves firstly, a retreat into the "depth of things" (bk. XII, l. 184) to discover an internal correlative to the energy sensed in the material world which he understands to be instilled in nature through "divine condescension," a Christian term that

> signifies the paradox at the heart of revelation, in that the infinite and supreme Being had accomodated Himself to man's finite capacities for understanding, especially by condescending to manifest himself through lowly human agents and trivial objects of events.[56]

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being built on personal liberty (bk. XI, l. 240). But this, which might actually limit political activity, is joined to a principle of moral action subordinating natural law, positive law or custom, to 'Reason's Naked self'. All that is needed to come to a decision is 'The light of circumstances, flashed / Upon an independent intellect' (bk. XI, ll. 243). By this means, says Wordsworth, using a significant metaphor, his hope found a new ground, and was able to grow once more."

[56] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 394. Wordsworth's adoption of this doctrine would seem to make my classification of him as a "Godless" artist untenable. However, my use of the term earlier refers to a public climate rather than to an individual faith. The Wordsworth

Secondly, anti-self-consciousness involves a non-didactic objectification of the self that lives in the "depths of things." In order for the poet not to seem to be lacking in "Negative Capability," his internal correlative to the "divine condescension" of God must be presented dramatically, as a moment that the reader can experience as real. For as Langbaum remarks, as

> an experience, the illumination recognition of a latent intelligence or system of the ideas in the object world is valid. But once the perception of value is abstracted from the immediate experience and formulated for application elsewhere, it becomes mere theory and therefore problematical. The formulation remains useful, however, as long as it returns us to experience, as long as we earn it, to paraphrase Faust, everyday anew.[57]

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of the "Prelude" was not an atheist by any means but he, and the other major English Romantic poets, excluding Coleridge in his decline, were greatly concerned with preserving, from the Miltonic age, only those religious doctrines that could endure the attention of "reason in its most exalted mood" (bk. XIV, l. 192) without wavering. He preserved this doctrine because it was consistent with his own intuitive sense of the life in nature and "trivial objects," and with his mature poetic theory, as recorded in the "Preface" to the "Lyrical Ballads" of 1815.

[57] The Poetry of Experience, p. 46.

Walter Pater, in his essay on "Coleridge" in Appreciations, provides an intimation as to why Wordsworth was successful in this regard.

> Wordsworth's flawless temperament, his fine mountain atmosphere of mind, that calm, sabbatic, mystic well-being, kept his conviction of a latent intelligence in nature within the limits of sentiment or instinct, and confined it to those delicate shades of expression which alone perfect art allows. (Appreciations, pp. 86-87)

Wordsworth's "perfect" art, if it is, indeed, perfect, has somehow managed to reconcile the polarities of pure idealism, which sees emotion and intelligence as being the products of the mind (and therefore negates the possiblity of a condescending God),[58] and empiricism, which regards nature as the fount from which springs feeling and thought. Coleridge, though contrasted to Wordsworth by Pater in "Coleridge" for abstracting the notion of a

[58] In Natural Supernaturalism, Abrams, in defining "Romantic philosophy," maintains that "it is the subject, mind or spirit which is primary and takes over the initiative and the functions which had once been the prerogatives of diety; that is why we can justifiably call Romantic philosophy, in its diverse forms, by the generic term 'Idealism' (pp. 91-92).

"latent intelligence in nature" out of the realm of intuition and into absolutist philosophy, nonetheless provides a clue to an understanding of Wordsworth's successful reconciliation of these polarities:

> where the ideas are vivid, and there exists an endless power of combining and modifying them, the feelings and affections blend more easily and intimately with these ideal creations than with the objects of the senses, the mind is affected by thoughts, rather than by things. . . . [59]

There can only exist "an endless power of combining and modifying" ideas if the idea or emotion which the poet wishes to convey has first been liberated from its conventional associations. Wordsworth inherits the Christian compendium of associations between certain natural objects and certain emotions, virtues or evils,[60] and because of this his early poetry falls into the 'sentimental'

[59] Biographia Literaria, p. 16.

[60] Meyer Abrams, in "Structure and Style of the Greater Romantic Lyric" (From Sensibility to Romanticism), traces the history of the "paysage moralisé," a genre of local-descriptive poetry popular in the 18th century, which "was grounded on two collateral and pervasive concepts in medieval and Renaissance philosophy. One of these was the doctrine that God supplemented the Holy Scriptures with the

category;[61] he makes use of inherited associations because his poetical "secondary imagination," which "dissolves, dissipates, in order to recreate,"[60] has not yet developed fully. This passage from "An Evening Walk," will serve as an illustration.

> Above yon eastern hill, where darkness broods
> Oer all its vanished dells and lawns and woods;
> Where but a mass of shade the sight can trace,
> Even now she shows, half-veiled her lovely face.
> Across the gloomy mountains flings her light,
> Far to the western slopes with hamlets white;
> And gives, where woods the chequered upland strew,
> To the green corn of summer, autumn's hue.

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liber creaturarum, so that objects of nature, as Sir Thomas Browne said, carry 'in Stenography and Short Characters, something of Divinity' (Works, ed. Geoffrey Keynes I, 17), and show forth the attributes and providence of their author. The second concept, of independent philosophical origin but often fused with the first, is that the divine Architect has designed the universe analogically, relating the physical, moral and spiritual realms by an elaborate system of correspondances."

[61] Robert Langbaum is helpful in defining the sentimental; " The Romanticists were out to transform reality, to show that it had no existence apart from an emotional apprehension of it. It is where the Romantic transformation does not come off, where emotion remains opposed to an object that will not yield it back, that a poem falls into sentimentality or bathos" (Poetry of Experience, p. 31-32).

[62] Biographia Literaria, p. 159.

> Thus Hope, first pouring from her blessed horn
> Her dawn, far lovelier than the moons own morn.
>
> (bk. II, ll. 331-40)

The reader cannot re-experience the associative interplay between "Hope" and rising moon; he is blocked out of the perception because the poet has merely juxtaposed object and emotion, and in doing so has deprived his perception of dramatic strength and nature of veracity. Coleridge believes that nature

> has her proper interest and a poet's heart and intellect should be combined . . . with the great appearances of nature, and not merely held in solution and loose mixture with them. . . .[63]

As is well known, Wordsworth would not agree with Coleridge that the appropriate object of a poet's attention should be nature's "great appearances"; however, the mature Wordsworth would concur that his use of an inherited association in this passage has dealt an injustice to "Hope" and moon, to his own "endless power of combining and

[63] S. T. Coleridge, Letters, ed. E. L. Griggs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), I. p. 403.

modifying them," and to the reader, whose personality cannot penetrate into the one-to-one interaction between vehicle and tenor.[64]

[64] Geoffrey Hartman, in Wordsworth's Poetry, devotes an entire chapter to "An Evening Walk," and his appreciation of the poem is due to the fact that he sees it as an important step in Wordsworth's development away from the traditional local-descriptive poem, with its analogical borrowings, and the poet's mature lyrical poetry. Nonetheless, Hartman concurs that 'An Evening Walk' is still an "anthology of images from nature," maintaining that the "anthology view of "An Evening Walk" is also supported by its often directly acknowledged borrowings -- but Wordsworth borrows finely observed phenomena as well as finely expressed sentiments -- and by an architecture typical of the eighteenth century descriptive poem. The poem's plan, ultimately based on Virgil's 'Georgics', which proved country matters could be the substance of a sustained poetry, consists of the juxtaposition of pictures and topics: first the abating noon, next the picture of a retreat sheltering from the sun; then the eye is caught by a rill or cliff; after that a description of sunset, first as it affects the scenery, then the late labourers . . . The Prelude will modify this pattern of frames radically by blending several memories together" (p. 93). Meyer Abrams, in "The Structure and Style of the Greater Romantic Lyric," defines the "disparity between the Romantic lyric and its predecessors" differently from Hartman, stating that in "local poetry the order of the thoughts is the sequence in which the natural objects are observed: the poet surveys a prospect, or climbs a hill, or undertakes a tour, or follows the course of a stream, and he introduces memories and ideas intermittently, as the descriptive occasion offers . . . In the fully developed Romantic lyric, on the other hand, the description is structurally subordinate to the meditation, and the meditation is sustained, continuous, and highly serious. Even when the initial impression is of the casual movement of a relaxed mind, retrospect reveals the whole to have been firmly organized around an emotional issue pressing for resolution" (pp. 552-53).

Langbaum compares Dante's categorical, and therefore "impenetrable," symbols to Eliot's, which "put forth an atmosphere of unlimited meaningfulness," that is achieved, paradoxically, through "the most individualizing possible depiction, the mark of the poet's eye upon the object."[65]

Wordsworth's later efforts to synthesize emotion, idea and object into an aesthetic image are more successful because the inherited associations between object and emotion dissolve in the presence of a perceiving consciousness. The reader experiences the object as something that is being observed, and not merely as a perception imposed upon him because of its associative power of representing an emotion or idea, and his perception blends together with that of the poet's persona in an atmosphere of "unlimited meaningfulness."[66]

Dionysian drama, as defined by Nietzsche, is enacted in this moment:

> . . .the poet in creating the tragedy, the actors in performing it, and the audience in observing it, all lose their identities in a participation with the

[65] The Poetry of Experience, p. 66.

[66] I have drawn from Langbaum, The Poetry of Experience, p. 41., for this paragraph.

Dionysian-Apollonian synthesis of a "dissolution of the individual and his unification with primordial experience."[67]

During such moments in the "Prelude," after the reality of the object of perception has been established for the reader, the poet's sight slips into, and is baffled by, a commingling of sense and stimuli, as in book XIV on Mt. Snowden, wherein the "roar of waters, torrents, streams / Innumerable" (bk. XIV, ll. 59-60) is "felt by the starry heavens" (bk. XIV, l. 62). Freed from Apollonian, individuating associations of sight, the perceiver approaches the depth of self and of "things" simultaneously, and a subjective equivalent to the primordial act of creation is experienced. As he descends deeper into his own subconscious he descends deeper into the sublimity before him; the interchange between "roaring waters" and "starry heavens" is experienced as occurring within the self, so that the separation between subject and object is breached.

However, what is of most importance in this passage is not the establishment of a continuity between subject and object, or man and nature; this is not Wordsworth's primary

[67] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 318, on Nietzsche's Birth of Tragedy.

concern. The crucial discontinuity for Wordsworth is not felt to be the one between man and nature, but between present and past selves, or between self-consciousness and what Carlyle calls "un-self-consciousness,"[68] a state in which the nightingale lives, as Keats bids him to

> Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
> What thou amongst the leaves hast never known,
> The weariness, the fever and the fret
> Here where men sit and hear each other groan;
> Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
> Where youth grows pale, and spectre thin and dies,
> Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
> And leaden-eyed despairs,
> Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
> Or new love pine at them tomorrow.[67]

In "un-self-conscious" moments, Wordsworth sees this state blending happily with his present state, as is illustrated by the passage in bk. IV of the "Prelude," in which he compares himself to

[68] Quoted by G. Hartman, "Romanticism and Anti-Self-Consciousness," p. 54.

[69] "Ode to a Nightingale," from The Poems of John Keats. ed. Jack Stillinger (Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 1978), ll. 21-30.

. . . one who hangs downbending from the side
Of a slow-moving boat, upon the breast
Of a still water, solacing himself
With such discoveries as his eye can make
Beneath him in the bottom of the deep,
Sees many beauteous sights - weeds, fishes, flowers,
Grots, pebbles, roots of trees, and fancies more,
Yet often is perplexed and cannot part
The shadow from the substance, rocks and sky,
Mountains and clouds, reflected in the depth
Of the clear flood, from things that there abide
In their true dwelling, now is crossed by gleam
Of his own image, by a sunbeam now
And wavering motions sent he knows not whence,
Impediments that make his task more sweet.

(bk. IV, ll. 256-70)

Yet this "sweet" blending of present self, past self, and an unknown emissary of "wavering motions" is broken up by "a swarm / of heady schemes jostling each other, gawds / And feast and dance, and public revelry / And sports and games . . ." (bk. IV, ll. 280-83), so that

It seemed the very garments that I wore

> Preyed on my strength, and stopped the quiet stream
> Of self-forgetfulness.
>
> (bk. II, ll. 295-97)

Through the writing of the "Prelude," an exercise of intense self-examination, the poet prepares himself for self-objectification, so that the unconscious blending of past and present, in the "slow-moving boat" passage, can be put forth consciously, as it is in the Snowdon episode. He must leave behind "sweet" moments of "self-forgetfulness" that harken back to the unity of childhood, and explore his divided state, become conscious of self-consciousness, "brood over the dark abyss" (bk. XIV, ll. 72-73), so that by the end of the "Prelude,"

> The mature poetic mind, whose infant perception had been a state of undifferentiated consciousness, has acquired self-consciousness, and is able to sustain the sense of his own identity as an individuation in unison with the object it perceives.[70]

And the poet feels, after the self-objectification process of writing the "Prelude," the same emotion that his

[70] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 287.

persona feels after the Snowdon episode:

> . . . the highest bliss
> That flesh can know is theirs -- the consciousness
> Of whom they are, habitually infused
> Through every image and through every thought,
> And all affections by communion raised
> From earth to heaven, from human to divine.
>
> (bk. XIV, ll. 113-18)

The traditional distinction between lyric poetry, in which the poet describes himself and his emotions, and dramatic poetry, in which he describes external events, is abolished in the Snowdon episode;

> The only valid distinction is between the Apollonian or epic poet, who contemplates images as things other than himself, and the Dionysian or lyric-dramatic poet who is what he contemplates, who projects his Dionysian life into Apollonian images in order to find himself in them . . . .[71]

Wordsworth's progression from an Apollonian "poet of meaning" to a Dionysian "poet of experience" is related to

[71] Langbaum, The Poetry of Experience, p. 231.

one within Romanticism in general, which Harold Bloom defines as a movement from the "Prometheus" stage to "The Real Man, the Imagination" stage:

> Generally, Prometheus is the poet-as-hero in the first stage of his quest, marked by a deep involvement in political, social and literary revolution, and a direct, even satirical attack on the institutional orthodoxies of European and English society, including historically oriented Christianity and the neo-classic literary and intellectual tradition, particularly in its Enlightenment stage. The Real Man, the Imagination, emerges after terrible crises in the major stage of the Romantic quest, which is typified by a relative disengagement from revolutionary activism, and a standing aside from polemic and satire so as to bring the search within the self and its ambiguities. In the Prometheus stage, the quest is allied to the libido's struggle against repressiveness, and nature is an ally . . . In the Real Man, the Imagination stage, nature is the immediate, though not the ultimate antagonist. The final enemy to

be overcome is a recalcitrance in the self. . . .[72]

Wordsworth recounts his departure from his "Prometheus" stage in bk. VI; his revolutionary "hopes that pointed to the clouds" cannot be sustained by nature, or more specifically by human nature, for mankind will not conform to a perfectabilist vision, and revolutionary will eventually become oppressor. And, in this episode, nature, which had played such an important role in his development as an artist, abandons him to his own devices; the travellers separate from their guide and then from "The beaten downward way that led / Right to a rough stream's edge, and there broke off" (bk. VI, ll. 568-69).

The poet has stepped off the poetic path of his early career; rising moons will no longer attempt to sustain "Hope" as they had in "An Evening Walk." His separation from the beaten path illustrates an internal rift between "things as they are" and "things as he feels they should be"; subsequent developments, particularly the anarchic nature of the revolution, England's declaration of war on revolutionary France, and the death of his brother, serve to widen this rift, so that in bk. X he cries out to the

[72] H. Bloom, "The Internalization of Quest Romance" (Romanticism and Consciousness), p. 56.

> . . . Power Supreme!
> Without whose call this world would cease to breathe,
> Who from the fountain of thy grace doth fill
> The veins that branch through every frame of life,
> Making man what he is, creature divine,
> In single or in social eminence,
> Above the rest raised infinite ascents
> When reason that enables him to be
> Is not sequestered - what a change is here!
> What countenance to promote this second love!
>
> (bk. X, ll. 420-40)

He realizes that "If new strength be not given nor old restored / The guilt is ours, not Nature's," and what is left of his perfectibilist dream drowns in "a terrific reservoir of guilt / And ignorance filled up from age to age " that "burst and spread in a deluge through the land" (bk. X, ll. 476-80).

His sense of participation in this deluge of guilt and ignorance leads him astray "from Nature's way" (bk. XI, l. 290), and hence to his "dark night of the soul" in which he yields up "moral questions in despair" (bk. XI, l. 305). However, though it is "Nature's self / By all varieties of

human love / Assisted" that leads him "back through opening day / To those sweet counsels between head and heart" (bk. XI, ll. 350-53), his focus has shifted away from the duality of man and nature to an attempt to replace his own bursting "reservoir of guilt and ignorance" with the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" that " a saving intercourse / With his true self" provides.

The spirit of negation, which had moved Wordsworth to yield up "moral questions in despair" and immerse himself in analytical science, gives way to dynamic dialogues between present self and the self that inhabits unconsciously remembered moments of intense emotion. This constitutes a complete reversal in direction from that of analytic science, which takes various assumptions for granted and moves forward deductively. Wordsworth's saving dialectic carries him "backward to wanderings along thorny ways" (bk. XIV, l. 138), to that sweet "substance" (bk. IV, l. 264). "Beneath him in the bottom of the deep" (bk. IV, l. 260), shedding, as he goes, the dross of his "shadow" (bk. IV, l. 264) life; the "swarm / of heady schemes jostling each other" (bk. IV, ll. 280-81).

His immersion into analytic science constitutes a sublimation of pain and disappointment resulting from the crises that lead to his personal "Hell" in book XI, an attempt to veil his fallen state, his naked self-consciousness,

behind a fig leaf of mathematical abstractions, to obscure the self at the "bottom of the deep" behind picturesque categories, to blind himself from his own life in things by seeing with, in the words of Norman O. Brown,

> That sunlike eye which perceives but does not taste, which always keeps a distance, like Apollo himself, the Far-Darter.[73]

The essence of Dionysian faith, says Brown, is to affirm "the dialectical unity of the great instinctual opposites: Dionysus re-unifies male and female, self and other, life and death."[74] In Romanticism, these polarities dissolve into un-self-consciousness and self-consciousness; "Orc and Los in Blake, Prometheus unbound and bound in Shelley, Hyperion and Apollo in Keats, the Child and the Man" in Wordsworth."[75] The dialectical movement of the Romantic persona from the first term to the second is essential to his development toward being able to

[73] N. Brown, Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytic Meaning of History (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1959), p. 274.

[74] Life Against Death, p. 174.

[75] Abrams, "Internalization of Quest Romance," p. 11.

"sustain the sense of his own identity as an individuation in unison with the object he perceives."[76] As Keats, in "The Fall of Hyperion," reveals, only "those to whom the miseries of the world / Are misery and will not let them rest" can "usurp this height" ("The Fall of Hyperion," Canto I, ll. 148-51). The factors that build the fallen, shadow world of self-consciousness must be released from memory through "backward wanderings along thorny ways" so that one might see

> . . . as a God sees, and take the depth
> Of things as nimbly as the outward eye
> Can size and shape pervade.
>
> ("Fall of Hyperion," ll. 303-05)

In other words, this painful backward dialectic is necessary if one is to couple one's sense of unity with the "Other" with the essential atmosphere for self-objectification; an atmosphere of artistic detachment that is the reward for having realized one's creative potential through a process that Hegel calls "aufheben" and Nietzsche "overcoming." Through the writing of the "Prelude,"

[76] Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, p. 287.

Wordsworth dismantles the structure of self-consciousness inherited from the Apollonian eighteenth-century. Each stone of this structure is subject to the "aufheben" process; thus fallen empiricism and idealism are "annulled, preserved, and lifted up,"[77] purged of self-conscious dross and raised to the plateau of "perfect" art where they might co-exist. Through the enactment of this process, Wordsworth unconsciously reveals a qualified Dionysian faith; his poetry transcends his strong individualism, and transcends time, so that despite his latent orthodoxy, a spirit rises from the "Prelude" that anticipates the Brownian dictum which holds that "the Apollonian preserves, the Dionysian destroys, self-consciousness."[78]

Only through a Dionysian overcoming of selfhood can the poet measure his self-worth, and thereby obtain sufficient independence to be able to join Keats' skylark in the rarified air of the objectified spirit. At the end of the "Prelude," the poet recalls saying "unto the life which I had lived / Where art thou?" (bk. XIV, l. 377), amid the distraction and intense desire with which he began his poetic effort, and he then describes the "aufheben" process that enabled him to find his poetic voice. The poet rises

[77] R. Pfeffer, Nietszche, Disciple of Dionysus, p. 39.

[78] Life Against Death, p. 175.

up into the "unwearied heavens," in order to see, "beneath him stretched / Vast prospect of the world which he had been / And was" (bk. XIV, ll. 380-82). His own selfhood is annulled, but his voice remains "attempered" (bk. XIV, l. 385) to the "deep-drawn sighs" of earth; his poetic aim is to dissipate these sighs by "centering all in love" (bk. XIV, l. 386), so that, in the end, the good will be preserved, suffering justified, "All gratulent, if rightly understood" (bk. XIV, l. 387). The longing of Wordsworth and Keats to join the lark in "unwearied heavens" is not symptomatic of escapist transcendentalism, but rather expresses a desire to review the joy and sorrow of past existence, and by seeing "as a god sees," to annul, preserve, and lift up" their lives in song. The life reviewed by Wordsworth's "discerning intellect" ("Prospectus," l. 52) is objectified; "wedded to this goodly universe / In love and holy passion" ("Prospectus," l. 53-54,) so that his

> . . . Song
> With star-like virtue in its place may shine;
> Shedding benignant influence, -- and secure,
> Itself, from all malevolent effect
> Of those mutations that extend their sway
> Through the nether sphere! And if with
> This I mix more lowly matter, with the thing

> Contemplated, describe the Mind and Man
> Contemplating; and who and what he was,
> The transitory being that beheld
> This vision -- when and where and how he lived,
> Be not this labour useless.
>
> ("Prospectus," ll. 88-99)

It was not useless. Wordsworth's voice will rise forever from the "nether sphere," in harmony with the strains of his audience's Dionysian chorus, transporting them to a realm in which the constraints of time and space, the boundaries between individuals are broken down, and replaced with a vision of unity.

Pater's Dionysus

As we have seen, one of Wordsworth's primary purposes in writing the "Prelude" was to examine the process whereby the artist is able to obtain a certainty of self through the projection of imaginative sympathy onto what is not self. This certainty is obtained after he has filled the object of his attention full of himself, so that its otherness evaporates into a continuum between subject and object. The perceived object sheds its strangeness, and lends support to the perceiver, when it has become imbued with his own personality. The Romantic imagination responds to the notion of spirit in the same fashion; Wordsworth's sense of an immutable force in nature can only be expressed through concrete images, such as the blind beggar in book VII of the "Prelude," or the leech gatherer of "Resolution and Independence." As Geoffrey Hartman remarks,

> Their acceptance of the injuries of time evokes the idea of a soul that is invulnerable, because it dwells in Abraham's bosom or nature's.

These figures act as conductors for the poet's apocalyptical imagination, channeling his fear of death into a union with its dialectical opposite; a will to

survive, for

> in such border figures, life and death, like natural and supernatural faith, are no longer separable.[79]

In Chapter 1 of this thesis, it was maintained that a philosophical system that posits an initial transcendental unity requires a sublimation of erotic energy in order to regain that unity. Nietzsche, in the Nachlass or Unpublished Notes, expresses a similar viewpoint in terms that are extremely relevant to my argument:

> Dionysus against the "Crucified," there you have the contrast. There is no difference in respect to their martyrdom -- it is a difference in the meaning of it. Life itself, its eternal fertility and recurrence, causes pain, destruction, the will to destroy. In the other case, suffering -- the "crucified" as the innocent one -- counts as an argument against this life, as a formula for its condemnation.[80]

[79] Hartman, Wordsworth's Poetry, p. 225.

[80] F. W. Nietzsche, Nachlass. Vol XVI, p. 391, of Grossoktav - Ausgabe. Quoted from R. Pfeffer, Nietzsche, Disciple of Dionysus, p. 47-48.

In Chapter 1, Wordsworth's philosophy was distinguished from that of the German Idealists on the basis of an argument similar to Nietzsche's expressed above. Norman O. Brown maintains that

> Schopenhauer's incapacity to affirm life or death turns on his conviction that men are so constituted that they could not be happy in whatever kind of world they might be placed.[81]

Brown contrasts this pessimistic world view with Nietzsche's, which can also be described as "pessimistic", but

> because he can envisage the possibility of Superman, can affirm life and therefore death . . . the ultimate defect of all heavens with immortality beyond the grave is that in them there is no death; by this token such visions betray their connection with repression of life.[82]

In his chapter entitled "Apollo and Dionysus," Brown defines Apollo as

[81] Life Against Death, p. 107.

[82] Life Against Death, p. 107-08.

> The god of form -- of plastic form in art, of rational form in thought, of civilized form in life. But the Apollonian form is form as the negation of instinct: "Nothing too much," says the Delphic wisdom; "Observe the limit, fear authority, bow before the divine." Hence Apollonian form is form negating matter, immortal form; that is to say, by the irony that overtakes all flight from death, deathly form."[83]

As has been established in regard to Wordsworth and Pater, in the act of artistic creation, matter must not be negated, for only through it can spirit be expressed. In Pater's Portraits, Gerald Monsman, Pater's most esteemed critic, analyses a passage from chapter three of Marius, in which, at the end of the youthful Marius' sojourn to the Aesculapian shrine,

> the priest, who had been his special director during his stay at the place, lifting a cunningly contrived panel, which formed the back of one of the carved seats, bade him look through.

Marius looks out upon "a long drawn valley" with a "green meadow" and a "beautifully formed mountain," and

83 Life Against Death, p. 174.

thinks that "It might have seemed the very presentiment of a land of hope" (Marius, I, p. 40).

In retrospect, Marius understands that this sight served "at once to strengthen and to purify a certain vein in him," and provides him with "a vivid sense of the value of mental and bodily sanity" which would counteract "the less desirable or hazardous tendencies of some phases of thought, through which he was to pass" (Marius, I, p. 41).

Monsman claims that

> the real significance of Marius' trip to the Aesculapian shrine lies in the fact that there he discovers that the visible counterpart, the proof of the reality of his dreams, can be found in this life.[84]

He is only half correct in this analysis; the Aesculapian shrine represents a centripetal ideal, while Pater's ideal synthesizes centripetal and centrifugal, Apollo and Dionysus. For just as Wordsworth's "spots of time" affirm the mind's power to unite with the creative energy in nature, so does Pater's Dionysus, through his promise of a rebirth each year and his example of unsublimated love.

[84] Monsman, Pater's Portraits, p. 68.

Pater calls Dionysus

> . . . a Doppelganger; like Persephone, he belongs to two worlds and has much in common with her, and a full share of those dark possibilities which, even apart from the story of the rape, belong to her. He is a Chthonian god, and like all children of the earth, has an element of sadness; like Hades himself, he is hollow and devouring, an eater of man's flesh . . . (Greek Studies, p. 44).

In his chapter on the myth of Demeter and Persephone, Pater elaborates on this aspect of Greek worship:

> The "worship of sorrow," as Goethe called it, is sometimes supposed to have had almost no place in the religion of the Greeks. Their religion has been represented as a religion of mere cheerfulness, the worship of an untroubled, unreflecting humanity, conscious of no deeper needs, of the embodiments of its own joyous activity . . . But this familiar view of Greek religion is based on a consideration of a part only of what is known concerning it, and really involves a misconception akin to that which underestimates the influence of the romantic spirit generally, in Greek poetry and

> art; as if Greek art had dealt exclusively with human nature in all its sanity, suppressing all motives of strangeness, all the beauty which is born of difficulty, permitting nothing but an Olympian, though perhaps somewhat wearisome, calm. (Greek Studies, pp. 110-11)

Pater applies the same criteria to his criticism in the "Postscript" on Romanticism in Appreciations. In contrast to the "born classicists" who start with form, the "born romanticist" purges "away . . . all that is not organically appropriate," to their work" (pp. 257-58). The romantic characteristic of "curiosity" performs a function similar to that of Keats' quality of "negative capability," which in the words of W. J. Bate, should

> confine itself to the particular; if it extends overmuch to the ideal realm, the poet will tend to become an abstract reasoner and obtrude his own views, he will become reflective rather than creative . . . and he will lose the strong grasp of actualities, the firm sense of the solid world, which is the most noteworthy manifestation of the objective poet.[85]

[85] Negative Capability, p. 41.

Keats' "Negative Capability" was formulated as a reaction against what he felt to be an obtrusion of identity in Wordsworth's poetry. It shall be demonstrated that Pater's critical and fictional work has been subjected to a similar appraisal by Monsman and a number of critics, and that this critical perspective, which emphasizes the Apollonian or idealizing nature of Pater's thought, has resulted in a number of serious misreadings of Pater's Marius -- particularly of its ending. It is my hope that Paterian criticism can be redeemed, somewhat, through a new appreciation of the role that Dionysus plays in Pater's fiction.

In The Idea in Nature, Anthony Ward prefaces a chapter devoted to a study of Pater's essays on The Renaissance, and comments on what he feels to be

> a striking difference between the aspirations of the relative spirit in "Coleridge" (1866) and the tired search for unity of "Georgione." What starts as the desire to release the manifold particularity of the world finishes as the determination to reduce it all to "one dominant tone." The imagery of things golden; golden thread, golden light, begins to figure prominently in the discussion and it always represents the "idealizing" power in art. There is increasing emphasis on the

> power the artist may exert over nature. So in spite of the apparatus he has been erecting to defend himelf against it, Pater slips more and more into the nightmare of the solipsist dream.[86]

This assessment is correct insofar as it applies to The Renaissance. Indeed, there seems to be a great difference between the Pater of "Coleridge," who perceived the poet's literary life to be "a disinterested struggle against the relative spirit," dominated by a desire to "apprehend the absolute," "an effort of sickly thought that saddened his mind and limited the operation of his unique poetic gift" (Appreciations, pp. 68-69), and the Pater of "Georgione," who suggests that

> It is with gold dust, or gold thread, that these Venetian painters seem to work, spinning its fine filaments, through the solemn human flesh, away into the white plastered walls of the thatched huts. The harsher details of the mountains recede to a harmonious distance, the one peak of rich blue above the horizon remaining but as the sensible warrant of that due coolness which is all we

[86] A. Ward, The Idea in Nature (London: MacGibbon & Kee Ltd., 1966), pp. 91-92.

> need ask here of the Alps, with their dark rains and streams. (The Renaissance, p. 153)

In his examination of the way in which Pater contrasts Coleridge to Wordsworth, Ward is particularly insightful. He maintains that, though Coleridge is criticized for his "dreamy temperament," Wordsworth is praised for his "unbroken dreaming over the aspects and transitions of nature," which prompts Ward to observe that "It is neither 'dream' nor 'fact' that Pater is after,"[87] an observation apparently abandoned in his discussion of Marius.

After the death of Flavian, Marius is aware of a sharpened distinction between his inward world of "sensation and ideas" and the external world of plague and unenlightenment. However, Aristippus of Cyrene's developments upon Heraclitian philosophy keep him from falling back into the dreamy idealism of his youth, for, as Ward says,

> this negative philosophy becomes the spur to knowledge, it provokes a thirst for experience, conduces to an expansion of life, instead of reducing experience to that of a prisoner isolated in his cell.[88]

[87] The Idea in Nature, p. 137.

[88] The Idea in Nature, p. 141.

Ward goes on to maintain, however, that

> when Pater attributes to Marius the desire to live in the here and now he belies not only the method of the book, but one of the essential elements in Marius' personality. The fastidious reticence, the idealism, of Marius is innate and operates against the Cyrenaic view of life. Therefore, though Cyrenaicism directs him into a programme the end of which is "the expansion and refinement of the power of reception," Marius proves incapable of wholly committing himself to this outward life of sensation.[89]

Ward claims that Marius' "innate idealism" inspires in him a "picturesque" view of reality, and that this conduces to a detached, ironical outlook on life, that persists during Marius' encounter with Christianity, so that Marius' sacrificial death is, therefore, "ironic".

Ward's argument is supported by James Heffernan, who believes that

> Marius is anxious to milk all human suffering of

89 The Idea in Nature, pp. 43-44.

> its emotional pleasures. But the "sympathy" so carefully cultivated never expresses itself in a charitable act. If it did it would break the aesthetic distance and the delicate equipose so essential to the centripetal vision.[90]

Monsman, Ward and Heffernan have all applied the same basic misconception to their readings of Marius, that of over-emphasizing the importance of the centripetal or Apollonian in Pater's philosophical and aesthetic thought. In their projection of Apollonian idealism as Pater's antidote to the solipsism inherent in the flux, these critics seem unaware that solipsism is inherent in Apollonianism, the "principium individuationis," and that release is found through Dionysus, the "mysterious primordial unity of every phenomenon." Although this is Nietzschean terminology, Pater clearly concurs, for he calls Dionysus, in Greek Studies, the inspiration behind "the gift of self-revelation, of passing out of oneself through words, tones, gestures" (Greek Studies, p. 18), and holds Dionysus' spirit to be expressive of

> The whole range of man's experiences of a given object, or series of objects -- all their outward

[90] J. Heffernan, "Centripetal Vision in Pater's Marius" (Victorian Newsletter, 35), p. 15.

qualities, and the visible facts regarding them -- all the hidden ordinances by which those facts and qualities hold of unseen forces, and have their roots in purely visionary places. (Greek Studies, p. 29)

Thus the Apollonian, to Pater, is not a transcendental force, but is instead "a unifying or identifying power, bringing together things naturally asunder . . . welding into something like the identity of a human personality the "unseen forces" (Greek Studies, p. 29) of Dionysus.

So what must be understood is that Marius' "blitheness," is, as it is for Cornelius, "united with the bold recognition of evil as a fact in the world" (Marius, II, p. 53), and must actually be tested by this recognition time and again; "that flawless serenity . . . so easily ruffled by chance collision even with the things and persons" (Marius, II, p. 63) of his life must be "ruffled" in order to prevent Marius from becoming inhumane. A recognition of the darkness in life must form the "mysterious substratum" upon which the individuating eye of the artist will build his structures.

While the sensuous form which the artist creates to embody his subjective dreams represents the contribution of Apollo to the world of art, the original immersion in the

sensuous world of art and life, the original experience of pain or joy that precipitates artistic creation is Dionysian. To this experience Pater will add the Apollonian principle of Heiterkeit, a serenity that keeps the Greek artist's immersion in sensuousness indifferent. This term appears in Pater's "Winkelmann" essay, in which Pater echoes Nietzsche's thoughts concerning the difference between Dionysus and "The Crucified": indifferent Greek sensuousness "does not fever the blood: it is shameless and childlike." Christian asceticism, on the other hand, requires that one "contend for a perfection that makes the blood turbid, and frets the flesh, and discredits the actual world about us" (The Renaissance, p. 222). In the same passage, Pater considers a third type; "the spiritualist," who

> is satisfied as he watches the escape of the sensuous elements from his conceptions; his interest grows, as the dyed garment bleaches in the keener air. (The Renaissance, p. 222)

Ward and Heffernan would, I believe, apply this definition to Marius' character; a brief glance at the life of Sebastian Von Storck, a similar type, will serve to demonstrate that though Pater was attracted to the spirit

of devotion in monastic ascesis, he was well aware of the dangers in aspiring to such a temperament.

Many critics have observed that Marius was intended as a corrective to the ideal, propounded in The Renaissance, of an immersion in sensation, to the "deification of passion" as The Saturday Review called it.[91]

This may be partially correct; Pater could not help but feel responsible, to some extent, for the way in which The Renaissance was interpreted, though he maintained that his ideas had been badly misconstrued. In a footnote to the third edition of The Renaissance, he apologizes for unintentionally misleading certain impressionable readers. However, if Marius was intended as a corrective against hedonism, or Dionysianism in its darkest form, "Sebastian Von Storck," an "imaginary portrait" published a year later in 1886, must surely be seen as a corrective against the other extreme -- pure Apollonianism.

Sebastian's manuscript volume, "The studious record of the abstract thoughts which had been the real business of his life," reveals that he

> had come to think all definite forms of being, the warm pressure of life, the cry of nature itself, as no more than a troublesome irritation of the

[91] Quoted by Monsman, Walter Pater, p. 62

> surface of the one absolute mind. (Imaginary Portraits, p. 103)

Sebastian's life is an exercise in ascesis, a gradual disengagement from the physical; the only thing in the natural world that pleases him is the sea, because through erosion it aspires to dissolve everything into itself, to become absolute. After rejecting the advances of the young lady whom his mother, and others of the Dutch town, desire that he should marry, Sebastian escapes "to the sea" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 113), because only there can he "make equation between himself and what is not himself" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 114).

However, Sebastian has been mistaken; the sea will not "equate" to his Apollonian self --

> a sudden rising of the wind altered, as it might seem, in a few dark, tempestuous hours, the entire world around him. (Imaginary Portraits, p. 114)

Sebastian drowns, but before his end he manages to save a child, and

> it was in the saving of this child, with a great effort, as certain circumstances seemed to indicate, that Sebastian had lost his life. (Imaginary Portraits, p. 114)

Sebastian's thought, throughout his life, had always been turned toward death, toward the decay of the physical self, and the destructive force of the sea had always nurtured and answered to these thoughts. However, in the final tableau of "Sebastian," the sea reveals, as does Sebastian, its Dionysian side, its regenerative force. The fact that Pater attempts to present a solution to the problem of physical decay reflects a common homosexual concern over the inability to attain a sense of continuity between present and future through sexual reproduction. Sebastian's final act suggests another alternative, however; through his saving of the child, he enters into "the warm pressure of life" for the first time, and dies a creative being, is, in fact, reborn, through the "generous loan of himself" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 145) that he offers to history. The "equation" he has sought between internal and external Apollonianism becomes a Dionysian one; his saving of the child finds its "sigma" in the eternal effort of the Dutch to keep their heads above the encroaching sea, an effort which gives birth to strong souls steeped in an awareness of suffering.

The ending of "Sebastian Von Storck" mirrors the ending of Marius, and recapitulates the pattern of the novel

wherein the hero discovers the earthly, Dionysian counterpart to his Apollonian ideal, sacrifices himself so that this counterpart might live, and thereby gives birth to a self that represents a synthesis of Apollo and Dionysus, and which escapes from solipsistic death into the eternal world of cultural history. In both cases the hero's direct experience of death is necessary for this escape, which points toward Langbaum's distinction between a "poetry of meaning" and a "poetry of experience," and suggests that Pater's solipsism, like that of Wordsworth, is closely related to associationism.

As Langbaum has said, associational art aims toward a direct representation of "objects complete with their own meaning"; it does not require "a combination of sympathy and judgement, through finding by an effort of creative insight one's own life in the otherwise incomplete image or events." Now, the primary question that Marius attempts to resolve is not "What lies beyond the veil of mere appearance -- what is the nature of alterity, of death"? but "How should one attempt to understand alterity, through direct representation or direct experience"? The endings of "Sebastian" and Marius clearly indicate that it is the latter alternative that Pater deems more fruitful, and support for this opinion may be obtained through the example of "Denys L'Auxerrois."

The opening of this "imaginary portrait" provides an apt illustration of the process through which one finds "by an effort of creative insight one's own life in the otherwise incomplete image or events." The narrator of "Denys" discovers, during a visit to Auxerre, France, "a large and brilliant fragment of stained glass" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 52), and tapestries, dating back to the thirteenth century, featuring "a suffering tortured figure" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 54). His curiousity piqued, the narrator proceeds to investigate, and discovers that medieval workmen of the 13th century had unearthed a coffin containing "a flask of lively green glass, like a great emerald" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 56), which, magically, "had seemed to bring back no ineffable purity, but rather the riotous and earthy heat of old Paganism itself" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 56).

Pater makes use of Heine's fable, "Gods in Exile," as he had in The Renaissance, to account for the return of the pagan spirit to the middle ages. He was able to make use of the same idea in "Apollo in Picardy"; in this "portrait," however, it is Dionysus who returns. Pater's characterization of the god owes little to Heine; as John Harrison says in "Pater, Heine, and the Old Gods of Greece,"

> we may discern Denys' character through a multitude of stray hints in art and poetry and religious custom, through modern speculation on the

> tendencies of early thought, through traits and touches in our own actual state of mind, which may seem sympathetic to those tendencies.[92]

In Walter Pater, Monsman brilliantly delineates the process whereby the character of Denys and the authorial self serve to substantiate each other. Pater

> began with the radical empiricism of psychological introspection. Then by virtue of the self's direct experience of relations and connections, the phenomenological historian passes from autobiography to biography, and finally by "retracing in his individual mental pilgrimage the historic order of human thought," approaches cultural history.[93]

Pater does not attempt to impose a myth upon reality but rather searches for "a mythic pattern within reality itself"[94] in his hope to discern a cyclical pattern of artistic regeneration and decay. He attempts to transcend

[92] PMLA, XXXIX (Sept., 1924), p. 659.

[93] Walter Pater, p. 60.

[94] Walter Pater, p. 19.

temporality by using the early Renaissance in France as a two-sided mirror which will reflect light back upon classical Greece and forward to nineteenth-century England. Herbert Marcuse, in Eros and Civililization, remarks that Orphic images such as Dionysus are symbolic of a rebellion against time, and representative, therefore of "the conservative nature of the pleasure principle."[95] So, through "the radical empiricism of psychological introspection," Pater disengages and conserves, from the reservoir of memory, a principle of unsublimated eros, which lived for a while in thirteenth-century France and which, through Pater's writing of "Denys," has been reborn to the modern world.

Denys, like Pater's Mona Lisa and Persephone, is a doppelganger, embodying the antinomies of generation and decay. When he first makes an appearance, as summer Dionysus, the god of the vine, he inspires the people of Auxerre with a spirit of creativity; a great church is constructed, and wine flows abundantly. However, after a period of productivity, Denys disappears, and returns as Dionysus Zagreus, "the devourer," and engenders a "kind of degeneration, of coarseness -- the coarseness of satiety." This

[95] Eros and Civilization, p. 170.

new spirit represents the seed of his own destruction that Dionysus contains -- Denys is torn apart, in a religious ceremony, by the people of Auxerre. However, before his death, Denys manages to complete the building of the organ (discussed briefly in chapter 1 of this thesis), which "expanded to the full compass of his nature in its sorrow and delight." As Marcuse says, Dionysus is one for whom desire and fulfillment coincide.

Through the "radical empiricism of psychological introspection," the phenomenological historian, or Pater, divines a principle of desire, or Dionysus, within himself, which is prevented from attaining fulfillment by the other principle that his introspection discovers, the Apollonian principle. By "retracing in his individual mental pilgrimage the historic order of human thought," he discovers a period in history when Dionysian erotic desire was somehow able to fulfill itself -- thirteenth-century France. In order to fulfill itself, the spirit of Dionysus must, in fact, overflow into cultural history, the eternal world occupied by the testimony to his achievements proclaimed by the green flask and stained glass. As he "approaches cultural history" therefore, the narrator, "the phenomenological historian," approaches, becomes receptive to, his

Dionysian desire; he "seemed actually to have seen the tortured figure there -- to have met Denys L'Auxerrois in the streets." (Imaginary Portraits, p. 77) Through the conservation of a period in history, Pater finds a way to protect his erotic principle from the strictures of Apollonianism. Through the interaction between creator and created, Pater and Denys, the author is able to examine the life and death of his own erotic principle with "unsinged hands."

In "Denys" another method of comprehending alterity is presented. When Denys' winter spirit brings a time of scarcity and madness to Auxerre,

> The clergy bethought themselves of a remedy for this evil time. The body of one of the patron saints had lain neglected somewhere under the flagstones of the sanctuary. This must be piously exhumed and provided with a shrine worthy of it. (Imaginary Portraits, p. 68)

This exhumation amounts to an attempt to arrest the people of Auxerre's collective fears of alterity through direct apprehension of the spirit's continuous existence through time. As we understand from Pater's Heraclitian philosophy, this self can never be apprehended directly,

for it only manifests itself as a "relic" within the flux of succeeding selves. The clergy's attempt to discover the loving, corrective spirit of the patron saint through the exhumation and reburial of his remains can only capture an empty space between "relics." Denys' "relic," the green flask, provides the narrator, or Pater, and Denys himself, with a visionary opening for their souls to escape; the body of the exhumed saint provides no such outlet for the solipsistic soul.[96]

As I argue in Chapter 1 of this thesis, there is, for Pater, no "enduring circle of self" which defines the human personality, for "at every moment the self is being defined anew as the elemental threads (physical properties or mental impressions) are added and subtracted."[97] The same principle underlies Pater's literary style. In a typical Paterian sentence there is no governing clause, no directly apprehensible core of meaning; instead, each element, each phrase contributes equally to the sentence's meaning, which, blended of so many elements, sometimes seems to change with every phase. Each phrase is akin, therefore, to the "relic" which is all that remains of each succeeding

96 I have drawn from Monsman, Walter Pater's Art of Autobiography (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 59.

97 Monsman, Walter Pater, p. 59.

self in the flux of personality. And as Deny's "relic," the green flask, generates meaning which is changed, qualified through its absorption of the narrator's "direct experience of relations and connections" within himself, each phrase generates meaning which is subsequently altered or qualified by the succeeding phrase. This style allows Pater to present aspects of himself that defy direct apprehension; Pater's homosexual self emerges, in his writings, as only one of a succession of selves, each of which only "contains a relic of the self that preceded it." Through an examination of this method of self-revelation, we can correct a serious misreading of the ending of Marius on the part of Gerald Monsman, and establish a connection between Pater's Dionysus and his ideal of homosexual love.

In Pater's Portraits, Monsman justly describes Marius' growing identification with the spirit of Christian martyrdom as

> a crucial stage in his development, for he has discovered an escape from his isolated dreams through a sympathetic identification with humanity.[98]

[98] Pater's Portraits, p. 93.

However, Monsman goes on to say that

> the world of summer Dionysus has, as in the story of Flavian, been closed off forever behind him by the sombre shadows of death.[99]

This interpretation, in light of the autobiographical nature of Marius, would suggest that Pater had completely abandoned "Dionysus", or paganism, in favour of Christianity by the time of its composition, and this is simply not true. It also suggests that Dionysus will not return 'next year', which is improbable considering the seasonal nature of the god.

R. T. Lenaghan, in "Pattern in Walter Pater's Fiction," points toward a correct interpretation of the ending of Marius by describing Pater's religion as "an ideal in which the spiritualized melancholy of Dionysus and the humanism of Apollo can find simultaneous expression."[100] Lenaghan defines the difference, for Pater, between Apollo and Dionysus as

> a matter of spiritual breadth; the Greeks under Apollonian guidance had concentrated value on man and had achieved a marvelous ethical depth and purity, but their achievement was circumscribed

[99] Pater's Portraits, p. 93.

[100] Studies in Philology, LVIII, no. 2, p. 73.

within relatively narrow human limits and it neglected the wider spiritual sense of the more than human vitality which Dionysus proclaims.[101]

In this passage from "A Study of Dionysus in Greek Studies, Pater gives expression to Dionysus' "wider spiritual sense":

> If Dionysus, like Persephone, has his gloomy side, like her he also has a peculiar message for a certain number of refined minds, seeking, in the later days of Greek religion, such modifications of the old legend as may minister to ethical culture, to the perfection of the moral nature. A type of second birth, from first to last, he opens, in his series of annual changes, for minds on the lookout for it, the hope of a possible analogy, between the resurrection of nature, and something else, as yet unrealized, reserved for human souls; and the beautiful weeping creature, vexed by the wind, torn to pieces, and rejuvenescent at last, like a tender shoot of living

[101] Lenaghan, p. 73.

> green out of the hardness and stony darkness of the earth, becomes an emblem or ideal of chastening and purification; and of final victory through suffering. It is the finer mystical sentiment of the few, detached from the coarser and more material religion of the many, and accompanying it, through the course of its history, as its ethereal, life giving soul, and as always happens, seeking the quiet, and not too anxious to make itself felt by others. (Greek Studies, pp. 45-50).

This passage is suggestive of a notion of immortality achieved through simultaneous physical/spiritual rebirth, offered as an alternative to the Homeric notion of "nothingness" after death, or the idea of a physical rebirth into an afterlife. Pater makes use of a similar image in "Duke Carl of Rosenmold," which begins with a description of a great tree, newly fallen, the roots of which are dis- covered to have become entangled with the remains of two bodies, "(male and female, said German bone science)" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 119). One of the bodies is believed to belong to "the young Duke Carl, who disappeared from the world just a century before" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 120), and whose plight in life

apparently had resembled that of the homosexual Victorian, since he, "by the usage of his realm, could only with extreme difficulty go whither, or marry whom, he pleased" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 120).

Another notion of immortality is also rejected, therefore -- that achieved through sexual intercourse; and the tableau reflects this recognition. The lovers' remains nurture a tree, a separate species, which gratefully falls a century later in order to tell their story, to "those still interested in the matter" (Imaginary Portraits, p. 120), one of whom is the narrator, who lends them new life "through finding by an effort of creative insight his own life in the otherwise incomplete image or events." A spiritual rebirth attends the death of the tree, and transpires as the ideal of selfless love presented by the tableau takes root in the narrator's mind.

Pater expresses a hope, through the phallic imagery in the passage comparing Dionysus to "a tender shoot of living green," that the "hardness and stony darkness" of Victorian England will become fertile enough for the rebirth of Platonic, homosexual bonds between a "certain number of refined minds," who will, as homosexuals have throughout the ages, "seek the quiet."[102] The "modifications of the old

[102] This phrase sums up Pater's reaction immediately following the critical response to his "Conclusion" to The Renaissance (1873).

legend" which will "minister to ethical culture" will involve a measure of Apollonization, a purification of the orgiastic nature of the worship of Dionysus in "the later days of Greek religion." For this reason, Pater places his hero in the propitious "Zeitgeist" of second-century Rome, to observe the transforming effect of

> a spirit which in its dealings with the elements of ancient life, was guided by a wonderful tact of selection, exclusion, juxtaposition, begetting thereby a unique effect of freshness, a grave yet wholesome beauty, because the world of sense, the whole outward world was understood to set forth the veritable unction and royalty of a certain priesthood and kingship of the soul within, among the prerogatives was a delightful sense of freedom. (Marius, II, p. 116)

In contrast to this period under the Antonines, which Marius calls the "minor peace of the church" (Marius, II. p. 118),

> The greater "Peace" of Constantine, on the other hand, in many ways, does but establish the exclusiveness, the puritanism, the ascetic gloom which,

> in the period between Aurelius and the first Christian emperor, characterized a church under misunderstanding or oppression, driven back, in a world of tasteless controversy, inwards upon herself. (Marius, II, p. 116)

What distinguishes this greater "Peace," a correlative of which would be the atmosphere created by the Victorian Protestant Church, from the period that Marius finds himself in is "the generosity of Antonius Pius," which "like the geniality of the earth itself, had permitted the church, as being in truth no alien from that old mother earth, to expand and thrive for a season as by natural process" (Marius, II, p. 115). In Greek Studies, Pater remarks that "the whole compass of the idea of Dionysus, a dual god of both summer and winter, became, ultimately, almost identical with that of Demeter" (Greek Studies, p. 43), "old mother earth" herself. It is clear, therefore, that Pius' rule is conducive to the return of Dionysus, whose presence inspires a "delightful sense of freedom," which "guided by a wonderful tact of selection, exclusion, juxtaposition," the prevalent Apollonian spirit, results in a "certain priesthood and kingship" of "refined minds."

Marius feels fortunate to have lighted

> upon a period when even more than in the days of austere ascesis which had preceded and were to

> follow it, the church was true for a moment, truer than she ever would be again, to that element of profound serenity in the soul of her founder, which reflected the eternal goodwill of God to man "in whom" according to the oldest version of the angelic message "He is well pleased." (Marius, II, p. 117)

In this atmosphere of "profound serenity" Apollo and Dionysus have found harmony. Because of this, Marius' "divine companion" behind the veil of the Apollonian world of appearance, can and will become incarnate in human form, the body of Cornelius.

The nature of the relationship between Marius and Cornelius has been much discussed. Richmond Crinkley, in Walter Pater: Humanist, quotes a sentence from Marius:

> Marius believed that Cornelius was to be the husband of Cecilia; and that, perhaps strangely, but had added to the desire to get him away safely. (Marius, II, p. 212)

Crinkley remarks that

> the public reading would be that Marius, having affection for Cecilia, does not want to see her

married to Cornelius; the opposite, of course, is the case. Marius, being fond of Cornelius, does not want to see him married to Cecilia.[103]

In response to this line of thought, Monsman claims that

> if one insists that . . . Marius is attracted sexually to his friend Cornelius, then one must note that he is attracted sexually to Cecilia in at least as intense a degree -- as well as to all the other persons and, even, objects of beauty which fall within his ken.[104]

However, there is ample evidence in the novel to suggest that Marius' "divine" or earthly companion would preferably be male. Brian Reade, in Sexual Heretics, remarks that, in Marius

> it will be noted how male friendships were among the more powerful emotions described; and not only were these dependent upon attractiveness and

[103] Walter Pater: Humanist (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1970), p. 155.

[104] Walter Pater, p. 45.

therefore erotic, but they were linked dramatically to religious crises.[105]

After Marius' vision of his "divine companion" in the chapter entitled "The Will as Vision," he wonders,

> Must not all that remained of life be but a search for the equivalent of that Ideal, among so-called actual things -- a gathering together of every trace or token of it, which his actual experience might present. (Marius, II, p. 72)

Marius' predicament is similar to that of many Victorian homosexuals:

> It is not hard see how the difficulty of "l'amour de l'impossible" led by imaginative extensions to the vanishing point of safety in 'God'. For the 'love of God', a predominantly Christian conception, can only be communicated in figures of speech inspired originally by erotic sensations, and this spiritual love on the part of men for a masculine force can thus be rendered backwards

105 Sexual Heretics, ed. Brian Reade (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 20.

into homosexual emotion which has taken refuge in the clouds of intellect.[106]

Another critic has asserted that Pater's

> attitude to religion . . . is bound up in a bundle of other attitudes, all of which can easily be associated with his sexual preferences . . . the ritualist's emphasis on elegant vestments and splendid church fitments, on gold and silver and jewels and incense, together with their emphasis on celibacy, had a greater natural attraction for homosexuals than, let us say, strict Evangelical or Calvinist forms of worship. Pater, at any rate, was a man of homosexual leanings, and paradoxically, while he was not a fully believing Christian, by the time that he wrote Marius, he was once more a ritualist, as he had been in his boyhood.[107]

[106] Reade, Sexual Heretics, p. 12.

[107] Robert Lee Wolff, Gains and Losses: Novels of Faith and Doubt in Victorian England (N. Y. and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977), p. 177.

Pater sheds light on the connection between religious and homosexual ritualism in the chapter entitled "On the Way," in book II of Marius. To Marius, the soldier, Cornelius, with whom he has recently made acquaintance on the way to Rome, "seemed to carry about with him, in that privileged world of comely usage to which he belonged, the atmosphere of some still more jealously exclusive circle." Soldiery is "rendered backwards," in Pater's mind, to the "new knighthood or chivalry" of Christian souls, which is "rendered backwards," once again, into the homosexual ritualism of Victorian England. The "articles and ornaments" of his knightly array are a vital part of Cornelius "vivid personal presence," which breaks

> through the dreamy idealism, which had almost come to doubt of other men's reality: reassuringly, indeed, yet not without some sense of a constraining tyranny over him from without. (Marius, I, p. 169)

A passage from "Emerald Uthwart," in which Uthwart, a student at a monastery in 18th-century England, attempts to define the nature of his relationship with his tutor, James Stokes, will reveal the purpose behind Pater's curious commingling of soldiery, monasticism and ritualism. Emerald

> finds the Greek or Latin model of their antique

> friendship, or tries to find it, in the books they read together. None fits exactly. It is of military glory they are really thinking, amid these ecclesiastical surroundings, where however surplices and uniforms are often mingled together; how they will be, in costly glory, costly to them, side by side (as they work and walk and play how, side by side) in the cathedral aisle, with a tattered flag above them, and under a single (Sapphic) epitath.[108]

Uthwart finds sanction for his pederastic relationship with Stokes in ancient Greece, where

> it was a respected relationship between teacher and taught, senior and junior, the soldier and his page. And the cult of homosexuality, in its pederastic form, gained support from the arguments of

108 "Emerald Uthwart" in Miscellaneous Studies (London: Macmillan and Co, Ltd., 1910; rpt. Johnson Reprint Co. Ltd., 1967) p. 214. that lying beside each other will be "costly to them" refers to their posthumous reputation. However, when Marius " lies down beside" the dying Flavian, "undeterred by the fear of contagion which had kept other people from passing near the house," the "cost" he fears is not only the plague, but Flavian's homosexuality as well. In Victorian England, homosexuality was regarded as a communicable disease.

> Plato and other Greek philosophers who took this educational pattern in their lives as they found it, only maintaining that the less physical it was the more philosophical, and therefore the better.[109]

To bring our argument around full circle, it would seem that Crinkley's interpretation of why Marius' belief "that Cornelius was to become the husband of Cecilia . . . perhaps strangely, but had added to the desire to get him away safely" is of greater merit than Monsman is willing to concede. The significance of "perhaps strangely" escapes Monsman; it suggests that Marius' sacrifice is, on one level, opposed to his true desire, not to marry Cecilia, but to remain with Cornelius. This phrase is akin to most of the homosexual references in that it is just that, a phrase, a hedging qualification, designed to be passed over by all but a few "refined minds."

[109] Reade, Sexual Heretics, p. 2. The "constraining tyranny" which prevents physical expression of Marius' attraction to Cornelius has its roots in Platonic philosophy; however, "tyranny" seems too harsh an adjective for this form of restraint. Pater would like us to think of the less "philosophical" restraint imposed on the homosexual by Victorian morality.

In conformity to the Platonic tradition of homosexual love, Marius, rapturizing to himself about the new hope that Christianity promises, comes to the conclusion that

> Chastity -- he seemed to understand -- the chastity of men and women, with all the conditions and results proper to that chastity, is the truest conservation of the creative energy by which men and women were first brought into it. (Marius, II, p. 110)

Again, as in the previous examples cited, the homosexual reference is found in a qualifying phrase; "the chastity of men and women." The idea that emerges and temporarily subverts the apparent core of this sentence's meaning is that since homosexual love is not directed towards procreation, but towards mutual philosophical and emotional enrichment, it is therefore more "chaste" than heterosexual love. The erotic attraction that Marius feels toward Cornelius is purified by the fact that, like Emerald Uthwart, he finds "a Greek or Latin model" for their friendship. Though he seems to be approximately the same age as Marius, Cornelius is his religious mentor, and in the passage in "On the Way" in which Cornelius laces on his "breast-plate, the sandals and cuirass . . . one by one, with the assistance of Marius" (Marius, I, p. 170), their relationship resembles that

of soldier to page. The pederastic cult, like the homosexual elite of Victorian England, is "purified," expiated from guilt, through a shared sense of inclusion in a creative, philosophical, non-repressive society.

It is not my purpose, in this thesis, to uncover "naughty bits" in Pater's writing simply because Monsman has not paid attention to them. However, his blind spot has led him into a critical quagmire; as has been discussed, his placing of Marius' aspirations exclusively on an Apollonian ideal is inconsistent with the fact that, for Pater, Dionysian "freedom" is a necessary foil to Apollonian self-consciousness, and its inclusion in the ideal is essential to the formulation of an "Anima Naturaliter Christiana."

In order to gauge the influence of Dionysus at the end of Marius, let us examine his various manifestations. As has been demonstrated through my discussion of the passage from Greek Studies in which Dionysus is compared to "a tender shoot of living green," Dionysus can be associated, in Pater's thought, with the rebirth of a healthy form of homosexuality. When Marius descends into the catacombs of the Christians in the chapter entitled "Divine Service," he participates in the Dionysian cycle which is delineated in that passage. Marius' "going under," which is re-enacted when he visits his family tomb, is a correlative to the

tearing apart of Dionysus by his worshippers; such events, which provide the artist-heros of the bildungsroman with a knowledge of pain and thereby test their humanity, are linked through their portention of "final victory through suffering." And as the dissevered body of Dionysus is scat- tered about, returned to the womb of mother earth so that he might be reborn to bring fertility to mankind "next year," so Marius returns the child, 'himself', to the earth that covers his ancestors, so that his creative powers might gather strength from the "relics" of his past selves, and be renewed.

In the introductory chapter of this thesis it was demonstrated that inhumation is, in itself, Dionysian, in that its practice predates the Apollonian tradition of cremation, and testifies to an awareness of "the wider spiritual sense of the more than human vitality which Dionysus proclaims." When the Christians bury Marius at the end of the novel, Pater would like us to recall the Dionysian roots of this practice, and by doing so, appreciate that Marius' desire to see "beyond the veil" is essentially a Dionysian desire. This desire, which is manifested in "a generous loan of" himself so that Cornelius might live, allows for expression of Pater's homosexual desire, which he "generously loans" to a receptive period in history,

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that of second-century Rome, so that he, like Dionysus, can signal a hope that such desire might again regenerate from "the hardness and stony darkness of the earth."

Such a hope could never be realized in Pater's Victorian England. It requires a period when a dialectical interchange between Dionysian erotic or creative desire and Apollonian contemplative serenity can be discerned, so that they might, with a little prodding from Pater, for a moment, unite. According to Schiller, in ancient Greece

> Feeling and thought were not yet split in pieces, that scarce remediable cleavage in the healthy nature of man had not yet taken place.[110]

In such an atmosphere, desire might find expression. Marius desires to be commemorated, upon his death, with the inscription, "He was the last of his race!" For Pater, a sapphic epitath on his tombstone would, perhaps, have sufficed.

[110] Cited in David Delaura, Hebrew and Hellene in Victorian England (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1969), p. 165.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the distinctive processes through which Wordsworth and Pater sought to overcome their private selfhoods, and has demonstrated that, though certain manifestations of their respective selfhoods are unrelated, both can be traced to their roots in a common condition, the solipsism inherent in Apollonianism, the principium individuationis. We have observed that Dionysian "self-forgetfullness" provides a remedy for the solipsistic disease of both artists, for Dionysus is representative of a struggle to overcome repressive Apollonian "boundaries and due proportions."

The significance of their struggle can be appreciated in the light of our current desire to subdue and channel natural force into seemingly infinite experiments in productivity, which, though intended in part to increase our leisure time, have divided impulse from fulfillment more than ever before, for we find ourselves on the threshold of self-annihilation, and hardly dare dream.

Our attention has focused on the efforts of both artists to correlate self and not-self through self-objectification. In Wordsworth, this effort results in an identification of the unconscious mind's "first born affinities" with the sublime "first dealings of nature" through

a sense of their mutual creation and sustenance by nature's maternal love. Pater's results in the recognition that his self is "determined by a far-reaching system of material forces external to it, a thousand combining currents from earth and sky" (Marius, II, p. 68). As has been demonstrated, this recognition, translated into literary style, provides passage out of his solipsistic shell.

We might benefit from their example, for, as N. O. Brown, in Love's Body, says,

> To become conscious of our participation in the creation of the phenomenal world is to pass from passive experience -- perception as impressions on a passive mind -- to conscious creation, and creative freedom. Every perception is a creation -- "when we see physical objects we are makers or poets." Or gods; the world is our creation.[111]

Modern literature, that of Joyce, Eliot and Woolf, for example, exhibits an acute awareness that the escape from inwardness is made only by venturing further inward. The literary critical tradition would be enriched by further

[111] N. O. Brown, Love's Body (N. Y.: Vintage Books, 1966), p. 255.

efforts to assess the contribution of Wordsworth and the major Romantic poets to this awareness. In the opening pages of this thesis, the inability of Arnold to appreciate Wordsworth's contribution in this regard was discussed. Should critics again point to the contradictory nature of an attempt to escape from subjectivity through subjectivity, let Dionysus be born again, to teach them of the truth that lies in contradiction.

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